

Israel & the Palestinians

Edited by Davis, Mack & Yuval-Davis

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Israel & the Palestinians

Edited by

Uri Davis

Andrew Mack

Nira Yuval-Davis

Published by Ithaca Press

London 1975

for The Richardson Institute

& The Issues Programme at

The University of Bradford

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to Gul and his grandfather Joseph Stanley

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First published in 1975 by

Ithaca Press 13 Southwark Street London SE1

ISBN 0 903729 13 X paper

ISBN 0 903729 12 1 cloth

Printed in England by

Redwood Burn Ltd. Trowbridge and Esher

and bound by Wm. Brendon and Sons Ltd. Tiptree

42912847

PREFACE

This anthology is a contribution to the ongoing debate on one of the most critical and dangerous conflicts in the international system - that in the Middle East. The region is now the most militarised area in the world, the threat of war is constant and the prospects for a just peace seem particularly bleak at the present time. The established policies of the main protagonists in the area and their super-power supporters have failed in the past and seem equally likely to fail to resolve the basic issues at stake in the future. Voices of dissent, critical analyses of past failures, and radical political alternatives for the future tend to fall on deaf ears when established policies appear to 'work'. When those policies fail, the need for critical analysis and radical alternatives becomes more obvious. It is to this task that the editors and contributors of this volume have addressed themselves.

The anthology, which had its genesis in a conference sponsored by the Richardson Institute in December, 1974, includes contributions from internationally renowned scholars, journalists who specialise in the region, and political activists. In this sense it differs from the more conventional academic symposia. It differs also in the radical political orientation which characterises most of the papers which are included herein. A number of widely held views are therefore not represented at all. While one of the functions of the Richardson Institute is research and the dissemination of research findings, another is to encourage the interchange of differing views which might not find a ready forum elsewhere. The dedication of the conference organisers and the editors of this volume has meant that both these functions have been amply served by this anthology. Needless to say the views of the editors and of the contributors are their's alone and do not necessarily represent the views of the Institute.

Michael Nicholson MA Ph.D

July 1975

Director

The Richardson Institute for Conflict and Peace Research
London

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Most of the papers which comprise this anthology were delivered originally at a conference on Nationalism and the Conflict in the Middle East in December, 1974, convened by Uri Davis and Nira Yuval-Davis and sponsored by the Richardson Institute for Conflict and Peace Research, London. The Rowntree Trust generously provided financial support to cover the costs of the conference, and Ursula Semin, Research Administrator of the Richardson Institute provided invaluable organisational assistance. The Issues Programme of the University of Bradford provided the facilities for recording the two days of presentations and discussion and made available transcriptions of the tapes to the editors. Without the cooperation of these organisations and individuals neither the conference nor this anthology would have been possible.

We would like to extend our particular thanks to David Caploe, for his special editorial assistance; to Lilian Smith for re-typing barely legible manuscripts; to the staff of the Richardson Institute, and to the contributors themselves who responded to often unreasonable editorial demands and last-minute deadlines without complaint. Special thanks are due to David Wolton of Ithaca Press for good-humouredly enduring many heated late-night editorial meetings and for making this anthology possible in the first place, and to Jenny Greaves and Anne Minaee who did all the type-setting.

The Editors
London, 1975

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INTRODUCTION

by URI DAVIS, ANDREW MACK
and NIRA YUVAL-DAVIS

The aim of this anthology is to introduce readers to some of the key issues which underlie the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and to the debate which surrounds them. Many of the papers included here were originally presented at a conference on nationalism and conflict in the Middle East organised by the Richardson Institute for Conflict and Peace Research and held in London in December, 1974. Other papers were commissioned especially for the anthology, while a few are reprints of articles published elsewhere. With very few exceptions the papers presented here adopt a stance which is both radical and anti-Zionist. Although this may condemn the book in the eyes of unthinking Zionists and their supporters, the treatment of issues by the different authors in fact covers a broad range of political views and an equally broad range of methodological approaches.

Part I of the anthology examines a number of the major issues from different theoretical and historical perspectives. Section One deals with some of the contradictions embodied in Zionist ideology and practice, while Section Two examines Arab nationalism both as an ideology and as a political movement. The third section focusses on the Palestinian Resistance, its class origins and some of the major political, tactical, and strategic problems it faces. In the final section of Part I the role of the super-powers in the area is analysed and some of the implications of super-power policies for struggles at the local level are examined.

Part II of the anthology is less self-consciously theoretical and more immediately political in its general orientation. While in the first part

of the anthology the focus of analysis is at the level of either class, nation or the international system, in the first four sections of Part II a more personal and existential dimension is added - one notably absent from the many radical analyses which deal almost wholly with macro-political phenomena. Thus Section Five focusses on the experiences of Palestinians - both in Israel itself and in exile; Section Six includes an interview with the leader of the Oriental Jewish Black Panther movement; Section Seven examines the position of the Diaspora Jew, while Section Eight includes analyses of the personal experiences of anti-Zionist Western Jews in Israel. These sections also include essays on specific issues which the editors thought warranted special attention - for example, the role of the Zionist movement in the Diaspora (Section Six); the contradictions between class and 'ethnicity' within the Oriental Jewish community in Israel (Section Seven); the role of the kibbutz in the Zionist colonisation effort and the evolution of the revolutionary socialist opposition to Zionism in Israel itself (Section Eight). The two penultimate sections are based on panel presentations at the Richardson Institute Conference in December 1974, and deal with two of the major political dilemmas which currently confront the Left in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. First the problem of the potential for a common Palestinian-Arab/Israeli-Jewish struggle for radical social change, and second, the highly contentious issue of the desirability or otherwise, of implementing a Palestinian West Bank state.

Finally, since many of the articles in this anthology pre-suppose some previous knowledge of the subject matter which readers may not have, we felt that it would be useful to provide a brief summary of the historical and political developments which have led to the not-war/not-peace situation which exists today. Neither the summary of events, nor the various digressions which concentrate briefly on issues which we felt had not been dealt with adequately elsewhere, are intended to be 'objective'. They reflect both the editors' political orientation towards the conflict and their methodological preferences. As in any other attempt to offer a summary of a complex historical process within severe restrictions of space, the nuances and qualifications with which we might have wished to modify various arguments have had to be jettisoned.

Origins of the Confrontation

The Middle East conflict has its roots in the confrontation between the Zionist colonial effort and the native Palestinian-Arabs. The rise of Zionism, however, is located outside the area - in the rapid social change

and consequent social dislocation of pre- and post-World War I Europe and the emergence of western imperialism.

Modern political Zionism originated in Eastern and Central Europe in the late 19th century as one reaction of the Jews to the rise of European anti-semitism. In the fast-industrialising East European countries, traditional Jewish shtetl life was undermined and finally destroyed. Shtetl Jews had traditionally held a middle-caste role between the peasantry and the ruling landed nobility and 'grande bourgeoisie', administering the latter's mercantile interests and leasing its monopolies in trade and estate administration. The impact of industrialisation, which jeopardised the traditional roles of East European Jews, also subjected the non-Jewish peasantry to disruption, dispossession, and finally transformation into a wage-earning industrial proletariat located in the fast growing slums around the East European industrial centres. In the face of these catastrophic events the non-Jewish peasants, not unexpectedly, and with ruling class encouragement and incitement directed their frustration against the most vulnerable link in the hierarchy of the old feudal order - the Jews. Peasant fury was most obviously manifest in frequent anti-semitic pogroms, but in contrast to the later Nazi pogroms, anti-semitism manifested itself primarily in religious terms.

The East European Jews responded to the new situation in a variety of ways. Many became proletarianised and joined the new working classes - mainly in small factories and work-shops. Here they formed constituencies which gave popular support to two socialist secular revolutionary movements: Communism and Jewish Bundism. Both these movements insisted that anti-semitism could be properly understood only as an example of the racist persecution, which is invariably directed against minorities in class societies ridden by contradiction and crises. But, whereas the Communists advocated the overthrow of the old order and the institution of a classless and 'nationless' revolutionary society, the Bund insisted on both the right, and the desirability, of cultural and national pluralism. Bundists did not share the tacit or explicit Communist assumption that the relevance of national and cultural distinctions would - like the state - necessarily wither away with the establishment of Communism. The Bund called upon the persecuted Jewish communities in East Europe to join the struggle for Socialism and insisted that the Jewish predicament could only be solved within a socialist context. The Bund solution embraced the idea of a Jewish people, differentiated by culture, history and tradition within a Socialist commonwealth of nations.

Other Jews chose to emigrate. They went first to Western Europe, and then to its overseas extensions: the United States, South Africa,

Australia, New Zealand, etc. A trickle migrated to the traditional Jewish holy land - Palestine - where they mostly settled as closely-knit traditional communities in such cities as Safad, Tiberias and Jerusalem. Emigration, of course, generated its own problems and arrival of East European Jewish immigrants in Western Europe revived anti-semitism there. Capitalist Western Europe had absorbed and accommodated the western Jewish communities with the Emancipation in the 18th and 19th centuries giving Jews formal equality as citizens of the Mosaic religion. But the new waves of migrants from the East posed new problems. Differing in culture, language and habits, and in general perceived as alien, the migrants posed a threat of social disruption and a revival of anti-semitism. Governments feared that the influence of radical Eastern Jewish elements would foment social unrest, and the West European assimilated Jews feared that a revival of anti-semitism triggered by the arrival of the immigrants would threaten their own hard won and increasingly comfortable positions. The arrival of the immigrants did revive anti-semitism and had precisely the effect feared by some of the assimilated Western Jews. The notorious Dreyfus affair in France in 1894-5, was to symbolise these issues dramatically. Despite a storm of protest from French intellectuals, Alfred Dreyfus, an assimilated Jewish officer, was tried for treason on a series of trumped up charges, in a trial which became notorious for its flagrant violation of due process.

That assimilation was no answer to the problem of the Eastern Jewish immigrants already appeared obvious. The blatant anti-semitism of the Dreyfus affair suggested to some Jewish intellectuals that it provided no guarantee for the security of the western Jewish community either. These at least were the conclusions which suggested themselves to a journalist called Theodor Herzl who covered the trial for the Viennese liberal newspaper Neue Presse. Coming himself from an assimilated Jewish background, Herzl was shocked and outraged by the Dreyfus case. The same Herzl was to become the founding theoretician of the Zionist movement and its leader until his death in 1904 (see Maxime Rodinson). *

Herzl advocated the establishment of a sovereign Jewish nation-state, not necessarily (though desirably) in Palestine as the solution of the Jewish problem. It was to be a modern nation-state following the European model. Herzl identified anti-semitism as an inherent feature

* Names in brackets refer to authors of articles later in the anthology which relate to points raised in the text.

of Gentile (non-Jewish) nature, one which would therefore remain unaffected by social transformations of whatever kind. Thus it is not surprising that Zionism, in contrast to Bundism, and despite its socialist guise, should eventually advocate a solution to the Jewish problem based on colonial immigration, segregation and the establishment of an exclusively Jewish State. Thus the Zionist movement inevitably clashed with the popularly supported Bund as well as with Communism. The conflict was ultimately settled in the Zionists' favour by the Nazi holocaust of World War Two, and the annihilation of almost the whole of the Jewish population of East and Central Europe.

Prior to World War Two, among the specifically Jewish movements, religious and secular, Orthodox Judaism, Bundism and Zionism competed for the support of the East European Jews. Of these three Zionism had the least support. Thus the war had the consequence of wiping out the most numerous Jewish anti-Zionist constituency physically, while at the same time lending enormous credibility to the Zionist claim that only when the Jews had their own state could their survival be assured. It was at this point that the confrontation between Zionism and the native Palestinian-Arab population sharpened and came into acute focus.

The Middle East Context *

In the Middle East itself, World War One and the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire constitute the background against which the major political forces in the area consolidated. The Ottoman Empire had ruled the area since 1516, but after a long period of deterioration was defeated by a combination of the Allied armies and the rise of Arab nationalism. At the end of the First World War the Arabs quite clearly expected that the victorious Allies would fulfil the promises made, or understood to have been made to them by Britain in return for their revolt against the Turks. These consisted of various statements and declarations (one of them in conjunction with France) during the war and the so-called Hussein-McMahon correspondence between the Sharif Hussein of Mecca, who led the Arab Revolt - and the British High Commissioner in Egypt. This correspondence

* Parts of description of the historical evolution of the conflict up to 1973 which follows lean heavily on the interpretation found in the special issue of Comment (No. 19, CIIR, London, 1974) dealing with the genesis of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

was somewhat ambiguous as to the area of Arab independence. The Arabs have since maintained that it included Palestine; the British Government and its principal negotiators that it did not. Certainly the Allies gave the impression in their public declarations that the principle of 'consent of the governed' or 'self-determination' would be observed in the post-war settlement for all those who had formerly lived under Ottoman rule. (See I. Abu Lughod, A. Kelidar and T. Asad).

The real intentions of Britain and France as expressed in the secret Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916, were to divide most of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire into spheres of influence. In its ultimate form this agreement meant that in the post-war settlement, Britain received the mandate under the League of Nations for Iraq, Palestine and the newly created Emirate of Transjordan, and France for Syria and Lebanon.

The majority of the former Arab subjects of the Ottoman Empire did not consent to the mandate. But although the mandatory powers imposed a barely modified form of colonial rule, they were committed under the terms of the mandate to bring the territories as quickly as possible to self-government with representative institutions. In the case of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Transjordan, under pressure from indigenous national independence movements, this was eventually done, and by the end of World War II all were independent states. The only exception was Palestine because Britain had made a wholly exceptional undertaking with respect to this territory which was incorporated into the terms of the mandate: the Balfour Declaration of 1917. This took the form of a letter from the British Foreign Secretary to a leading British Jew, Lord Rothschild, saying that the British Government: "view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country".

Superficially, the two parts of the Declaration might not seem to be incompatible. While it clearly speaks of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, it does not speak of turning all or part of Palestine into a Jewish National Home - let alone into a Jewish state. The trouble was that a Jewish State was the ultimate objective of the Zionist Movement for whom the Declaration was made. In 1917 some 93% or 600,000 of the population of Palestine were Arabs. It was therefore crucial for the Zionist Movement to prevent Palestine from becoming an independent State before the achievement of a Jewish majority.

Zionism in Palestine

The Zionist effort in Palestine, especially in its pre-1914 stages, was heavily coloured by what is properly termed 'Utopian Zionism'. It concentrated on the establishment of different types of collective agricultural settlements, and at this stage its long-term political aspirations were unclear. By 1914 there were 43 such Jewish settlements, numbering about 12,000 people out of a total population of some 600,000. The political aspirations of the movement became increasingly clear after 1941, when Political Zionism, which aimed to secure a legal Charter for the Jewish colonisation of Palestine, came to predominance in large part as a consequence of the catastrophic events in Europe. The Zionist leadership had moved from Austria and Germany after the outbreak of World War One, to Britain. Here the Russian-born Haim Weizman became the dominant figure. With the decline of the British Empire and the shift of western political centre of gravity to the United States, the financial and economic strength of the movement came increasingly from Jews in the United States, whereas the political centre, the Jewish Agency, moved to Israel.

The Balfour Declaration (1917) was a remarkable success for the British Zionists, although the Lloyd George War Cabinet had its own reasons for committing itself to support the movement. There was also widespread public sympathy for the Jews who were scattered in many countries, often suffering prejudice and persecution. From the post-1914 British imperial point of view, it seemed probable that support for the policy of a Jewish National Home in Palestine might work in favour of retention of Palestine by Britain. Some members of the British Cabinet had misgivings about the difficulties of reconciling Zionist aims with the wishes of the native inhabitants of Palestine, but the problems were swept aside in the post-war settlement.

These unresolved problems were, however, to poison the Arabs' relations with Britain for a generation. The British were committed under the terms of the Mandate to facilitate Jewish immigration and settlement in Palestine. By 1918 the World Zionist Organisation had already established the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, which rapidly became a government within a government. The Zionist movement, notwithstanding vehement ideological controversies relating to priorities, theory and practice among its different parties (which ranged from right to left, secular and religious) was nevertheless, and in contrast to the Arabs, outwardly united by a shared colonial aspiration which was both purposeful and determined (see Teodor Shanin). The right wing of the Zionist movement (the General Zionists and the Revisionists) were in no way averse to following the

classical colonial approach, based primarily on the exploitation of the native population, but the Zionist Yishuv by and large followed a colonial practice based on the dispossession of natives and their political and economic exclusion.

The Hebrew conquest of land, labour and means of production were the three pillars of the Zionist effort. On this premise, and under the leadership of Labour Zionism, an exclusively Jewish economy and polity were established. The native Palestinian Arabs, who would otherwise have been the undisputed inheritors of the British as rulers of the country, were thus confronted with the increasing political challenge of the nascent Jewish Yishuv in Palestine.

Since the Palestinian Arabs accepted neither the mandate nor the Balfour Declaration they rejected the British High Commissioner's proposals for a limited form of self-government in 1923. The Zionists were equally opposed to government by elected bodies while they were a small minority of the population. Thus self-governing institutions were never evolved for the peoples of Palestine for the whole period of the mandate (1922-48), although they were among the most politically and socially advanced of the inhabitants of any mandated territory. Throughout the inter-war period the British Government and its representatives in Palestine made repeated attempts to find a solution. Numerous commissions of enquiry came out from Britain only to contradict each other in the policies they advocated.

In the years immediately after the First World War, the Palestinian Arabs showed their hostility to Zionism in riots, attacks on Jewish settlements and demonstrations. But Palestine was relatively peaceful from 1923 to 1929 because Zionist immigration had fallen away with the subsiding of post-World War One immigration. In 1927 there was actually a net Jewish emigration out of Palestine - and Arab fears were quietened. However, the Zionists were steadily consolidating their political and economic position in the country and in 1929 the Jewish Agency was enlarged to include the non-Zionist Jewish sympathisers throughout the world. At the same time Arabs and Muslims outside Palestine were becoming increasingly aroused by the problem. A Muslim Congress in Jerusalem in 1931 warned against the dangers of Zionism and in 1933 a boycott of Zionist and British goods was proclaimed.

By 1931 the Jewish population had increased from 60,000 in 1919 to 175,000 - 17.7 per cent of the total population. Between 1932 and 1938, 217,000 Jews entered Palestine, mainly from Poland and Central Europe, and by 1939 the Jews numbered 429,605 out of an estimated population of 1.5 million, ie 28 per cent. The fact that it was events in Europe (namely the Nazi persecution of the Jews) for which the Arabs were in no way responsible which ultimately ensured the Zionist control of Palestine, added greatly to the Arab sense

of injustice. This was further increased by the knowledge that other western Christian countries had contributed so little to saving European Jewry before 1939.

In 1935 the British again offered a form of representative government. While some of the Arabs would have accepted the proposal, the Zionist movement strongly rejected it since this would have given the Arabs a permanent constitutional majority. In 1936 various Arab political groups united sufficiently to form the Arab Higher Committee under the leadership of Hajj Amin al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. Organising a national front against Zionism was, however, problematic. The landed nobility, from which the national leadership was drawn, had a direct interest in de facto co-operation with the Zionist movement and the Jewish Agency. Selling portions of their vast estates to the Jews enabled the landlords to convert land capital into financial capital and thus enter into the world market via capitalist ventures. This was facilitated by British rule. Arab capital investments in the fast-growing industries and service industries (catalysed by the presence of the large British army camps), as well as capital investments in the agricultural cash industry (primarily orange groves) developed fast. This growth had been made possible partly by finance generated by land transactions with the Jewish Agency. That these transactions spelt disaster to the local native peasantry, which had only customary and not legal rights to the land, did not concern the landed nobility. Popular resistance and the emergence of an increasingly strong nationalist movement eventually rendered these transactions increasingly politically embarrassing. The landed nobility, in collaboration with the Jewish Agency and the Jewish National Fund, then resorted to a complicated middleman machinery which for a time was quite effective.

Resistance to Zionist policies continued to escalate however, and culminated in 1936 in the call for a general strike which developed into a general Arab rebellion supported by Syrian and Iraqi volunteers. The general strike policy at this juncture proved disastrous for the Palestinians since the Yishuv immediately filled positions evacuated by the striking Arabs with Jews, both in the British Mandate civil administration and in the economy at large.

In May 1939 the British Government, anxious to reduce Arab hostility during the expected war with Germany, issued a White Paper which posed a direct threat to the Zionist Movement. The paper provided for limitation of Jewish immigration to 75,000 over the next five years, with independence for Palestine after ten years when further immigration would be decided by the majority, that is to say, the Arabs. Although the Arab Higher Committee officially rejected the White Paper, de facto acceptance of its terms effectively quietened the Arab rebellion for the duration of the war. On the other

hand, the White Paper turned the Zionist movement emphatically against Britain for the first time.

The outbreak of the war placed the Zionists in the paradoxical position of supporting Britain against the common Nazi enemy on the one hand, and escalating resistance to the British administration in Palestine on the other. The political line of the Zionist leadership was: "To participate in the war effort against the Axis as if the White Paper did not exist, and to fight the White Paper policies of the British Government as if the war against the Axis did not exist." As the war progressed, the contradictory requirements of this policy resulted in an increasing convergence between the 'official' Zionist military arm, the Haganah, formally illegal yet tolerated in effect by the British mandatory administration, and the two provisional underground organisations, the Irgun (IZL) and the Stern Group (Lehi). The Lehi at a certain point even negotiated contacts with the Nazi delegation in Beirut in context of its anti-British struggle. In addition to the 27,000 Jews who received training in the British forces, the Jewish Yishuv munitions industry also developed rapidly, and the formally illegal Zionist forces ended the war with both training and a good supply of light arms.

Meanwhile, on the international front the Zionist movement shifted its main efforts from Britain to the United States, where it gained the support of both major political parties. International support for the movement increased still further as the fate of the Jews under the Nazi Reich became widely publicised.

Fortified by US support and growing world sympathy, the Zionist movement stepped up illegal immigration at the end of the war on a massive scale. The Arab states meanwhile attempted to mobilise their diplomatic and military forces on behalf of the Palestinian Arabs through the newly-formed Arab League. But their political and military weakness as well as their internal divisions precluded effective action.

In 1947, Britain finally abandoned hopes of reconciling the conflicting interests. Weakened by World War II, the British Government came under strong economic and political pressure from the United States and decided to hand the whole problem over to the United Nations. A UN Special Committee on Palestine recommended the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states, with Jerusalem and its environs to remain under international control. Partition was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 29th November, 1947. The favourable two-third majority vote was secured by strong US and USSR pressure on a number of smaller nations. All the Islamic Asian countries voted against, and an Arab proposal to ask the International Court of Justice to judge the competence of the General Assembly to partition a country

against the wishes of a majority of its inhabitants, was narrowly defeated.

While the Arabs totally rejected partition, the Zionists accepted it. The resolution provided for a Jewish state to include 55 per cent of the land area of Palestine at a time when Jews formed only 30 per cent of the population and owned less than 8 per cent of the land area. Britain refused to implement the resolution because it was not acceptable to both sides and announced its relinquishment of the mandate on 15th May, 1948.

The UN partition resolution touched off violent Arab protests which soon developed into communal fighting. Armed volunteers arrived from Syria to help the Arabs but in general they were to prove no match for their more cohesive, better trained armed Zionist opponents.

Partition and its Consequences

On the 14th May, 1948 the last British troops left Palestine, and on the same day the Jewish Yishuv proclaimed the State of Israel, which was promptly recognised by the US and the USSR. The following day, units of the regular armies of Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Egypt entered the parts of Palestine allotted to the Arabs by the UN 1947 Partition, in support of the Palestinian Arabs. These British-trained, British-equipped and (in the case of Transjordan) British-commanded troops, scored some initial success. But the Israelis, fighting desperately in the knowledge that their political survival depended on the outcome, launched a counter-offensive which ended in an Arab collapse.

Events both immediately prior to and also during the war precipitated a mass flight of Palestinian Arabs. Many Arab villagers, terrified by reports of the massacre of the Arab population of the village of Deir Yasin by Irgun terrorists in April, 1948 left their homes en masse hoping to return later. Others fled as the fighting escalated in the months that followed and many were forcibly expelled (see Fouzi el-Asmar). According to the United Nations over 725,000 Arabs fled from Palestine between April and December, 1948. Two thirds of the refugees went to the West Bank and the Gaza strip with the Lebanon, Syria and Jordan taking most of the rest.

Fighting ceased in January, 1949 and the UN was able to secure armistice agreements between Israel on the one hand, and Egypt, Syria, Transjordan and Lebanon on the other. Israel now comprised nearly 80 per cent of the area of the Palestine mandate, and the number of Arabs within the area of Israel had diminished to 165,000. Of the 21 per cent of Palestine which remained in Arab hands, the Gaza Strip was placed under Egyptian military administration, and the enclave on the West Bank of

the Jordan, which included the Old City of Jerusalem, was annexed by Transjordan in 1950 (against strong opposition from the other Arab states), following elections on both sides of the river.

The Palestine war and the harsh injustices to the indigenous inhabitants left a legacy of bitterness and humiliation among all the Arabs against Israel and against the two powers most responsible for its creation - Britain and the US. The Arabs made it clear that they had no intention of recognising Israel. In November, 1950 the Arab League decided to continue the wartime blockade of Israel on the grounds that an armistice did not constitute a state of peace. The war was followed by two decades of uneasy tension. Stability was quite unattainable because of the existence of one million Palestinian refugees and the Arabs' refusal to accept the *faits accomplis*. The UN Relief and Work Agency (UNWRA) was formed and provided basic subsistence, accommodation, health services and education for the refugees. A substantial minority of the refugees - generally those of middle and upper-middle class background with higher education or technical skills - were able to leave the refugee camps and make a living in other Arab states or in the western countries. But the majority were now simply dispossessed and destitute peasants. (See Fawaz Turki and Pamela Smith).

One direct consequence of the rise of the Zionist movement and the creation of the state of Israel was the threat to the position of the substantial Jewish communities in several Arab states.

After 1948, the Zionist movement, which had its roots in Europe and had long drawn its support from the West, turned its attention to the non-European Jewish communities of the Middle East and North Africa. In their homelands the 'Oriental Jews' (as they were later to be called in Israel) were facing increasing hostility and, in some cases, outright persecution as a consequence of the escalating Arab/Israeli conflict in Palestine. As persecuted Jews they became a high priority for the emissaries of Zionist immigration. As important was the immigrants' vital role in providing cheap labour to ease the critical labour shortage in the new Jewish state which had been greatly exacerbated since three quarters of a million of the Arab inhabitants of Palestine had fled or been evicted.

In the years immediately following 1948 hundreds of thousands of 'Oriental Jews' migrated to Israel - a land for which many already felt a deep religious affinity. Now a majority of the Israeli-Jewish population, they remain a distinct underclass within it, discriminated against economically, politically and culturally. (See Andrew Mack, Steve Vines, Kokhavi Shemesh).

As a consequence of this vast influx of Jews from Arab lands as well

as continued immigration from elsewhere, the Israeli government has continually claimed that there has been a somehow equitable exchange of population - Jews moving from Arab countries to Israel, and Palestinians moving from Israel to Arab countries. Needless this view is not shared by the Palestinian Arabs, since for the Palestinian, the Israeli Law of Return means that whereas any Jew may emigrate to Israel and automatically acquire Israeli citizenship, a Palestinian born in Haifa may not even return to live in the home of his parents.

The Israeli Law of Return also highlights the fact that the structure of the Israeli state is formally, and much more so informally, fundamentally different from that of other western nation-states. This is so despite the fact that the post World War I conception of the nation state with its emphasis on the principle of national self-determination served as a partial model for political Zionism in its efforts to constitute a Jewish state in Israel. Israel has no constitution, and not even its Declaration of Independence has been incorporated by the Israeli Parliament into the body of the Israeli law. This is in no way accidental. For Israel, as a Jewish state, cannot as the Declaration claims 'promote the development of the country to the benefit of all its inhabitants'. Nor can it 'uphold the full social and political equality (note: not national - eds.) of all its citizens without distinction of religion, race or sex'. Since 13% of its citizens are not Jews - let alone the hundreds of thousands who live under Israeli military occupation in the post 1967 occupied territories - the Israeli state cannot - as Noam Chomsky often forcefully points out, be both Jewish and democratic. To the extent that it is one, it cannot be the other.

Israel also differs from other western states with respect to the unique and essential relationship which exists between the Jewish religion and the Jewish state. Despite the fact that Israelis (with a significant but numerically small exception) are as secularised as most Britons or Americans, organised religion exerts enormous influence in Israel.

There have long been controversies as to the definition of Jewishness. Jews have been seen as an ethnic group, a 'people-class', a nation and as a caste at different times and by different people. However the one constant factor in Jewish history has been the Jewish religion. Thus although Zionism arose as a secular, and to a degree even anti-religious movement, it has been unable to ignore religion. Traditional Judaism provided the legitimation both for the national movement and for its location in Palestine. (See Maxime Rodinson). Furthermore the Orthodox Jewish tradition provides the least ambiguous criteria for deciding 'Who is a Jew' for the purpose of implementing the Law of Return and also for determining the basis for Israeli citizen-

ship for Jews. *

The considerable political influence of the Orthodox religious parties in the Israeli parliament stems from different (though related) causes. In contrast to other parties the religious parties have (until 1967) been predominantly interested in matters related to the state enforcement of religious laws. Labour Zionism has thus found it expedient to include the religious parties in government coalitions. In exchange for concessions on such issues as the state marriage and divorce laws, the Labour Zionists have received the support of the religious parties on critical issues relating to social, economic, security and foreign policy. After 1967 this pattern changed when the religious parties took a firm stand on a number of issues which embraced both foreign and security policy considerations. These related to the occupation of the West Bank which is seen as a part of the land of Israel promised to the Jews in the Bible and which includes many of the holy places of the Judaic tradition.

Also of fundamental importance is the impact of organised religion on the education system where the young are socialised into world views which rationalise, justify and even exult the superiority of Jews over non-Jews (see Fouzi el-Asmar) while at the same time religious instruction provides a totally spurious historical justification for the Zionist colonisation of Palestine.

Despite the political influence of organised religion within Israel, in the Diaspora the Zionist state itself has replaced religion as the central focus of Jewish identity. The decline of traditional Judaism in western industrialised countries is perhaps no more surprising than the relative decline of other organised religions. The rise of Zionism, with the state of Israel as its symbol, as a secular alternative to Judaism for Diaspora Jews has however been carefully fostered by the Zionist movement both in Israel and abroad. The Zionist argument is that, since Israel exists to solve the Jewish Question it is only proper that Jews throughout the world should contribute liberally to 'their state'. The not-so-subtle implication is that the monies collected are a form of ransom which must be paid by Diaspora Jews - living in comfort abroad - who evade their duty to emigrate and who also avoid the many sacrifices which Israelis themselves must make. Diaspora Jews are constantly pressed to provide, not merely political and moral support for Israel (all 'excesses' being excused on the grounds of necessity)

* A Jew according to Orthodox Jewish tradition is a person born to a Jewish mother or converted to Judaism by Orthodox convention.

but also material support. Israel is thus economically critically dependent on Diaspora Jews who are called on to give more and more money to a state in which they do not live and cannot vote - 'taxation without representation' in fact. (See Steve Vines, Everett Gendler and Israel Shahak).

The funds which pour in from the Diaspora play a key role not only in propping up Israel's sagging economy but - equally importantly - in sustaining in power the ageing Zionist political establishment. Funnelled through the Jewish Agency, foreign funding is employed to oil the wheels of Israeli 'machine politics' - the patronage relationships which permeate every organisation in the land from Kibbutzim and health services, to labour unions and youth clubs. The funds are allocated to the different establishment parties according to ratios which are said to reflect their relative strength.

Financed from without and controlled by a professional 'veretan' leadership, the Zionist parties (which in various alignments have controlled the Israeli state from its creation) have power structures which are largely independent of the grass roots membership. The network of Zionist parties - despite manifest differences in political ideology - co-exist in a close and almost symbiotic relationship. Their roots stretch back to the 1920's and under the British Mandate they already constituted a 'government within a government'. What was needed in the 'pioneer' epoch to transform the Zionist movement into a state, was a continuous flow of funds and people from outside Palestine: Diaspora Jews have provided both.

The organisational superiority of the so-called 'moderate' Zionists has kept them in power (in various coalitions) since the creation of the state in 1948. Yet the logic of the colonising endeavour and the concomitant resistance this was bound to generate, among the dispossessed Palestinians, and in the Arab world generally, has forced the 'moderate' and 'socialist' Zionists to adopt policies which have been neither moderate nor in any sense socialist. In fact the 'moderates' have almost invariably adopted policies advocated by their right wing Zionist opponents (see Teodor Shanin).

While the discrimination against Arabs in Israel is readily explicable as an inevitable by-product of an exclusivist Jewish state, the marginally more subtle, but nevertheless very real, political, economic and social discrimination directed against the Oriental Jewish population by the 'western' Israeli-Jewish elite clearly cannot be explained in these terms. Oriental Jews, who now form a majority of the Israeli Jewish population not only remain a distinct underclass but have also consistently failed to form a viable Oriental Jewish political party which would represent Oriental Jewish interests. To explain this failure it is again necessary to examine the historical roots of the present Ashkenazi (Western) Jewish political ascendancy and the

nature of Israeli patronage politics which has maintained the Ashkenazi establishment in power. (See Andrew Mack, Kokhavi Shemesh).

Oriental Jews do not, of course, constitute the lowest stratum in Israeli society. This position has been reserved for the 'Israeli-Arabs' who include the Palestinians (some 400,000) under direct Israeli rule and living within the pre-1967 borders of Israel, and also the Palestinian population (approximately one million) of the areas captured and occupied during the 1967 war. Subject to arbitrary military rule, land expropriation and confiscation, harassment and persecution, the Arab population of Israel has been transformed from a predominantly small farmer class into a wage proletariat employed in the lowest paid, lowest status sectors of the economy and forced to commute long distances to work. Palestinian intellectual and political leaders who opposed Zionist policies have been continually harassed, denied employment, imprisoned or forced into exile. Despite this and despite the educational and other deprivations suffered by the Arab population in general, a new political and cultural leadership has emerged.

Israeli/Arab Relations after 1948

From 1949 to 1956 there was constant friction on the Arab-Israel borders. Israel responded to acts of sabotage by Palestinians - often farmers whose lost land was visible across the armistice lines - with massive retaliation raids which on at least two occasions led to massacres of civilians by Israeli regular forces. In 1956 Britain and France, in response to Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal, initiated and carried out a joint Israeli-British-French attack on Egypt. But joint US-USSR pressure forced the three parties to withdraw and made Israel return to its previous borders.

Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal marked a new era in the Middle East. Conservative and corrupt regimes solidly supported by, and dependent on, the West were being replaced by nationalist governments whose leadership came from the middle ranks of the officer class. Proclaiming a nationalist resolve to free their countries from the West and to 'modernise' them under enlightened one-party rule, the new regimes (Baathism in Syria and Iraq and Nasserism in Egypt) found themselves denied western aid (see Ibrahim Abu-Lughod). This led to a re-orientation towards the East and an increasing reliance on the Soviet Union which began to play a major role in the area. The US retained its influence with the conservative monarchies of Jordan and Saudi Arabia, intervened militarily in the Lebanon in 1958 and managed to stem the tide of nationalism in Iran in 1953 with a

CIA fomented coup which brought down the Mossadegh government and returned the Shah to rule. Israel, unlike other countries in the area could be relied on unconditionally by the US. Its allegiance did not depend on specific class or power elite alignments but rather on the nature of the Zionist colonial effort and the dispossession of the Palestinians which had engendered enormous hostility in the Arab world - particularly from the emergent nationalist and anti-imperialist regimes. Israel thus remained firmly united with US imperial interests out of a fear of being 'thrown into the sea' as some of the official pre-1967 Arab propaganda had threatened. (See Fred Halliday, Eqbal Ahmad and Malcolm Caldwell).

Between 1956 and 1967, an uneasy truce was resumed until, in response to Egypt's mobilisation and blockade of the Straits of Tiran, Israel launched a blitzkrieg against the Arab states. The June War brought a complete military victory over Egypt, Syria and Jordan and the capture of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights of Syria. Some 400,000 new refugees were uprooted in a second exodus and Israeli military rule was imposed on the occupied territories. In the years which followed, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip territories were increasingly drawn into Israel's economic orbit, the newly conquered Arab population being employed as cheap labour in Israeli economic enterprises. Arab suspicions that the Israelis meant eventually to annex the occupied territories to Israel were in no sense diminished by the new waves of Israeli settlement in these areas. By 1974 more than fifty new Israeli rural and urban settlements had been created in the occupied territories following the classic pattern of Israeli colonisation.

In November 1967, the UN Security Council passed unanimously the now-famous Resolution 242 which calls on Israel to withdraw from 'territories occupied in the recent conflict'. The resolution, accepted by the major Arab states and backed cautiously by the US under the so-called Rogers Plan, was rejected by the Palestinians because it recognised the state of Israel and referred to the Palestinians merely as a refugee problem. Israel's formal acceptance of the resolution is constantly belied by Israel's actual policies.

Between 1949 and 1957 the Palestinians had hoped that the liberation of Palestine would be brought about by the armies of the major Arab confrontation states. The massive Arab defeat of 1967 destroyed these hopes and stimulated the emergence of a wholly Palestinian resistance now united - at least formally - under the banner of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) led by Yasser Arafat. Since the fluctuating fortunes of the Palestinian resistance are dealt with at length in this anthology suffice here to say that the Resistance, largely as a result of guerrilla

and terrorist operations which have been almost universally condemned in Israel and the West, has brought the Palestinian case to the forefront of world attention as a political and national (not merely humanitarian) issue. (See Peter Hellyer, Sabri Ahmed, Pamela Ann Smith and the contributions to Sections 9 and 10). With respect to the critically important issue of the ultimate aim of the Palestinian resistance, 1967 also marks an important turning point. After this date al-Fatah, and later the PLO, adopted as the ultimate objective of the Resistance the establishment of a democratic secular state in Palestine - including the area occupied by the pre-1967 Israeli state - in which Muslims, Christians and Jews could live together on equal terms. With the official adoption of this goal, the pre-1967 slogans, including that of 'throwing the Jews back into the sea', so often voiced by the former PLO leader Ahmad Shuqayri, were abandoned. Yet simultaneously the Palestine National Covenant has been adopted by the PLO in 1968, which included Article No. 6 stating that 'Jews who were living permanently in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be considered Palestinians' (emphasis added). This, of course, legally excludes the majority of the Israeli-Jewish population if, and when, the Covenant comes into effect. The article is said to have been frozen by the Eighth Palestinian National Congress, and effectively substituted by current Congress political statements, yet it has not been revoked and thus remains legally binding.

The slogan of 'Palestine as a Secular Democratic State' does not recognise the Israeli-Jews as a national group but as a religious one. The only established Palestinian organisation which recognised the Israeli-Jews as a national group is the PDPFLP (Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine), although PDPFLP interpretations of the meaning of the Israeli-Jewish 'right of national self-determination' have been ambiguous. The range of opinion within Israel differs markedly. The overwhelming majority of the Jewish population believes that an exclusively Jewish state is the only long-term solution to the Jewish problem. Most Israeli Jews also object to the withdrawal of Israel from all the territories it occupied since 1967, while the official recognition of the Palestinian-Arab people, its right of self-determination, let alone recognition of the PLO - is seen as being out of the question. Some Israeli 'doves' do, however, support the idea of establishing a small Palestinian state totally controlled by Israel and Jordan on some parts of the post-1967 occupied territories (see Section 10). But not even the Communist Party (Rakah), which declares itself to be non- or anti-Zionist and which advocated Israel's total withdrawal from all the post-1967 occupied territories, has

challenged the legitimacy of the continuing existence of Israel as a separate state.

The only Israeli political groups which consistently challenge Zionism and the legitimacy of the Israeli state from a radical perspective, have been the Israeli Socialist Organisation (Matzpen) and its various splinter groups (see Moshe Machover). The revolutionary socialists argue that a social revolution is the only means of resolving the basic conflicts between the Israeli-Jews and the Palestinian-Arabs thus enabling an eventual just and peaceful co-existence between the two nations. In contrast to many organisations within the Palestinian Resistance movement none of the Israeli socialist revolutionary groups - with the recent exception of the Red Front - have any doubt that the Israeli-Jews constitute a national group and that no just solution can be achieved without taking this fact into consideration (see Nira Yuval-Davis).

Post-1973: The Contemporary Scene

In October 1973, after six years of frustrated diplomatic efforts, and spurred by the growing evidence of Israel's intention to consolidate permanently its control over, and 'Judaisation' of, the post-1967 occupied territories, Egypt and Syria launched a combined military offensive against Israel on two fronts. The basic Arab aim was to break the diplomatic stalemate and to force the US - and to a lesser degree the USSR - to bring pressure to bear on Israel to implement UN Resolution 242.

In purely military terms the war was, not surprisingly, indecisive. Politically, however, its repercussions have been very important. Firstly, the contrast between the October War and that of 1967, was so marked, that the myth of Israeli military invincibility was completely shattered. Secondly, the desperate dependence of Israel on US military logistic support was underlined by the necessity for an American emergency airlift of military materiel to the Sinai frontline during the war itself. Thirdly, the ability of the Arab armies to launch a surprise attack, and their greatly improved performances during the war itself, had the immediate effect of greatly increasing Arab morale, while at the same time increasing the political credibility of the 'moderate' Arab states (notably Egypt). The emergence of the 'oil weapon' as a source of political as well as economic influence was even more important. For the first time the oil producing states were able to act in concert, and in league with the major Arab states (Egypt and Syria in particular)

which were not oil producers. With the capability to pose threats to the security of oil supplies and to the international monetary system, while at the same time providing important markets (particularly for weaponry) and investment opportunities to the Western powers, the Arab states could demand with some force that the US exert its influence over its dependent, but intransigent, Israeli client to withdraw gradually from the occupied territories (see Fred Halliday). The US also stood to gain considerably by the strategic re-alignment in the area, in particular with respect to Egypt, whose ruling elite, having reduced its dependence on the Soviet Union, was now desperately in need of American economic support for its ailing economy and US diplomatic support in its conflict with Israel (see Eqbal Ahmed). Despite the much-heralded, and indeed important, diplomatic victories scored by the PLO (culminating in Yasser Arafat's address to the United Nations), these developments did not bode well for the PLO's stated long term objective of establishing a democratic secular state in Palestine. Not only had the performance of the Arab armies undermined the Palestinian claim that only the Resistance could catalyse effective opposition against Israel, but Arab military achievements in the war owed virtually nothing to Palestinian military actions. More importantly, it was becoming increasingly obvious, that what constituted a reasonable settlement for the Egyptians (and most of the other powers involved except the Israelis) was something along the lines of UN Resolution 242, plus a vaguely worded requirement that Israel recognise 'the legitimate rights of the Palestinians'. Clearly this falls far short of the objectives of the PLO, and Palestinian fears of being 'sold out' can only have been increased when, in the summer of 1975, it seemed that some sort of rapprochement between Syria and Jordan was in the offing.

In Israel, a new mood of pessimism developed after the war. Vociferous criticism of the government by Liberal and right wing protest movements led to the resignation of the government, with Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan being replaced by the Rabin-Peres cabinet. But popular criticism was directed essentially against the lack of efficiency with which past policies were implemented - in particular the lack of adequate military preparation for the war - rather than the underlying assumptions of the policies themselves. The difference between the ruling coalition and its opponents remained merely one of degree. Both government and opposition remain united in their refusal to recognise the PLO, while the government is marginally more sensitive to the need to show greater pragmatism and flexibility in negotiations, and in co-operation with the continuing United States 'peace initiatives'. There are, it is true, some signs of dissent from within the Israeli Labour Party. A number of

Zionist 'doves' have consistently indicated that they are, in principle, prepared to negotiate with the Palestinians. They believe that the only alternative to the collapse of the Israeli state in the long term would be territorial compromise and the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel and under de-facto Israeli control. But even this relatively mild proposal was anathema to the Zionist establishment, and those advocating this position were forced to split from the ruling Labour coalition and establish their own small and isolated party (the Eliav-Aloni led Yaad Party). Cut off ideologically from the mainstream Zionist consensus, and denied access to the vast resources which kept the ruling Zionist parties in power, there seemed little chance that the 'doves' would gain many political converts.

By the end of 1974 the military forces of both the Arab states and Israel had, at enormous cost, more than replaced the losses of the 1973 war. In the case of Israel, the economic burden was crippling. The 1974-5 Israeli defence budget (3.7 thousand million dollars), absorbed more than a third of Israel's total gross national product and the costs to the economy of maintaining the 'Warfare State' were becoming increasingly obvious. In 1974, the rate of inflation had risen to 35%, while foreign currency reserves were being depleted at a rate of 100 million dollars a month. In November, in a desperate effort to stop the haemorrhage of reserves, the Israeli pound was heavily devalued, heavier taxation rates were introduced and various subsidies on basic commodities were withdrawn. Yet there seemed little chance that these measures could cause an economic recovery. To add insult to injury the flow of funds from Diaspora Jews into Israel was slowing dramatically. The combination of a declining economy, the prolonged failure to achieve any sort of settlement with the Arabs, and the re-occurrence of terrorist activity within Israel itself, had also caused a sharp reduction in the flow of immigrants to Israel, while increasing numbers of Israeli Jews were beginning to leave the country (see Sabri Ahmed).

Within Israel not even the Zionist 'doves' who support the idea of some sort of West Bank state solution, are prepared to challenge any of the assumptions on which the Zionist movement created its exclusively Jewish state. The only groups which have been consistent in their critique of Zionist assumptions have been those of the revolutionary left. (See Uri Davis and Moshe Machover, Section Six, and contributions to Sections Nine and Ten). But in a context characterised by increasing intransigence towards any serious efforts to come to terms with the Arab states, and by increased repression of basic civil and political rights at home, the Left today finds itself increasingly on the defensive. Left wing

political energies are now being channelled increasingly into defending the most basic civil and political rights of the Palestinian Arabs under Israeli rule.

To conclude we can do little more than reluctantly concur with Noam Chomsky's pessimistic evaluation of the current prospects, which he elaborates at greater length in the concluding essay in this anthology:

"The conference of Arab States at Rabat has designated the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians. The United Nations has in effect endorsed this position. The Government of Israel refuses adamantly to deal with the PLO. As long as this impasse persists, the probability of war is appreciable. As critics of Israeli government policy have been warning, Israel has now backed itself into a corner, facing almost complete diplomatic isolation, committed to policies that can only be implemented at the grave risk of war, hence the risk of eventual destruction of a state that can lose only once and that can never finally defeat its adversaries."

SECTION ONE:

ZIONISM

Introduction

Without a clear understanding of Zionist ideology and practice the current conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is inexplicable. Teodor Shanin, in the first paper in this section, examines some of the key contradictions in Zionist ideology and shows how these have manifested themselves in practice. In particular he seeks to demonstrate how the 'moderate liberal-socialist' tendency of Zionism, which has been the predominant political force throughout the Zionist endeavour in Palestine, has in practice constantly adopted the policies of its politically weaker, right wing and fundamentalist adversaries. After demonstrating that this apparently paradoxical feature of Zionist policies has been characteristic of the movement since well before the formation of the state of Israel, Professor Shanin goes on to consider some of the theories which have been advanced in an attempt to explain this phenomenon and to put forward some theoretical ideas of his own. Finally he considers the implications of his analysis for future political praxis.

Maxime Rodinson's contribution embraces a much longer historical perspective. Professor Rodinson relates the evolution of Zionist ideology, and of the movement itself, to the various changes in fortune experienced by the Jews throughout their long history. He compares this with various other movements of national separation, and examines the social and political forces which pushed Zionism in the direction of seeking to establish a Jewish state in Palestine. Finally he shows how it is impossible to provide a fundamental critique of Zionism in its own terms, and argues that an ethical evaluation of both the ideology and the movement must be made from a universalist rather than a nationalist perspective.

THE PRICE OF SUSPENSION

The Policy of Stages and the Historical Defeat of Moderate Zionism¹
by TEODOR SHANIN

Until a people confronts its
own past, it has no future.
(E. Genovese)

Here is Rhodes - jump!
(from Greek mythology²)

The time seems ripe to consider contemporary, post-1967 Zionism. By now it has matured and shown its colours. Indeed, it may also be the time to consider Zionism in toto. Nothing compares with hindsight for shedding light on historical developments, and it is the interdependencies, contradictions and tensions between ideologies and political praxis which often provide the most fruitful point of entry into the analysis of political movements.

At the heart of the issue lie two seemingly contradictory facts and a question, 'Why?'. Both as an ideology and as a political movement Zionism has displayed a broad heterogeneity of direction and purpose. (Only to the more stupid of its adversaries and supporters does it appear sloganised as 'Zionism' tout court). Within this heterogeneity two main trends appeared whose proponents disagreed violently; a fundamentalist wing of extreme nationalism ('monistic' ie undiluted in self-definition) and a moderate liberal and socialist tendency. Fact number one: during the seventy years of the history of Zionism in Palestine/Israel the political organisations professing moderate Zionism have consistently had the upper hand over their opponents in terms of numbers, resources, votes and, at a later stage, control of the state machinery of Israel. Fact number two: over essentials the moderate Zionist majority has violently castigated its weaker adversaries and yet in the last resort adopted policies representing their ideological outlook and aims. Before turning to the, 'why', and the subsequent, 'so what', let us first elaborate the issue at hand.

A. The Ideology and the World-Outlooks

Zionism has represented a multiplicity of concepts, values, emotions, ideological assumptions, political strategies and tactics, closely inter-linked with powerful networks of organisation. Like all fully grown national

or nationalist movements, it contains complexities, contradictions and ambiguities, often making the very definition of Zionism puzzling. Yet, two, or possibly three, long term political aims form the hard core of the contemporary Zionist declaration of faith and definition of purpose, as well as Zionism's self-applied measure of ultimate success. It is these which may distinguish Zionism as an ideological entity.³

In order of importance, the most crucial of these aims was that defined at the first Zionist Congress in 1897, as the creation of a legally recognised Jewish national home in Palestine. This was formally ratified by the 1917 Balfour Declaration and the mandate subsequently granted to Great Britain by the League of Nations. After decades of doubts, changing interpretations and political vicissitudes concerning the advisability and possibility of statehood, it took final shape in the so-called 'Biltmore Programme' of 1942, in which the Zionist leadership unequivocally defined its aim as the creation of a Jewish State in the land of Israel. The main engineer and spokesman of the Biltmore Programme was David Ben Gurion, by 1948 the first Prime Minister of the state of Israel to take office.

The second, partly interlinking aim of Zionism was the concentration of the Jewish people all round the world in the National Home/State of Israel. While the aim was accepted by the whole of the movement, the measure of concentration deemed advisable or necessary varied from an elite which would form the culturally unifying centre of world Jewry (the Achad Ha'am view), to the 'in gathering' in Palestine of every single Jew in the world. The explanations and/or rationalisations of this aim varied once again: the building of a new and better society away from the old ghetto-world, the wish to counter cultural assimilation, of the experience or fear of anti-Semitic persecution.

The third aim, that of 'productivisation' was somewhat less commonly accepted and was traditionally associated with the socialist wing of the Zionist movement. Indeed, it formed the specific contribution of this wing while seeming to permeate the whole of the movement. Initiated by the Russian radical Zionists, 'productivisation' called for a transformation of the social structure of the Jews from a 'pyramid standing on its top', ie numerous merchants and intellectuals and few workers and farmers, to the like-that-of-other-people position, where this situation is reversed. The creation of a National Home and the concentration of Jews would provide the necessary preconditions for such a transformation leading to a 'healthier society' or even to the Tolstoian pacifist communalism expounded by the writings of A.G. Gordon. To the Poaley-Zion supporters of Borochov this transformation constituted in addition the proletarianisation necessary for the subsequent proletarian revolution.⁴

This more or less common Zionist ideological and political stand was underlaid by two contradictory Weltanschauungen however, one fundamentalist, the other universalist in nature.⁵

The thought world of fundamentalist Zionism resembled that of 19th century European romanticism. Man to man is wolf, yet he is not alone for he is born into a nation. National exclusivity is the basic unity of men. The world is divided into nations - supreme, natural and eternal collectivities locked in a constant struggle, constituting the crux of history and determining the life of nation and man alike. Social organisation, fully expressed in the modern state, must serve the main purposes of the nation, ie to secure its maximum strength, unity and efficiency against external foes. True morality consists in transcending personal interests for the sake of the national community and State. To do otherwise is treason. Realism consists in grasping all this to the full. A powerful, mystical link binds the eternal national collectivity and its collective spirit with the exclusive symbols of nationhood, territory, language, etc. To the initiated, history often appears as a Manichean vision of poetic grandeur as, for example, in Jabotinsky's⁶ poem-dream of the future, in which "From blood and sweat/ A race will emerge/ strong, generous and cruel." Powerful emotions link feelings of collective grievance towards outsiders with ambivalent love/hate relations towards one's own people who, after all, do not measure up to what is seen to be their manifest capacity and destiny. In the Jewish/Zionist context, the main issue in such a world-outlook is that of power, or more exactly that of the weakness of the Jewish nation. The aim is to overcome this weakness, resulting mainly from the dispersion, and to make the nation and its state all-powerful. Zionism is the political and organisational expression of the Jewish claimant-combatant in the eternal world-wide power struggle between nations.

The second world-outlook underlying Zionism was very much the opposite of that of the nationalist fundamentalism. It has its roots in the universalism and anthropocentrism of the Renaissance and in the evolutionary rationalism of the 19th century, informing and providing the point of departure for both liberal and socialist movements. Man as such is the supreme value. The supra-human entities: nation, religion, state, class etc., are historical and changeable; the attitude adopted towards them must depend on the extent to which they (or their abolishments) would serve the maximum self-realisation of the greatest number of individuals. Man equals man or, in formal political symbols, vote equals vote at an election. It is in the absolutely and unrestrictedly equal relation to the outsiders belonging to the racial, national or religious minorities that universalism and humanism are best measured. True morality consists in transcending personal and group

egoism and securing universal and equal suffrage. Realism consists in demystifying supra-human entities and laughing eternal national claims out of court. History is the progression from barbarism towards the society of man - rational, tolerant, peaceful, co-operative and equal. The alternative was spelled out with an uncomfortable predictive force by Grillperzer - an Austrian writer at the end of the 19th century: "From humanity through nationality to bestiality".

The moderate liberal-socialist wing of Zionism adopted the universalist world outlook, while at the same time accepting the immediate supremacy of national interests, aims and organisations. (These have been expressed in, and can be exemplified by, the very existence of the World Zionist Organisation and, with respect to Palestine, by an exclusively Jewish Trade Unions Movement, forcefully struggling for the exclusive use of Jewish labour in a variety of enterprises etc.) Logical ideological and political inconsistencies resulted. Those were conceptually bridged by a more or less sophisticated theory of temporary suspension of aims - a 'theory of stages'. It was the natural brotherhood of free nations which was to provide the framework of the better future world, an idea close in conception to Mazzini's 'Young Italy' and Masaryk's idea of an independent Czechoslovakia. Universalist aims and ethics were accepted in principle but, temporarily and exceptionally, suspended to ensure realisation of basic national aims - an essential preliminary stage. The creation of an independent state, or a Jewish majority or else an Arab-Jewish parity in Palestine, were treated as the point at which the dispensation ends, a dividing line beyond which the farther parts of the political programme would be put into operation. To be sure, even before 'the farther stage' is reached some measures of a universalist nature can, and should, be fought for and introduced, the right mixture to be defined pragmatically. In any case, the faster one goes the faster the end of the nationalist stage would be reached, which would then leave the movement and its members free to expose fully their true universalist and humanist selves, liberal or socialist as the case might be.

There is nothing simpler than to dismiss political ideologies as 'bad faith' and/or crowd manipulation. Evidence in support of such a view can easily be drawn from the long list of declarations never fulfilled; terms 'stretched' into their own logical opposites; 'sacred cows' dropped overnight in the service of some immediate interest of political leaderships. Should it be thought that ideologies simply and directly reflect the opportunism of power-holders, much of the problematic posed by this paper disappears. Yet we know that the 'adjustability' of views and terms has limits above which political movements and controls crack, some ideas mobilise masses of people turning them into a political force while in other cases no propaganda effort, no matter how intensive, can translate ideas into

effective mass action.

Furthermore even the most cynical manipulators are restricted by their own conceptualisation of reality. Ideologies do not simply reflect immediate interests any more than power and privilege simply reflect normative or metaphysical thought. It is the dialectics of mutual impact and interaction, and the specific and partly autonomous dynamics of the ways power and thought are structured which account for the complexity and 'richness' of political reality.⁷ The history of Zionism is a case in point.

1. STAGES AND TRENDS

B. Before the State

The history of Zionism from 1917 to 1948 involved (a) the articulation of, and the struggle over, its three-pronged programme and (b) the internal struggle between factions reflecting the different interests and the contradictory outlooks within the movement. The internal struggle within the Zionist organisation was dominated by the confrontation between the coalition of the moderate Zionists led by Weizmann and the so-called Revisionist party led by Jabotinsky.⁸ In the Palestinian Zionist context, the main carrier of the formally universalist world outlook and the major political force within Weizmann's coalition has been the Zionist labour movement which dominated the political arena. Any attempt to review a 30-year stretch of Zionist history within the confines of a single paper would be necessarily inadequate and an interested reader must be referred to the basic textbooks on that matter. We shall stress a few points of relevance, however.

The period commences with the creation of a new political situation in the area as a consequence of the Balfour Declaration of 1917. This committed Britain to the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, while British troops prepared to march into the country where they were to stay for the next thirty years. But the euphoria within the Zionist movement was quickly quelled by the events which followed. Arab political and armed struggle in 1920/21, the British White Paper of 1922 introducing formal limitations on Jewish immigration, and the 1923 British suggestion for establishing an Arab Agency in Palestine on par with the Jewish one, all acted as a forceful reminder of the political realities of the post-1918 'Middle East'. The country was not simply an empty property which could be given away, the Arabs of Palestine could not be simply written off. The new British rulers, and even their first Jewish High Commissioner, were British first and foremost and pursued interests which were primarily those of Britain. Nor was there any overwhelming wish within the Jewish

Diaspora to avail itself of the new opportunities. For example, even among the 4,500 volunteers - soldiers of the Jewish Legion who reached Palestine with the British army - only 260 decided to settle there.⁹ The wave of the so-called Third Immigration (1920-24) never exceeded 9,000 per annum, and many left within a short time. The Jewish population of Palestine in 1922 was 83,000 out of a total population of 725,000, ie 11% in all.¹⁰ The hopes for massive financial help from wealthy Jews around the world did not materialise either.

The reappraisal of the political scene which followed defined the outlook of the Zionist movement between the two World Wars and emphasised its fundamental divisions. Attitudes towards statehood, relationships with the Palestinian Arabs, British rule and the 'class issue' provided the crucial dividing lines. From 1925, the newly-established Revisionist Party demanded the immediate establishment of a Jewish state which would then solve the problem of immigration and settlement by an 'evacuation of Jews into Palestine'. This particular conception of Zionism held that both the Arabs and British had to be fought by military means. To this end the Zionist movement should concentrate mainly on the creation of Legions - a professional military force. Arab objections would be inevitable and would have to be met by 'an iron wall' until they submitted. Class division in Palestine weakened national unity and was anyway bogus because, 'there are no classes in Israel, only pioneers'. Compulsory national arbitration was to settle any dispute concerning Jewish wages, while Arab/Jewish unions or other forms of co-operation were to be totally opposed.¹¹

The interpretations of the meaning of the term 'National Home' among Zionist majority have varied over time. There is no doubt that in 1917, Weizmann as well as Balfour, aimed at a fully fledged statehood using a synonym for reasons of tactical expedience. Yet before too long, both for the official Zionist leaders and their supporters, statehood as an aim receded into the indeterminate future or else disappeared altogether, while 'National Home' came increasingly to mean freedom of immigration and the social advance of the Palestinian Jewry within self-autonomy and under a friendly rule. By 1930, Weizmann declared that 'a Jewish state was not the aim of Zionism but only a means to it ... The context of Zionism is to create a number of material foundations on which an autonomous, compact and productive community can be built ... Palestine could become a Jewish state if it were an uninhabited country. But it is not an uninhabited country". All this was, in the view of a contemporary historian, "not a tactical device" but "a deep and genuine reaction to the political cul-de-sac...". This statement was powerfully supported on behalf of the Zionist Labour by

Katzenelson, Ben Gurion, Tabenkin and other of its leaders.¹² The organisation of voluntary settlement and construction, with a stress on self-defence and the political aspect of power, were presented as the only way to confront successfully both British rule and Arab nationalism. In the long term, the Zionist socialists and liberals declared their commitment to live together with the Arabs, the actual programmes varying from a Jewish state treating an Arab minority as equals, usually with a Palestinian state at its side, to a Jewish-Arab state of two nations in the whole of Palestine - the Brit Shalom and Hashomer Hatzair view. This approach has found its fullest political expression in the official policies of Havlaga (self-restraint in Hebrew) in accordance with which during the 1936/38 Arab military struggle, the Haganah Jewish armed units were ordered not to retaliate over and above strict self-defence for 'we shall have to live together in the future'. (This was only partly observed but was significant all the same).¹³ Policies of co-operation with the British government were also adopted, although to a decreasing extent as the British restricted Jewish emigration and settlement. Finally, the idea of inter-class compulsory arbitration and peace was vehemently opposed by the Zionist Labour movement.

The historical developments of the 1920's and the 1930's: Hitler's ascendance to power, anti-Jewish policies elsewhere in Europe (especially in Poland and Rumania); the resulting wave of Jewish emigration to Palestine; the military struggle of Palestinian Arabs in 1928 and again in 1936/39, had two major consequences within the World Zionist movement. Firstly, and as a part of general political polarisation, a shift of power occurred with the Zionist Labour movement, which had been rooted in Palestine and which since 1933, was represented by about 40% of all delegates at every Zionist Congress. Secondly, and of crucial importance to the future, the majority of the Zionist moderates were rapidly converted during the late 30's and early 40's to the idea of the necessity of immediate Jewish statehood and the need to search for new political allies to secure this goal. (For example, Ben Gurion in 1939, Katzenelson in 1941, Weizmann in 1942.¹⁴) Between 1935 and 1945 the Jewish population of Palestine was growing numerically and in its political and economic strength. In this context two further developments were to crystallise the Zionist determination to create a Jewish state. The first was the British government's declaration in 1938 of its intention to limit Jewish immigration into Palestine severely and to establish an independent Arab state there within ten years. The second was the growing awareness of the Jewish persecution in Europe. Yet the ideological contradictions within Zionism remained.

In the political competition for the support of the Jewry in Palestine

and on a world scale it was the moderates who all along dominated Zionism, for decades winning every election and forming the majority in every one of their representative executive bodies. The Revisionist opposition increased its representation within the Zionist Congress to 15% in 1929 and, at the peak of its influence in 1931, had about 23% of the delegates. By 1933 their support among the electorate had declined to 14% after which the Revisionist Party left the Zionist Congress to re-appear only in 1946 with 11% of delegates.¹⁵ They did not fare any better inside Palestine.

The superiority of the moderate wing of Zionism over the fundamentalist one was rooted in the social characteristics of both the Palestinian Jewry and the Zionist movement before 1948. Its members came mainly from the Jewish-European secularised middle classes, the idealist younger generation (as often as not students) acting as its pioneering spearhead. They brought with them the powerful impact of a universalist, humanist and often socialist outlook. In the countries (and universities) which they had left behind they had encountered radical and socialist movements, with which they were often closely interlinked as natural allies in every battle against anti-Semitism. In Palestine they found themselves struggling for minimal wages in an erratic labour market, facing grasping Jewish farmers - employers who preferred cheap Arab labour. Many left the country. Others built trade unions and co-operatives, crystallising the political self-consciousness of a militant labour movement. Labour militancy was both 'anti-boss' and also 'anti' its ethnically defined competitors in the labour market - a situation only too common in the rest of the world.) The labour movement, and especially the General Confereration of Unions (Histadrut), rapidly grew into the most important power organisation of the Palestinian Jewry, dominating the political, economic and cultural scene and reinforcing in turn its own mass support. The Israeli-born 'tsabras' - still few in number - took their cues from their elders. To all these, the extreme nationalist declarations, military tactics, forms and salutes and the loud unity-of-the-nation anti-socialism of the Revisionists conjured up memories of the anti-democratic and anti-semitic forces of Europe. The Revisionists could count on massive support only in the poor quarters of Oriental Jewry, less oriented towards Europe, less universalist, less working class conscious and more anti-Arab.¹⁶ But these were relatively few in number before the creation of the state of Israel.

Relations between the two basic wings of Zionism before 1948 were characterised by severe political infighting, mutual recriminations and, at

times, ruthless suppression. The Revisionists castigated the Zionist majority as opportunist, if not downright treasonable in its universalist/nationalist ambivalence and anti-militarist stand. An attempt was made to build up an alternative Zionist world organisation. Revisionist trade unions were organised, calling for co-operation with Jewish employers, breaking up strikes and fighting socialist symbols. A Revisionist military underground (Irgun Tzvai Leumi) was set up, challenging the supremacy and even the usefulness of the Haganah - the Zionist organisation's military arm.

The Zionist majority reacted in kind. The ideas of the Revisionists were rejected as Fascist and their similarity to those of Mussolini repeatedly stressed. The Clausewitzian doctrine of a world of constantly fighting nation-states was declared both wrong and dangerous, a self-fulfilling prophecy, especially when related to the extent of the territorial demands of a kingdom of David size nation, a way to entangle Israeli Jews in a war which will never end. The national unity slogans were said to serve and conceal class exploitation and social injustice. Most important, a chauvinist refusal of universalism, and in the 20's and the earlier 30's even a demand for a Jewish state, was treated as dangerous both to the potentially suppressed and to the suppressors since 'a people suppressing another people cannot be free'.

The stand of the Zionist majority was backed vigorously by all the force of the main Jewish organisations in Israel: the Jewish Agency, the Haganah, the Histadrut, etc. Nor was all this limited only to the confrontation between leaders or militants. The very minority position of the Revisionists was turned against them as powerful emotions were mobilised against the 'splinterers of national unity'. The Revisionists fought back. On both sides militants were repeatedly slandered, dismissed and physically assaulted in meetings, pickets and street fights. In 1928, when the Revisionists celebrated Jabotinsky's arrival to Palestine with a military parade through the streets of Tel-Aviv, their own historian noted: "the route was jammed by a dense and violently antagonistic crowd shouting 'Militarists!', 'Generals!'"¹⁷ The political and physical confrontation peaked in 1933 and again in the 1940's when a virtual civil war developed (the so-called 'Season' operation of the Haganah) in which adversaries were kidnapped, beaten up and even given away to the British police.¹⁸ The battle lines were unequally drawn here, the relatively weaker Revisionists getting, on the whole, the worst of the infighting.

The creation of the state of Israel and the war which followed once again, did not lead to reconciliation within the Zionist movement. If anything, the new controversies over the character of the new state acted as

an even more divisive force. The stakes were high both politically and personally. The new political context had re-established both the pre-state dividing lines and the decisive superiority of the moderate Zionists. The Revisionists were kept out of the Provisional Government. The various military undergrounds, now legal, became part of the newly created Israeli army, although they still maintained a relative autonomy and jostled for power and prestige. In April 1948, Irgun (the Revisionist military arm) and its allies conquered the village of Deir Yasin near Jerusalem and slaughtered its population. The Revisionist leadership defined this action as a necessary and fully justified stratagem to put the Arab population to flight. The anger and horror with which this news was received with the Zionist majority sharply emphasised the underlying divisions in general outlook and political stance and their emotional/moral underpinnings.¹⁹ In June 1948, with the Arab armies still only ten miles from Tel-Aviv, a head-on clash came in the so-called 'Althalena affair'. A short but furious civil war was fought, lasting only a couple of days but leaving sixteen killed on both sides and hundreds disarmed and arrested. The Irgun military structure was smashed, its leadership put under temporary arrest and its specific units dispersed.

The political culmination of this stage was reached in the first parliamentary election in January 1949. The Herut movement campaigned as the main fundamentalist group. The movement called for support for the Irgun leaders invoking the martyrdom of the movement in the anti-British struggle and demanding that war be waged until a final victory was achieved and the whole of the country conquered. The Herut movement came a poor fourth with 11.5% of the vote, and to the surprise of commentators, took an even lesser share of the vote within the army units still at war. By the second election, in 1951, its support was down to 6.6% of the total vote. The two main Zionist labour parties, Mapai and Mapam, collected more than half of the total vote in both these elections, with the remainder chiefly going to other Zionist moderates. Non-Zionist electees were few. By the early fifties the Jewish state (and its Jewish majority) was an undeniable political reality; Mapai dominated the government, Mapam provided the major opposition. De jure belli and by the will of an overwhelming majority, the stage was set for the realisation of the moderate Zionist programme and its universalist perspective within the state of Israel.

C. The Next Stage: 1949-1967

In Greek mythology there is a story of a notorious local braggart who boasted continually of an exceptionally long jump he once made on the far distant island of Rhodes. Greek mythology has immortalised the answer of

a local wit to this man's claims. The response - as much a basic law of verification as a joke - was: "Here is Rhodes - jump!" When all is said and done, deeds are the best test of declarations of intent and the capability to turn intention into action, even if one does not accept for political history the simplicities of moral fables.

One cannot and should not write a history of the state of Israel in a few pages. But one can highlight essential trends and basic evidence which are relevant to the matter at hand. The history of Israel is the history of the widespread initial acceptance of, and an increasing slide towards, essentially fundamentalist policies of national closeness and self-centredness, disregard of the rights of 'others' and acceptance of power as self-legitimizing - all these enmeshed with extreme nationalist self-righteousness. The universalist commitment to total equality of rights for the non-Jews in Israel in the Manifesto of Independence 1948, was closely followed by the Law of Return 1950, which gave immediate citizen's rights to every Jewish, and/but only Jewish, immigrant. More or less simultaneously, a set of laws concerning 'absentees' (Nifkadim) made every locally born Arab outside the territory of Israel, at a given date, a foreigner subject to expropriation.²⁰ A Jew from the Bronx by the very fact of Jewishness acquires legal rights within Israel which most of the Arabs born in Haifa have lost. A consequent debate over 'Who is a Jew?' (an issue which by its very appearance signals legal inequality) also specified that the Jewishness of a Jew is valid only if he is of true Jewish stock by the orthodox standards, ie either born of a Jewish mother or else religiously converted. It was also ruled that a Jew who has chosen Christianity loses those legal rights which go with Jewishness (the case of the brother Daniel - 1962). The logical and legal contradictions between the universalist Manifesto of Independence and these laws were simply disregarded.

To consider further the issue of the 'Absentees', the 1948/49 war created hundreds of thousands of Arab refugees, creating a sight as disturbing as it was familiar to those who had symbolised the problem of refugees in Europe five years earlier. Furthermore, with the refugees in camps the attempts at peace negotiations were check-mated. An offer by the Israeli government to negotiate on the basis of a proposal to allow back a hundred thousand refugees and to participate in the resettlement of others was made in July 1949 - very much a nationalist/universalist compromise solution within the moderate Zionist frame of reference. It was refused by the Arab governments (nobody bothered to ask the Palestinians), furiously condemned as treason by the Zionist fundamentalists, it was then promptly dropped and never heard of again. The non-negotiability of the return of

the refugees or of the territories held became the formal stand of the Israeli government.

However, a more poignant test of the de facto rules of the game according to which Israel was being run, was expressed over a fundamental issue of property. In the public mind of the Israelis the issues of citizenship rights were often interlinked with, and clouded by, the genuine enough problems of military security. Issues of personal ownership would not qualify as easily for such a criterion. The main non-Jewish group on the territory of Israel was the Arab peasantry. The main non-Jewish property was land. Right at the very beginning the Israeli government took over both government lands and the landed properties of the 'Absentees'. Within twelve months, additional lands were taken over, including property belonging to those Arabs who still resided in Israel but were in a different village at the doomsday date and to those who were ordered out 'temporarily' by the Israeli army, and finally to those whose lands were handed over to Israel by agreement at a later stage (in the so-called 'Small Triangle' area; Um-el-Fahum, etc.) A new, grotesque, term - 'A resident absentee' - was coined for those manipulated out of their property. In the '50s and '60s the creeping process of expropriation of Arab lands continued. For example, in 1961/62 an area in Galilee was closed for unspecified 'security reasons' then given over to build the township of Karmiel, within which Arabs are formally barred from residing. (In official sources, the campaign was explicitly referred to as the 'Judaisation' of Galilee.) At the same time Arab agriculture has had its economic viability severely curtailed by being excluded as such (ie as Arab) from a variety of extension services and improvement measures.²¹ By 1967 two-thirds of the Arab lands as of 1948 were, according to Ben-Amitai estimates, in Jewish hands. Most of this land was now owned by the KKL national foundations and was rented out on long term leases to Jewish farmers under conditions explicitly barring sub-letting to Arab peasants.²²

One can proceed with a list of examples of different aspects of formal and informal discrimination along national lines within Israel. For example, military rule was established territorially in some districts of the country, but the consequent administrative limitations, such as the necessity to ask for a military permit to leave the area, or subjection to military court proceedings, were used against only the Arab residents of those districts. Equal rights to vote existed, but the only attempt to create an autonomous Arab political movement, with a programme of moderate nationalism very much resembling the Zionist one (El-Ard), was banned by the courts in 1964 and its leaders detained.²³ (It was declared illegal as a danger to the existence of the state of Israel, by the very fact of making claims on behalf of the

Palestinians despite the fact that no illegal action was attempted or even implied.) There are practically no Arabs in the main sections of the civil service especially in its top grades. Arabs are formally barred from joining most of the political parties. And so on.

The internal opposition within the 'moderates' camp to the policies of aggressive nationalism pursued by the Government of Israel found a symbolic expression in the confrontation between Ben Gurion and Sharet, Israel's first and second Prime Ministers. With most of the political parties of Israel too weak to play a substantial role and the Zionist-socialist Mapam immobilised by a factional split, the duel was fought mainly within the leadership of the Mapai ruling party. Typically, the confrontation focussed on foreign/military policies even though a much broader set of issues was clearly at stake. Again typically, Ben Gurion had chosen for himself Ministry of Defence, while Sharet took Foreign Office. Sharet and his friends demanded 'policies of negotiations', initiated the '100,000 refugees back' scheme, looked for 'political solutions', objected to many of the 'retaliatory actions'. They were opposed primarily by Ben Gurion and his political 'young men' and army commanders. In the resulting conflict, Mapai's moderates showed weaknesses which reappeared time and time again in similar situations (eg when the relatively moderate Prime Minister Eshkol, faced the war pressures of 1967). Compromises were achieved and some extremist plans blocked - these being hailed as both victories and proofs of the policies of moderation. Ben Gurion came under increasing pressure and finally resigned after a retaliatory raid on the Jordanian village of Khibya in 1953, with Sharet taking over the Prime Minister's office. This however led to the unleashing of powerful anti-Sharet pressures. Every border clash (often initiated by the Israelis according to Sharet's own records) led to an immediate clamour for retaliation from the army command and the press. Gossip campaigns were launched attacking the 'soft' Prime Minister for failing in the defence tasks and according to Sharet every attempt to cool things down was sabotaged by Ben Gurion's men in the army - especially by its Commander-in-Chief Dayan. After numerous defence scandals and party rows and having authorised 'retaliation actions' time and again against his better judgement, Sharet finally resigned in 1955. Ben Gurion returned triumphantly to power,²⁴ and in 1956 came the war against Egypt in alliance with the British and French colonial armies. Yet the humiliation of retreat under barely concealed US orders, the lack of any tangible political results, and the bitter feeling of many moderates that a big opportunity to come to terms with Egypt (by supporting it against the colonial powers) had been lost, did not lead to a reversal of the hardline policies. It did not even lead to a return to Sharet's policies of ambivalence. After 1956, the Ben Gurion line was

irreversibly 'in' both in terms of institutionalised power and of popular support. It was shaped by and in turn promoted the slide towards an ever more extreme nationalism.

The failure to realise the universalist goals promised by the government of the moderate Zionist majority was by no means merely a trick of a small group of legislators and politicians. Lamm has analysed the directions of the degeneration of the moderate Zionist thought (see note 13) while a powerful and extremist nationalism of the fundamentalist type has increasingly permeated the mass of moderate Zionists and played a crucial role in the political development of Israel. If anything, the 'masses' of Israeli Jews expressed themselves in a more fundamentalist fashion than their leaders. The anti-Arab mass hysteria which preceded and followed the 1956 war bears clear testimony on that score. However, the character and direction of development of the views and feelings of 'the man-in-the-street' can be grasped best by watching those explicitly committed to the internationalist brotherhood of man. The kibbutz gan-Shmuel has for years been one of the most 'left' communities of the 'Hashomer Hatzair' left wing Zionism - a symbolic hotbed of treason in the eyes of the Israeli fundamentalists. In the 1960's, a girl born in the kibbutz fell in love with an Arab neighbour. They married and the husband applied for membership in the wife's community. In a secret ballot the majority of the members of gan-Shmuel refused to accept him despite the outcry of its radicals. The questions "Would you share your neighbourhood with a Negro?", or, "Would you let your daughter marry a Jew?", are a fair test of the actual norms of everyday human relations all round the globe. On a less personal level, the expropriation of Arab land was tacitly or explicitly accepted by the majority of Israelis, who would probably have considered such behaviour criminal elsewhere. What is more, the group directly involved was the elite of the Zionist labour movement - the kibbutzim settlers. Once again it was the kibbutz movement of Hashomer Hatzair (as we may recall, the past supporters of a programme of a dualist Jewish-Arab state) which took over the lands of the village of Bir-Im. (This was a particularly sordid story of a friendly village whose inhabitants were asked to evacuate their houses for a fortnight then brazenly refused permission to return. They were later to see their houses dynamited by the army while an appeal was still pending in the courts. This case was later to become the symbol of disregard of Israeli Arab minority rights, of the stubborn insistence of its people to go back and of the moral unease of the Israeli intellectuals, including some Establishment figures, still waging a political campaign for the 'right to return' of the past inhabitants.)

D. The 1967 War and The Jump That Never Was

To the moderate Zionists, the main legitimization of the explicitly nationalist and anti-Arab policies and feelings, as well as of the ever-delayed end to the temporary suspension of universalist principles, was fear for the existence of Israel. Since 1948, Israel has lived in a state of uneasy truce with its neighbours: with no formal mutual peace treaty, with military infiltrations and clashes, an arms race, etc. Fear of 'showing weakness' in the face of an enemy numerically superior and calling for the destruction of the newly created state was mingled (often deliberately) with memories of the European slaughter of 1942-45. There was no military and little political opposition from the one-tenth Arab minority in Israel. Yet they could still be regarded with an alarm which reflected the fear of the Arab states. Extraordinary circumstances and the threat to survival were felt to justify, at least partly, nationalist policies and reactions, 'as long as the conditions are what they are'.

All this explains why the 1967 war marked not only a turning point in the history of Israel, but also a moment of truth in the political history of moderate Zionism. The Arab military defeat created occupied territories four times the size of the original Israel, with 1,500,000 'additional' Palestinian Arabs living there. At the same time the apparent military superiority of Israel over its neighbours undercut the justification for the perpetual delay in the realisation of universalist principles and of peace-directed compromise solutions. Return of the occupied territories in exchange for a final peace, and a reversal of the process of escalation with the neighbouring countries, seemed a distinct possibility. A sense of the unlimited power of Israeli arms swept the Middle East while an economic boom added to the optimism of the Israelis. After a short intermezzo the government was once again completely in the hands of self-professed Zionist moderates. For once, in the eyes of practically every one of its citizens, Israel seemed powerful enough to choose. "Here is Rhodes - jump".

Within a short time the Israeli government made its post-1967 policies clear. In spite of an explicit declaration to the contrary (in the speech of the Minister of Defence on the day the war began), a policy of territorial aggrandisement was adopted. The only problem within the government was how much of the occupied territories to hold on to. Once again, 'public opinion' - organised and spontaneous - was if anything, more extreme in its nationalism. A 'not one step back' stance was forcefully advanced by the 'Greater Israel Movement' which for once united Herut, religious factions with numerous Labour Party members of extremist persuasion. That was not the end of the demands, for within a few years, an editorial comment of Davar - the Israeli Labour Party mouthpiece -

could declare that, "our current outlook, which regards the Jordan as a 'security border', may have to be revised and moved further on in view of the delivery of American aircraft to Saudi Arabia."

While at its beginnings the occupation was kept sensibly flexible ('liberal' on the West Bank, much harsher in Gaza, where the resistance was stronger) the political self-organisation of the Palestinians was banned and potential or actual leaders detained, exiled or dismissed from public functions. The existence of the Palestinians as a national entity was rejected. The declaration of the Israeli Minister of Defence that the Palestinians do not exist because they missed the boat by not claiming self-emancipation in 1948, was supported by many, including, Haaretz, the leading liberal daily in Israel.²⁵ (It sounds almost like a macabre joke, a notice 'Further applications for nationhood will not be considered - by Authority', hung on a locked door by a second generation immigrant.) On both sides of the nationalist fence the denial of the existence of a national group was indeed often used to justify disregard of its rights as a group.

The policy of expropriation of Arab lands proceeded and was intensified. The nationally differential attitude meant that while the Arab farmers of Bir Im were refused permission to go back to their village (now in an area declared 'of no security risk'), pre-1948 Jewish lands in the occupied territories were immediately restored to their former owners and settled. Additional extensive farmland was taken over, to which not even the vaguest legal claim could be laid. In Rafah, Akroba, etc., Arab farmers were ordered out, Jewish farmers settled, often employing the expropriated Arab farmers as wage labour.²⁶ The waves of protest inside Israel when all this became known were answered by Y. Ben-Poret (a journalist who often acts as a mouthpiece for the Ministry of Defence) with a demand "to rip aside the veil of hypocrisy" and to remember that in the present as in the past "there is no Zionism, no settlement of land, no Jewish state, without the removal of Arabs, without confiscations".²⁷ By 1973 the so-called Galili protocol became the official government policy, supported by the most powerful trio of ministers: Meir, Dayan and Galili. It made 'Judaisation', and the stage-by-stage de facto annexation of the occupied territories, explicit and official.²⁸ It also made it clear to every Arab government that to delay military action could only make the situation worse.

The post 1967 military policy seemed at pains to exemplify Isaac Deutscher's remark then about Israel turning into the "Prussia of the Middle East."²⁹ It was marked by a constant brandishing of power, disregard of civilian needs or any non-military considerations and a sweeping arrogance of 'we are above everybody, everybody all over the world'. The 1972 shooting down of a Libyan civilian aircraft on the personal order of the Commander-in-Chief, resulting in the death of a hundred civilians, and the flashy commando raids on Beirut were typically interlinked with a

decrease in competence of the army command and in the unchecked spread of corruption within its supply and organisation networks due to show in 1973 and after. Reports about torture of prisoners were increasingly heard. Internationally, in clear relation to the character of her post-1967 policies and consequent isolation, Israel has found herself in increasingly self-defeating alliances with the most reactionary and corrupt of the world's politicians and regimes. In an unprecedented intervention into the United States election, Zionist sympathisers were called on by the Israeli ambassador - the Prime Minister of today - to support Nixon. Military and economic aid was offered to what was then the Saigon regime. And so on.

The openly expansionist, nationalist, militarist and reactionary image of post-1967 Israel, increasingly shored up by the old justification of the fear of destruction, has shocked the more conscientious of the moderate Zionists. This was not the Zionism they believed they had been realising. Many of them condemned 'the infamy of Bir Im' and 'the crude slander ... to maintain that Zionism was founded upon expropriation and exploitation'. Bar Nir, a Mapam MP, and one of the pioneers' generation, angrily declared that he would never have come to Palestine if in his eyes Zionism were to be founded on Arab expropriation. Since 1967 writers, artists, professors and political militants of a moderate Zionist background have spoken, petitioned and demonstrated in protest against the fundamentalist policies of the Israeli government.³⁰ In spite of the viciously hostile mass media and public opinion (both guided and spontaneous), waves of protest rose to a peak in 1968-70 against Jewish settlement on the occupied territories, and again over the 1972 attempt to revise the government stand on Bir Im. The petitions were rejected, the demonstrations met by police force, the direction of political development did not change. The heterogeneous protest movements launched by intellectuals proved no match for the consistent and ruthless pressure of 'the machine' of the state and mass media.

As against the increasing hawkishness of the policies, some voices of 'dovish' moderate opposition could be heard even within government circles. The Ministry of Finance complained about the costs of the occupation. The Minister of Foreign Affairs talked about the moral dangers of power. The head of the Confederation of Labour declared that the utilisation of Arab labour defeats the Zionist aim of productivisation, since by now it is Arabs who build Tel-Aviv. A Labour Party secretary demanded the recognition of the Palestinians and negotiation with them. Yet, notwithstanding such occasional evidence of non-conformity, invariably followed by a public witch hunt of the offenders by the Press and right wing

politicians, the essential nature of Israeli politics did not change. The politicians referred to above who challenged the hawkish avalanche (Eban, Sapir, Ben Aharon and Eliav), are by now ex-Ministers and ex-General Secretaries. The government of what used to be the moderate Zionists has proceeded to execute fundamentalist Zionist policies with the support of what used to be a moderate Zionist electorate. Both government and electorate are increasingly prone to accept chauvinist views and solutions. Within one generation and without concentration camps, executions or a formalised one-party state, a massive trend of universalist, liberal and socialist support has been democratically de-radicalised, reduced to impotence and then to nothingness - an outstanding example of political thought-reform, hegemony and manipulation.

The October 1973 war tore down the veil of self-congratulatory euphoria. The surprise was overwhelming. The 1967 war was not "the end of it". Arabs could fight and kill. Israeli generals could be and were stupid. The Israeli army could be and was ill-prepared. The help of the United States was essential and already needed by the third day of the war. The majority of the Israelis felt bitterly cheated, defeated and unjustly punished. So they had been, in terms of the prevailing outlook and government promise of 1967-73, even though the war was not a defeat, nor was the country in any danger of destruction. The defeat was mainly in the mind: in the feeling that the 2,500 extra dead could not be accounted for in terms of 'success' and that the deeply believed 1967 promise of final victory, by politicians and generals, was not true. Each war seemed only to lead to another. The search for culprits and ways out has reinvigorated the 'dovish' forces of some while strengthening the 'hawkish' tendency of others. The political confrontation within the Labour Party which followed and the election campaign and its results have made both these trends clear. Yet these dramatic events have neither changed the major political processes within Israel, nor resolved the ideological ambivalence of the political consciousness of the Israelis. It is still a government of decreasingly 'moderate' Zionists, gradually weakened by a slow swing to the right of the electorate, carrying out policies of the fundamentalist nationalism modified by an uneasy symbiosis with the policies of the United States. Israel remains captive to a view of reality which has made a majority of Israelis support policies contrary to their own liberal or socialist self-image and declared aims.

II. 'The Why's' and 'So What's'

Let us proceed from this statement of facts and puzzles to an introductory discussion of the 'why's' and 'so what's'. Why did the leading faction of

the moderate Zionists accept the essentials of the outlook of the political adversaries it fought so bitterly? What is the future of moderate Zionism as the leading ideology of Israeli Jewry and of the Zionist movement? Once again the issue is much too complex to be satisfactorily explored in a single article. What follows is more of an itinerary of topics for study than the study itself.

E. The Simple Answers

There are two easy answers to the question 'why?', popular with the nationalist theoreticians of both sides and their 'lobbies': on the Arab side - the everlasting falsehood of the Zionists; on the Israeli side - the pathological anti-Israeli hostility of the Arabs. Both are sustained by a grain of truth. Both are partial enough to be false when used as the explanation of the question at issue.

There is little doubt that within the ranks of the moderate Zionists there were some who preached lofty humanism while never actually meaning what they said. It made it easier to ally with non-Jews in defence of equality where Jewish minorities were concerned and it looked good to some circles to profess equality and socialism. Others simply followed the most powerful leaders. Yet, although a consistently cynical historiography looks realistic, it is, in fact, anything but so, since it misses out enough to misunderstand and mispredict the whole. The experiences of the last decade have made particularly clear the 'objective' force of ideologies and utopias, and the intrinsic stupidity of 'end of ideology' views. For one thing, without the ideologically coloured perception and true commitment of many, little if anything of what is Israel would exist. Furthermore, the bitterness and bloodshed in the intra-Zionist struggle at least until the 1950's cannot be simply dismissed as personal or factional settling of scores. It reflected the force of an unequivocally liberal-socialist stand within both the leadership and the rank-and-file of the Zionist majority. Indeed, even a two-faced universalist declaration would be indicative for, as the English say, hypocrisy is a bow to morality; it shows what people believe to be right. It is, however, the true ambivalence of thought, "not so much window dressing as genuine intellectual confusion"³¹, which seems particularly relevant here. Too many of the old guard of trusted Zionist supporters and top intellectuals have displayed after 1967 a deep sense of shame, emotional outrage and political opposition to have been simply reacting to an essentially known and accepted white lie coming to the surface.

There is little doubt, once again, that the undifferentiated Arab hostility and fiery Arab rhetoric badly hampered the compromise-prone

or internationalist tendencies in Israel. While constantly cheering and quoting the Israeli critics of the nationalism of Israel, the Arab side could barely show its ideological equivalents and what can arouse more suspicion of nationalist double-talk than such double standards? The hostility of the defeated after 1948, and especially the hostility of the Palestinian refugees could be, and at times was, understood by many within Israel. However, in contrast to a consistently nationalist policy, any internationalist, or even moderately 'dovish' outlook and policy need a partner. One cannot practice it fully on one's own any more than one can make love singly. Not even a small Arab group operating in an Arab country and explicitly universalist in its attitude towards the Israeli Jews, ie genuinely ready to grant them all that it assumed for itself in terms of national self-expression, has been in evidence since 1950 until last year's declaration of Palestinian Communists.³² (Or is it? - one is not clear even now). Israeli fundamentalists and the mass media have never failed to miss an opportunity to rub this in, together with daily repetitions of the destruction-of-Israel rhetorics from the Arab press and Arab leadership, faithfully reproduced.

Without an Arab partner the necessary reference point for the Israeli 'doves' was lacking and the attempts to establish an internationalist movement of significance in Israel never had much chance. And as Brecht once remarked, one becomes for a moment a nationalist by the very fact of meeting a nationalist of the opposite side; stupidity makes all it meets stupid. Yet, simply to state all this and to leave it at that is to hide behind half-truths.

To attribute the nationalist slide of Israel mainly to Arab hostility, or Arab chauvinism simply to Zionist cruelty and falseness, has usually been simply another avenue of escape towards the infectious stupidity that Brecht talks about, via the only too easy moral indignation against the shortcomings of others. Nor is it very satisfactory simply to point to the 'objectivity' of the vicious circle of nationalist hostility, since behind such supra-human concepts stand men and leaders who decide, choose and act. Similarly, difficulties in the past have not deterred Zionists or Arab nationalists from fighting for their aims nor, for that matter, did they always defeat internationalists. It was the lack of a consistent and powerful attempt to quell nationalism both 'ours' and 'theirs' by the political action of 'the moderates' which has to be explained. Jewish and Arab nationalisms have contributed handsomely to the existing situation but the strength of nationalism itself, and its capacity to sweep, and sweep away, moderates needs further analysis. The issue of the Arab nationalism and where it led and leads the Arab people should be discussed elsewhere and preferably by another man. The question 'why?' for the Israelis will be pursued further.

Before attempting this, a reference should perhaps be made to a mode of analysis which, while serious, systematic and in no sense capable of being subsumed under the rubric of 'easy answers' shares with the 'easy answer' explanations an essential determinism of approach. This mode of analysis assumes that the very fact of the acceptance of a Jewish state (ie a state 'of' an ethnically defined nation and not simply of its residents and citizens) necessarily leads to nationalist and suppressive policies, consciousness and future history.³³ From this viewpoint the very fact the Zionist movement had the implementation of a Jewish state as its aim from the outset (or at least since the conversion to this approach by Labour Zionism in Palestine in the late 1930's has pre-determined the history of Israel as it is. To me the pessimism of such a deterministic approach provides a sound warning. But as a complete analysis it seems unsatisfactory in part because of what has already been said about ideas, but also because of the historical experience of other societies. There are examples of societies whose origins have also been marked by an extreme nationalism but whose consequent development in the direction of increasing universalism - ie a direction contrary to that taken by Israel - have not been blocked.

F. Concepts, Emotions and Controls

It would seem that there is a major conceptual, or programmatic, cause at the root of the developments discussed. Moderate Zionism has performed most ineffectually in conditions of major national crisis. To take an example, the 'dovish' Mapam opposed on principle military 'retaliation policies' and territorial aggrandisement; in the decision taken to begin the 1956 war its cabinet ministers were simply side-stepped. Yet, the following week, Mapam declared the 1956 war necessary and right and even managed to put in its bid against retreating from the freshly occupied territories. Many of the other Zionist moderates did likewise. This, and other such about turns, were often followed by a somewhat shame-faced return to the initial 'moderate' positions often paradoxically strengthened (eg Uri Avneri and his journal in the 1956 war and after). The impression was that of people simply swept off their feet, but this is a metaphor - not an explanation. Accepting the strength of the institutional pressures for 'national unity', an additional factor appears within the very ideological structure of moderate Zionism. When a world-outlook of strict overall consistency and easily propagandised simplicity, like that of the Zionist fundamentalists, confronts an essentially eclectic outlook, an uneasy synthesis of contradictory sets of principles and suspending clauses, the more cohesive and simpler outlook proves superior. In particular, it wins with those less versed in and less inclined towards conceptual speculations

and ambivalence: farmers and workers, petty clerks and petty politicians, soldiers and generals. Like patches on a fabric, moral dispensations, political ambivalence and doubtful ideological bridges and somersaults are the first to fail under conditions of high pressure.

The nationalist solution to conceptual ambivalence has found powerful support in the institutions of aggressively nationalist socialisation which operate at two levels. The massive daily schooling in national symbols and also in national emotions; the spread and partial imposition of religious education and mores; the educative experience of military service; the fact that by now neither radio, TV nor any daily newspaper express any views other than those of the government or groups even more nationalist - all these factors reflect, deepen and perpetuate nationalist views. Specific details of these processes require further study³⁴ - the results however are particularly evident in the swing to the right of politically active youth in Israel. The majority of this sector of the population is now to the right of the government politically and not to the left as in the past. The demographic importance of political socialisation comes into focus more clearly when one considers that those born when the state was created in 1948, were aged 19 and in regular army service in 1967. By now 25 annual cohorts of those educated in the schools of the Israeli state form a majority of its armed forces and make up the most politically active section of the population.

However, to understand the full force of the 'ordinary' socialisation pressures in making the accepted 'political truths' appear self-validating to an otherwise critical population, one must consider a second type of cultural control. For two decades at least, Israel has been repeatedly swept by tremendous emotional and cognitive upheavals of nationalist hysteria - public rectification campaigns unleashed by the political leadership, the army command and the mass media. The frequent wars have often, but not exclusively provided the pretext for these upheavals - border conflicts can be utilised for the same purpose. With many such waves of hysteria provoked by extremists in the political and military commands (see for example the story of the so-called Unit 101), this major tool of political re-education could be, and was, used with particular efficacy. Fear of destruction; Jewish blood spilt; Gentiles eternal hate; only power can secure existence; national unity - the message was hammered mercilessly home, conceptually and emotionally. When such a therapeutic brain-storm subsides the mind is left a neurotic desert of drained emotions. With this goes the compulsively repetitive talk about 'politics', the compulsion to switch on the radio every hour to hear the latest news and the well-established hate of symbolic enemies and

traitors. And each time this happened a few more of those who previously doubted the pure nationalist gospel and who questioned the emphasis on military solutions, would give in. Some retreated, others hid, still others were absorbed into the nationalist fold.

G. The New Rulers and the New Proles

The impact of the fundamentalist world-outlook cannot, of course, be explained purely in terms of the quality and manipulation of the political emotions and thought. Political thought does not float in the air but links with the social structure of power relations. Israel is a new political society and a new state; its class divisions and elites came into being within the last one or two generations. Yet, it is the character of the Israeli power elite that has been undercutting or relegating to the margin some of the basic principles of moderate Zionism, especially its socialist component. The socio-economic and ethnic polarisation and the consolidation of class boundaries, as well as the strength, linkage and self-perpetuating quality of the political, military and economic elites are on record in the writings of Israeli social scientists, who in the last decade have grown increasingly alarmed by these developments. The sudden emergence of an explicit and public pressure by army generals and their allies in 1967, their capacity to unleash hysterical fears and to impose 'their own' Minister of Defence and to force the hand of the Prime Minister as far as war was concerned, was the first time that the politically tame military leadership had manifestly shown its teeth in Israel. The seven-fold increase in value of the production of the defence industries 1967-73 in conditions of an economic boom, has meant the rapid growth of classes and groups to whom militarisation and occupation are good business. It has also led to flourishing corruption. The Israeli-wrought changes to the economy of the occupied territories and the 'deluxe colonisation' well-financed by the authorities and increasingly based on Arab labour have had similar effects. Outside the circle of those directly benefitting from war economy and occupation, there has also been a rapid growth of new local millionaires while at the same time well-to-do non-Israeli Jews have increasingly invested capital, stimulated both by the high profits and by national sentiments and plans of retirement.³⁵

In the Israel of pre-independence and early post-independence days there was traditionally a deep division between the power elite of 'those who serve' and the entrepreneurial top of the middle class - 'those who make money'. By now, and for the first time, the business elite, rapidly increasing its wealth, has acquired a significant social bridge to the traditional political elites. The linkage is via the increasing number of retired senior army officers taking up management posts in private and

public industries, or else moving into politics. In 1973 the numbers of colonels and generals in the reserve reached in all about 3,000, of whom about 20% 'went into politics' the others mostly 'accepting posts' or going into business.³⁶ The army officers turned politicians or business managers are steeped in military experience, linked by a common past, very Israeli in their appeal to the locally born 'tsabra' and indeed representative of many of these. This new caucus of 'men of action', rapidly growing into the main establishment 'cadre', is, in essence, conservative, pragmatic (in the sense of sneering at lofty principles) and egoistic in its personal and public outlook. To these 'new men' the universalist, and often socialist, principles of moderate Zionism are very much empty phrases, rhetorics to be shed painlessly if need be; their group intuitions are either fundamentalist or opportunist. In the context of post-1967 Israel, both mean the perpetuation of the existing reality.

With moderate Zionism increasingly turning into the rhetorical mask of the top of the politico-economic pyramid, some have looked for its defence (or even to a new and non-Zionist socialist challenge) to the 'lower classes' in Israel, to whom even an inflationary boom may mean a rise in relative, and at times absolute, deprivation. The socialist tendency within moderate Zionism could be, and at times was, used as a unifying banner in the fight for social equality, at least within Israeli Jewry. Yet, such chances today are slim, both as a result of the strength of control of the power elites and as a result of the violent nationalism ruling the consciousness of the overwhelming majority. Arab workers in Israel are 'out' as far as a unity of the deprived is concerned, because of the hostility and reluctance of the Jewish 'proles' to make common cause with 'ethnic enemies'. The Arab workers reaction to this has been to retreat into national ghetto-like solidarity, at times within RAKAKH, a 'Moscovite' communist party with little political impact and yet, with 85% of its electoral support coming from the 12% Arab minority, essentially a political expression of the self-defensive consciousness of the Israeli-Arab minority. The tens of thousands of Arabs coming daily to work in Israel from the occupied territories, deprived of citizen rights, underpaid and under the heavy surveillance of the security service, provide an atomised stratum at the very bottom. Above both of the Arab strata stand the Jewish labourers who come by now mainly from the Oriental Jewry. While doubtlessly 'inferior' in economic position and limited in their life-chances, Oriental Jews are prone (in a manner reminiscent of the poor whites of the South in the USA and South Africa) to express anti-government opposition through 'rightist' slogans and to define their own identity through violent anti-Arabism. The few attempts to organise Oriental Jews on their own and

around the issues of socio-economic inferiority (especially the latest by the so-called Black Panthers initiated by the children of immigrants from Morocco in Jerusalem) scared the Establishment badly but were quickly enough contained and dissipated by small reforms and 'large' nationalist slogans. In fact, the demographic change within Israeli Jewry, with the 'Orientals' increasing from less than 10% to more than 50% has been one of the reasons for the increase in the power of the political 'right'. By now, 'the Russians' - the main new wave of immigration, bring with them an additional load of nationalism, anti-socialism and cynicism and naturally join the ruling outlook of post-1967 Israel. The old-comers, who once organised socialist unions, are by now either retired or else have been promoted out of the working class by the influx of new immigrants or Arabs, and benefit from the resulting economic well-being. They know that they are 'part of it all', even though often feeling ambivalent towards post-1967 Israel. (It is this constituency, and their families, which provides a major part of the non-conformist vote of the middle classes.) Strikes continue and increase in number, but there is no increase whatsoever in consciousness of the need to relate these to the moderate Zionist dream, or, for that matter, to any other programme of structural social change. While class divisions and conflict are evident and, a clear ethnic/class correlation exists, the political consciousness of the working classes has been channelled for a generation through the nationalist politics which dominate the scene.³⁷

H. Captive Politics and Trojan Horses

Israeli political life in its narrow sense, ie the 'life' of its political parties, has displayed a number of specific characteristics, two of which are of direct relevance to the issue in hand. Firstly, the political parties of Israel have never operated simply as voluntary organisations of the supporters of some particular views. To use the Dutch/Indonesian term, these were 'aliranes': vertical organisations which, in addition to orientating political action, also attempt to satisfy the institutional needs of their members, through the party bank, party housing schemes, party contacts and controls in schools, labour exchange, medical care and so forth. To belong to a party involved a reciprocal relationship embracing a wide range of social and political benefits on the one hand, and unconditional political loyalty to the party leadership on the other. A professional career, especially a bureaucratic one, was subject both to 'belonging' and to loyalty in this sense. While some of these characteristics of party life have decreased since the late 1950's, they remain very prominent in several areas of Israeli political life. This is true in particular of the

religious Zionist movement and of rural communities of a number of different political complexions. Here one still sees a series of political constituencies held captive by the party system - which facilitates the control of non-conformist ideas and doubts. With the process of de-radicalisation of the left parties and the subsequent move to a more nationalist position, these captive electorates could be led wherever their leaders wanted them to go. It is not accidental that when pressures for national unity and nationalist solutions are at their most powerful, it is the urban middle-class areas of North Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem's Rechavia which show the highest Jewish 'Left' opposition vote. Indeed it is in these areas where most of the liberal and socialist non-conformism survives today. Even more significant for the question at issue has been the lack of ideological unity within the political parties of moderate Zionism. The origins and character of the party/'alirane' meant that the reason some members of the different parties of Labour Zionism joined up in the first place had little to do with ideology. Thus these parties became coalitions of vocational, ethnic and interest groups with little political or ideological congruence or consistency.³⁸ Receiving no ideological training they were, day after day, exposed to the constant barrage of propaganda from the nationalist news media. In conditions of crises it was not only conceptual ambivalence which lay behind the failure of the moderate parties to act in unison in confrontation with the right wing, but also the fact that some of the 'moderate' leaders played the role of ideological Trojan horses within the party - breaking ranks and forming 'more nationalist' internal factions. The political significance and strength of politicians like Peres, Galili and Dayan is thus derived.

I. Israel and the World Power System

The political life of Israel has, of course, always been closely related to that of the world at large. The fairly recent global change in the policies of the United States and its attempt to hand over to local allies the police function of 'keeping things steady' has had its further influence on the policies of Israel. The chance to become the regional ally, client, representative and main consumer of military equipment of the world's strongest imperialist force suits Israeli militarist policies and elite interests perfectly. (The fact that the largest Jewish community lives in the United States and the evolving conflict with the USSR justifies such policies in terms of 'national interest' in its broadest sense). Many of the exploits of the Israeli army and intelligence 1967-73 seemed 'playing to the gallery' - both internal and external. The Israeli Press has often talked about occupying Kuwaiti oil rigs to help Israel's allies. The 1973 war has cast a shadow over the capacity of Israel to deliver such goods, but the double alliance with the US

government on the one hand, and the financial elite of American Jewry on the other, has had an increasing influence on the policies of Israel, limiting alternatives outside and supporting conservative and reactionary forces inside. The Soviet pursuit of its own nationalist policies in the Middle East adds to the complexity of this picture.

J. Nationalism as a Phenomenon

The deeper roots of ethnicity as such and of the appearance of nationalism as the major force of political mobilisation in the world cannot be elaborated here. The issue is anything but clear; it seems to defeat major analytical schemes and is very much under discussion. The strength of nationalism (or, at least, the response to nationalist propaganda) seems manifestly in excess of anything simple explanations in terms of group interest, etc., can provide. Whatever the solution to this debate, there is little doubt that the rapid emergence of a world society did not defuse nationalist tensions. Nor did industrialisation, urbanisation and the like - as 19th century scholars predicted. It is into the areas where problems of personality and identity meet those of society and power that further analysis will have to proceed. The peculiarly emotional, guilt-ridden and extreme support of the Jewish diaspora for any political stand of the Israeli fundamentalist is an example and a case in point. It provides a peculiar feedback in which the uncritical support of the Jewry abroad (as against the increasing criticism elsewhere of Israeli policies) is used to prove the fundamental anti-Semitism and injustice of the world of Gentiles towards the Jews, and provides a reason to demand the further strengthening of nationalist policies in Israel and a further disregard of any anti-Israeli criticism. The images thrown up by the distorted mirrors of the Israeli and Diaspora Jewish mass media reinforce each other. On another level the same thing happens in the feedback relations between the Jewish and Arab nationalisms. Returning to the broader picture, one can add that the whole phenomenon of increasingly manifest nationalist tendencies and moods on a world scale, facilitates fundamentalist nationalism within Israel. It reinforces the camp which explicitly professes nationalist ideas while exaggerating the equivocation of those who do not. In conceptual and theoretical terms an attempt to locate the genetic and casual roots of Zionism is a move towards a better understanding of wider issues - eg of Palestinian nationalism to use only the most obvious example. It is typical of each nationalist movement to claim that its case is unique. Each case is indeed always unique - which is a tautology. Yet theoretical understanding is not confined by this fact.

All this says little enough about a subject which requires

fundamental analytical efforts for the key questions to be clearly articulated, let alone satisfactorily explained.

K. So What?

Moderate Zionism, combining a long term universalist perspective, expressed in programmes of a liberal or socialist type, with a temporary nationalist suspension of parts of this, has for generations acted as the basic ideological formula, doctrine, self-image and legitimation of Israeli Jewry. Since the second World War, and even more so since 1948, it has been also increasingly accepted by Jewish communities all round the world. Over the years it has gradually lost its initial humanist and radical stimuli. Yet, it was not dead and has exercised its influence by making some political solutions more acceptable, while limiting and blocking others, and keeping under its spell, consciously or unconsciously, thousands of political activists of undoubted political vigour. This kernel of genuine moderate Zionism, often unrealistic but all the same sincere, has rapidly dwindled and shrunk despite periodic new leases of life resulting from peace opportunities and new controversies. The basic legitimation in terms of temporary 'suspension' was lost in the display of Israeli military, political and economic power after 1967, while its promises collapsed in the wave of absolutist, unabashed and explicit nationalism which followed. The very logic behind the 'theory of stages' did not work. The increase in the strength and self-assurance of Israel did not lead to relaxation of nationalist policies and moods. An increase in power simply led to an increase in demands. Fundamentalist nationalism spread. The tolerance shown towards non-conformism and/or internationalist views rapidly decreased. Of course, people do not drop deeply rooted patterns of thought and expression overnight, nor do the mass media give up easily well established symbols. But one cannot flog a dying ideological horse for ever. Its capacity to mobilise people and influence their perception and action wears off rapidly, its hold slips and it is often the most devoted supporters who leave it first. The signs of the end of an ideology, as regards moderate Zionism are clear to see. Not for nothing, does the Israeli youth use the idiom 'to flog Zionism' (Leharbits tsionut) to signify the contrast between mumbled preaching and reality. To most young people the preferable alternative is the brisk command of state authority.

What next? How about the Israeli 'masses' those, old, and young, who grew up mostly within the norms and values of moderate Zionism? There are always some to whom anything beyond their immediate existence and environment is highbrow. These follow, and will follow, any governmental authority, responding to the ever-repeated call for national unity

against the ever-hostile world. Faced with the collapse of an ideology they had lived by, some, especially the older ones, will simply hide from the horrors of a recognition, negating a life span. Others, especially those who went through the social education of the Israeli school and army will 'drop their dreams', become 'pragmatic' in the sense of do-your-job-efficiently, look-after-your-family-and-to-hell-with-them, any 'them'. Thoughts about emigration to a softer spot of the world will often follow. At the same time the explicit and outspoken fundamentalism will proceed making new converts in a creeping advance towards parliamentary power.

To those in Israel who are not ready to live within such constraints and who do not accept fundamentalist simplicities as real policies, there will be only few alternative political roads to take. In the conditions of post-1967 Israel, all such alternatives will necessarily be represented by numerically insignificant groups striving to re-establish a fully-fledged radical critique and opposition from the 'left' in a situation where even consistent liberalism is of necessity 'left'. Their attempts will take place in conditions which are anything but conducive to success. The road of political action, massive and powerful enough to produce a realistic challenge to the establishment, will be for a time closed to them. It will remain closed until the context in which they act is changed by forces they do not control.

In the meantime such groups 'keep the spark' of the views and the people who represent dissent. Their potential importance lies in the fact that although ideologically 'alternative' groups cannot perform miracles, during major crises of the existing social system they may suddenly become crucial. Or, to put it the other way round, serious chances for, and attempts at, opposition misfire if there is no coherent alternative ideology or political 'cadres' capable of leadership. (The 1973 war and election offered a foretaste of such situations). While limited at this stage mainly to the intelligentsia, to be of use such people will have to keep clear openings in various directions and especially in that of the 'lower classes', to be able to forge a massive opposition when, and if, the time becomes ripe. They will have to build up a programmatic platform capable of uniting Israelis and Palestinians behind common aims. It will therefore have to be an 'anti'-the-ruling-power-elite, anti-nationalist and probably anti-imperialist programme. It will have to start from existing realities of which the mode of consciousness of the majority of contemporary Israelis - the main legacy of the moderate Zionism and its defeat - forms a major component.

There are only two possible general ideologies for a 'left' alternative to the Israeli status quo today. One is to call an end to 'the dispen-

sation' ie of the suspension of principles which led moderate Zionism right into the ideological and political house of its fundamentalist adversaries. This would mean trying once more to purify what was universalist and humanist in Zionism, to reclaim the Zionist banner from the hands of the overwhelming Zionist majority of today. Such a crystallisation of views and political forces can take place either within or outside the amorphous structure of the Labour Party. In the conditions of contemporary Israeli society the chances for this alternative do not look good, especially in the long run. For a basic problem would remain within any honest and thus merciless self-analysis of the type required. The problem being what would prevent such an opposition from sliding into nationalism during the next crisis the same way its left-Zionist predecessors did, as long as neither the conditions nor the basic ideological structure change while the pressures and lures of the establishment have grown? The very recent history of the so-called MOKED group is a case in point.

The second possibility is to cut loose totally from an ideology which facilitated moderate Zionism's surrender of its long term programme and to build up a consistent world outlook(s) and political programme(s) and movement(s) based on universalist principles to face the ideological and political consistency of extremist nationalism. The moral collapse of Soviet Communism through the disclosure of its Great Power policies: Berlin, Budapest and Prague, has blocked for the Israeli majority and especially its youth, the simple solution of turning in this direction for the answers (as was often enough done before the 1960's and will still be done by some - the simple fact of viable Arab-Jewish organisation within a disorientated left plays a major role). A non-Zionist solution for Israeli Jewry, capable of laying foundations for 'a new majority', will probably have to be more original. This perspective is again not very promising. Yet without underestimating the importance of ideology, it remains the case that the very existence of conceptual coherence, consistence honesty and the devotion of a few, have, on their own, never of course been sufficient to secure fundamental political changes. Any attempts to challenge the nationalism which now reigns supreme will encounter the highly suppressive efficiency of the Israeli establishment, which can count on the massive support of the majority in Israel. An anti-nationalist challenge will have to face a series of vicious circles in which outbursts of Jewish and Palestinian nationalism again and again reinforce each other. It will be as short of men and resources as of concepts and ideas. All these limitations, social, political and ideological, may make building up a political alternative a matter of generations, or to delay it until the

big powers' game forces Israel out of the occupied territory and the dust settles. It may even make it impossible. If a socialist or even truly liberal, Israel is the aim, this seems still to be the only way toward it. still to be the only way toward it.

Footnotes

1. The following paper represents a second version of a text circulated between friends in February 1974. It was since reconsidered, checked and amended under the influence of their criticism. There is no need to name them all; the list would be long and they know both the fact of their friendly comments and my thanks due for them.
2. See section C below.
3. The relevant sources are too numerous to be quoted in full. To name a few of the most significant (all of which will be of importance insofar as the next paragraph is concerned): W. Laqueur, A History of Zionism, London, 1972; I. Cohen, A Short History of Zionism, London, 1951; N. Lucas, The Modern History of Israel, London, 1974. And more critical of Zionism: M. Selzer, Zionism Reconsidered, New York, 1950; A. Buber, The Other Israel, New York, 1972; I. Ilam, Introduction to a Different History of Zionism, (Hebrew), Ramat Gan, 1973(?); N. Chomsky, Peace in the Middle East, New York, 1974.
4. Laqueur op. cit. chapter 6; Lucas op. cit. chapter 3. Also P. Merchav A Short History of the Israeli Labour Movement, Marchavia, 1967, (Hebrew), chapters B, C and D.
5. As a possible source, H. Kohn, Nationalism - its meaning and history, Princeton, 1955. Also, K.R. Minogue, Nationalism, London, 1967.
6. The leader of the Revisionist Party within Zionism (see Section B below).
7. For an example, what could be considered a classic study of such a complex interaction, see Barrington Moore Jr., Soviet Politics - the dilemma of power, Cambridge, Mass., 1959.
8. Laqueur op. cit. chapters 5 to 9; Ilam op. cit.; Chomsky op. cit. introduction. Also J.B. Schatman etc., History of the Revisionist Movement, Tel-Aviv, 1970.
9. Laqueur op. cit., page 447
10. Cohen op. cit. pages 254/259
11. Schatman op. cit. especially pages 18, 39-41, 220-223; Laqueur op. cit. chapter 7

12. Ilam op. cit. page 99; Laqueur op. cit. pages 356, 515; Schatman op. cit. page 281. To quote a declaration by Ben Gurion at the time: "We do not want the Arabs to sacrifice Eretz Israel. The Arabs of Eretz Israel will not be victims of Zionist fulfillment. To our understanding of what Zionism is about we do not want and we cannot build here our life on the account of the Arabs." (Ilam op. cit. page 63). See also N. Chomsky in Section 11.
13. S.H. Sankovsky, A Short History of Zionism, New York, 1947, pages 153-159; E. Luttwak etc., The Israeli Army, London, 1975, pages 12 and 13; T. Lamm, Zionism's Path from Realism to Autism, Jerusalem, 1974; Lucas op. cit. page 178.
14. Laqueur op. cit. pages 530-547; Ilam op. cit. pages 136, 149.
15. Cohen op. cit. page 262
16. eg Schatman op. cit. page 331
17. ibid. page 184. Also pages 182, 212-214, 329
18. Lucas op. cit. pages 214-221
19. J. de Raynier, A Jerusalem un drapeau flottait sur la ligne de feu, Neuchatal, 1950, pages 69-74. Also a declaration of the Haganah commander of Jerusalem in Davar 12.4.48. For the Altalenah affair, see Luttwak op. cit. page 38
20. Introduced as emergency regulation 1949 and made law in March 1950, see S. Jiryis, Arabs in Israel, Tel-Aviv, 1966 (Hebrew) chapter 2, especially pages 62-67.
21. ibid. pages 67-80, especially section 125 of the mandatory Emergency Regulation (Defence) 1945
22. Reports on the Legal Structure, Activities, Assets, Income and Liabilities of the Keren Kaiemet Leisrael, Jerusalem 1973, pages 6, 18, 49, 56-57. For exemplification, see the legal proceedings against the Jewish farmers subletting land to the Arab peasant, eg, Haaretz 5.11.71. (see also fn. 30)
23. Jiryis op. cit. pages 117-121
24. See Sharet's diaries for 1955, Maariv of 14.6.74, 28.6.74, 5.7.74, 12.7.74, especially the records of 11.4.55 and 7.8.55. For the political history of the moderate trend from Weizmann via Sharet to Eshkol, see Lamm op. cit.
25. Haaretz additional on 8.7.73
26. The Israeli press has documented it all, eg ibid. 10.3.72 and 13.8.73 concerning the takeover of the Rafah lands and the use of the labour and its ex-owners by the new settlers.
27. Yediot Ahronot 20.6.72
28. Reported ibid. 16.9.73

29. See his excellent description of the spirit of the militarist elation in "The Non-Jewish Jew", Selzer op. cit. pages 73-86
30. For a valuable reportage of those developments in English, see A. Kapeliuk, "Zionism between the Ideal and the Practical", Le Monde/Guardian Weekly, 12.5.73
31. Minogue op. cit. page 79
32. Quoted after Bemaavak February 1974.
33. That is the way I understand the views of I. Shahak and to some extent of N. Chomsky.
34. For the parts of analysis already done, see in particular the sociological studies of nationalist double standards, the impact of Israeli school study of the bible on consciousness, etc. by Tamarin. Also Lamm op. cit. Also A. Orr "Generations and Cultures in Israel", Israka, January 1973. See N. Chomsky fn.12.
35. See "The Secret of Polak", Haaretz 21.6.74, as exemplifying the success story of an entrepreneur who left Chile because of the 'Reds', making high profits in Israel employing underpaid Arab labour from the occupied territories. Also *ibid.* 13.8.73, an article by Ben Ezer. Also a Phd. thesis by J. Yatziv at the Department of Sociology, Hebrew University, discussing the land deals at the occupied territories.
36. A. Kapeliuk, "Generals in Demand", Le Monde/Guardian Weekly 6.11.73
37. For sources in English concerning this paragraph, see New Outlook, 1972, vol. 15, no. 3, pages 27-39; A. Arian, The Election in Israel 1969, pages 121-127, 239-277 and M. Lisak etc. (eds), Political Institutions and Processes in Israel, Jerusalem, 1971, pages 287-307
38. eg P.Y. Medding, Mapai in Israel, Cambridge, 1972, who speaks about the depolitisation of the labour party membership in relation to its social characteristics.

ZIONISM: THEORETICAL SKETCH OF AN IDEOLOGY

by MAXIME RODINSON*

- I: Sources of the Ideology of Regroupment in Palestine
- II: The Elaboration of the Ideology : Zionism
- III: The Realisation of the Zionist Project and its Consequences

The word 'Zionism' appeared at the end of the 19th century to designate a cluster of different movements, the common element of which was the project (projet) of giving world Jewry a spiritual, territorial or state centre, usually located in Palestine. The success of political Zionism with its aim of statehood has insured the primacy, and even the exclusivity, of this meaning of the word. Once its goal was attained, the ideological movement of political Zionism found itself faced with new problems which forced a new definition upon it. Anti-Zionist ideologists have themselves often used the term 'Zionism' in a loose way.

For some, Zionism arises from the permanent national calling of all Jewry and, for that reason, is in itself legitimate and beneficial; for others, it represents an essential infidelity towards universalist values - be they of the Jewish religion, of liberal humanism, or of proletarian internationalism. For a third group, and sometimes for the second group as well, it is above all a harmful manifestation, either of the evil essence of the Jews, or of capitalism in its imperialist stage.

Here, we will examine in particular those ideologies aimed at regrouping the Jews. We shall look at them first within the general framework of tendencies towards regrouping or towards establishing a state centre for dispersed and 'inferiorised' minorities, and then in relation to various Jewish conceptions which, throughout history, have emphasised Palestine as the location for such a centre. The modernisation of these first tendencies in the case of the Jews will be explained as the consequence of the possibilities opened to a feasible project (projet) of this type by economic, political and ideological conditions at the end of the 19th century; a project helped, moreover, by the conjuncture of the Jewish situation in Europe. We will consider briefly the consequences of the realisation of this project in Arab Palestine, first of all for the Arabs, particularly the Palestinians; and then we will be able to define the elements of an ethical critique and appraisal.

* Reprinted from the Encyclopaedia Universalis, Vol. 14 (Paris, 1972)

I. SOURCES OF THE IDEOLOGY OF REGROUPMENT IN PALESTINE

'Zionism' or the Centripetal Tendency of a Dispersed Group

An 'inferiorised' group may articulate not only demands for equality and aspirations for integration, but also separatist tendencies, especially, but not only, if it is significantly different from the surrounding society. If such a group is dispersed, the separatist tendency sometimes aspires to the creation of a more or less autonomous centre within a given territory and sometimes to the creation of a centre endowed with the autonomy of decision-making conferred by a state structure. Hence 'Zionism'. Symbolic of this tendency is the Amazon myth which expresses a conceivable tendency of this type for the feminine sex. 'Colonies' in the original meaning of the word, thus regrouped expatriates who came mainly from disaffected categories in the metropolis. Certain tribal migrations have had the same character, as have the Puritan, and then the 'socialist', colonies established in America.

A state-building project of this type presupposes such conditions as a minimal degree of conscious collective identity and regular exchanges between the various local groups (conditions not fulfilled, for example, in the case of the Gypsies). Such a tendency is all the more powerful if the group in question is frustrated, harassed or persecuted. The aspiration to statehood is particularly liable to emerge from those dispersed groups which have more or less the characteristics of an ethnic group, and for whom the model of an ethnic State is present either in their own history or in that of others. The ideology of modern nationalism, in general proposing national values as paramount, strongly encourages such an orientation. The situation of American Negroes has stimulated many endeavours of this type, one of which - Liberia - has been realised. A religious community, in a minority and 'inferiorised', is able to formulate identical aspirations, and can do so all the more strongly when it shares certain ethnic and cultural characteristics. This has been the case of the Muslims in India - hence the creation of Pakistan.

Any new State created in this fashion necessarily confronts the same problems. These include its relations with the diaspora remaining outside the State (which can include both active and passive enemies of the State-building project) and the situation of that diaspora vis-a-vis the states in which they live; the preservation in the new state of the specific character given to it by its founders (in the Greek myth, the problem posed for the Amazons by their male children); and relations with the indigenous population if the territory occupied is not empty).

Among the Jews, there have been projects of regroupment other than

in Palestine - Herzl himself was momentarily seduced by the Argentine and by Kenya. The USSR favoured for a certain time a Yiddish-speaking Jewish entity in Birobidjan which is still officially 'an autonomous Jewish territory'. There were Jewish religious states in the Yemen (5th to 6th century) and in southern Russia (the Khazar state, 8th to 11th century).

Palestino-centric Tendencies in Jewish History

The attachment of the Israelite or Hebraic ethnic group of antiquity to its country, Palestine, was a normal fact, at first hardly theorised. But the internal evolution of the ethnic religion in the Kingdom of Judah resulted, in the 7th century BC, in the proclamation of the cult centred around the tribal god Yahweh (the only true god) in the Temple of Jerusalem, thus producing a growing sanctification of that city.

The loss of independence of the Hebraic kingdoms of Israel (721 BC) and of Judah (587 BC) as well as the accompanying massive deportation of Jews to Mesopotamia, stimulated, especially among the deportees who swelled an already numerous emigre community, aspirations for a return, for a political restoration and for a restoration of the legitimate faith through the reconstruction of the Temple of Jerusalem. These aspirations were expressed through a religious ideology which emphasised the eternal rights of the people of Israel to the land of Palestine. The aspirations were guaranteed by the promises of Yahweh, which prophesy the creation of a new Jerusalem (poetically designated under the name of Zion). Here the Jews (that is to say, the Judaeans) having returned to their fatherland would restore the cult of Yahweh. Since this ethnic god had acquired in the prophetic movement a universal power, all the nations would throng to the Holy City which would become the scene of the eschatological judgement and of the festival of joy offered to all mankind.

This ideology inspired all the subsequent tendencies with a more or less analogous orientation, thanks in particular to the authority of the texts in which it was expressed. These texts were rapidly sanctified and also became sacred to the Christians (hence the thesis of a 'Zionism of God', the title of a recent book by a Protestant pastor). A group of 'Zionist' exiles returned to Palestine with the assistance of the Persian kings at the end of the 6th century BC and reconstructed the Temple. They also reconstituted themselves as a community faithful to Judaism - an autonomous community under foreign domination which was independent from 142 to 63 BC, but which declined very slowly after the repression of the revolts of 70 AD (marked by the destruction of the Temple) and of 135 AD (after which access to Jerusalem was forbidden to Jews).

A very large diaspora persisted and grew. As long as the Temple

existed, many Jews followed (very partially) the Biblical recommendation to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem 3 times a year. As in every emigre community, they followed with interest the vicissitudes - the struggles, revolts, glory and misfortune - of the Palestinian metropolis as long as it was the centre of an important Jewish community (containing, until 425, the seat of the Patriarch, theoretically the spiritual head of all the Jews). Moreover, Palestine was globally sanctified as the dwelling place of the ancestors, scene of the holy history of the people of Israel where so many of the awe-inspiring acts of Yahweh had taken place.

The dispersed Jewish communities (religious communities preserving many of the traits of an ethnic group or people) underwent changing fortunes according to time and place, but never achieved unqualified satisfaction inasmuch as they were almost always a dominated minority. Their ideological orientations were likewise complex and variable. The 'utopia' of an eschatological restoration of Israel in Palestine (a country generally designated in Hebrew by the name of Eretz yisrael, 'the land of Israel') existed throughout. But this generated very few realistic projects: pilgrimages, individual settlement in Palestine in order to live a pious life there while waiting passively the Messiah. At most it ensured the preservation or the re-establishment of an important Palestinian community - this too, lacked any political project but was capable of giving to the Jews a spiritual centre.

To the extent to which a Jewish community within the diaspora was prosperous and free and endowed with authority, Palestino-centrism or Palestinophilia weakened without ever completely disappearing, given the eschatological myth and the special charisma of Palestine guaranteed by the sacred texts. Thus the prosperous Babylonian community, which was endowed with great intellectual and spiritual prestige, and which lived in a peaceful enough fashion under the authority of an 'exilarch' supposedly descended from David and was recognised and honoured by the Persian rulers, competed with Palestine from the 2nd to the 7th century. A Babylonian teacher, Juda Ben Ezehiel (220 - 299) made emigration from Mesopotamia to Palestine before the end of the world a sin.

Poverty and persecution, on the other hand, tended to encourage Palestino-centrism. However, given the weakness of the Jews and the political situation in Palestine, they fell back on the fervent, but passive hope of the eschatological restoration and on the limited projects and actions described above. Occasionally, a false Messiah proclaimed the end of the world had come and took with him a small group to Palestine. Theological developments idealised Palestine to the highest degree possible and constructed a theology of exile (Galut) - metaphysical elaborations, such as those of

the highly influential cabbalist school of Isaac Luria (1534 - 1572). These had the effect of depriving both exile and regroupment of any concrete reality by turning them into cosmic situations.

More realistic Palestino-centric projects emerged from the 16th century under the combined influence of the massive expulsion of Iberian Jews; the massacre of the Jews of eastern Europe (1648 -1658); the growing secularisation of European thought; the speculations of Protestant Christians concerning the end of the world and the role of the Jews according to the Bible, the 'grand tolerance', and finally, the decline of the Ottoman Empire. The Spanish rabbi Berab (1474 - 1576) proposed in vain the restoration of a supreme religious authority in Palestine. The Jewish banker, Joseph Nasi, a favourite in the Ottoman court, was given a small district around Tiberias where around 1565, he installed refugees and developed a textile industry to support them. In the 17th century Shabbatai Zevi, having proclaimed himself Messiah, hoped to lead the Jewish masses into an immediate departure for Palestine in anticipation of the imminent eschatological restoration. But, whatever may have been the fears of the Ottoman government, he had no clear political project.

II. THE ELABORATION OF THE IDEOLOGY: ZIONISM

From pre-Zionism to Zionism

The aspirations to regroupment, which existed, at least in a latent stage, among the Jews, along with other connected or unconnected aspirations of a palestino-centric type, had still not opened the way to any realistic political endeavour. The flourishing of colonial projects in Christian Europe from the 16th century and the aforementioned factors stimulated plans - (especially among the Christians) for a Jewish regroupment in Palestine or in America, designed to benefit a particular state power or even a particular individual (eg the plan of Maurice de Saxe). The oldest plan might be that of Isaac de la Peyrere who, in 1643, proposed a colonisation of Palestine by converted Jews (like himself) under the aegis of France. Bonaparte took up the idea in 1799, but without the notion of conversion.

Secular nationalism did not appear among the Jews until after 1840 under the influence of the development of nationalist ideology in Europe. Two rabbis, Yehuda Alkalay (1798 - 1875) developed an equally Palestinian project but on a resolutely irreligious line in 1862. This tendency, almost without resonance in the Jewish milieu, paralleled the plans of the Christian states for the division of the Ottoman empire; the Protestant missionary

efforts to convert the Jews, Jewish or Judeophile philanthropy and millenarian speculation thus helped to multiply the number of Palestinian projects. These only began to attract real support from Jews following the rise of anti-semitism after 1881; the generalisation of the perception of the non-European-world as a space to be colonised and the decline of Ottoman power. It was then that the most harassed, and persecuted, and least assimilated Jewish masses, those of Eastern Europe, who had been driven into a fairly massive emigration, became receptive to such projects. Initially however, only a very small part of the emigre community headed towards Palestine. Following less convincing ideological attempts (Pinsker, etc.) and competing with projects founded on purely religious aspirations (groups awaiting the millenium in Palestine), or on secular aspirations for the improvement of the condition of the Jews involved (agricultural colonies in various places), or on the establishment in Palestine of a spiritual and intellectual Jewish centre; Theodor Herzl at last established, in a powerfully attractive form, the charter of a Jewish nationalism which was secularised and centred (especially but not exclusively) on Palestine.

The Social Causality of Zionism

Left-wing tendencies, Zionist or anti-Zionist, have sought to legitimate their programme within the framework of marxist dogmatism by situating their struggle in the context of a class struggle. Left-wing Zionists insist on the force of the proletarian Jewish element and of the socialist ideology in the Zionist movement, and suggest that Israel could, under certain conditions, contribute to the worldwide anti-imperialist movement. The left-wing anti-Zionists (and even the right-wing ones) underline the bourgeois and capitalist leadership of the movement in the past and its imperialistic connections in the present. The shared assumption is that of class leaderships drawing up plans and mobilising troops so as to defend or to promote their own interests.

If this view of things must be rejected, it is true that these ideologically opposed theses integrate in a dubious synthesis factual elements which are partially usable for a rational sociological analysis. The Zionist movement, divided into many currents, channelled and organised certain tendencies which existed in the Jewish populations, above all in Europe and in America.

This human aggregate was very varied; religious Jews, irreligious Jews who wished to keep some link with their Jewish identity, and assimilated Jews without the slightest interest in Judaism or Jewishness but who were considered by others as Jews. Only the 'Jew consciousness' of

others gave this aggregate its unity. Dispersed, the Jews belonged (in unequal proportions) to various social strata, differing from place to place; they were more or less integrated, they sometimes participated in a purely Jewish culture (the Yiddish speaking communities of Eastern Europe, for example) and they were imbued with many ideological currents. Zionism pushed them towards the choice between, on the one hand, projects of integration (or, in limited cases, of local cultural autonomy), and, on the other hand, a separatist, nationalist project founded on the vestigial surviving elements of a common history in their own consciousness and in that of their environment. Very different and varied factors, individual as well as collective, favoured one choice or another. Many families were divided, as family members chose one or the other option, but any 'rejection' by the surrounding milieu favoured the separatist option.

Belonging to a particular class could however orient preferences towards one of the possibilities offered. A carefully detailed analysis of the fluctuating attitudes of various Jewish strata towards Zionism has been put forward by Eli Lobel. We cannot paraphrase it or elaborate it here. Very schematically, it can be said that the troops of the Zionist movement were supplied by the poverty-stricken and persecuted Jews of Eastern Europe, at least by those who, still incorporated in communal structures, were oriented towards emigration to Palestine by religious sentiments or by the residual influences of the palestino-centric tendencies described above. The leadership was supplied more by middle-class intellectuals who sought financial support among the 'haute bourgeoisie' of western Jewry who were anxious to deflect from western Europe and from America a wave of mass emigration from the East. Such a migration posed a threat to the western bourgeois Jewish drive to assimilation, both by its foreign ethnic characteristics and by its revolutionary tendencies.

Consequently, we cannot consider Zionism as merely the manifestation of one particular class of Jews. It is true that the movement as a whole, in order to gain its ends, looked for and obtained the support of both European and American imperialism, (above all British imperialism, later US imperialism), and that it also obtained the greatest part of its financial support from the wealthiest Jewish strata (particularly those of the USA) who themselves did not emigrate to Palestine. It is also true that its excommunication by the Communist International cut off many proletarian Jews from Zionism for quite a while. However, the tragic character of the Jewish situation in Europe after 1934 and especially after 1939, gave the Zionist movement the allegiance of numerous, previously reluctant Jews from all social strata and from all ideological tendencies.

III. THE REALISATION OF THE ZIONIST PROJECT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Relations with the Arabs

Initially, Zionism paid very little attention to the fact that the territory it claimed was occupied by another people, the Arabs. This was understandable in an epoch when colonisation appeared to be a normal and praiseworthy phenomenon. Nonetheless, certain political Zionists, including such an important authority of spiritual Zionism as Ahad Ha'am, and many anti-Zionist Jews, warned about the problems thus raised.

During the period of the British mandate, this question became fundamental. The leadership of the Zionist movement for tactical reasons underplayed the project of an exclusively Jewish state, without ceasing to hold to it as an ideal and a final objective. Among left-wing Zionists and idealists such as Judah Leon Magnes and Martin Buber, tendencies emerged that were oriented towards the ideal of a Judeo-Arab binational state in Palestine. Some entered negotiations with Arab leaders. However, the majority of Jews were unwilling to give up the freedom of the Jews to emigrate to Palestine (and became less and less willing to give it up in view of the rise of Nazi-anti-semitism). This freedom was difficult for the Arabs to accept since, if unlimited, it posed the risk of transforming the Jewish minority into a majority and thus of leading to a loss of the territory for the Arabs.

After the constitution of the State of Israel, the idea of a binational state (meaning a state whose structure does not guarantee Jewish domination) was practically abandoned on the Jewish side. On the Arab side, from about 1967, the Palestinians put forward the idea of a democratic and secular state in which Jews and Arabs would be citizens with equal rights. Most Israelis and their friends, noting the absence of effective guarantees for the collective interest of each ethnic-national group, are suspicious of this proposal. On the other hand, the Arab and Palestinian organisations refuse to admit (at least publicly) the existence of a new Israeli nation. The Jews of Palestine are considered to be the members of a religious community (hence the insistence on secularity in the plan mentioned above) on the pattern of various Middle-Eastern religious communities coexisting within the same state. The exclusively Arab character of Palestine is not put into question. Consequently, any solution of this type implies the 'Arabisation' of the western Jews now living in Israel. This is rejected by the vast majority of Israelis who hold to the idea of a Jewish state and to Hebraic language and culture. It is even rejected by the Arab-speaking Israeli Jews who are tending, on the contrary, towards Hebraicisation. Some of those most sympathetic to-

wards Arab grievances (not very many it must be said) would go as far as accepting a genuinely binational state in which the two ethnic-national elements would keep their own political structures, with guarantees for the defence of the aspirations and of the collective interest of each. But Israeli military successes and the absence of a plan of this type on the Arab side do not encourage such an attitude to develop.

Zionist Ideology After the Triumph of Zionism

Political Zionism has reached its goal, the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. This state can now be defended by the normal means of state structures, diplomacy and war. Some people have thus made the logical deduction that Zionism, in the proper sense of the word, has no further *raison d'être*. The friends of Israel should be termed as 'pro-Israeli', whether they are Jews or non Jews. David Ben Gurion himself showed a liking for this idea. Israeli youth shows little interest for the classical Zionist ideology. Israeli nationalists may wish to disengage from this ideology and to break the 'special relationship' with those Jews who have chosen to remain in the Diaspora. This attitude may or may not be connected with the recognition of a legitimate, Palestinian nationalism, as in the case of the non-conformist member of parliament, Uri Avneri, who argues for a binational federation.

However, despite division into numerous ideological tendencies, a powerful Zionist movement nevertheless remains, especially at the social level. It is a Jewish nationalism which is secular, although founded on a definition of a 'Jew' which can only be based on criteria of present or past religious affiliation. Nonetheless Zionism sustains the national calling of the Jewish people throughout the ages. It attempts to reconcile this diagnosis with the wish of most of the Jews to remain members (normally patriotic and even nationalist ones) of other national communities. Even for many Jews who refuse to accept this doctrine in its theoretical form, such a nationalism undermines tendencies to assimilation, and emphasises all the vestigial elements of a specific identity. Zionism preaches an active solidarity with Israel, and seeks to mobilise in its favour the resources and the energies of the Jews by making this solidarity an obligation for them. At the same time it retains the (very theoretical) duty of 'aliya', of the emigration of each Jew to Israel, which is an issue provoking both discussion and disagreement, American Jews, in particular refusing to recognise such an individual obligation; consequently, their attitude is difficult to distinguish from a systematic pro-Israeli position which might be held by non-Jews.

On all these notions, confusion is great. Anti-Zionist opinion, particularly among the Arabs, refuses in general to distinguish between Israeli

patriotism or nationalism; a pro-Israeli attitude; recognition of the legitimate existence of the state of Israel; awareness of the formation of a new Israeli nation and the traditional Palestino-centric attitude of religious Jews. All this is thrown together in the concept of 'Zionism'. In a political vein, some go so far as to qualify as 'Zionist' any defence of the individual rights of Jews, any sympathy for the Jews, or any criticism of an Arab position. Pro-Israeli and authentically Zionist opinion, however, also tends to confuse these attitudes so endowing the most controversial of them with the good repute which is attached to the others.

The Consequences of Zionist Success for the 'Jewish Problem'

The Zionist attitude also includes a celebration of the success of the movement by showing its positive consequences for the situation of Jews as a whole. Certain of these consequences are undeniable. Israeli military and economic successes tend to dispel the traditional image of the Jew as a weakling, incapable of physical effort or constructive vigour, and consequently relegated to a disembodied intellectualism and sly, shady, and evil action. The improvement of their image has tended to put an end to certain anxieties, certain complexes affecting Jews. On a more concrete level, the State of Israel offers (except in the case of a more powerful manifestation of Arab hostility) a safe refuge for persecuted and harassed Jews.

However, these are not the only consequences. The Zionist movement created by a handful of Jews and having only mobilised a minority of the whole Jewish population, has forced all Jews to define themselves in relationship to it. The creation of the State of Israel has forced Jews to take part, whether they like it or not, in problems of Middle-Eastern international politics which would normally have held little interest for them. The dangers which the Jews of Palestine face, or are believed to face, have provoked in most Diaspora Jews a feeling of solidarity which the Israeli and Zionist authorities have tried to intensify and exploit. From the beginning, Zionist propaganda has presented the Zionist option as a duty, as the natural culmination of tendencies latent in every Jew. Israel has, on many occasions, declared itself their representative. Consequently all the Jews have tended to appear, in the eyes of others, as a group of a national character - thus apparently confirming the traditional accusations of the anti-semites.

This has had serious disadvantages - first for the Jews from Arab countries who previously formed one Arabic-speaking religious community among others, despised and harassed in the most backward countries but without difficulties too serious to contend with, for example, in the countries of the Arab East. In the atmosphere of the Arab-Israeli struggle, it was inevitable that these Jews should have been suspected of complicity with

the enemy, and the majority were obliged to leave their countries. In the same way, this gave rise to suspicions about the Jews living in the Communist states which had taken a strong position in favour of the Arabs. Along with the lively embers of popular anti-semitism these new suspicions were used by certain politicians for internal political ends, and resulted in a genuine resurgence of organised anti-semitism in Poland.

Elsewhere, in the countries where the 'Jewish problem' was in the process of vanishing, the Jewish identity had been maintained for many Jews who did not desire it: namely those who thought that a more or less common ancestry, together with minor cultural vestiges and especially a common situation with respect to anti-semitic attacks and Zionist efforts at seduction (efforts de seduction) did not justify adhesion to a particular community of an ethnic-national character. Thus the consequences of Israeli success impeded all the more strongly the ongoing efforts at assimilation. For these Jews, themselves reduced in number, who were attached to religious Judaism (and to that alone) and who desired on all other levels to be assimilated, the existence of Israel gave a national coloration to their communal or existential option. This was even more true to the extent that the successes of Israel revived all the ethnic elements of the old Jewish religion whilst separating it from the universalist tendencies which had remained strong since the time of the prophets. For a long time opposed to Zionism, religious Judaism has gradually moved closer to it.

Elements for an Ethical Judgment

Since an ethical judgment necessarily involves reference to chosen values, none of these factual points is sufficient to yield such a judgment. Zionism is a very special case of nationalism. If a purely nationalist critique is disarmed in the face of it, a universalist critique is intellectually better founded. By definition, a universalistic critique cannot limit itself simply to weighing the advantages and the inconveniences of Zionism for the Jews. Beyond the general consequences of the nationalist definition of world Jewry, such a critique would emphasise the considerable wrongs done to the Arab world by the realisation of political Zionism's project centred on Palestine. These include the alienation of an Arab territory; a cycle of consequences leading to the subordination and to the expulsion of a very important part of the Palestinian population (it is difficult to see how the Zionist project could otherwise have succeeded); and the implications of a national struggle which has deflected many of the energies and resources of the Arab world away from more constructive tasks. The latter

consequence appears to have been inevitable in an epoch of acute nationalism and of violent struggle against all types of colonialism.

Criticising the methods of Zionism is, in itself, inadequate. Objective analysis can only dismiss both the reckless idealisation of the movement by the Zionists and their sympathisers and the no less frenzied 'Satani-sation' often expressed by their adversaries. The Zionist movement, divided into many divergent tendencies, has the normal characteristics of any ideological movement of this type. They remind one often of the Communist movement. Zionist organisations have employed the usual kind of methods, with particular groups and particular men acting with more scruple than others in order to achieve their aims. We can find examples of self-sacrifice and cases of personal profiteering from the ideology, examples of brutality and of humanity, examples of totalitarianism oriented solely towards effectiveness and other examples where human considerations were taken fully into account.

Naturally, any universalist criticism of nationalism in general will also be a criticism of Zionism. Such a critique would also stress all the ugly characteristics of nationalism; above all a contempt for the rights of others, conscious and cynical for some, disguised for others, often transformed by ideology and thus made unconscious for many and hidden in their own eyes by second order moral justifications.

Note: This article was translated from the French by Tom Wargraf.

SECTION TWO:

ARAB NATIONALISM

Introduction

As articulated by certain Arab ideologies, Arab nationalism in theory envisages a Pan-Arab nation stretching from the 'Atlantic to the Gulf'. As a progressive goal this vision has been challenged - especially by non-Arab political thinkers in the area. In any event Arab nationalism in practice has never approached its goal of Pan-Arab unity. Influenced by currents of European nationalism, but in direct response to Ottoman (and later western) imperialism, Arab nationalism derived its support from its insistence on the Arab right to political independence and to the cultural individuality which distinguished the Arabs from their Muslim Turkish oppressors. When the Europeans supplanted the Ottomans they divided the Arab world into individual mandates. These divisions, while failing to diminish the popular demand for independence from colonial rule - and merely postponing the European departure from the region, did strengthen the political structures which facilitated the emergence of future states and their elites. Regional differentiation and the concomitant rise of national elites with vested economic and political interests in the new state system, also created further difficulties for the achievement of the goal of Pan-Arab unity, while in no way resolving the problem of the non-Arab nationalities.

The role of Arab nationalism in the Arab Israeli conflict is both ambivalent and the source of considerable controversy. To the Arab masses, the Zionist colonisation of Palestine and the expropriation of the native population appears simply as the latest in a long line of indignities imposed on the Arab people by foreigners. But leaders of the politically independent Arab states do not necessarily view the existence of Israel with the same degree of antipathy, understanding that there is a place both for themselves and Israel within the various imperialist schemes of the superpowers. Yet many Arab leaders have

come to power precisely as a result of their leadership of, or association with, the popular struggle against colonialism or the more blatantly reactionary neo-colonial regimes. To retain the legitimacy thus derived, Arab elites now find themselves in a somewhat contradictory position. Since the Zionist state remains the most obvious and intrusive alien presence in the Middle East, Arab leaders, have, as often as not, adopted a militantly anti-Zionist rhetoric which may be largely opportunistic on their part but which reflects popular feeling. Thus anti-Zionism is even characteristic of regimes which are neither confrontation states, nor directly affected in any other way by the Zionist presence. Focussing attention on the presence of the Zionist state and the predicament of its direct victims - the Palestinians, Arab ruling elites have attempted to obscure their own collaboration with the very same imperialist forces which both succour the Zionist state and also necessitate social repression within individual Arab states themselves. This ambivalence towards imperialism is also reflected in the attitude of the Arab states towards the Palestinian resistance. On the one hand, both Pan-Arabism and anti-Zionism demand that the Resistance be supported, on the other hand, the threat posed by a radical Palestinian resistance movement to the domestic stability of existing Arab regimes must be repressed.

In the first contribution to this section Ibrahim Abu-Lughod provides a brief overview of some of the key factors which had led to the emergence of Arab nationalism as a political force. In considering the different forms the nationalist movement has taken in the past he leaves open the question of its eventual success. Abbas Kelidar, on the other hand, argues that the continued failure to achieve the nationalists' goal of Pan-Arab unity, is rooted in a failure to determine a viable basis for common Arab citizenship. In particular, he argues, that the different foci of national identity which have been emphasised by different Arab nationalist ideologues have always proven to be divisive in practice. In the final paper in this section, Talal Asad, takes issue with the type of methodology employed by Abbas Kelidar. * He argues

* Talal Asad's paper is the only published contribution from the Richardson Institute Conference which was couched in terms of a rejoinder to a particular paper.

that the failure of Arab nationalism cannot be traced to any intellectual failure of Arab ideologies to solve such problems as a 'concept of common citizenship'. On the contrary, root causes should be sought in an analysis of 'the evolving structures of a specific pre-capitalist society forcibly subordinated to a world market system'.

ARAB NATIONALISM: SOCIOPOLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

by IBRAHIM ABU-LUGHOD*

We should, at the outset of our discussion, distinguish two types of group consciousness which have often been confused. The first is a group's consciousness of itself, of its heritage, of its traditions and other bonds which its members may share. The type of political system in which the group happens to exist has no bearing on this form of consciousness. This first type has erroneously been termed nationalism. The second type is a group's consciousness of being a community in terms of language, traditions, history, ethnicity, and the like, but in this case the members insist on living together and conducting their lives as one political community independent of all other polities. This form of consciousness is correctly identified as nationalism. Whereas the Arabs, no matter how one defines an Arab - and the literature on Arab nationalism is replete with esoteric definitions - have always been conscious of their ethnic-linguistic identity, their specific aspiration for the establishment of an Arab political community that would encompass all those who define themselves or who are defined by politically conscious nationalists as Arabs is essentially a modern phenomenon originating in the mid-nineteenth century.

Many will recall that the Arab people, even when they exercised hegemony and dominance, were part of a universal community of Muslims. Arab values, self-definitions, norms of political conduct, and legal institutions were derived from and shaped by the religious system of Islam. Thus, until 1250 the Arab people existed in an Islamic polity

*Reprinted from The Journal of Social Science, No 2(October 1974), University of Kuwait.

in which members of their community played critical roles; until 1516 they lived in a system which was politically fragmented but dominated by a host of Turkish and Mamluk dynasties; and until the break-up of the Ottoman Empire, subsequent to the First World War, they lived in an Islamic system that was somewhat unified but Turkish-Ottoman dominated. Not until the mid-nineteenth century did disgruntled spokesmen representing the Arab people begin to challenge the universal assumptions of the Islamic polity and demand the organization of a political system that would be based on principles other than religious ones. It is only in the context of the changing climate of the nineteenth century that one can speak of the emergence of a distinct Arab national consciousness with political aspirations.

II

Several forces at work in the nineteenth century posed a serious challenge to the existing Islamic-Ottoman system and its basic universalistic premises. In the first place there had grown up an important intelligentsia that had been affected by the European intellectual and political experience and which had witnessed the effectiveness of the new system of nation-states; this group comprised Egyptians, Tunisians, and Syrian-Lebanese who had lived in Europe or studied at European-American institutions in the Arab world. They were the modernizers of the time, skilled in new techniques; and their visions of the Arab future were quite different from those of the traditional politicians and bureaucrats of the time. To a large extent, this group had acquired its training at the behest or under the sponsorship of a new political power elite precisely to organize more effective political systems and establish modern state structures. Tahtawi and his disciples in Egypt, Ahmad Bey and Khayr al-Din in Tunisia, Yazigi and Bustani in Syria are members of that intelligentsia who readily come to mind. These and others like them began to plead for the organization of a new political system whose basic principles would not be religious ones. Therefore, in any discussion of nationalism in the Arab world - and please note that I avoid the term 'Arab nationalism' in describing what they pleaded for - their contribution to the circulation of ideas about the new political systems cannot be ignored.

The second significant force was essentially sociopolitical. Increasing European penetration and power, as well as internal decay of Ottoman institutions, had enabled local dynasties and rulers to assume greater autonomy, initiative, and de facto sovereignty, and had thereby contributed

to the growth of territorial loyalties. Thus, Algeria (prior to its occupation by France), Egypt (under Muhammad Ali), and Tunisia (from the mid-1830s) were increasing their independence and emphasizing their national personalities. The ethnically alien dynasties that were in control were anxious to keep the authority of the central government in Istanbul at arm's length. In their efforts to maintain their autonomy, if not their independence, they generated a process of social and national integration of extreme significance for the rise of nationalism in the Arab world and for the increasing Arab political consciousness.

At this point it is appropriate to depict some of the realities of the distribution of power that characterized the Islamic system. At the apex stood the caliph-sultan's representative who was usually assisted in the provinces by a praetorian guard and by a political elite that was alien, normally Turko-Circassian. As provincial dynasties asserted their control, the local ruler - dey, bey, or khedive - had to develop an elite power base that was different from the previous imperial one. The struggle that ensued, accompanied by other social processes, resulted in the assimilation or destruction of the Turko-Circassian elite that had been dominant in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire, and its replacement by an indigenous elite whose loyalty was to the local ruler and the province. It was increasingly an Arab-speaking elite, familiar with local conditions and eager to exercise greater economic and political control. The efforts of the local dynasties to acquire greater autonomy from the central government in Istanbul were thus reinforced by the increasing pressures of the indigenous Arabic-speaking elites - first of Algeria, then of Tunisia, Egypt, and, eventually, Iraq - for greater control. Naturally, the Arabic-speaking elites stressed the importance of ethnic-linguistic affinities in politics in contradistinction to religious principles of state organization. And by the latter part of the nineteenth century, Arab elites were in de facto control of the governmental apparatus of the Arab provinces or constituted the upper social and economic class. Arabic became the official state language in Tunisia, Egypt, and Iraq. The elite transformation, symptomatic of the altered power realities, helped in the process of increasing Arab political consciousness.

The third force was economic. One of the results of attempts to modernize the Ottoman Empire was the reorganization of its economic system. Most important to note are, first, the implementation and acceptance of the principle of freehold in the land system and, second, the rationalization of the system of land registration. These two factors contributed to the emergence, throughout the Ottoman system, of a

landed aristocracy which eventually began to use its economic power for political control. There was, consequently, a perceptible shift in the power base away from the pure military and toward this group of landed aristocrats. Whereas military strength had previously resulted in economic-political control, in the new system economic wealth resulted in political power. This shift had two important implications for national consciousness. First, the elite's insistence on a political system based on 'constitutionalism', in limiting the absolute power of the executive, led to conceptions of popular sovereignties closer to the nation-state principle than to the premises of the Islamic polity. Second, this indigenous economic elite's strong resentment of the conspicuous economic power of the European or European-affiliated elite, which had acquired important privileges as a result of the system of capitulations granted them by the Ottoman government, led its members to mobilize internal forces in the name of nationalism. The national economic elite resented the fact that it had to pay higher taxes while European economic enterprises were exempt from local taxation and jurisdiction; at the same time, the European elite perceived in this national elite a serious economic - and political - threat to its own privileged position. In the process of economic competition the national elite, in order to obtain greater support for its position within the system, employed national symbols and stressed national loyalties, thereby strengthening the emerging national consciousness.

While this process was common to most Arabic-speaking countries, the situation was somewhat different in Syria-Lebanon. There the control by the Turkish government was more direct, more authoritarian, and increasingly subject to manipulation by the advocates of Turkish nationalism. Furthermore, the presence of an articulate Christian Arab intelligentsia, anxious to establish a position of equality for itself within a system based on religious loyalty, meant that the negative reaction to the greater authoritarianism of the Ottomans, together with the positive search for equality, produced the appeal for an ethnic-linguistic principle of state membership, and, in due course, led to the emergence of Arab nationalism.

III

The processes discussed above, essentially those of internal change, can partially account for the rise of political consciousness in the Arab world, but external factors were to play their role as well. It is therefore appropriate to assess the effect that European colonialism

had on the emerging national consciousness. It will be recalled that European powers, in their perennial combat with the Ottoman Empire, were at first successful in containing that empire and eventually began to absorb certain parts of it, ultimately subjugating them. We need not discuss the main motives behind European imperialism, for they have been analysed sufficiently elsewhere. What concerns us here is the effect of European imperialism on the transformed consciousness of the Arab people. Algeria was colonized in 1832, followed by Aden in 1839 and eventually all of the Arabian Gulf territories, then Tunisia and Egypt in 1881-82, Libya and Morocco in 1912-14, and finally the Fertile Crescent countries of Iraq, Transjordan, Syria-Lebanon, and Palestine. In all instances European colonial control was effected by force, and it was natural that the national population should resist it. Although the dialectics of this struggle is often described in 'nationalistic' terms, we must differentiate the types of national consciousness that developed in the process of resisting the colonial occupation. Where European colonialism was imposed on areas in which the internal processes of change had not been consummated, the national aspect of the struggle has been described in terms of traditional loyalties. In Aden and Algeria, and to a great extent in Libya and Morocco, the type of national consciousness that characterized the struggle was essentially Islamic-Arab. The imposition of administrative colonial frontiers which followed produced a specifically territorial consciousness, which stressed, in response to colonialism, territorial loyalties. Where the direct struggle was launched after the national political consciousness had matured, as in Syria-Lebanon, and Palestine, the response was characterized by an ethnic-linguistic appeal. Thus it is safe to accept the three types of nationalism which Albert Hourani has suggested are prevalent in the Arab world - namely, religious, territorial, and ethnic-linguistic. The Arab people combated colonialism and mobilized their forces in the name of one or another of these three types of consciousness. Thus in Algeria, the Arabian Gulf territories, Libya, and Morocco, nationalism had a greater religious content and was predominantly Islamic in formulation. In Tunisia and Egypt, the national struggle was waged in territorial terms. And in the Fertile Crescent countries, it was an ethnic-linguistic Arab consciousness that inspired the national struggle. All three, however, had components that were clearly Arab.

From a slightly different perspective, one might suggest that where the Ottoman Turkish presence was strongly felt, the struggle of the Arab people was for the establishment of an independent Arab political

community; this eventually was the case in the Fertile Crescent countries and, to some extent, in the Arabian Peninsula. Where the struggle was against the European powers, there was syncretic nationalism combining various elements - religious, territorial, and ethnic - as in Egypt, Algeria, etc. It is interesting to note that up to the First World War the call for an independent unified Arab state was made only by the Arab nationalists of the Fertile Crescent, who had in the meantime effected an alliance with the Sharif Hussein of Arabia, who, in turn, had political ambitions of his own. The other nationalists sought independence for their own countries. The Arab Revolt of the First World War symbolizes the triumph of the nationalist appeal together with the appeal of traditional legitimacy. The outcome of that revolt is well known. Those Arab countries that had fought for an independent Arab state fell under European control and domination; and from then on the struggle against European colonialism was common to all Arab countries. The Arab world had to develop bonds of consciousness that were less ambiguous in their content than they had been in the past. Increasingly, Arab nationalism emerged as the major force inspiring the struggle of the Arab community against colonialism. While each of the countries that had been carved out by the colonizer sought its own independence, there was an increasing consciousness of the fate of other Arab territories. It is only in the period between the two world wars that one can legitimately begin to speak of the emergence of political movements and parties with Pan-Arab tendencies and consciousness. Thus the most important political parties of the interwar period, such as the Wafd, the Neo-Destour, the Independence and the Nationalists, and eventually the Baath, had these two aspirations clearly formulated.

IV

The change in the emphasis and conception of the nationalist struggle is obviously related to the altered political realities in the Arab world. Equally important are the major proponents and leaders of the struggle who had, by their thoughts and actions, stamped the nationalist movement with a particular imprint. It is reasonably well known that the nineteenth-century struggle for a political community and for self-assertion was led by an upper class of landlords who had recently acquired economic wealth, which they wanted to convert to political power. Hence, their emphasis was not only on severing the ties that bound their province to the central government but on reducing

the strength of the European economic elite as well. Their vision of the polity was essentially parochial, and they thought that their economic interests would be best served in a territorially limited patrie. They were concerned with the establishment of some form of constitutional government in which their power would be exercised to protect and enhance their interests. Their struggle was, in the final analysis, a class struggle for dominance against the established bey, sultan, khedive, or Turkish governor. And in the process they helped consolidate specific types of loyalties to the patrie in which they functioned. Thus we can suggest that their contribution was a matter of weakening the bonds which previously bound the population to other Ottomans, and intensifying territorial consciousness - Egyptian, Tunisian, etc. It would not be accurate to say that that class believed in a secular society, though it did not actively oppose those trends that ultimately helped to establish secular bonds in society.

The landholding class had lost the struggle by the First World War. It would be reasonable to suggest that at that time the national struggle, and therefore the basic formulation of nationalist doctrine, passed on to the bourgeoisie, which had benefited from the previous periods and from the increasing modernization of the Arab world. This is not to suggest that the landed aristocracy had passed into oblivion, but that members of the bourgeois class increasingly came to dominate politics, incorporating previously dominant elements. It was the bourgeois class in the Arab world that was essentially responsible for the formulation of the major components and aspirations of Arab nationalism. While members of this class believed in constitutionalism, independence, and, to some extent, secularism, they were more conscious of the bonds that united the Arab world as a whole. Thus, their drive for the independence of their own countries was joined with an equal insistence on independence for the rest of the Arab world. By the 1940s there was no doubt in the Arab world that there was an Arab nation; momentarily fragmented by European colonialism, but a nation that should ultimately gain independence and unity. It was this class, in the course of the anticolonial struggle, which spelled out the overall concept of Arabism and formulated the specifically political aspiration for an Arab political community.

The eventual triumph of this class within each of the Arab countries placed the bourgeoisie in a position of absolute power. Concerned with the preservation of its own power and privileges, and fearing the possible loss of that power should an all encompassing union be effected, this class compromised its earlier demand for an Arab union by accepting an Arab League that was anchored in the outmoded concept of the

political sovereignty of each Arab state. Thus the nationalist aspiration for an Arab political community was betrayed by its former advocates, and an ensuing struggle between those in power and more radical nationalists came to characterize political relations subsequent to the Second World War. It was only in the 1950s that one could begin to speak of the seizure of power by anti-bourgeois elements who were in theory more committed to the concept of an Arab political community independent, formally and in reality, from external constraints. Proponents of Nasserism and members of the Baath parties of Iraq and Syria are perhaps the best representatives of this anti-bourgeois class of nationalists which was more willing to intervene in the affairs of other Arab states in order to achieve the goal of Arab unity. And it is in the context of the struggle between the bourgeoisie and their opponents that other formulas for unity emerged. For while the anti-bourgeois nationalists actively campaigned for unity, the others spoke of confederations or greater regional co-operation. The more and more frequent discussions concerning the Maghreb, the Nile Valley, and the Greater Syria as natural regions within the Arab world, indicate the presence of competing theories are based on the reality of class control of the Arab world.

This theoretical struggle had its political counterpart in terms of state behaviour and policy. The increasing polarization within the Arab states came to be viewed as a struggle between progressives and conservatives. The progressives were thought of as strong supporters of distributive justice, land redistribution, industrialization, nationalization of capital, greater collaboration with the socialist states, and Arab political unity. They were Arab nationalists par excellence. On the other hand the conservatives came to be viewed as supporters of a laissez faire economic system; they were considered gradualist in approach, more religiously inclined, not concerned with the redistribution of wealth, more open to collaboration with the capitalist system of power, and lukewarm to the concept of immediate Arab unity. And whereas progressives advocated the participation of the masses in politics, the conservatives were more restrictive.

While both groups can claim certain successes and failures, it is evident that the conservatives are under extreme pressure. But the anti-bourgeois elements who seized control beginning in the 1950s and came to dominate the progressive sector of Arab politics have also failed. Radical opinion in the Arab world holds that the anti-bourgeois groups have failed in two important respects: they have failed to achieve Arab unity, still one of the greatest Arab aspirations (thanks

to the politicization and cultural revival supported by the Arab bourgeoisie); and they have failed to modernize the Arab system sufficiently to withstand Israeli aggression and expansion.

A new belief gaining ground in the Arab world, and especially notable since the 1967 war, is anchored in a concept of revolutionary nationalism and change essentially through armed struggle not only against the external threat to the Arabs, symbolized by Israel and its supporters in the West, but also against internal oppressors as well. While this new belief is intimately connected with the rise of the Palestinian resistance, it is to be found throughout the Arab world. In its simplest form it contends that Arab national integration will be effected only by organized violence carried out by a new Pan-Arab revolutionary movement committed to the radical transformation and liberation of the Arab world. It takes for granted the existence of an Arab political community that is trying to overcome the inheritance of its colonial fragmentation and backwardness. It also assumes the inability and unwillingness of Arab regimes, from whatever class they may have stemmed, to undertake radical measures for the liberation and unification of the Arabs. Hence, revolutionary nationalism - which is integrative in nature, modernizing, and mass-based - is increasingly being viewed as the new panacea.

It is hazardous to speculate on the future. But one can safely say that the earlier nationalists, irrespective of their failures, contributed significantly to the rise and development of Arab nationalism. That Arabs discuss means of unification indicates quite clearly a genuine belief in their existence as a cultural unit based on language, ethnicity, traditions, and interests. It indicates that competing universalist norms - such as those derived from Islam - or provincial ones rooted in the specific state or regional structure - Maghribi, Syrian, or Pharonic - have lost out intellectually and as bonds of attraction and definition of the community. Whether the revolutionary nationalists will succeed in translating this consummated cultural unit into one political organism remains to be seen. But revolutionary nationalists undoubtedly will continue their struggle in the light of the failure of their predecessors to give substance to the dream of an Arab Ummah.*

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THE RISE OF ARAB NATIONALISM

by ABBAS KELIDAR

The basic purpose of this paper is to examine the nature of the Arab nationalist movement, its origins and subsequent evolution. Arab nationalism as an ideology embodying a programme for political action, sought (and still seeks) the creation of an Arab nation encompassing the whole Arabic speaking world, 'from the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf', as the slogans have it. This all-inclusive Arab nation-state would provide a focus for the Arabs' political loyalty and the basis for a common identity. The validity of the various Arab (or Pan-Arab) nationalist ideologies has not been seriously examined, but rather opposed and denigrated by their opponents. Arab nationalism is posited the assumption that there already exists an Arab nation bound by the ties of race, language, culture, and a shared past. The task which Arab nationalism seeks to achieve is therefore the creation of a distinctive political identity and the delineation of a national homeland. This goal remains a dream. Yet no objective investigation has been undertaken by Arab nationalist political thinkers to explain the failure of the movement. They have emphasised over the years the factors that unite the Arabs in the various regions, states and countries - a unity which they argue entitles them to nationhood, but they have consistently and it seems deliberately, refrained from an examination of the causes of Arab disunity. In this essay I hope to show that the underlying reasons for the Arabs' inability to transform their national cause into a national cohesion and thus nationhood, are to be found in the origins of the Arab nationalist movement and its close inter-relationship with the Islamic political, religious and cultural heritage.

It has been customary for the proponents of Pan-Arab nationalism to blame Arab divisions on the European powers, namely Britain

and France, whose imperial interests took precedent over the political aspirations of the Arab peoples to independent united statehood. Thus the Pan-Arab nationalists argue that the political, strategic and economic interests of Europe has been the cause of their divisions and that the failure to achieve Pan-Arab unity has been the effect. If imperial control from Europe was the root cause of Arab disunity as the nationalist ideologues claim, then it would seem only logical to expect that the relinquishing of direct imperial control would facilitate the pursuit of the cherished objective of Pan-Arab unity. This however has not been the case. But rather than seek an explanation for this failure in a reassessment of the nature of the nationalist appeal to the Arab peoples, the Pan-Arab ideologues now claim that socialism and revolution are the necessary prerequisites for the establishment of an all-embracing Arab nation. In fact the concept of socialism has no more ideological or philosophical foundation in Arab political thought than has nationalism. Attempts to implement either nationalism or socialism in practice have had to come to terms with Islamic political and ethical traditions. This has posed severe difficulties some of which are described below. Ideologues who now argue that Pan-Arab socialism is the prerequisite for the establishment of the Arab nation have been influenced by the recent debate on national liberation movements. This has been interpreted as arguing that the struggle for national liberation (on the basis of current political boundaries) and the introduction of a local nationalist regime - replacing either the colonial power or a traditional conservative post-colonial regime - is a stage in the evolution towards socialism. With the advent of socialism the Pan-Arab ideal of an Arab nation would become a reality.

But the revolutionary socialism which has been adopted - in theory at least - by a number of Arab states has been more an expression of a political elite attitude, a stance or ideological posture, than a real commitment to a socialist programme. It was the failure of the Pan-Arab nationalist ideal which led the nationalist ideologues to argue that revolution was necessary in order to transform Arab society so as to conform to the nationalist image of what it should be. Such revolutions as have occurred have extended the power of individual Arab states - a trend which has been evident since the early part of the 19th century. But this move towards modernisation, and the revolutionary socialist transformation attributed to it, has in fact been imposed by rulers whose basic attitudes towards such fundamental concepts as the state, power and authority, people and legitimacy and - above all -

religion and religious values, have remained basically unaffected by the changes they have sought to introduce. An inherent contradiction exists here of which the early Muslim reformers were either unaware or chose to ignore, and which the latter-day nationalists have adamantly and steadfastly refused to acknowledge. The contradiction is that between the Islamic heritage and the 'modern' mode of thought in both science and philosophy. The values of the modern western, technological and scientific world do not preclude such concepts as 'nationalism' and socialism. But Islam, which is both a religion and a way of life, which makes no distinction between the temporal and spiritual realms (they are one - perfect and immutable) does preclude these modern concepts. Essentially the contradiction lies in the belief that concepts like nationalism and socialism can be lifted out of their European context and be successfully transplanted in societies infused with religious values which are antithetical to such notions. This contradiction has been repeatedly glossed over by the religious reformer-cum-nationalists. In short the nationalist ideologies have failed to define a new political culture which could replace the older, simpler and more familiar identity of Islam and the Muslim community. They have therefore been reduced to attempting to adapt Muslim political concepts to suit the modern age.

It has been a common practice to view the development of nationalism in the countries of the Third World as a reaction by indigenous peoples to the political domination and economic exploitation of the imperial powers of the western world. But while there is little doubt that the response in most Third World countries was authentically nationalist, in the Middle East the reaction to European encroachment was not so much nationalist as religious. Under the Muslim Ottoman system the political and social identity of individuals was determined by religious affiliation. The demand for political independence was not made on the basis of ethnicity nor any nationalist belief that humanity is 'naturally' divided into nations which manifest their own peculiar characteristics. Neither was it made on the grounds that the only legitimate government that the peoples of the region would accept was a national government. On the contrary the demand arose because Muslims, regardless of their nationality and irrespective of their ethnic or social origin, were members of a community of believers which enjoyed the same rights and respected the same obligations under the laws of God.

The Muslims of the Ottoman Empire, like those of early Islam and today, assigned to themselves a superior status vis-a-vis the

infidel European, just as the ancient Greeks saw themselves as superior to the barbarians. Thus when faced with the impact of European domination, Muslims asserted their belief in their religion with renewed vigour. The Islam of their ancestors had enabled them to conquer the world, the same Islam was as potent and valid a force to the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire, as it had been to their forefathers. All that was necessary to meet and defeat the European challenge was to rejuvenate Islam and link it with modern science and technology. Thus the Islamic response to the spread of Western political influence was a political movement akin to nationalism in its general purpose and appeal to a separate and independent political identity. Islam with its religious message of salvation provided a dynamism unmatched by any solely nationalist appeal. The movement thus constituted both a challenge and a response to European encroachment. The challenge took the form of a call for Muslim unity which demanded the political awakening of the faithful to provide the resources and to muster sufficient strength to resist the Europeans. The response was an attempt to show that the Islamic way of life and government embodied all the essential elements which had made Europe so superior. Muslims could borrow, adopt and adapt whatever was necessary to succeed in their confrontation with Europe.

In an almost naive attempt to discover the secrets of European strength, the Muslim rulers of the 19th century began a process of wholesale adaptation to European styles of government, education and military organisation. Non-Muslim subjects, who for centuries had been kept outside the Muslim body politic because of their religion, were presented with opportunities for political participation. Here the impact of the French revolution was obvious. To indicate their true conversion to the new ways and give proof of their belief in the equality of the non-Muslim subjects with fellow Muslims, a new political ideology based on the Ottoman State, was promulgated by the Muslim rulers. It was an attempt to check the encroachment of Europe on the Empire by overcoming the ethnic and religious diversity of the Ottoman state, and creating conditions conducive to the emergence of a common Ottoman identity. However, since Islam remained the oasis of the state, and the Caliph maintained his position as the shadow of God on earth, the notion of Ottoman nationalism was Islamic no less than Ottoman. The overwhelming concern remained the preservation of Islam and Islamic tradition. In this context what was true of Ottomans has become true of Arabism, particularly as the Arab Muslims of the Empire (with open encouragement from some European powers)

declared themselves in favour of Arab Islam as the only true way of restoring the message of Muhammad to its original purity and sense of value. It is this that led the Arab nationalist ideologues to probe the long history of the Arabs - Islamic and pre-Islamic - in an attempt to establish the origins and the foundations for a national movement which would embrace all the inhabitants of the Arabic-speaking world. Such an attempt required the re-interpretation of historical events and the recasting of major characters in different roles so that a nationalist flavour could be ascribed to them. This was tantamount to the complete revision, indeed the rewriting, of the history of the region. Indeed a number of scholars are already engaged in doing just this. One example of this tendency is Hazim Nuseiba's Ideas of Arab Nationalism. Nuseiba puts it this way:

"Secularization and rationalization would be extended to every facet and period until the entire past had been recast in the image of the present. Modern nationalism could then pose as the venerable residual legatee of a long established tradition."

Needless to say such a tactic is not worthy of the serious historian or political scientist but characterises rather the national propagandist and publicist.

However, these attempts have already provided Arab nationalism with almost mythical history of the 19th century, based mainly on the book by George Antonius, The Arab Awakening. Islam has been transformed from the universalist, egalitarian religion that Muhammad had intended it to be, into the exclusive product of the Arab national ideology, and in the process the prophet has been transformed into the founder of the Arab nation. Despite this a preoccupation with Islam continues to reoccur. It is asserted for instance that such religious rebellions against Turkish domination by the Wahhabis of Nejd in the Arabian peninsula were manifestations of Arab national consciousness since Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab, and his Saudi followers were Arabs. This is simply not good enough, the Wahhabis could neither then or today, be described as nationalist, under any meaning of that term. They were puritanical Muslims who wished to restore Islam to its original purity and simplicity. Their concern was the corruption which they saw rampant in the community of Islam rather than a campaign for the establishment of an Arab national state. This feature of Muslim politics continued to manifest itself in the work and activities of subsequent religious reformers such as al-Afghani, Abduh and their numerous disciples.

The Ottoman decline, European encroachment, the military attacks

on Muslim lands and their subsequent political subjugation, coupled with criticism of Islam and the denigration of Islamic system of beliefs and practices as backward, primitive and barbaric, led al-Afghani and other early Muslim reformers to call on Muslims to rise against the European challenge. Like the Wahhabis, al-Afghani wanted a return to the way of the ancestors, but his beliefs also had a distinctly utilitarian form. His chief purpose was to renovate the solidarity of the Muslims and make them into a world power, feared and respected - Nasser of Egypt shared the same view. Islam was a civilization to Afghani and only incidentally a faith; its basic demand was for loyalty rather than piety. However, Afghani's contentions ran counter to the traditional Muslim view of their religion. The orthodox view was not that Islam was primarily a powerful political force that could resist foreign domination but rather that Muslims were Muslims because they believed in the revelation of God to Muhammad, and because they conducted their life according to Divine Law in order to secure salvation in this world and the one to come.

M. Abduh Muhammad however did face the basic contradiction between the utilitarian view and the basic dogma of a divine revelation. He made a distinction between what he felt was essential and unchanging in Islam, and what could be changed without damage to the truth of the religion or the moral basis of the community. But as the work and writing of the Rashid Rida on the one hand, and Qasim Amin and Lutfi al-Sayyid on the other have shown, the distinction could not hold and the contradiction persisted. As a consequence Rida abandoned the attempt to reconcile modern science and philosophy with the basic tenets of Islam, and in its place emphasized the unchanging nature of the central doctrines of Islam. In so doing he ascribed to them a rigidity alien to the spirit of Abduh's original assertions, but reminiscent of the Hanbali and Wahhabi fundamentalism with which Rida came to sympathize towards the end of his life. Qasim Amin and Lutfi al-Sayyid also discovered the futility of Abdu's distinction and its attempt to reconcile traditional Islam with modernism but, in contrast to Rida, they rejected the Muslim heritage of religious and political identity in favour of West European philosophical and political concepts. Their nationalism was territorially based on the premise of Egypt, the motherland.

What was implicit in the campaign for the return to the Islam of the ancestors - al-Salafiyya - was made explicit in Rida's writings and works. M. Abduh had dated the decline of Islam to the period of rule of the Caliph al-Mu'tasim. The Caliph, suspecting the loyalty of the Arab troops of his household, introduced Turkish mercenaries who were to

become a praetorian guard, and inaugurate the military domination of the State. Abduh contended that under the impact of the barbaric Turks the intellectual civilisation of Islam withered and wilted for no other reason than that they were in effect bad Muslims. Rida concluded - being of Syrian origin and proud of the Syrian contribution to Islam under the Arab-dominated Umayyad Empire - that since the Turks were bad Muslims, the glory of Islam rested primarily with the Arabs. However, Rida's partiality towards the Arabs was clearly based on a concern for Islam and the defence of the faith. Though he insisted that the Arabs must play a leading role in a Muslim revival, one reminiscent of their original role when the Islamic religion began and the Arabs were the people who spread it, Rida was not a nationalist. Thus he could not condone Arab separation from the Ottoman Empire. Rather he wanted the position of the Arabs as the religious and ruling elite of the Muslim community restored to them. Indeed, as a young radical Rida had joined the Young Turk Movement, and when the authoritarian nature of the Young Turk rule had disillusioned him (like many of the Arab leaders of the time) he became a prominent figure of the Decentralization Party. Not until after the Italian invasion of Tripoli in 1911 did he seek help for the establishment for an independent and separate Arab state.

Abdul Rahman al-Kawakibi went a stage further in elaborating the partiality towards Arab Muslims expressed by Abduh and Rida. He held the tyrannical nature of the Ottoman State responsible for the stagnation of Islam, and declared the Ottoman Empire unfit to protect the faith. Thus, the regeneration of Islam could only be undertaken by the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula since only they were free of racial, religious, and sectarian bias. The Caliphate would be restored to the Arabs and re-established in the birthplace of Islam at Mecca. However, the Caliphate that Kawakibi wanted restored to the Arabs was a completely different institution from that of traditional Islam. For unlike the traditional Caliph, Kawakibi's would exercise no political power, he would be merely a religious authority, a kind of a Muslim pope, acting as a symbol of Islamic unity and the final arbiter in matters of religion. These ideas were not as novel as they may sound. Blunt had already given public expression to such notions in 1881, in his book, The Future of Islam. It is also thought that Kawakibi had been acting on behalf of Khadive Abbas Hilmi of Egypt whose ancestor Muhammad Ali and son Ibrahim had sought an empire in the Fertile Crescent following the Egyptian invasion of Syria in the 19th century.

Kawakibi may be regarded as the first true intellectual precursor of modern Arabism. He was the first Arab thinker to declare himself

unequivocally against Turks. There were no half measures in his attitude, he saw the Arabs as better Muslims than the Turks. As such they deserved to have their position of primacy in Islam acknowledged and recognized by other Muslims. Here lies the most glaring contradiction that has plagued Arab nationalism as an ideology of the Arabs. For the question that has remained unanswered is: 'Which Arabs?' It was obvious, since the call was made on religious grounds, that Kawakibi, being a Sunni Muslim and a Syrian, meant that it was the primacy of the Sunni Muslims which ought to be acknowledged. This fact in the evolution of Arab nationalism has been completely overlooked. Moreover, subsequent works on Arab nationalism especially, strangely as it may seem, by Christian ideologues of Arab nationalism have come to subscribe to this view.

As the Empire had come to show increasing signs of decline and decay it was natural that local feeling and opposition in the Arab provinces should find its leaders in the religious families of the great cities: Jerusalem, Damascus, Baghdad and Basra. These leaders had managed to preserve their wealth and position because of the protection they had enjoyed under the religious system, and the pan-Islamic policy of Sultan Abdul Hamid who was deposed following the Young Turk revolution of 1909. The leaders of these religious families opposed the rise of the Young Turks who had showed themselves bent on a centralizing policy detrimental both to the Arabs and to the Empire. The deposition of Abdul Hamid with his large Arab entourage was an unwelcome development in Ottoman politics. The presence of men like 'Abu al-Huda, and Izzat al-Abid, who may not have been popular in the educated Arab circles in Beirut and Cairo, was nevertheless a guarantee to the Arabs that their position in the Islamic establishment was maintained and respected. The Young Turks' suspicion that the Arab leaders were working for secession under the guise of an Arab Caliphate, led to the replacement and persecution of Arabs by Turks after the 1909 revolution. It was only then that Arab leaders, deputies to the Ottoman parliament, teachers, religious leaders and some officers began to organize themselves in political groupings in order to assert the Arab right to a share in the power in the Ottoman Empire and to participate in the decision making processes. These societies included: Ottoman Arab Brotherhood, The Literary Club, The Qahtani Society, The Green Flag, The Covenant, all in Istanbul. The Reform Society of Beirut, The Reform Society of Basra, The Literary Club in Baghdad, al-Fatat (The Young Arab Society) in Paris and the Decentralization Party in Cairo.

None of these organisations, not even the most radical al-Fatat, which organised the Arab Congress in Paris in 1913, demanded complete and separate nationhood for the Arabs. They all, in varying degrees, sought to obtain autonomous status for the Arab provinces within the legal framework of the Empire. They wanted, in the terminology of the time, 'Unity in diversity'. There is little doubt that they did this out of deference to Islam, to protect the unity of all Muslims, while ensuring at the same time that the position of the Arabs was respected and the language of the Quran was preserved as the official medium.

The point to be remembered is that in a mosaic of societies like that of the Middle East, with a complicated social system based on an ethnic division of labour, and a formidable variety of religious and ethnic communities subdivided on cultural or sectarian lines, the introduction of the concept of Pan-Arab national autonomy linked to religion was hardly conducive to the emergence of a uniform national identity. It is these divisions - social, economic, ethnic and religious which have constantly hindered the development of any Pan-Arab national cohesion, not just between inhabitants of the different Arab states, but also among the nationals within individual states. This can still be seen in the contemporary national politics of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan as well as the Sudan.

The assertion by the Muslim Arabs of their position of primacy has been maintained in the new political entities that came into being as a result of the First World War settlement. For when the Arab nationalist ideologues spoke of Islam they meant Sunni orthodox Islam. Thus the Sunni communities of the Arab states, especially in Iraq and Syria, which had flourished under the Ottoman Empire as merchants, religious teachers, provincial administrators and Ottoman army officers, had come to consider themselves (in contrast to heterodox Muslims) as the direct descendants and heirs of the Umayyad in Syria* and early Abbasid in Iraq.* The Sunni Muslims therefore concluded that they had a divine right to protect the community by ruling over it. The prophet was theirs, Islam was theirs, the Caliphate theirs, the community transformed into a nation was also theirs. This conception of nationalism had little in common with the concept of the modern nation state. It meant that Arab nationalism could only appeal to one community - in this sense it has come to carry sectarian connotations. In essence it was tantamount to saying that the Muslim Sunni Arabs were the ruling group, that political power should emanate from the Sunni

* The Umayyad and Abbasid were Muslim dynastic empires.

community and that no other community had the right to challenge that power. Anyone who did not subscribe to this conception of Arab nationalism was accused of being a 'Shu'ubi' - an 'Arab baiter'. The key difficulty with the idea that Arab nationalism could become a reality under Sunni leadership was that the emphasis on orthodox Islam meant that not only Christians and other religions would be excluded but also heterodox Muslims.

Attempts were made by Faisal of Iraq, Amin Rayhani and others to resolve this contradiction and put an end to the distinction by an appeal to the ethnic origins of the Arabic speaking world. Arabs were Arabs before they became Christians, or Muslims, Sunni or Shi'i they argued. However, this device created as many problems as it solved since it gave nationalism a racial connotation and gave rise to the question: "Who is an Arab?" It also led to a re-evaluation of Islam - as merely another development in the history of the region - and not as the central event of history which has governed the life of Muslims. For these reasons it had to be abandoned.

Apart from the Sunni Muslims, the Christian Arabs of Syria were the most receptive to modern ideas. These young men, educated at the missionary schools, readily accepted European notions of nationalism and national self-determination. But there was a special reason for them to do so, namely their exclusion from the Ottoman body politic on account of their religion. This led them to advocate the establishment of a state based on the principles of nationalism. But the Christian political agitators of the late 19th century who sought the independence for the Arab provinces (especially the Lebanon) from the Empire soon found out that Muslim co-operation was imperative if they hoped to succeed in their objective of evicting the Turks. Their approaches to the Muslims were however rebuffed and most had to seek safety in British-protected Egypt. Later Christian political thinkers like Qustantin Zurayq and Michel Aflaq found other ways to accommodate Christian communities within the Arab nationalist camp.

Arabism has remained an ideology in search of a programme for political action and a nationalism in search of a nation. It was not until the 1930s under the impact of the then rampant nationalism in Europe, that serious attempts were made to define the meaning of Arab nationalism and what constituted the Arab nation. Different political writers emphasised different factors which contribute to the making of a nation, such as ethnicity and race (Rabbat), environment, history, language, common customs, and feelings (Alayili) and the unity of language and history (Husari). They also showed an obsessive concern for Islam -

especially the works of al-Bazzaz. All argued that Islam and Arab nationalism were not incompatible and that each was implicit in the other. In doing so they were denying the fundamentalist objections (not all Arabs were Muslims), as well as affirming their own allegiance to Islam. In declaring themselves Arab nationalists they also argued that this was what their faith demanded of them. And what their faith demanded was also an Arab nation. Thus nationalism becomes a valid substitute for a religion which appeared to be incompatible with modern times. In most cases, it seems that the terminology of nationalism was tailored to suit basic Muslim concepts. Yet the perception of the political realities implicit in the new concept of the nation-state was to be overshadowed by the emphasis on the Islamic heritage and the traditional Muslim view of the state. The European idea of the nation-state as an organic political community had to give way to the position of primacy of the Sunni Muslims community as ordained in orthodoxy.

Nothing has shown this better than the works of al-Husari and al-Bazzaz. Sati al-Husari perhaps the most prominent ideologist of Arab nationalism, states that there is no freedom for the individual outside the nation, and that man must be prepared to obliterate himself in his nation to achieve his liberation. There is a striking resemblance between this and the call of the early Muslims for pagans and infidels to enter into the community of Islam for their own salvation. 'Freedom' for the nationalist thus becomes the equivalent of 'salvation' in the traditions of Islam. Such freedom or salvation could only be obtained within the believing community of Muslims as it once was, or in the nation-state of the contemporary nationalist. Moreover, to meet objections that Islam and nationalism were not compatible, al-Husari had to acknowledge that in-gathering of the Arabs into a single nation would be the first step towards Muslim unity and the re-establishment of the Community of Muhammed.

Abdul Rahman al-Bazzaz went further than any other ideologist in his attempt to accommodate Islam within Arab nationalist theoretical writings. In the course of so doing he was to expose the nature of Arab nationalism as a divisive and elitist movement and so provided an affirmation of the nationalist belief in the necessity for the pre-eminent position of the Sunni community in Islam. Bazzaz revived the old arguments when he asserted that nationalism and Islam went hand in hand in many respects. To him nationalism had to take on the activist nature of Islam since nationalism was an assertion by the Arabs of the resumption of the mission of Muhammed. Thus the prophet becomes the founder

of the Arab nation, and Islam is the product of the Arab national genius. This kind of analysis leaves out the non-Muslim Arab, the Christian and Jew, the non-Arab Muslim, the Kurd and Berber, and the heterodox Muslim, Shi'ite, Druz, Alawi, and Ismaili. But Bazzaz claims to provide a solution for this dilemma too. These groups become true Arabs when they recognize Muhammed as the hero of Arab nationalism and venerate Islam as the religion that entitled the Arab nation to assert its place in the world. This seems to be an open invitation not only to the non-Sunni Muslims but to the Christians, and the Jews to acknowledge that the Muslim Sunni Arab has the right ordained in orthodoxy to enjoy a position of primacy and - presumably - rule all non-Sunni communities. This may seem to be really a religious argument cloaked in secular terms but Bazzaz persists:

"The non-Muslim Arab used to enjoy rights under the shadow of the Arab state. The loyal nationalists among the Arab Christians realize this, and know that Islam and the civilization which accompanied it are an indivisible part of our national heritage, and they must as nationalists cherish it as their brother Muslims cherish it."

This is elitism in extremis. It contains no hint at all of either humility or egalitarianism.

Strangely as it may seem a number of Christian ideologues of Arab nationalism have accepted Bazzaz's thesis and condoned his pretensions. Indeed Qustantin Zurayq, whom Bazzaz cites as a model Christian nationalist thinker, in contrast to the early Christian advocates of nationalism (who advocated the separation of religion and state) emphasized the compatibility between Islam and nationalism and called on his fellow Christians to accord Islam a special veneration. Aflaq, another Christian and the founder of the Baath party, took up the cudgels of the nationalist cause with unstinting zeal. Like Bazzaz he saw Islam as an Arab movement whose meaning was both the renewal of Arabism and its maturity. For him Islam is Arab nationalism, and any other kind of Islam (presumably including Muhammed's Islam) is either degenerate or an imposition of western imperialism; conversely the only defenders of Islam are the Arab nationalists. When an Arab's national consciousness is awakened, regardless of his religion, he will recognize that Islam constitutes for him a national culture in which he must immerse himself so that he may understand and love it, and so that he may preserve Islam as he would preserve the most precious element in Arabism. Despite the romanticism Aflaq injects into his concept of nationalism, he is really interested only in Islam as

as a rallying banner for political activism. He wants nationalism to do for the Arabs what Islam had done for them in the name of religious salvation. He evolved a theory for political action based on a revolutionary party which would wage a crusade for national salvation in which the nationalists must be as merciless to themselves and to others as Muhammed and his early disciples were to their opponents. He offers to those who hold contrary views to the nationalists a classic choice: faith or the sword, which is exactly what orthodox Islam has offered its opponents.

To Aflaq every Arab is a potential nationalist convert. The task of the publicist is to awaken the latent political consciousness in order for him to achieve self-realisation. There could be middle way for Aflaq:

"Either we will bring something new and important which will transform the life of the Arabs from humility to glory, from degeneration to progress, or our attempt shall fail. We do not recognise a middle situation."

One cursory look at the history of the Baath party and the current ideological dispute between its various factions (particularly those ruling in Iraq and Syria) provides sufficient indication that this attempt has failed. Yet Aflaq's most recent writings show that he remains optimistic about the future prospects of Arab nationalism.

Yet the failure of the Arab nationalist movement has been mainly due to the absence of any genuine and serious attempt to examine validity of the nationalist case and its relationship to Islam. This failure has been compounded by the parallel failure to articulate a concept of common national citizenship not dependent on social, ethnic or religious status. Only when this is done will it be possible to create a polity which will enjoy both national consensus and genuine national cohesion. Only then can the Arabs achieve nationhood. Equally, if not more, important is the question of legitimacy. Political control may be primarily instrumental but political legitimacy is primarily evaluative. The diverse and divergent groups which exist in many contemporary Arab countries will accord legitimacy to a political system or reject it according to the degree of congruence between the values of that system and their own values. As long as the Arab nationalist conceives Arab nationalism primarily in terms of his religious affiliation the claim to nationhood will continue to be questioned and challenged.

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THE RISE OF ARAB NATIONALISM:

A COMMENT

by TALAL ASAD

In my view Abbas Kelidar has not given us an account of the rise of Arab nationalism, but a selective interpretation of the ideas of some Arab ideologues. In the approach which he adopts, as in most of his conclusions, Kelidar relies heavily on the interpretive writings of politically committed academics such as Sylvia Haim and Elie Kedourie who focus on given ideas in abstraction in order to attack the rationality of a specific historical movement in the Third World. I could take issue with various points of interpretation which have been offered, but I will not do so because this would divert us from our present concern - namely, to understand the formation and significance of Arab nationalism.

Arab nationalism as a social-ideological movement has an existence which is not at all adequately reflected in or determined by these theories. This simple point should be quite obvious but appears not to be so to Abbas Kelidar. If it were, he would not so easily conclude that the political 'failure' of Arab nationalism is to be traced essentially to the intellectual 'failure' of Arab ideologues, that what really explains the absence of 'political unity' is the absence of 'a concept of common citizenship' and the lack of 'humility'. It has always seemed to me a remarkable irony that the bitterest critics of Arab nationalism should share so completely their naive political moralism and idealism

with so many Arab nationalists!

The rise of Arab nationalism must not be sought in the 'secular' ideas borrowed from the West (the concept of 'the secular' employed by orientalists in any case leans too uncritically on Protestant definitions of religiosity), or in the xenophobic sentiments of a resentful Islam defeated finally by infidels (but Muslims have often been defeated since the Middle Ages - in Spain, in Sicily, in the Fertile Crescent, in the Balkans, in India, etc). It must be sought instead in the evolving structures of a specific pre-capitalist society forcibly subordinated to a world market system. It is this structural opposition which makes certain ideas appropriate to the alliance and struggle of classes, and which sustains at once the emotional style of imperial rule and the specific sentiments on the part of the ruled. The point is not - as Modernisation theorists would have us see it - that since traditional loyalties and groupings are breaking down and new ones slowly taking their place, Arab nationalism may be seen as one expression of the painful and clumsy 'adjustment to modernity'. Such a view amounts to little more than special pleading for the historical interests of Western imperialism in the Third World. The point I am making is that concrete historical contradictions and oppositions have been generated in the Middle East, as elsewhere in the Third World, by the expansion of European industrial capitalism, that Arab nationalism has been from its very inception an expression of these contradictions, and that it will exist for as long as the forces of industrial capitalism continue to dominate in the Arab world.

I must stress that my objection to the kind of approach adopted by Abbas Kelidar is not that it is incomplete (ie requiring a sociological background), but that it distorts the social significance of the political ideas and sentiments under discussion - and so of the historical reality of which they form part. The successive doctrines elaborated by Arab ideologues are attempts to overcome in conceptual form real historical contradictions, and if they can be said to have failed in this task it is because, and to the extent that, they remain at the conceptual level. This is the level on which Kelidar's account is also focussed, and for this reason he fails to grasp and represent adequately the basic character even of Arab nationalist ideology.

Anyone familiar with Middle Eastern history will know that for at least a century before its final dissolution the Ottoman Empire was unable to resolve the conflicts, internal and external, in which it was involved, that if it did not break up earlier than it did this was due primarily to the interests and efforts of the European capitalist powers who continued

to maintain it. In other words, the formal political independence of this pre-capitalist Empire did not make it immune to the forces of European industrial capitalism - indeed, its formal autonomy, and so too the contradictory development of its internal structure, was primarily determined by these forces. The Arabic-speaking population of the Empire (especially the urban-based classes of geographical Syria) was probably the most acutely affected by European industry. The administrative centralisation which took place at the end of the nineteenth century, and particularly after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, aggravated internal conflicts although it was undertaken in order to meet Western military-industrial pressure more effectively. The proto-nationalist demands of the representatives of the Arab urban classes for decentralisation, and so too the ideological theorising that accompanied it, can only be understood in this context - ie as a demand for greater autonomy and protection against the unequal impact of European industrial capitalism. With the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, the Arab urban classes found themselves divided into a number of new political units controlled by Britain and France. These divisions were carried out expressly by and in the interests of the European capitalist powers, actively supported by small local elites who were prepared to act as their agents. The development of Arab nationalism during the inter-War period was continuously directed against the two European national representatives of industrial capitalism in the Middle East, and so against the divided political order over which they presided. After World War II, when direct control through mandates was replaced by indirect control through unequal treaties, Arab nationalism found its major expression in Nasserism. It was by degrees, and largely in response to external pressures, that Nasser moved into radical Pan-Arabism - almost as thoughtlessly as the British had once acquired an empire. Much has been made of the fact that neither the statist measures nor the populist rhetoric of Nasserism constituted real socialism - which is true enough. But the Nasser era revealed most fruitfully the necessity and the limitation of radical Pan-Arabism as a stage in the struggle against Western imperialism in the Middle East.

In order to understand Arab nationalism it is essential to recognise not only that it was generated by the forces of European capitalism and imperialism in the Middle East, but also that its basic tendency has been to come sooner or later into direct opposition with these forces. Even today, the aims of Arab nationalism are fundamentally at variance with the interests of Western imperialism - and in this respect Arab

nationalism is radically different from Zionism which has been made possible by, and continues to be basically compatible with, Western imperialism. In this sense Arab nationalism has a liberating dimension.

And yet, although the basic thrust of Arab nationalism is against Western imperialism, this opposition is constantly frustrated by certain elements in the ideological make-up of that movement - that is, by the nationalist suppression of the class struggle. The liberating potentiality of Arab nationalism as a particular struggle against Western imperialism can only be achieved when it is fully realised as such. Only when the struggle is consciously mobilised in terms of a class struggle which transcends (but does not completely ignore) the nationalist definition of the historical Arab nation, can that conflict hope to be successfully resolved. The attempt to direct the political struggle in terms of an essentially harmonious, unchanging Arab nation which must be united at all cost, as some Arab ideologues wish to do, must fail. But equally, to ignore that a very real struggle exists today in the Middle East against the forces of Western imperialism, as Kelidar does in his account, and to urge that Arab nationalists should really concentrate on 'developing a concept of common citizenship' is absurd. It means recommending in effect that Arabs adjust themselves to the shifting demands (political, economic, ideological) of Western imperialism. Fortunately there is little likelihood of this advice being heeded.

SECTION THREE:

THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE

Introduction

The relationship between Arab Nationalism (see Section Two) and the Palestinian national movement is extremely complex. The Palestinians, in large part as a consequence of their marginal position in the Arab world after 1948, were initially among the most enthusiastic supporters of Pan-Arabism. This support was later to be severely qualified both by the failure of the Arab states to liberate Palestine, and by the refusal of the so-called Arab 'host' countries to allow the Palestinians to integrate themselves fully into the polity and economy of the societies in which they were dispersed.

Pamela Ann Smith, in the first essay in this section, charts the changing fortunes of different class elements within Palestinian society both under the British mandate and since the flight/expulsion of Palestinians in 1948, from what is now the State of Israel. She shows how the Palestinian bourgeoisie - virtually destroyed during the exodus - later reconstituted itself only to face political and economic discrimination as it grew more powerful in countries like Kuwait and the Lebanon. Unable to assimilate and continue to prosper in the so-called Arab 'host' countries, because of growing local competition, the new bourgeoisie (and significant elements of the skilled Palestinian working class) were to become a key element in the resurgence of Palestinian nationalism. However, the class nature of this support, as Pamela Smith notes, has obvious implications for the political forms that Palestinian nationalism has assumed. Peter Hellyer's contribution, on the other hand, provides a detailed description of the rise of the Palestinian resistance; the support (and sometimes opposition) that the different resistance groups received; the splits which arose both over tactics and longer term strategy and finally the achievements of the resistance since the October War. Sabri Ahmed's contribution deals neither with changes in class structure of the Palestinian Diaspora nor

with the divisions which have split the resistance in the past. Written from the perspective of a leading member of the Palestine resistance movement, it outlines what the author considers to be the main strategic objectives of the Resistance in the aftermath of the October 1973 war.

ASPECTS OF CLASS STRUCTURE IN PALESTINIAN

SOCIETY, 1948 - 1967

by PAMELA ANN SMITH

No study of Palestinian nationalism would be complete without a study of the class structure, the extent of class ties and changes in class consciousness since the beginning of the Palestinian resistance movement in the 1920's.¹ Ideally such a study should begin even earlier, with the decline of feudalism and, to a lesser extent, of the tribal, or clan, system during the last years of Ottoman rule, a process which was intensified by the upheavals resulting from the first World War. But the purpose of this paper is to discuss some of these changes since 1948, specifically the rise of classes in the Palestinian diaspora. As such it does not deal with all of Palestinian society: those Palestinians living under Israeli rule since 1948 are excluded, and the West Bank and Gaza are dealt with, if at all, only during the period prior to Israeli occupation in 1967. It should also be emphasised that this paper does not deal with the 'guerrilla' movements *per se*, nor with the 'Palestinian Problem' in its international context. The purpose, rather, is to examine the social structure of the Palestinian Diaspora in its historical context in the hope that this may provide a better understanding of the Palestinian resistance, its strengths and weaknesses, and the potential for social, as well as national, liberation.

SECTION I: Palestinian Society Under The British Mandate

Under the British Mandate in Palestine, which lasted from the establishment of the civilian administration in 1920 to the withdrawal of British armed forces in May, 1948, the political economy of Palestine underwent a significant transformation. This greatly affected traditional forms of social relations; resistance to the British occupation; and events leading to the establishment of a 'Jewish national home' in Palestine.² The effect of these changes was to be felt even after the declaration of

the State of Israel on 15 May, 1948, and the dispersal of the majority of the Palestinians. But they can be discussed only briefly here; their significance to the struggle for liberation now going on should be clearer when we discuss the rise of classes after 1948.

For our purposes, it is sufficient to note the major changes which occurred in the political economy under the Mandate.³ These were the commercialisation of agriculture and the unification of smaller plots of land, jointly owned, into a plantation or comprador system of farming, particularly for citrus fruits; the rise of local market towns on the one hand, and, on the other, the vast increase in international trade made possible by the British rule which opened new markets in Europe, Iraq and the Gulf states and India; and, finally, the beginning of industrialisation, which, together with the increase in trade, led to a substantial increase in the relative size of the urban population, the rise of an indigenous Arab working class and of an urban lumpenproletariat consisting for the most part of day labourers.

By the end of the Mandate, in 1947, Palestinian Arab society was composed of a variety of social groupings in which the traditional ties of clan, family and household had given way to, but had not yet been completely submerged by, new forms of social ties. Of these class was but one, the most important was a heightened sense of national, as opposed to village, identity. The extent to which class alliances formed an alternative mode of social relations varied among the different emerging groups and was stronger in certain areas than others: the cities of Haifa and Jerusalem had the strongest alliances among the nascent working class, while the smaller towns of upper Galilee, the city of Jaffa and the villages of the Jerusalem-Ramallah-Nablus area witnessed the most prolonged periods of political agitation and organised revolt by the lumpenproletariat and landless peasantry.

Class alliances were weaker among the industrial bourgeoisie, itself too small to constitute a potent force in Palestinian politics except when it sought allies among the more enterprising sections of the new immigrants.⁴ In this sense, however, it could pose a challenge far outweighing its numbers, if only by withholding support from the more openly nationalist leaders. Among the agriculturally-based bourgeoisie, class ties remained strong but the newer systems of farming on large-scale plots of land using less labour and producing for the export market had created new schisms within this group. Some invested their surpluses in the machinery, land and warehouses needed to respond to an enlarged market. Others continued to opt for the usual form of spending - taking up residence in the urban areas and setting up newer and larger house-

holds where conspicuous consumption became a finely developed art, and, more importantly, a source of political power. A few invested their wealth in light manufacturing such as textiles, mills and brick-making factories, or sought to expand the opportunities for investment by setting up banks and credit institutions both in Palestine and in other Arab countries. As a result, while the burgeoning economy provided new wealth and sources of revenue for the bourgeoisie, the variety of alternative paths available proved divisive and weakened its sense of class ties and so too its political power.

Within the upper class, that is, the traditional landlords and 'notables', the options were equally varied. But the shadow of British rule and, more especially, the inroads made by the Jewish infrastructure and the expansion of the Yishuv served to weld the disparate elements together, for it was this group which had traditionally ruled and so was most threatened by the imposition of British rule and the threat of a Jewish state in Palestine.⁵ The result was a strong sense of class ties, and of class solidarity, among the landlords and notables which transcended religious, ethnic and regional differences. Because of this, the landlords and notables, although relatively small in number, played a significant role in developing a sense of specifically Palestinian nationalism - (as opposed to a broader pan-Arabism or the more limited proposals for a Greater Syria) - and in the rise of a national movement with roots throughout the country. Their importance in maintaining this sense of identity even after the defeat and dispersion of 1948-49 is a major factor in explaining the tenacity of Palestinian nationalism to this day.

At the base of this pyramid, Palestinian society under the British Mandate remained propped up by the peasantry which made up more than two-thirds of the Arab population as late as 1946. If the peasant's lot was harsh under the Ottomans, it was virtually intolerable under the British. For, added to the perpetual plague of the tax-collector, the peasant now found himself faced with land confiscations on a scale unimaginable before. The Zionist purchases had led to a tremendous speculation in land which raised the price beyond the reach of the small owner. About the same time the British land policy, by replacing the traditional system under which land was collectively owned with a system under which it became the private property of the individual shaykh, absentee Arab landowner or Zionist overlord, removed the peasant's source of livelihood. In the latter part of the Mandate, the increasing concentration of capital in agriculture intensified the process and this, together with the Zionist purchases, Arab sales and British legal regulations, created a vast mass of dispossessed tenants and landless peasants. The numbers thrown off the

land reached crisis proportions during the mid-1930's and was a major cause for the outbreak of armed resistance in 1936, which continued to grow even after the ending of the six-month general strike in October. By the end of the Second World War the struggle had escalated, despite setbacks caused in part by the duplicity of some Palestinian leaders who feared a revolt which threatened not only the British and Zionists but also their own holdings, and in part by the repressive measures imposed by the British during the war. This time the landless peasantry were joined by the new urban lumpenproletariat which had been created by the increasingly effective Jewish boycott of Arab labour. Together these two groups formed the backbone of the Palestinian resistance to the United Nations partition plan, adopted by the UN General Assembly in November, 1947 and to the declaration of the State of Israel six months later.

SECTION II: The Rise of Classes, 1948 - 1967⁶

Exile and Defeat: The Creation of the Diaspora

At the end of the first Arab-Israeli war in 1949, Palestinian society was divided into two major groups, those who remained in Palestine under either Israeli, Jordanian or Egyptian occupation and those who had left or were forced to leave during the fighting, that is, the diaspora. Of the former, about 120,000 lived in areas occupied by Israel, that is, those parts of Palestine allocated to Israel in the 1947 United Nations Partition Plan, plus the areas, in Galilee, Jerusalem and Beersheba, occupied by Israeli troops at the time of the 1949 armistice. About 500,000 lived in the West Bank, which was occupied by Jordan and absorbed into the new Royal Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1950, or in Gaza, which was administered by Egypt until June, 1967.

Estimates of the number of displaced persons vary, but an analysis of the limited demographic material available indicates they totalled at least 770,000 to 780,000. The total number of refugees, that is, the number of displaced persons plus those who lost either their homes or sources of livelihood or both, amounted to about 900,000 to 950,000. Of those displaced, roughly two-thirds remained in Palestine, moving either to the West Bank or Gaza, which were under Arab control. At least 150,000 remained under Israeli rule. About one-third crossed the borders and sought refuge in the neighbouring Arab countries of Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and, to a lesser extent, Egypt, Iraq, Libya and the Gulf. A few went directly to Europe, the United States, Canada and South America.

Gradually, and especially in the early years from 1948 to 1954, the number of Palestinians living outside Palestine, in the diaspora, increased even further as individuals, mostly young men, and in some cases entire families, moved out of the camps or places of initial refuge to areas more likely to provide housing jobs, medical care and/or educational facilities. By March, 1968, allowing for natural increase and those newly displaced by the third Arab-Israeli war in June, 1967, the number of refugees living outside Palestine who were receiving United Nations assistance totalled more than one million. In addition there were several tens of thousands of Palestinians living in the neighbouring countries who were sufficiently well-off not to need UN relief. Although it is impossible to know exact figures due to the lack of adequate census figures, we can say that by mid-1968 roughly one-half of the total number of Palestinians (about one and one-half million people out of a total population of three million) were living in exile.

In the first months of dispersion, flight and forced exile, the movement of refugees was sporadic and unorganised.⁷ In general, those from Galilee and the northern cities of Haifa and Acre along the coast fled to Lebanon and Syria. Those from the central plains sought the nearest Arab-controlled territory in Syria or Trans-Jordan. Those from Jaffa and Beersheba generally fled to Egyptian-controlled areas in the Gaza strip. Some, as we shall see, were fortunate enough to find refuge with relatives and friends living in neighbouring Arab countries while still others, mainly those from the bigger cities in Palestine, made use of business and professional contacts and found refuge, and often a home and a job as well, in Amman, Beirut, Damascus or Cairo.

The effect of such a massive population transfer was the virtual destruction of Palestinian society as it had existed prior to 1948. At the end of the war, Palestinian society was, in a very real sense, classless. More than half shared the experience of uprootedness, flight and exile; many more were homeless and at least three-fourths of the population had lost their source of livelihood. Workers had lost their jobs, peasants their lands, others their shops and businesses. Even those who remained, or managed to return, found their families, possessions and way of life fragmented and divided. Old divisions based on rank, clan affiliation or village ties receded into insignificance. The struggle for survival and, after that, reconstruction in alien surroundings, became paramount. The humiliation of destitution and the communality of life in the refugee camps forged new bonds based on shared experience and led to a sense of national identity and unity. Disillusionment with the neo-colonial regimes, particularly of Egypt and Jordan, and the hostility of some local residents, particularly in Lebanon where the big influx threatened the confessional balance

between Christians and Muslims, reinforced the sense of Palestinian alienation. The final insult was the attempt, resisted en masse and sometimes violently, to impose outside control on the refugee camps through the United Nations, the same organisation which had first recommended partition. Although seemingly dedicated to humanitarian principles, UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Association, which has run the camps since 1950, in practice served to imprison the Palestinian in his refugee status and make him entirely dependent on the charity, and control, of others.

Class Structure in the Diaspora

The time, manner and conditions of flight became a new basis for the rise of classes within the diaspora. In this section we will look at the situation immediately following the dispersion and at the amorphous groups which existed at that time, then at the situation as it existed in 1967, when Palestinian society had become, like other societies, again divided along class lines. First the earlier period:

The Bourgeoisie:

Within the newly-formed diaspora, that is, those Palestinians living in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the Gulf, Egypt, Iraq and elsewhere, a small number, variously estimated at between 8,000 and 30,000, had managed to take with them, or transfer abroad, some assets, money from the sale of real estate, movable property and/or personal possessions. This was possible primarily because those concerned had either managed to leave early, in mid or late 1947, before the war broke out in full force, or because they had relatives, friends or property abroad. The simple fact of possession, of having some capital, tangible or intangible, amidst the general poverty and confusion, set these Palestinians apart from their fellow refugees and they formed the basis for the Palestinian bourgeoisie which was to emerge, in an expanded form, throughout the mid-50's, and early 1960's. To this group must be added those few who managed to recover some of their losses after the general exodus. Some, through legal or diplomatic action, recovered all or part of their bank deposits in Palestine, others managed to sell or obtain compensation for lands occupied or taken over by the Israelis, and still others managed to return temporarily, or in other ways, to recover items which could be used to start a new life abroad, such as cash and valuables, business and office records and equipment, shop goods and stocks, farm implements and/or some personal possessions which would enable them to set up housekeep-

ing outside the refugee camps, and so escape the permanent impoverishment and loss of independence which camp life entailed.

The Displaced Peasantry:

Other than the group described above, the Palestinian diaspora in the years immediately following the armistice was composed overwhelmingly of a large, amorphous mass of displaced peasantry, now broken down into individual families, often separated from each other, and dispersed over a wide geographic area. In a few cases the families of a village managed to stay together, but this pattern was broken as new camps were set up in urban areas and as rumours of better treatment in more distant places of refuge caused mass migrations in varied directions.

In the frantic months of summer and fall 1948 and on into mid-summer 1949, the refugees were often sheltered in private homes or placed temporarily in public buildings: eventually schools, convents, and former army barracks were all put to use. Tent reception centres were set up in parts of Syria and Trans-Jordan, a device which became institutionalised when UNRWA moved in officially in 1950. Most of these refugees had fled in the midst of the fighting. Thinking their stay away from home would be only temporary, until the fighting was over, they had brought with them nothing other than personal effects, if that. Most went on foot, some by ship, others by cars and trucks.

By 1954, after the last elements of armed resistance had died down, and after UNRWA consolidated its control, the bulk of the displaced peasants were confined to camps set up in Jordan (including the West Bank, which was annexed in 1950), Lebanon, Syria and Gaza.

Class Structure, 1967

By 1967, Palestinian society in the diaspora had become far more differentiated. Throughout the Arab world and in parts of Europe, the United States and South America, men and women of Palestinian origin had become financiers, entrepreneurs, businessmen, writers, teachers and scientists. Much of the infrastructure in the developing parts of the Gulf states had been built and was being maintained by Palestinian technicians, professionals and skilled workers. Palestinians served in the armies of Syria and Jordan and on the staffs of several international organisations, including the United Nations. A new 'intelligentsia' had arisen and its members' novels, poetry and paintings, as well as political pamphlets and journals, were becoming known in the West.

In terms of class structure, Palestinian society in the diaspora by 1967 was composed of four main classes: the bourgeoisie, wage labourers, the lumpenproletariat and the displaced peasantry. A small class of landlords and the traditional notables continued to exist in the West Bank and they exercised considerable political influence either under the Jordanian regime, or, after 1967, under Israeli occupation. Some of the members of these landed families who had migrated to Jordan and Lebanon, enjoyed a certain prestige and influence which derived from their position before 1948, but their economic base tended to have shifted from the land to either industry, construction, real estate holdings or financial investments outside the boundaries of Palestine. Some also held high positions in the Jordanian government or received government salaries in accordance with Islamic custom.

In addition, attached to each of these classes and to the notables, were groups of intellectuals, or, in the case of the labourers, peasantry and lumpenproletariat, what could be called an 'intelligentsia'. Under the Mandate, intellectual life continued to be based on religion, the Sayyids and religious Shaykhs exercising a certain amount of influence in the villages and towns, as did the more orthodox Ulema (and Patriarchs) in the largest cities. Their role in developing a nationalist ideology has already been mentioned briefly above.

In the latter part of the Mandate, and particularly in the aftermath of the defeat, the position of this intellectual group was challenged by newer groups of intellectuals whose education was secular, Western and professionally oriented. By the mid 60's, yet another generation of intellectuals had arisen. They were distinguished from the earlier group by their use of Arabic, their experience in the refugee camps and their political involvement. While ideally any study of the rise of classes should also include a study of the intellectuals attached to them, space precludes this in this essay. Nevertheless, it is important to be aware of their existence. Each group in its own way played a role either in translating class interest into class consciousness, or in muting these divisions by presenting alternative lines of ideological thought.

The Grand Bourgeoisie:

The grand bourgeoisie was composed of those who had originally managed to transfer, or recover, some of their wealth from Palestine and who used this as capital to build new holdings in the neighbouring Arab countries. Several patterns emerged but only three can be illustrated here. First, transferring commercial activities from Palestine to other Arab countries

where smaller-scale branches had been established before 1948; second, investing cash or intangible assets in new operations; and third, forming alliances with relatives or professional associates living abroad to minimise the legal restrictions affecting foreign residents.

Members of the Shuman family, which had founded the Arab bank in Palestine in 1930, managed to transfer the bank's Jerusalem headquarters to Amman after a daring series of exploits which involved smuggling out documents, safe deposit boxes and cash. Today the bank is one of the biggest in the Middle East, with branches throughout the Arab world and affiliates in Europe, Africa and the United States. Many of its staff are Palestinians and it controls a large part of the wealth Palestinians have built up since 1948. The founder of Intra Bank, Yusif Beidas, on the other hand, built his bank up from a small office set up in Lebanon after the defeat. Intra specialised in foreign exchange transactions and funds to start the business came from assets recovered from Barclay's Bank in Jerusalem. By 1966 Intra had become one of the largest financial institutions in the Middle East, with major holdings in a French shipyard, investments in lucrative urban real estate in several European capitals and in three banks in Brazil. It controlled an appreciable part of the Lebanese economy, with major holdings in Middle East Airlines, the Beirut port, hotels and real estate. Branches of Intra were located in New York, Paris, Rome, Geneva, and Frankfurt and most Arab countries. Many of the Palestinian-owned industries built up in the 1950's and 1960's owed their beginning, or expansion, to Intra help. Another Palestinian in exile, Hasib Sabbagh, who comes from an influential trading and contracting family in the northern Palestinian town of Safed, helped set up the international Consolidated Contractors Company (CCC), with two other Palestinians who had wide experience in the Gulf. CCC has built oil pipelines, roads and pumping stations as well as several other major building projects in a number of Arab countries, including Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Libya. The company has been a pioneer in building up the Gulf and in providing technical expertise, managerial skills and the skilled labour needed to develop indigenous Arab resources. In this sense it is somewhat different from another well-known Palestinian company, Contracting and Trading (CAT) which was started by a Lebanese, Emile Bustany, who moved to Palestine during the Mandate, then returned to Lebanon. Much of CAT's business came from Western firms and governments, most notably from the British before their expulsion from Aden. CAT declined somewhat after the death of Bustany in 1963, and CCC is now said by some Palestinians to be one of the biggest

Palestinian contracting companies in the Arab world.

The Moyenne Bourgeoisie:

In addition to those who transferred or recovered, then invested their wealth abroad, the bourgeoisie in the diaspora included by 1967 those Palestinians who had managed to set up businesses based on their technical skills: teams of consulting engineers, architects, doctors, urban planners and real estate brokers. Unlike the grand bourgeoisie, most of these firms specialised in services, primarily to Arab but also to Western clients. Although a few were started with relatively large sums of money, usually from savings earned in the Gulf, the overall pattern was one in which the outlay for machinery, stock, or property, was kept to a minimum. Most had learned their professions either at the universities in the Arab world, particularly the American University of Beirut, or through a combination of training and education at UNRWA schools in the camps, and experience on the job. Those who had a knowledge of English found opportunities to work for the Western oil companies, or in those Gulf states where the British remained. Others worked as civil servants, teachers, consultants or engineers in Kuwait, Lebanon or the Gulf and built up the marketing and managerial skills, plus the necessary contacts, which enabled them to start out on their own. One Palestinian who served as an educational consultant in Kuwait is now thought to be among the wealthiest of Palestinians with large real estate, insurance and other holdings in Lebanon and the Gulf. Another, who trained at the American University of Beirut as an engineer, runs a large company, which undertakes extensive civil and consulting engineering work throughout the Middle East.

The wealth amassed by the grand bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the skills and knowledge of advanced technology and management provided by the moyenne bourgeoisie on the other, together made up a cohesive and aggressive Palestinian financial and trading empire. At its height, it was able to compete on equal terms with those Western firms, particularly from the United States, which moved into Beirut and the oil centres in the late 1940's and early 1950's. By the mid-1960's these Palestinians were also posing a threat to the local Arab bourgeoisies which had grown up in Lebanon, Jordan and parts of the Gulf since the late 1950's. In Lebanon, Beidas' empire was destroyed in 1966 at least in part by competing Lebanese interests fearful of the expanding scope of Intra's operations. In other countries Palestinian entrepreneurs and professionals who had been welcome prior to the rise of an indigenous bourgeoisie were either replaced or ejected. In Kuwait 'Kuwaitisation' began as early as the late 1950's, and many of those whose holdings were

nationalised, or whose jobs were taken over, moved to Lebanon, Jordan or even the Sudan. In Saudi Arabia, shifts in the choice of contractors by the Arabian-American Oil Company (ARAMCO) or the Government led to the virtual, of not formal, exclusion of some major contractors by the early 1960's. The process was slowest in Jordan, where the Palestinians constituted two-thirds of the population and provided virtually all of the services, and capital, needed to make Jordan a modern state. Palestinians retained their automatic rights to citizenship but restrictions on identity cards, import licences, passports and tax benefits were used quite effectively at times to restrict the economic activity of those felt to be politically undesirable. The fall of the Nabulsi Government in 1957, which was led by Ministen from the West Bank, the landing of British paratroops in 1958, and the suspension of Parliamentary Government after that, severely affected many of the promising Palestinian companies which had developed since 1950, and created a split in the Palestinian bourgeoisie in Jordan which exists until today. Those who were loyal to Hussein remained and prospered, while those who were not found their activities circumscribed at best, or, at worst, themselves forced into exile once again.

Thus these two elements of the bourgeoisie above all other social classes in the diaspora, had managed not only to recoup their commercial losses after the 1948 defeat, but also to grow and prosper economically, enjoying a standard of living which often rivalled their contacts in New York, London or Paris. Nevertheless, in the end, they found themselves also subject to the same statelessness and impending poverty which a lack of even the most basic rights of citizenship entails. It is for this reason that the bourgeoisie, rather than being assimilated into the neighbouring Arab states has, on the contrary, become a leading force in supporting the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, and especially those organisations within the PLO which favour the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank. As one Palestinian told me, "We are allowed to build the oil refineries, the hotels and the schools. But we are not allowed to marry their daughters, and, in the end, we're kicked out sooner or later. Support of the PLO is the only hope we have."

The Petite Bourgeoisie:

The petite bourgeoisie consisted, in 1967, of small businessmen: commission agents, manufacturer's representatives, franchise-holders, small-scale importers, wholesalers and retailers. Part of this group was composed of Christians - Greek Orthodox, Armenians, and Greek Catholic among others - who had sought refuge with relatives, or with the help of

the Patriarchates, in Lebanon. Unlike the Palestinians belonging to various Muslim sects, the Christian Palestinians in Lebanon could often obtain citizenship or at least an identity card. This enabled them to own a certain amount of property, engage in trade and obtain work permits for other relatives. Most of the petite bourgeoisie in Lebanon therefore is Christian. It is centred in the newer parts of Beirut where Palestinians own many of the restaurants, coffeehouses, boutiques, groceries and speciality shops. Elsewhere in the Arab world, Palestinians run small shops catering to the camp population and operate small firms dealing in insurance, spare parts, food and beverages imported under licence from US or European manufacturers. The most successful elements of the petite bourgeoisie have been able to expand their businesses when times are good, but by and large the overwhelming pattern has been one in which success means no more than staying in business making only marginal profits. The benefits are the ability to finance part of a son or daughter's education, to live in the city or to have access to certain social advantages rather than the acquisition of wealth for its own sake.

Wage Labourers:

The number of Palestinians employed in wage labour appears to be relatively small, although it is impossible to estimate the size of this class accurately because of the lack of basic census information. It consists primarily of two groups: (1) technical, scientific and administrative workers, some relatively highly-paid, and, at the other end of the scale, (2) a larger group of labourers many of whom work on a contract basis, monthly or seasonally-employed. There exists no sizeable 'working class' in the diaspora in the western sense, that is, manual workers employed fulltime, partly because of the lack of industrial development and partly because of the high levels of un- and under-employment in virtually all of the Arab countries. Such jobs as are available go first to local residents. The one exception to this is Jordan where Palestinians do constitute a fairly large working class largely because the local population has been too small and, until recently, too unskilled, to fill local demand. But in the East Bank, Palestinian workers have tended, as elsewhere, to be gradually replaced as the indigenous residents, many of them nomadic Bedouin, are resettled in the cities and towns. As a result, there are no large trade unions composed solely of Palestinians except in Jordan, where they have played a major role in politics, (clandestinely since the late 1950's) particularly in the Jordanian Communist Party. In other countries, where the

trade union movement is closely controlled by the Government, as in Lebanon and Syria, Palestinian workers have tended to express themselves collectively and politically in the broader nationalist movements of one kind or another, such as the Arab Nationalist Movement, the Ba'ath Party, or the Nasserists, or through indigenous Palestinian organisations which cut across class lines. In a few countries, such as Bahrein, Kuwait and Qatar, Palestinian workers have been a major force in attempts to organise and legalise trade union activity and in organising strikes since the early 1950's. But Government action has generally been swift in removing such trouble-makers from their jobs. In Saudi Arabia, many Palestinian employees recruited by ARAMCO to work in related development industries - housing, electricity and transport - were dismissed en masse in the mid-1950's after organising strikes and walk-outs and engaging in political activity. The dismissals resulted primarily from Government pressure, rather than from opposition by the Company, which feared that such dismissals would deter other skilled Palestinians from working for ARAMCO.

The majority of the technical, scientific and administrative workers were employed in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Gulf states and, to a lesser extent, in Lebanon. The end of World War II, the rise of American influence in the area, and the new discovery of oil and of its growing importance to the West, had led to a big development boom in the area after 1945. And the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 meant that many facilities, such as the pipeline from Kirkuk in Iraq to Haifa on the Mediterranean coast, port facilities, financial and other institutions, had to be duplicated in the Arab world. United States-owned companies operating in the Middle East set up new headquarters in Beirut and branches in other parts of the Arab world. Beirut itself grew from a relatively small provincial capital in Syria under the pre-war French Mandate to a bustling, thriving commercial and financial centre of the Arab Middle East. Palestinian workers played a major part in the expanding US operations, partly because companies like IBM, National Cash Register, and the big oil corporations needed highly-skilled clerical staff, accountants, engineers, managers, teachers and lawyers fluent in English. But the biggest rise in the employment of Palestinians in highly-skilled 'white collar' jobs came in the early 1960's, when a new generation of refugees raised in the camps and educated in UNRWA schools came to maturity.⁸ These Palestinians filled the mushrooming demands of the Gulf, where the oil revenues had created an expanded public sector and raised both the level, and sophistication, of private consumption. Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrein, Abu Dhabi, and other

countries became the new Mecca for Palestinians eager to apply their education in jobs which would allow them to escape camp life while providing adequately for the family left behind, or the family they planned to start. Some of them managed to rise to high positions, and start their own businesses before they were replaced by local workers (see above). But many lived in the urban shanty towns which had sprung up around the Gulf capitals and the major oil centres. Here they were often in conflict with the local residents because their urban way of life threatened local customs.

The manual labourers consisted primarily of skilled tradesmen, such as electricians, welders, fitters, masons; craftsmen, such as furniture makers, weavers and silversmiths; and seasonal labourers employed in the construction industry. Many of the latter were employed on a contract basis which involved migration from the camp to the city, or from one Arab country to another. Some Palestinians worked in agriculture, in Jordan, parts of Syria and northern Lebanon. Others worked as drivers, for the United Nations, church-related institutions and other international agencies, or for the oil companies where their knowledge of English, however rudimentary, gave them preference over the local residents. A small number worked in the oil fields directly and on the UNRWA staff.

The Lumpenproletariat:

At the bottom end of the scale, just above the camp residents, existed a large number of Palestinians who managed to turn the streets into a source of revenue: vendors, peddlers, errand boys and coffee house attendants, whose activities were subject to the ever-watchful eye of the local policeman. But by and large the lumpenproletariat is composed of a large mass of marginally-employed labour. Many live in the camps, or in the bidonvilles which surround them, and, together with the wage labourers and camp residents they provided much of the support for the mass demonstrations staged by the Nasserists, the ANM, the Ba'athists and the Communist parties in the years between 1948 and 1967.

The Displaced Peasantry:

Although the displaced peasants still comprised the bulk of Palestinian society, by June 1967 their numbers in the diaspora had declined somewhat. Estimates of the camp population in the diaspora range from between 20 to 25 per cent of the total Palestinian population in Lebanon, to between 40 to 50 per cent in Jordan. After the June war another 250,000

to 300,000 Palestinians were displaced from the West Bank and Gaza, some for the second time in their lives, and many of these sought refuge in the camps in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria.

By 1967, however, the camp population could be differentiated between those who lived in camps set up in rural, isolated areas, and those who lived in camps set up around the big urban centres. In the rural camps the population consisted predominately of the very old and the very young. Many of the peasants and agricultural tenants who left Palestine in 1948 found it difficult to learn new skills under the conditions in which they lived and had virtually no hope of finding employment. As the young went off to the cities or to jobs in widely scattered parts of the Arab world, or even to Europe and the United States, the population in the rural camps diminished relative to those in the urban camps. Consequently the rural residents lost many of their sources of contact with the larger world outside. But the radio remained, and for the peasantry in the rural camps the daily isolation, frustration and despair was often broken only by the ringing speeches of Gamal Abdel-Nasser, King Hussein, or the Voice of Palestine from Cairo. The cultural attitudes of pre-1948 Palestine which emphasised communal ties, family honour and martyrdom in the cause of justice and religious freedom remained, but these were now something to be championed by one Arab leader or another rather than something which Palestinians themselves could achieve.

The situation was quite different in the camps which surrounded virtually every major city in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. Here the displaced peasants had some access to the amenities of urban life: medical care, education, newspapers, magazines and television, if not a job. Income from a son or daughter working in the city could provide a meagre, if insufficient source of cash to supplement the daily round of UN rations. But, at the same time, the proximity to the city also created a new awareness of contrasts. The urban camp dweller living in the camp or adjacent shanties is often only a few steps away from the high-rise luxury apartment building, and the radio booms not with the speeches of Nasser but with advertisements for cosmetics, travel abroad, and the cinema. The result is a heightened sense of alienation and, increasingly of class consciousness. In Lebanon and Jordan in particular, the daily hardships and indignities are as much the creation of the local oppressor as the distant one. The working permit is denied, the price of water raised because a rapacious landlord is eager to gain what he can out of UNRWA, the local policeman is a constant source of arbitrary irritation at best and inexplicable questioning and detention at worse. In such situations it is no wonder that, for the residents of the urban camps, the idea of 'Return' so

cherished by their fellows in the rural camps has been replaced by a new determination to liberate themselves both from the Israeli occupation and from the local Arab bourgeoisie.

SECTION III, Conclusion: the Diaspora since 1967

The June, 1967 war marked a turning point in the history of the Palestinian diaspora, much as the previous wars had done. Like the Palestinian notables and the Arab neo-colonial regimes before them; both Nasser and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (which the Arab League, under Egypt's leadership, had set up in 1964) were discredited by the Arabs' defeat and by their failure to prevent a further Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory.⁹ Fatah, which had launched its first guerrilla raid against Israel on 1 January, 1965, emerged as the new leader of Palestinian liberation. Fatah, along with the other commando organisations which were established in the aftermath of the war, took over the PLO in 1968. Fatah drew a large number of its recruits from the rural camps and based its ideology on the doctrine of armed struggle, believing that concrete military successes, however limited, would lead to a general uprising of the Palestinian masses and of the rank-and-file within the Arab armies. Its financial support came from those sections of the Palestinian bourgeoisie who had achieved commercial success in the Gulf and, after 1968, from several Arab governments, including Saudi Arabia. After the battle of Karameh in March, 1968, which marked the first time the guerrillas had fought the Israeli army in face-to-face combat since 1948, Fatah's ranks swelled with new recruits from the urban camps as well. Recruits also came from Palestinian units which defected from the Jordanian army and, to a lesser extent, from the Palestine Liberation Army, the military arm of the old PLO, which was considered to be too subject to the control of the Arab League.

Fatah's success, and the subsequent rise of Palestinian nationalism and of the resistance movement in general during the late-1960's is documented elsewhere in this anthology, and is beyond the scope of this particular study. But, in conclusion a few points are perhaps in order. First, Fatah was largely responsible for, and highly successful in, presenting armed struggle as a useful weapon in the battle for liberation, and in forging the bonds of a movement controlled by Palestinians themselves. But Fatah's base of support and its ideology were to a certain extent determined by the need to remain on good terms both with the Palestinian bourgeoisie and with the existing Arab governments. In particular, its brand of nationalism, which eschewed interference within the internal

affairs of the Arab regimes, while providing space to manoeuvre and the possibility of avoiding what were seen as 'marginal' battles, also limited Fatah's potential for securing mass support from Palestinians living in the urban camps and from progressive and socialist forces elsewhere in the Arab world. These elements turned more and more to other movements, particularly the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which from its beginning had placed a high priority on mass organisation and mass support among the camp population particularly in Lebanon and Jordan, as well as in the West Bank and Gaza, rather than on armed struggle alone. It also supported and encouraged alliances between the Front and other progressive movements in the Arab world such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Gulf (PFLOAG). Unlike Fatah, the PFLP was supported primarily by small contributions from its members and from the sale of its journal, *al-Hadaf*, and so was freer to adopt policies which often conflicted both with the policies of the Arab governments and with the Palestinian bourgeoisie.

The civil war in Jordan in September 1970, and the virtual exclusion of all fedayeen from Jordanian territory the following autumn, was a major defeat for Fatah's policy of non-interference and a victory for the PFLP. It also broadened support, particularly in leftist circles abroad, for the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine which, although too small to play a military role of any significance, became a major intellectual force in promoting the concept of class struggle, and a Marxist-Leninist analysis in general, within the Resistance. The PDFLP's rejection of alliances with 'reactionary' Arab regimes, and the fact that membership was open to non-Palestinians, made it particularly attractive to certain sections of the Arab intelligentsia and to Arab and Palestinian students abroad.

By 1973 the contradictions within the Resistance created by a growing class consciousness both among Palestinians themselves and within Arab society as a whole were beginning to become more apparent, and they emerged into full prominence after the October war. Fatah was split between a 'left-wing' centred around the local camp commanders on the one hand, who grew impatient with the forced inactivity caused ultimately by the leadership's refusal to break its ties with the existing Arab regimes, and, on the other hand, those elements within the leadership who tacitly or overtly supported the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank as an immediate strategic goal to be given first priority, however insufficient this might be in the long-term. The PLO National Congress in January, 1973, which had come out openly against the Jordanian regime, and which urged the formation of alliances with progressive forces in the Arab world

and the continuation of armed struggle until total liberation, did much to prevent an open split within Fatah and prevent divisions within the PLO leadership during the crucial months of internal debate which followed after the war. But it remains doubtful whether, in the long run, those sections of the PLO (Fatah's right-wing in particular) which draw their support from the Palestinian bourgeoisie, can expect broad support for any policy which falls short of total liberation or which fails to recognise the oppression and exploitation suffered at the hands of certain local Arab bourgeoisies.

Finally, however, it must be also said that although class consciousness is growing among Palestinians as a whole, it would be too facile to assume that the class struggle has consequently become the central fact of Palestinian daily life. Equally facile would be the superficial assumption that Palestinian workers and peasants have more in common with workers and peasants elsewhere, or with their Israeli counterparts, than with Palestinians or Arabs of a different class. Other ties, such as family and place of origin remain important in Palestinian society. And any analysis which is based solely on class-divisions also ignores the class-transcending unity created by the Israeli occupation.

A more realistic view is one which sees the rise of class consciousness among Palestinians as linked to the history of anti-imperialism within Arab society as a whole. The national liberation of Palestine is part of the general movement within the Arab world as a whole seeking to remove the vestiges of colonialism and neo-colonialism which continue to exist. Israeli workers, and progressive movements in the West in general, in this author's opinion, can play a role in the liberation of the Palestinian masses only to the extent that they recognise the national, as well as class, oppression which Palestinians suffer.

Footnotes

1. The word class is used here to refer to a set of social relations which arise from a specific mode of production, ie in the sense in which Marx, for example, makes a distinction between classes based on wage labour, capital or landed property. But anyone who has tried to apply Western notions of class, including Marx's, to a third world society, will recognise the difficulties involved, especially the inaccuracies which can result from too superficial a use of concepts which were drawn primarily from studies of societies where capitalism was the dominant mode of production. This paper deals with classes as the word is understood in the West, ie in industrial,

specifically capitalist societies, but it should be pointed out that any such analysis touches on only a limited aspect of Middle Eastern society insofar as it leaves aside social relations which derive from earlier, and still existing, modes of production. See Ahmad al-Kodsy, Nationalism and Class Struggles in the Arab World, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1970.

2. Very little has been written, in English, about the political economy of Arab Palestine under the Mandate. Most of the histories of the period deal primarily with British rule in Palestine or with the diplomatic history and negotiations which led to the Balfour Declaration and the creation of the State of Israel. For the history of Arab Palestine, the best sources are the Survey of Palestine, Vols. I, II and Supplement, published by the Government of Palestine, 1947 to 1949, and the reports of the various Government commissions which visited Palestine during the Mandate such as the Report of the Commission on the Palestine Disturbances of August, 1929 (Shaw Commission) (Cmd. 3530) and the Report by His Majesty's Government on the Administration of Palestine for 1936, published by the Colonial Office. Neville Barbour's Nisi Dominus (Institute of Palestine Studies, Beirut, 1969) and John Marlowe's Rebellion in Palestine, London, 1946, provide an overview by two ex-British officers in Palestine. The Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine has also published a brief pamphlet, Historical Development of the Palestinian Struggle (Beirut?) 1971 written from a class perspective. In Arabic, works on the political economy of Arab Palestine and the rise of classes include Naji Alloush, al-Muqawamah al-Arabiyyah fi Filastin 1918-1948, Beirut, 1967; Hani Hourami, "Mulāhathāt hawla 'awda' al-Tabaqah al-Arabiyyah al-Āmila fi Filastin fi Ahd al-Intidāb," Shu'un Filastīniyya, No. 5 (May, 1972); and Ghassan Kanafani, "Thawra 1936-1939 fi Filastin: Khilāfāt wa-Tafāsīl," Shu'un Filastīniyya, No. 7 (July 1972). Wathā'iq al-Muqawamah al-Filastīniyyah al-Arabiyyah, 1918-1939, Beirut, 1968 is a basic reference but I have relied most on Badran, Nabil, at-Ta'lim wa-at-Tahdith fi-l Muj-tama' al-Arabiyyi al-Filastīniyyi, Vol. I: Ahd al-Intidāb, Beirut, 1969.
4. The main (Arab) Palestinian industries in 1935 were textiles, soap-making, mills and food processing, building materials, tobacco processing and confectionary. Salah Essaleh, "L'Industrie Palestinienne," L'état actuel de l'économie syrienne, Paris, 1944, pp. 166-177.
5. In this sense, British colonial policy in Palestine was fundamentally

different from its policy elsewhere in the Middle East, where the standard procedure was to set up rival clients, usually tribal shaykhs, who were loyal to the British in return for extensive privileges, but who were not strong enough to challenge British rule. An attempt to implement a similar policy among the leaders of notable Arab families in Palestine was made in the early 1920's when the British named Hajj Amin al-Husseini as the Head of the Supreme Muslim Council. But by 1936 this policy had failed altogether: the notables joined forces in the general strike and retained a loose alliance among themselves to the end of British rule.

Part II of this paper is based on a larger study of Palestinian society now in process. Material for the study was drawn primarily from fieldwork carried out in Beirut in 1972. Population figures are taken from Abu Lughod, Janet, "The Demographic Transformation of Palestine" (in) Ibrahim Abu Lughod, The Transformation of Palestine, Evanston, 1971, pp. 139-163, Cattán, Henry, Palestine, The Arabs and Israel, London, 1969 and from various United Nations documents, particularly the Progress Reports of the UN Mediator in Palestine, the Annual Reports of the Director-General of UNRWA and publications of the UN Economic and Social Office in Beirut. The "Estimated Population, by Religion and Sub-District, and Estimated Population in Towns, as at the End of 1944", published by the Government of Palestine in its General Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, Jan. - Mar., 1946, Vol. XI, Nos. 1 - 3, provides a comparative reference for the period before 1948. A report prepared by Dr. Nijim ed-Din Dajani for UNRWA Survey of Employment, Occupation and Incomes of Palestinian Refugees in Jordan, Amman, 1954, has some information on social conditions during the early period of migration not available elsewhere. Little has been published in English about the conditions Palestinians faced during their migration to the neighbouring Arab countries, in contrast to the volumes that have been written about the controversy surrounding the reasons why they left. Accounts written by officials involved in relief work can be of some use, particularly one by the Red Cross delegate to the Middle East, W. de St. Aubin, "Peace and Refugees in the Middle East," Middle East Journal, Vol. III, No. 3 (July, 1949), pp 249-259, and S.G. Thicknesse, Arab Refugees, RIIA, London, 1949. Elias Shoufani's "The Fall of a Village" in the Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. I, No. 4 (Summer, 1972), pp. 108-121, describes the conditions in a Palestinian village during the last days of the war and the reasons why the villagers left. Walid Khalidy's

"The Fall of Haifa", Middle East Forum, Vol, XXXV, No. 10 (December, 1959) describes similar events in a major Palestinian city which was the scene of heavy fighting in 1948. Another article by Khalidy, "Why Did the Palestinians Leave?", Middle East Forum, Vol, XXXV, No. 7 (July, 1959), pp. 21-24, 35 and Erskine Childers' article, "The Other Exodus" in the Spectator, 12 May 1961 are the classic sources used to refute the Zionists' contention that the Palestinians were urged to leave by their own leaders. An article in Le Monde, 8-9 October, 1972, "Pourquoi les pays arabes n'ont pas integre tous les refugies" by Paul Balta is a good summary of the reasons why most Palestinians have not been assimilated economically or socially in the host countries. A general survey of refugee conditions up to the late 1950's is contained in Roni Gabbay's A Political Study of the Arab-Jewish Conflict. The Arab Refugee Problem, Paris, 1959.

8. UNRWA estimates that by the early 1970's some 250,000 Palestinians had completed at least ten years of education in UNRWA schools.
9. For the history of the Palestinian resistance movement since 1964, see Kadi, Leila S., Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement, Beirut, 1969 and Khalid al-Hassan, Palestine Lives: Interviews with Leaders of the Resistance (introduction by Clovis Maqsoud), Beirut, 1973.

THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE : 1964 - 1975

by PETER HELLYER

The last decade has seen the rise of the Palestinian national movement from a nadir to a high point of strength and international recognition, and then a slip back to a situation where, although still extant, it is riven by splits over aims and tactics, and seems destined to face a considerable period of internal dissension. Whatever the international attention it may still command, which is considerable, the movement is so severely split that for the first time in five years, it is again difficult to determine who exactly speaks for the mass of the Palestinian population - in exile or under Israeli rule.

Ten years ago, however, there was no Palestinian national movement worthy of the term. The crushing defeat of national aspirations inflicted by the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, followed by the humiliation

of the spectacle of the Arab states using the Palestinian 'problem' more as a political weapon than as a cause to be pursued, had led to a splintering of the various Palestinian political forces. With the emergence of a number of different political trends in the Arab world - exemplified by Nasserism, the Ba'ath and the Arab National Movement, ANM, - Palestinians with no political entity of their own spread in different directions under the influence of these pan-Arab ideologies. Even in the Arab state where they were a majority, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (which had illegally annexed the West Bank, one of the sections of the former Palestine mandate that had remained outside Israeli control after 1948), the Palestinians did not enjoy the fruits of political power. King Hussein of Jordan used his political police and army to repress any independent expression of Palestinian political opinion. He also used his powers of political patronage to purchase the allegiance of most of the traditional leaders on the West Bank.

At the beginning of 1964, however, the situation for the Palestinians began to change. The change came with the decision by the Council of the Arab League to form a shadow Palestinian entity - the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which, under Nasserite influence, was intended to be a docile expression of the Palestinian national consciousness that could divert Palestinians from any movement that might be seeking to express an independent stance.

The PLO was the main Arab response to the Israeli decision to divert some of the headwaters of the Jordan River for its irrigation schemes in Galilee. The diversion decision aroused fury in the Arab world, but the Arab states decided that they were militarily incapable of challenging the move. Instead, the Arab League set up the PLO, under the leadership of the sometimes demagogic, but generally predictable Ahmed Shukairy, and agreed to establish a Palestine Liberation Army, to be formed on the lines of a conventional army, and to be under the control of the various states in which its contingents were to be placed. Palestinian aspirations, it was felt, could be channelled by the PLO to serve the aims of the Arab states, in particular the Egyptian Government, at that time the dominant factor within the Arab League.

At the same time as the PLO was founded, however, an important decision was taken by a small group of politically independent Palestinians. The underground group Al-Fatah, which emerged from a grouping of friends led by Yasser Arafat, decided the time had arrived for the preparation of armed activity against Israel. Their decision was sparked off by the inability of the Arab states to combat the diversion of the Jordan,

but the groundwork for it had been laid several years earlier.

Al-Fatah, formed in the mid-fifties, had taken as its starting point a rejection of the thesis that the future of the Palestinians lay in the hands of the Arab states. Some of its founders had fought with the Egyptian army in the Gaza area in 1956, but all felt that while Palestine's destiny was the responsibility of non-Palestinian Arab leaders, it would not be a first priority for them. Consequently, the early members of the organisation, who were scattered throughout the Arab world, as well as among Palestinian students abroad, particularly in West Germany, set themselves the task of articulating an independent Palestinian viewpoint, and of rejecting any concept of an Arab protectorate over the Palestinians' future. From the latter part of the fifties, they established close links with the main Arab insurgent movement of the time, the FLN in Algeria, and following the independence of Algeria in 1962, the movement received permission to establish its first military training camps in the new state.

Its emphasis on Palestinian independence from the Arab states brought Al-Fatah into conflict with those states, notably those surrounding Israel, and in particular Jordan, where the intelligence service actively hunted down Fatah sympathisers. The whole ethos of the Jordanian kingdom after 1948 was based on a belief that there was no separate Palestinian nation and that on both sides of the Jordan, the people should be loyal subjects of the Hashemite monarchy. The very fact of Fatah's existence was a challenge to that thesis, however small and obscure the organisation might be.

From the beginning of 1963, changes within the Arab world made Fatah's position somewhat easier. Not only did they have the support of the Algerians, but their popular appeal based on their guerrilla struggle against the French, but, in March 1963, the Ba'ath took over in Syria. The Pan-Arab Ba'ath ideology, a rival of Nasserism in Egypt, saw itself not only as an opponent of the Zionist state, but also a foe of the 'reactionary' states within the Arab world - notably its neighbour, Jordan. By the summer of 1963, the new Ba'ath Government had offered a home to Al-Fatah for its military preparations. Fatah, while retaining its belief in non-interference in the internal affairs of Arab states, was pleased to have the opportunity of a relatively secure base adjoining Israel, while at the same time, support for its underground cells in Jordan was made considerably easier. With Ba'athist support, Fatah began reconnaissance operations inside Israel, and its first casualties reportedly came in July 1963 in an unscheduled clash with Israeli forces.

Thus as the PLO began life there was already a Palestinian movement extant, though small and clandestine, which rejected Arab tutelage of the cause of liberation, and which enjoyed facilities immediately adjoining Israel. The decision by Fatah in early 1964, following the Arab governmental failure over the waters issue, to prepare to launch military operations was a clear challenge to the PLO, and its sponsors, even though it was to be some time before the challenge became an open one.

In January 1965, Fatah carried out its first operation - adopting the cover name of Al-Assifa (The Storm) for its military wing in public communiques. The operation itself was unimportant in military terms, but it marked the launching of an independent Palestinian offensive against Israel, against the opposition of the majority of the Arab states. Later in the month, the tenseness of Jordanian-Palestinian relations was underlined by a clash between a small group of Fatah 'fedayeen' and Jordanian troops. The first casualty since the launching of activity was suffered by the guerrillas.

Over the next couple of years, Fatah, with the support of the Syrian Ba'ath, slowly increased its activities, operating mainly from Jordan despite the difficulty of preparing operations there. The Syrians, while prepared to allow Fatah to train in Syria, did not want to permit possibly embarrassing activities to be launched from their soil, and while a very few raids were launched from southern Lebanon, Jordan, or rather the West Bank, was the main launching pad.

A powerful attempt was made by the Arab League, under pressure from both the PLO and the Egyptian Government, to suppress news of Fatah's activities. Following the launching of activities, the Arab League sent a message to its member governments, asking them to do all possible to prevent publication of Al-Assifa communiques, and it was only in Lebanon that the local press gave them any significant attention. Officially, in the eyes of all Arab Governments except the Syrians and the Algerians, the Palestinians were represented by the PLO, and not by small fringe groups daring to assert the independent nature of the Palestinian cause.

Indeed, the PLO itself, through its military arm - the Palestine Liberation Army - began a few raids of its own from Jordan, with a half-hearted tolerance from the Government in Amman. Having established links with the Government in Peking during 1965, the PLO found that it was collecting arms, and training several thousand men, while no use was being made of them. Under pressure from the PLA, a few raids were carried out. They stopped only after the Israeli reprisal raid on the Jordanian village of Sammu in November 1966.

Before the June War in 1967, the only Palestinian groups of any

importance in either military or political terms were Fatah and the PLO, the former with its Syrian supporters. Late in 1964, however, shortly after Fatah began to prepare its first active raid, a pan-Arab movement also began military preparations. The Arab Nationalist Movement, founded in 1953 by a Palestinian Christian, Dr. George Habbash, had developed in secrecy, and in rivalry with the Ba'ath during the fifties and early sixties, and had an informal alliance with the Nasser Government, and Nasserites throughout the Arab world because of this rivalry. It emerged, though Palestinian-led, as a movement with a Pan-Arab philosophy, generally more right wing than the Ba'ath. The movement had cells in a number of countries, and played an important role in the emergence of the National Liberation Front in what was then South Arabia - now the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen. Aiming to overthrow virtually every Arab government, it found protectors even less readily than Al-Fatah, and in the period after the Jordan waters dispute, it broke with Nasserism. By September 1964, a leftist tendency had emerged in the Movement, which adopted a programme of armed struggle in Palestine, as a contributory part of a move for a more general radicalisation within the Arab world.

With the support of a radical faction of the PLO, led by Shafiq al Hut, the Beirut bureau chief, the Palestinian section of the ANM began to prepare military activity, and its own group, the 'Heroes of the Return', began raids in late 1966. Another group, the Youth for Revenge, led by a Jordanian Christian, Naif Hawatmeh, formerly extremely active in the NLF in South Arabia, began military activity early in 1967. Yet another group, less closely connected with the ANM, also began operations before the war. Led by Ahmed Jibril, a former captain in the Syrian Army, although a Palestinian, the Palestine Liberation Front received some Syrian support, despite the fact that Jibril had been a member of Fatah until 1966. These three groups, though small, did carry out some activities before June 1967, and the collaboration of the Heroes of the Return with the dissident elements of the PLO - they were led by a PLA officer - gave an impetus to the strains already emerging within that organisation.

Although guerrilla raids did begin into Israel before the June War, mainly organised by Fatah, they were of little military significance. Their occurrence, however, was an irritant for the Israelis, particularly when civilians were killed or injured, and a number of reprisal raids were taken against Jordan, the most important being the Sammu raid in late 1966. Israel complained to the United Nations of Syrian-sponsored 'terror-

gangs', one of the first international indications of any change from the political warfare between Israel and the Arabs, and massive reprisals were threatened during the gradual build-up of tension from the beginning of 1967, but the Palestinian guerrilla groups were an excuse, rather than a reason for the verbal blustering from Tel Aviv.

At the outbreak of the June War, the Palestinian guerrilla groups had succeeded in training a few hundred guerrillas, and in gradually improving their organisation and security. They claimed to represent the vanguard of the Palestinian Revolution, but were still virtually isolated from the mass of Palestinians, either in exile, under Jordanian rule or inside Israel in its post 1948 boundaries. For the Palestinians as a whole, salvation it was felt would still come from President Nasser, if at all, while the shadowy exploits of secretive guerrilla groups were too little known for them to receive much direct support. People like Arafat and his colleagues, or Habbash and Jibril were still swimming against the political tide with their insistence of the independent nature of Palestinian action. Most Palestinians still expected salvation to be brought to them rather than to have to struggle for it themselves.

The situation changed radically following the June War though this was not due to the role played by armed Palestinians. Several hundred Fatah guerrillas fought fiercely in Quneitra, in the Syrian Golan Heights. PLA units in the Gaza Strip were still fighting when the Egyptian retreat - or rout - had slipped across the Suez Canal. And on the West Bank of Jordan, a PLA unit near Jericho broke out of an Israeli encirclement and escaped after the Jordanian army had safely crossed to the East Bank. In military terms, however, the Palestinian contribution was only of minor local significance - the general overwhelming defeat left little opportunity for the Palestinian groups to make their mark.

The real change arose from the destruction of an Arab myth - that of impending liberation emanating from Nasser and Egypt. The humiliation of the Egyptian army during the war pointed up two lessons: the vast difference between bluster and military performance, and the fact that it was useless for the Palestinians to wait on the Arab states for liberation of their occupied land. Moreover, as a result of the war, every Palestinian was either under foreign occupation or in exile - the anomalies of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip had been swept away in the wake of Israeli victory and the new territorial annexations.

In reality, the June defeat in 1967 was a blessing in disguise - in one sense, at least - for the Palestinian guerrilla groups. It swept away myth and confusion. It removed the illusion that liberation could be brought from outside. And in the immediate aftermath, the total collapse of Arab morale

gave special opportunities to any Arab movement that could show it was still possible to fight against the apparently invincible Israeli army.

At the end of June, Fatah met to discuss resumption of guerrilla activity. The next month, they called a meeting with the Heroes of the Return, the Palestine Liberation Front and the Youth for Revenge, in an attempt to establish a united front. Agreement on unification was not reached, largely because of differences in ideology - the beginning of divisions that have plagued the Palestinian resistance ever since - and Fatah decided to launch activity alone. The other three groups merged within a couple of months into the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP, which resumed its own military activity later in the year.

The first military activity after the June war was not of great military significance. A few small clashes on the West Bank, the collection of some of the masses of arms abandoned in the June rout, and the rapid creation of underground cells achieved little. Moreover, Israel had captured the files of Jordanian intelligence in the war, and these proved to be of great importance in rounding up early guerrilla sympathisers throughout the West Bank. Even the clandestine presence of Arafat and his chief lieutenants in the field was unable to prevent the first networks being rolled up. The real significance, however, lay not inside Israeli-occupied territory, but outside. In a miniscule way, Fatah, and subsequently the PFLP, showed that it was possible to resume the fight, and with the Arab masses desperately keen to find some straw at which to clutch to redeem their pride, these guerrilla pinpricks were of great psychological importance.

Moreover, the attitude of the Arab states changed after the war. Egypt and Syria could not envisage a resumption of activity themselves, but to give support to the Palestinians was a way both of continuing at least some military activity by proxy, and also of reassuring their own people that the war had not been abandoned. Only King Hussein stood out - ordering his army to do all it could to prevent the Palestinian groups from crossing the Jordan River on their early sabotage missions. The army, however, on some occasions, turned a blind eye. Many of them were Palestinians whose homes were newly occupied, while others were unhappy about the swift retreat of the army following the fall of Jerusalem.

With the publication of guerrilla communiqués becoming frequent for the first time in Arab newspapers, the small groups began to emerge from the shadows. The main beneficiary was Al-Fatah which had been larger than the PFLP from the first and had more governmental support. Indeed, in early 1968, George Habbash was arrested by the Syrian Government, in a continuation of Ba'ath-ANM rivalry. The PLO riven by the splits between

Shukairy, who had uttered a number of racist and extreme speeches shortly before the war, and his more moderate or realistic colleagues, entered a period of turmoil, while a large part of its best military units were underground in the occupied Gaza Strip.

The Palestinians gained prominence as a result of an Israeli over-reaction in March 1968. Stung by guerrilla raids across the Jordan at a time when the Arab states seemed to be quietly absorbing their defeat, Israel decided on a reprisal in force against Fatah bases in the area of Kerameh, on the East Bank. This, it was hoped, would stimulate King Hussein to clamp down more effectively on the guerrillas. Indeed, there were some grounds for believing that Israel initially considered an occupation of at least part of the river's Eastern banks, penning Jordan up in the hills rising to the east. On March 21st, a large Israeli force crossed the river by the two bridges, and converged on Kerameh.

They expected the Palestinians to turn and run - which would have been in accordance with conventional guerrilla tactics - and the Jordanians to avoid the conflict. Armed with intelligence about the forthcoming raid, however, the Fatah high command decided to stand and fight. After a day-long battle, at close quarters, in which the Jordanian artillery joined in later in the day, the Israelis retreated across the river, leaving behind some armour.

The battle was presented by the Palestinians as the defeat of an Israeli invasion, and by the Israelis as a successful reprisal - Kerameh was virtually destroyed. Whatever the original military intentions of the raid, however, it resulted in an enormous change in the situation of the Palestinian guerrillas throughout the Arab world. The Arab press presented it as a guerrilla victory over Israel - the first time the enemy had been defeated on the battlefield. Arab arms, it proved could stand against Israeli armour. And within the whole of the Arab world, guerrillas who before the battle had been hunted outlaws, became garlanded heroes.

Arab Governments rushed to offer support to the Palestinian groups. King Hussein, uncomfortably aware of their popularity, hurried to declare his backing for commando activity. And the Palestinian refugees - festering in their refugee camps, or under Israeli occupation, found that there was an alternative to the despair arising from the lost faith in the false gods of the Arab states. The change was nothing short of revolutionary.

The period from after Kerameh until September, 1970 saw the peak of the Palestinian Resistance in terms of its military and political weight, but also saw the steady emergence of some of the strains that were to lead to its continuing crisis over the past four years.

Following the Kerameh 'victory', all of the guerrilla groups were

forced to cope with a massive influx of recruits. Literally thousands of people - refugees, from the camps, and from the affluent centres of the Arabian states in the Gulf and from all over the world, came to volunteer, together with nationals from other Arab states. The small groups expanded rapidly, swallowing up a variety of little family organisations that emerged, and their organisation spread its tentacles to cover a variety of non-military activities. The military operations in Israeli-occupied territory soared: in 1968, the average was less than a hundred per month, in 1969 it was more than two hundred, and in the early part of 1970 more than three hundred - even on conservative estimates. Between October 1969 and September 1970, the guerrillas were at last proving something more than an irritant to Israel, despite heavy bombing of guerrilla bases in Jordan, and the beginnings of retaliation raids against southern Lebanon.

The guerrillas also achieved a degree of diplomatic recognition as the driving force of the Palestinians. Yasser Arafat, as leader of Al-Fatah, accompanied President Nasser to Moscow in the summer of 1968. Within the Arab world, Al-Fatah achieved recognition too. This was partially because of its strict insistence on a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of the Arab states. Governments as different as Syria and Saudi Arabia were prepared to allow Fatah to operate without fearing that it would embark on any internal political activity against them. Fatah also took over the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

At the meeting of the Palestine National Council in the summer of 1968 in Cairo, Shikairy was ousted, and replaced by an interim chief, Yahya Hammouda. Fatah, together with the Syrian-backed Sai'qa (see below) attended the Congress for the first time. At the next meeting, in Cairo in February 1969, Fatah effectively took over control of the PLO, and Arafat was chosen leader of the executive committee, on which Fatah was strongly represented. Three other Fatah leaders, Mohammed Yussuf Najjar, (Abu Yussuf), Farouq Qaddumi, (Abu Lotof), and Khaled el-Hassan joined him as executive members, while there were also a couple of pro-Fatah independents, including Kamal Nasser. Sai'qa also gained representation. At the next council meeting, in June that year, Fatah strengthened its political control, aided by the absence of the PFLP and the Palestine Liberation Army, both of which rejected their allocation of seats. Gradually Fatah succeeded in building up its influence within the whole structure of the PLO, and, against opposition, the PLA. In early 1969, a Palestine Armed Struggle Command, PASC, was formed, to co-ordinate guerrilla activity, and to police disputes bet-

ween the various movements and their host governments.

With control of the PLO established by Fatah, its leaders became public, and popular figures throughout the Arab world, and, with the assistance of the world press, achieved a considerable degree of international notoriety. Arafat, in particular, emerged into the international stage as almost an equal of the Arab heads of state, attending their summit meetings as a colleague rather than a guest, with the numerical and political strength of the movement behind him.

At the same time, Fatah expanded its non-military activities throughout the Palestinian communities in the Arab world and outside. Among the refugees in Jordan and Lebanon, the organisation established schools and clinics, supplementing the scanty provision made available by the UN Relief Works Administration, UNRWA. The PASC set up a police force. Local militia were set up in Jordan, to provide a kind of home defence for the Palestinians against Israeli attack, or, if necessary, Jordanian hostility, and a virtual state within a state was eventually created in Jordan, with an increasingly obvious dual authority in the remnants of the Kingdom.

However as the political weight of the Palestinians and their numerical strength grew, so too did the interest of the Arab states in the movement. Before 1967, it had been hoped that the PLO would be an umbrella body to control the Palestinians. With the emergence of the guerrillas as the dominant factor, it became obvious that any Arab Government which desired to influence the politics of the Palestinians directly would have to change its attitude towards them. The method chosen was the establishment of new guerrilla movements, either directly controlled by the separate governments, or owing loyalty to them, as a result of financial obligation, or political ideology.

The first to surface was Sai'qa, founded by the Syrian Government in early 1968. With the backing of the government in Damascus, it grew rapidly in numbers and military weight, and its early participation in the take-over of the PLO gave the Syrians a direct voice in the central body of the Palestinian resistance. The Iraqi Ba'ath followed suit in early 1969, with the creation of the Arab Liberation Front, ALF, which was, like Sai'qa, closely controlled by its sponsor government. The Egyptian Government chose a different tack, backing new groups that emerged, rather than forming its own. The Popular Struggle Front, formed in early 1968 by Bahjat Abu Gharbiyeh, a member of the first PLO executive in 1964, and the Arab Organisation for the Liberation of Palestine, AOLP, formed by a dissident member of Fatah, Issam Surtawi, both received Egyptian financial support at the beginning of 1969 as did the Arab Palestine Organisation, PAO, which emerged from one of the many splits that occurred in the PFLP.

The proliferation of Palestinian guerrilla groups that characterised the period from early 1968 until the middle of 1969 came from two sources: new groups were formed, like the ALF, and existing groups split, particularly the PFLP, and then sought, and received, support from various quarters. The periodic announcement by various groups that they had absorbed small and virtually unknown organisations made little difference to this process.

In late 1968, the PFLP had its first split, when Ahmed Jibril left, setting up a group known as the PFLP-General Command, PFLP-GC. A splinter from the GC subsequently became the PAO. Jibril left largely because of disagreements with the political line of the movement, and because of his own preoccupation with the armed struggle. During 1968, during part of which Habbash was imprisoned in Damascus until rescued in November, the PFLP underwent a further radicalisation, with the emergence of a Marxist-Leninist tendency led by Naif Hawatmeh. This group felt that a vanguard Bolshevik party was needed, and placed its major emphasis on the need for grass-roots political work within the whole of the Arab world, linking the Palestinian guerrilla struggle to a generalised anti-imperialist struggle against the majority of the Arab Governments. A strong tendency within the PFLP also criticised the failure of Al-Fatah to delineate a clear political programme, laying down policies which would, in contradiction to Fatah's line, involve some degree of interference in the internal affairs of the Arab states. Indeed, the split between the groups of a Pan-Arab origin, and the more narrowly nationalist Fatah began to emerge at this time.

Jibril, who had masterminded the Palestinians' first ever plane hijack, of an El Al plane to Algeria in the summer of 1968, disagreed with this radicalisation and left. Following his release, Habbash, too opposed the Hawatmeh group, and in early 1969, Hawatmeh and his followers left, to set up the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PDFLP - the first explicitly Marxist-Leninist group in the Arab world to be disassociated from the traditional Arab Communist parties. Jibril received support from Syria, and the PDFLP, with its hostility to virtually every Arab Government except Hawatmeh's former associates in South Yemen, was left ill-financed and ill-armed. Indeed, in early 1969, the PFLP actually tried to eliminate the PDFLP, and it survived only with the intervention of Fatah.

The proliferation of groups still left Fatah as the largest, and with the general support of Sai'qa, and, occasionally the PSF and the AOLP, it was able to exercise a certain degree of control through the PLO and PASC. While military operations against Israel continued to grow during 1969 and early 1970, however, political debate grew within the movement.

The ALF, in particular, chose to represent the interests of the Iraqi Government within the PLO, but the other groups dependent on finance from a single source also brought the disagreements of the various Arab states into the heart of the Palestinian guerrilla movement. With the differing state interests, the confusion within the PLO affected its external unity, and also affected its ability to strengthen internal unity.

Moreover, the emergence of the PDFLP, and the adoption of at least a verbal Marxism-Leninism by the PFLP led to severe strains with a number of Arab Governments, who were naturally somewhat suspicious of Palestinian movements that publicly advocated their overthrow. The dilemma of the movement as a whole lay in the question of whether the Palestinian Revolution could be won alone, or whether the internal structure of the Arab states would first need to be changed. With several Arab states tied to the United States and other Western powers, could Israel, itself an American client, be defeated? For the PFLP and the PDFLP, and, to a lesser extent Sai'qa and the ALF, the answer was negative, and within a number of Arab states, the activities of these movements were severely restricted. In Jordan, although the King was unable at first to tackle the guerrillas head on, the strains were also evident.

To complicate the situation even further, there was a severe dispute between the PLO, under Fatah leadership, and the Palestine Liberation Army. It had a number of causes. The PLA was stationed in Iraq, Syria and Egypt, and the different units were generally close to the governments of the countries in which they were based. Moreover, the PLA was a regular army, with the traditional contempt of the regulars for guerrillas. Even though the PLA formed its own guerrilla units, the Popular Liberation Forces, PLF, which proved more receptive to Fatah political influence, and were especially active in the old PLA stronghold in the Gaza Strip until 1972, the disagreement between Arafat and the PLA leaders was to continue to plague the PLO right up until early 1975. Relations were not improved as Fatah began to set up its own regular units, largely composed of defectors from the Jordanian army, in 1970 and 1971.

Despite the problems of the movement, however, the PLO, under its Fatah leadership, was able to consolidate its position as the authentic voice of the Palestinians in the outside world, even if inside Israeli-occupied territory it was unable to become as large a nuisance as it hoped, and, on occasion, claimed. With the growing confidence of the movement, it began to articulate its aims, and these, despite the presence of groups

owing allegiance to the Arab states within the PLO, marked a clear departure not only from the old positions of the PLO, but also from the positions of the Arab states themselves.

Before Fatah's take-over of the organisation, the PLO under Shukairy had adopted a policy of seeking the destruction of Israel and the expulsion of virtually all of the Israelis from Israel, except those whose origins in Palestine dated back to before the 1917 Balfour Declaration in which the Jews were first promised a national home in Palestine by the British. Under the pressure of Palestinian intellectuals associated with Fatah, like Dr. Nabil Shaath, a professor of business administration at the American University of Beirut a new aim began to emerge. The aim of the destruction of the governmental structures of Israel remained, but a different attitude towards the Israelis emerged. The slogan of 'a democratic, secular, non-sectarian state in Palestine' was proposed. This sought to distinguish between the Zionist structures of Israel's administration, and the individual Jews within the country. The theory suggested that both the Jews and the Palestinians were the victims of Zionism. In the absence of a Zionist state, once inevitable early difficulties had been overcome, Jews and Arabs could live together in a secular Palestine, where, according to much disputed demographic data, the Palestinians would be in a narrow majority. The old slogan of driving the Jews into the sea was abandoned, and Palestinian propagandists emphasised their distinction between Jews and Zionists. This distinction - then and since - was rejected as meaningless and designed for public consumption only, by leading Israelis. But a number of Palestinian groups, notably Fatah and the PDF sought recruits among the Israelis, with some, though minimal success. The new policy met with opposition from a number of Arab states, with the objection voiced by the Iraqis - namely, that the Palestinian 'problem' was a Pan-Arab problem, in which all Arabs were concerned - being felt by a number of other governments.

Nevertheless, despite some internal opposition originating from the Arab Governments, and despite total dismissal by the Israelis of any possibility of a change of line, the idea of the democratic secular state did take root in the PLO in the period from early 1969. The PFLP, with its insistence of pan-arabism paid little attention to the problems of the existence of two competing nationalisms in Palestine, preferring to see the problem more as one of class divisions throughout the region. But the only original piece of thought to emerge from the Palestinian Resistance between 1967 and the October War came from those intellectuals associated with Fatah. Indeed, Fatah was also the only group within the

Arab world to take up seriously the question of the status of Jews from the Arab countries within Israel. At the height of the furore over the execution of a number of Jews in Iraq for alleged spying for Israel, Arafat publicly appealed to Arab states to permit Arab Jews wishing to return to their original homes to do so. There was no favourable response.

By the middle of 1970, the PLO was a political force of some substance in the Arab world, and a military force of considerable irritation, although not a major threat, to the Israelis. Palestinians throughout the Arab world had redeveloped a sense of national pride and consciousness. Israeli Prime Minister, Golda Meir, might describe the Palestinian nation as non-existent, but although that might have been the situation before 1967, it was definitely not so after 1968, as virtually every government apart from the Israelis accepted. Indeed, the Palestinians were even attaining a certain degree of international attention, partially because of the variety of hijacks and other attacks carried out overseas by the PFLP, the PFLP-GC, and the PSF, but also because their political and military strength in the Middle East had made them a factor of some importance in any power equation. Those who described the PLO as an emerging government, without a clear territorial base were not far off the mark. In southern Lebanon and in large areas of Jordan, for example, the PLO not only acted as a kind of government, receiving recognition as such from the Palestinian communities, but also was in the process of developing some of the social and other services expected of a government - financed by taxation extracted as a government.

The seeds of trouble, however, were still present, particularly in Jordan. As pressure from the United States for some kind of settlement in the Middle East grew from 1969 onwards, these seeds began to flower. In April, October and November 1969, there were major clashes between the guerrillas and the army in Lebanon, but these were eventually resolved with the signing of the Cairo accords in early November 1969, which retained effectiveness until early 1973. In Jordan, however, where the army was stronger, the outcome was radically different.

The first fighting in Jordan between Palestinians and the army after Kerameh, took place in November 1968, after provocation by a group led by Tahir Dablan, known as the Victory Battalions, which was set up under government instigation precisely for such a purpose. In December 1969, however, the American Secretary of State, William Rogers, made the first speech that began the process towards the announcement of the Rogers Plan in mid-1970. Encouraged by the United States, the Jordanian Government attacked the guerrillas in January 1970.

This ended in a stalemate, and in February, the Unified Command of the Palestinian Resistance Movement was established, marking the beginning of a new drive towards unity between the various factions. For the first time, the PFLP displayed a willingness to collaborate with the PLO. In June after the announcement of the Rogers' Plan, another round of fighting took place, in both Amman and Zarqa, which was resolved only with the seizure by the PFLP of the Intercontinental and Philadelphia Hotels in Amman, together with their foreign guests. The King was virtually forced to sack his government and army command, and to replace it with leaders more acceptable to the PLO.

Between then and September 1970, a number of factors shifted the balance of forces in Hussein's favour. The PFLP and the PDF, in particular, worked to provoke a final confrontation, believing that the King could at last be overthrown, with the consequent establishment of an Arab 'Hanoi' against Israel. Palestinian guerrillas displayed excesses of arrogance and pride in the major towns that alienated a large number of Jordanians who could, perhaps, have been won to a programme of democratisation of the monarchy. Unable to control the PFLP and the PDF, the Fatah leadership was itself indecisive. Privately recognising the need for the replacement of the Jordanian Government, it was at the same time unwilling to break with its policy of non-interference, even though Jordan had a Palestinian majority. Thus the PLO was unprepared for a major clash, politically, and militarily.

The danger posed by the Rogers Plan was not underestimated. Leaders of all the major groups recognised that it could only be carried out after the liquidation of the Palestinian Resistance as an independent entity. It was, however, hoped that King Hussein would be alone in his support of it. Then, in July, President Nasser announced his acceptance, and a ceasefire began along the Suez Canal. Palestinian radio stations in Cairo criticising the Egyptian decision were closed down, which deprived the PLO leadership of one of its main channels of communication to the masses, Palestinians and others, throughout the Arab world. The PLO itself was split as a result, with the AOLP and the Arab Palestine Organisation responding to promptings from their sponsors by briefly applauding the Egyptian decision until pressure from the rest of the PLO brought them, bloodily, back into line.

The new Central Committee of the Palestine Resistance Movement, CPCR, which was established in place of the Unified Command at the National Congress in May and June recognised the dangers of a clash, but was unable to prevent it. In early September, fierce fighting broke out in Amman and southern Jordan, causing a special emergency meeting

of the Congress to be held under armed guard in an Amman refugee camp. The mass hijacking by the PFLP at the beginning of the month, organised by Dr. Wadi Haddad, the Front's second in command, during the absence of Habbash in China and North Korea heightened the crisis. The CCPRM suspended the PFLP from membership, but swiftly accepted it back when King Hussein declared martial law, thus setting the scene for the final confrontation. This raged for two weeks in late September, and casualties reaching several thousands - as high as twenty thousand according to some Palestinian sources. The bloody civil war was quickly christened 'Black September'.

The war, initially watched by the Arab states, then brought to an end by them, was essentially inconclusive. Neither Hussein nor the Palestinians were able to gain control of the whole of Amman, or to defeat each other. Jordan was able to repulse an invasion of Palestinian and Syrian armour from Syria, thanks largely to the Syrian failure to give air support, and the fact that the Iraqi Government, despite verbal support for the Palestinians, withdrew their brigades from northern Jordan, which were supposed to have been placed under Arafat's command. An American and Israeli mobilisation added to the Syrian unwillingness to commit more troops, while Soviet pressure contributed to the withdrawal of the armour. But the agreement signed by Hussein and Arafat in Cairo, under Nasser's watchful eye, just before the Egyptian President died, was little different in its terms from that signed shortly before the civil war broke out.

On paper, then, the war appeared to change nothing, while on the ground it seemed inconclusive. It represented, however, a major turning point in the fortunes of the Palestinian Resistance.

One almost immediate consequence of the war was the disappearance of several of the minor factions within the resistance. The AOLP and the PSF, virtually destroyed militarily, joined Fatah. The Arab Palestine Organisation slipped quietly out of sight. The ALF, virtually abandoned by its Iraqi backers during the war, was discredited, and its leader resigned. The PDF was virtually eliminated as a military force, though Hawatmeh as an individual fought bravely in Amman, and remained only as a political voice. The plethora of organisations before September were swiftly to vanish, and the major groups only remained - Fatah, Sai'qa, the PFLP, the PFLP-GC, small, but still active, and the PDF as a political tendency. The PLA, increased in size with the defection of some sectors of the Jordanian army, remained virtually intact in Egypt, and Syria. The ALF became increasingly irrelevant.

Despite the disappearance of some of the small groups, however, political disagreements continued to split the movement. Both the PFLP

and Fatah experienced severe internal stresses resulting from the lines adopted by their leaderships before and during the civil war, strains that were to lead to another split in the PFLP and to attempts to change the leadership in Fatah, which had remained unaltered since the organisation's foundation. In the PFLP, the debate was between a 'rightist' tendency, led by Wadi Haddad, which favoured a continuation of hijacking as a military tactic, and a 'leftist' group, which wished to concentrate on opposition to Hussein and organisation within Israeli-occupied territory. Within Fatah, the basic disagreement was over the question of non-interference, which was seen by many second-rank leaders and many of the fighters as being primarily responsible for the September war. If Fatah had adopted a policy of out-and-out hostility to Hussein before September, these elements argued, he might have been successfully overthrown.

This debate within Fatah, and between the Fatah leadership and other sections of the resistance was given an added impetus as a result of Saudi- and Egyptian-backed attempts to begin negotiations between Fatah and the Jordanian Government aimed at re-establishing some kind of Palestinian-Jordanian cooperation. With prices on the heads of both Habbash and Hawatmeh in Jordan, neither the PFLP nor the PDF were inclined to favour any collaboration with Hussein, while many of the Fatah rank and file believed that the time had come to embark on an attempt to overthrow the Hashemite monarchy.

Initially, the Fatah-PLO leadership tried its best to keep to the Cairo agreement. With an Arab governmental mission, led by former Tunisian Prime Minister Bahi Laghdam, based in Jordan to oversee the implementation of the agreement's terms, the Fatah leadership, while privately adopting a more and more hostile attitude to the Jordanian regime, tried to be as accommodating as possible.

In October 1970, however, the first breach occurred, from the Jordanian side. Confident after September, and assured of American assistance - the Jordanian army was fully re-equipped by the United States after the civil war - King Hussein gave permission for his army commanders to embark on a steady whittling away of the Palestinian military position. By the end of April 1971, the guerrillas remaining outside Jordanian jails but still in the country, were confined to the wooded hills in the Jerash-Ajlun area. Arab protests were ignored. And in late 1970, there was a coup in Syria within the Ba'ath, in which the civilian boss, Saled Jadid, sponsor of Sai'qa, and responsible for the September intervention, was ousted. The new Syrian government, while maintaining a verbal hostility to the Jordanians, refused to give as much support to the Palestinians. Sai'qa was emasculated, and a shipment

of arms for Fatah from Algeria was intercepted at Latakia, the Syrian port. When in June and July 1971, the Jordanian army moved against the remaining guerrilla bases. Arab support for the Palestinians was confined to verbal condemnation of Hussein. In a few days fierce fighting, the guerrillas were smashed. Some retreated into Syria, though they had been refused use of Syria as a supply base during the fighting. About 1000 were killed, and 2000 captured by the Jordanians. A small number fled across the Jordan to Israeli-occupied territory, much to the amazement of the outside world. The guerrillas knew, however, that whatever their treatment in Israel, it was unlikely to be as bad as that meted out by their Arab brethren in Jordan. After the Jerash-Ajlun battles, the Palestinian presence in Jordan was effectively forced totally underground apart from a small PLA unit that was closely aligned with the Government. It marked the lowest point of the sudden reversal of fortunes that had begun with the September civil war the previous year.

The period from September 1970 to July 1971 provided a number of lessons for the Palestinian resistance movement. They learnt that the Arab states could not be relied upon to provide assistance in their hour of need. They learnt that non-interference in internal affairs was an irrelevant policy in the Hashemite Kingdom, whatever value it might have in other states. They learnt that their political strength rested on their military power, and not on support for their political aims from others. And they learnt that clandestinity for an insurgent movement remains of the highest importance even when it is courted by the world's press. The lessons, interpreted in different ways by different groups of Palestinians, have been at the heart of Palestinian activity in subsequent years.

The dissatisfaction with the Fatah leadership, which was itself riven between 'rightist' and 'leftist' factions, the latter led by Salah Khalaf, (Abu Iyad), reportedly the number two in the organisation, led to the emergence of small dissident groupings within it. One, initially formed by friends of a Fatah military commander, Abu Ali Iyad, who was killed in Jordan in July 1971, was pledged to revenge those killed in the Jordan fighting. It took the name of 'Black September'. Possibly linked with a faction of the Fatah leadership, or with the Palestinian intelligence service, the Rasd, its first act was the assassination of the Jordanian Prime Minister, Wasfi Tel, in Cairo in November 1971. Wasfi Tel had directed the July warfare, and had been mainly responsible for the intransigent Jordanian position taken at the abortive negotiations with the Fatah/PLO leadership in Saudi Arabia in October that year. The attack was condemned by Khaled el-Hassan, one of Fatah's leaders who was close to the Saudis, but not by the rest of the Resistance, which

generally welcomed the move. After the next Black September attack, an unsuccessful attempt on the life of Jordan's ambassador in London, Zaid Rifai, subsequently Prime Minister, the Jordanians formally announced that they considered Al-Fatah a no more respectable commando movement than the PFLP or the PDF.

Black September, which never emerged into the public limelight, but retained its secrecy, then turned to operations against Israel, with a number of attacks in 1972 against targets in Europe linked to Israel - noticeably the Trieste oil refinery, and the hijack of a Sabena aircraft to Israel in May, an operation that ended in Israeli troops storming the plane under a Red Cross flag, and capturing or killing the guerrillas. The year for the group climaxed with the attack on the Israeli village at the Munich Olympic Games, resulting in the death of a number of Israeli athletes.

The Popular Front also resumed external operations. The 'leftist' faction, opposed to such activity, had left early in 1972, to establish the Popular Revolutionary Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PRF. Despite the criticisms of the PLO-Fatah leadership, with its waning authority, the Wadi Haddad, PFLP, faction embarked on a new wave of hijackings and attacks, the most spectacular of which was the attack by a group of Japanese, from the 'Red Army', in alliance with the PFLP, at Lydda airport in the summer of that year.

Within the Arab world, support for the Palestinians fell away. Arab states failed to pay their contributions to the Palestinian treasury. The Black September and PFLP attacks embarrassed the Arab leaders, noticeably President Sadat of Egypt, although only King Hussein openly condemned them. Freedom of action for Fatah in its political activity in the traditional Arab states was restricted, and the social services that had begun to emerge before 1970 fell away. So too did many of the fair-weather recruits to the guerrilla movement, including not only intellectuals from the Beirut salons, but supporters from the refugee camps. In a number of camps, the hopes and optimism that had been generated by the upsurge from 1968-70 began to give way again to despair, and the movements, under harassment and political pressure, even in Syria, began to go underground.

Ironically, the low point of political status in the latter part of 1972 coincided with a small upsurge of guerrilla activity, much of which was based in southern Lebanon. An Israeli invasion of the area was unable to halt the growth of the operations, which were coupled with a resurgence of activities inside Israel itself, where for the first time the Palestinians under occupation seemed to find the determination to carry out attacks. A number of Palestinians under Israeli occupation since 1948, the so-called

'Israeli Arabs', were arrested during this period.

From mid-1972 until the October War in 1973, the Palestinian resistance slipped virtually from sight, apart from a few isolated instances. Driven underground, and in despair after the collapse of the hopes generated before Black September in Jordan, a number of activities were carried out which seemed to achieve little in military terms, but rather exemplified the desperation of the remaining guerrillas. In March 1973, the attack by 'Black September' on the Saudi Embassy in Khartoum, in which the American ambassador was killed, alienated the Government of President Jaafar Nimeiry, who in September 1970, after a visit to Amman, had accused Hussein of genocide. During the same period, a battle between Israeli and Palestinian intelligence spread across Europe, with several assassinations and counter-assassinations, and Black September introduced the weapon of the letter bomb to the war, which in September 1972 killed Ami Schachori, agricultural attache and intelligence expert at the Israeli embassy in London. The Palestinians lost their representatives in Rome and Paris, while the killings spread to Cyprus, Spain and Norway. In April 1973, Israeli commandos struck in the heart of Beirut, killing three top Fatah leaders, Kamal Nasser, Kamal Adwan, and Mohammed Yussif Najjar, the first losses that Fatah had suffered at leadership level since the armed struggle began. The most hostile Arab response came from Lebanon, which in early May embarked on another major, and unsuccessful attempt to crush the Palestinians in the country. Only the rallying of a significant sector of the country's Moslems to the support of the guerrillas maintained their relative freedom of operation, but even so, they lost their full freedom to operate from southern Lebanon into Israel.

Before 1970, the PLO and its constituent organisations had developed a certain ability to initiate actions, but from then until mid-1974, they were steadily reduced to a situation where they can only respond to the initiatives made by others. The prime consideration of the various sectors of the movement over the period from late 1971 until the October War of 1973 was how to stave off any pressures and moves towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict between Israel and the Arab states. Within such a framework, the movements clearly saw that there was no place for a Palestinian Resistance whose main aim was the replacement of the state of Israel. The fierce Palestinian reaction to the proposal early in 1972 by King Hussein that a United Arab Kingdom should be set up, composing the two banks of the Jordan, was an indication both of the continued strength of hostility towards Hussein, and of the continued total rejection by the movements of any Jordanian

claim to suzerainty over the West Bank. Military moves, such as the various Black September and PFLP attacks, were also designed partially to make any likelihood of a settlement remote.

While the movements continued to seek to react to the moves on the diplomatic front of the Arab states, their internal disagreements continued unabated. In particular, one idea began to gain ground - the idea that in the event of any settlement actually taking place, the Palestinians should seek to deny to Jordan any right to return to the West Bank. To many Palestinians this was heresy: such a move could be interpreted as an acceptance of the continued existence of the state of Israel in the rest of the former Palestine mandate, and, moreover, was unlikely to occur without some fairly strong guarantees being given to Israel of a cessation of guerrilla activity. The movement which showed most sign of adopting a stance of favouring a West Bank state was the Popular Democratic Front, which, as early as 1969 had made equivocal statements which many took as recognition of an Israeli nation as such, something which the Fatah advocates of a democratic secular state did not accept. The best known exponent of the democratic state idea within Fatah, Dr. Nabil Shaath, also coined the phrase 'Palestinostan' to describe the West Bank (perhaps with Gaza) statelet, which he saw as little different from the Bantustans - technically self-governing labour reserves in South Africa. Within the Fatah leadership, however, some tendencies emerged that favoured a partial settlement, and the PFLP strongly attacked these tendencies. The killing of the PFLP's main spokesman, Ghassan Kanafani, by Israeli agents in Beirut in the summer of 1972 did nothing to stifle the criticism of Fatah, while at the base level within the organisation, there were growing signs of dissatisfaction with the leadership of Arafat and his colleagues.

At the outbreak of the October War in 1973, the Palestinian resistance was sorely divided, and militarily ineffective. Its operations against Israel had declined dramatically, although some still continued from southern Lebanon, with a certain degree of Syrian support. Outside the Middle East, a number of hijack operations took place. Their sponsorship was initially obscure. Officially, the PLO, Fatah and the PFLP denied responsibility, and even condemned them on occasion. Black September appeared to be declining into quiescence, and a variety of apparently new groups claimed responsibility for the hijacks and attacks. It subsequently emerged - as the Israelis had initially claimed - that they were masterminded by a faction of the PFLP led by Dr. Haddad, with responsibility being disclaimed because

of fears of Israeli reprisals. The unsuccessful Israeli attempt to hijack Dr. Habbash – the plane they seized in the summer of 1973 did not have Habbash on board – only added to the desire for secrecy. With the official leaderships being unable to carry out activities on a large scale, and unwilling to step down in favour of younger elements, some of these elements, from Fatah, Black September, the PFLP, and others coalesced into small, secretive groupings that owed no allegiance to the PLO, and conceded no authority to it. Financial support from Libyan president Muammar Qaddafi did not materially affect their political attitudes – most of them remaining Marxist in orientation. Shortly before the war broke out, it appeared that the Palestinian Resistance was slowly dividing into two parts. The official, public section, represented largely by the PLO-Fatah leadership, retained some public support within the Arab world, and a degree of international recognition, or at least attention, but was increasingly out of touch with the rank-and-file guerrillas. The secret groups, engaged in 'terror' operations, in the classic sense of the term, and were composed of PFLP, PFLP-GC and dissident Fatah elements, including Black September with Libyan support. Their exploits gained admiration among the desperate refugees, and condemnation from the rest of the Arab world.

The low level of Palestinian activity, and consequently importance, was indicated by the fact that the Arab states chose to interfere less in internal politicking within the PLO. Sai'qa more and more docile as the Syrians began to change their diplomatic position, became less active within the movement, while the only other Arab Government to display continual interest was Libya, which had emerged onto the scene as a radical state only late in 1969, after the client groupings of the other states had been established. The attitude of the Arab states was generally indifference, coupled with embarrassment at some of the more extravagant activities, and annoyance at the continued divisions within the movements. By the summer of 1973, there was a high level of desperation at all levels of the movement, tinged by despair or by a growing willingness to consider any partial solution that might be proposed.

The October War brought on the real split between the different factions of the movement which had previously been only in a chrysalis stage. During the war itself, the guerrillas and the PLA fought hard in the Golan Heights on the Syrian front, and several hundred were killed. On the Jordanian front, the guerrillas managed to carry out some attacks across river, despite active attempts by the Jordanians

to stop them, some Palestinians were wounded by Jordanian mines. Guerrillas crossing from southern Lebanon also created a small internal front within Israel, causing some important disruptions of Israeli communications. Officially the Israelis played down the importance of guerrilla activity during the war but it was sufficiently important for an almost total news blackout to be imposed. After the war, the massive change in Arab aims and attitudes seriously affected the movements, particularly after the Egyptian Government embarked upon its courtship of American Secretary of State Dr. Henry Kissinger. Political splits within the PLO characterised the whole of the first part of 1974.

At the time, guerrilla activity inside Israeli occupied territory showed an upsurge, witnessed by the new feeling of optimism generated by the October War among the West Bankers. This guerrilla activity, however, had little impact on the divisions within the movement, which were the most important aspects of Palestinian activity.

The disagreements within the movement as a whole began to emerge more openly after the announcement of the Geneva Peace Conference, which met early in 1974, to work out some of the details of Israeli withdrawals from areas occupied during the October War on the Egyptian front. Of major concern to the Palestinians was the realisation that the creation of a West Bank State, 'Palestinostan', was now a possibility, regardless of the attitude that the PLO and its constituent organisations took. Indeed, despite the official recognition granted by most of the Arab states, with the exception of Jordan, to the PLO, Arab diplomacy in the immediate post-October period seemed inclined to ignore the claims of the Resistance, and to be seeking Israeli withdrawals without insisting on the rights of the PLO.

Following the War, a Palestine National Council was called for mid-January 1974, in which the changed situation was due to be discussed. But the divisions within the movement meant that this meeting was repeatedly postponed, and did not, in fact, occur, until early June. The movement had to discuss its attitude to the Geneva peace conference, and to decide whether or not to attend, if an invitation was ever extended, and to discuss the attitude towards a West Bank state, should this in fact become reality.

Arab diplomatic pressure, in which Egypt played a leading part, sought to persuade the PLO leadership to adopt a conciliatory position. Within the movement as a whole, however, the 'left-wing', - the PFLP, the PFLP-GC, the ALF and Sai'qa, (the latter during the continuation of fighting on the Syrian front that lasted until May

1974) was opposed to concessions, and the Council meeting, which would have revealed the splits, was delayed until the dominant Fatah leadership could ensure that their position would be successful in the internal debates.

One result of the movement's internal arguments was a jockeying for votes within the Council, which continued to act, and began to receive more international recognition as, the Palestinian Parliament. During this period, the Palestine National Front, which had been formed on the West Bank before the October War with the assistance of the Jordanian Communist Party, was admitted to membership of the PLO, providing both a reinforcement for Fatah's control of the organisation, and also a voice clearly, and publicly, in favour of a West Bank state. As a counter to this, the anti-West Bank state groups, led by the PFLP, backed the re-emergence of the Popular Struggle Front, PSF, from within Fatah, which also adopted an anti-West Bank state line.

The debate within the PLO, which was sufficiently serious to cause the major delay in the holding of the National Council, was not a simple division between groups. In general Fatah, the Democratic Front, and (after the May 1974 agreement on an Israeli-Syrian disengagement) Sai'qa, constituted the 'moderates', while the rest made up the 'left-wing', later the 'Rejection Front'. But both Fatah and the PFLP, for example, had internal divisions. The bulk of the Fatah leadership were united on a 'moderate' line, but the bulk of the rank-and-file were opposed, while inside the PFLP, Dr. Habbash was reliably reported to be in favour of going to Geneva, under some framework. Dr. Haddad, however, was firmly opposed. According to one Palestinian source, the rest of the PLO leadership were by late March taking measures to guard against any possible attack on them emanating from Haddad.

Despite the divisions on the wisdom - or inevitability - of accepting some kind of settlement, all the major organisations were determined to play a part in the frustration of the kind of settlement that the United States might seek to impose on the area, and the wave of raids against Israeli urban or village targets, such as those at Kiryat Shemona, Ma'alot, and, in early 1975, against Tel Aviv itself, were carried out with precisely this intention in mind. Some of the attacks were launched by organisations involved in the 'Rejection Front', which became formalised during the latter part of 1974. One such operation, Kiryat Shemona, in April 1974, was undertaken by the PFLP-GC, but Ma'alot was carried out by the Democratic Front and the attack on Tel Aviv by sea by a Fatah group. Within the PLO as a whole, despite the divisions, there was basic agreement on the unacceptability of any American-

sponsored plan. For the 'Rejection Front' elements, such operations as Ma'alot were a part of a campaign designed to ensure that no settlement at all was possible: for the bulk of the PLO, led by Fatah, they were intended to underline the fact that the PLO should play a key role in any settlement proposals. The result, however, was the same - namely hardening Israeli opposition to concessions, and thus of frustrating the settlement attempts which were under way.

While military operations inside occupied territory showed some signs of increasing both in number and effectiveness during early and mid-1974, much of the attention of the PLO's leadership was turned to the question of securing greater international recognition for the Organisation - and for the Palestinian case as a whole. The aim here was to replace the former international status of the Palestinians, as expressed in UN Security Council resolution No. 242 of November 1967, which referred to them simply as a 'refugee problem'.

The first task was to ensure that some kind of common front could be presented by the Organisation despite its internal disagreements, and this was achieved at the National Council held at the beginning of June. A compromise was reached, in public at least, under which the leadership agreed not to advocate a West Bank state, but the 'Rejection Front' agreed not to oppose the creation of 'a national authority' on any land that might be evacuated, under pressure, by the Israelis.

The second task was to gain international recognition for the PLO itself as the authentic representative of the Palestinian people. The Arab summit that followed the October War expressed support for the PLO's sole right to represent the West Bank and Gaza in any negotiations, with Jordan the only dissident. At the end of December 1973, the Jordanian Government, through the intermediary of a minister who was a former member of the Arab National Movement, proposed a compromise to the PLO, under which Jordan would become a constitutional monarchy, with Yasser Arafat as Prime Minister. This proposal, which was never formally discussed by the PLO Executive, was rejected out of hand. In April 1974, King Hussein himself expressed his support for the presence of the PLO at a reconvened Geneva peace conference, and although Jordan was subsequently to make attempts to recover its position, all these failed, at least up to May 1975, when a new attempt, with some Egyptian backing, seemed to be under way.

Following the National Council in June, the PLO sent a delegation to the Organisation of African Unity summit in Somalia later that month, and at this meeting, the OAU for the first time expressed its support for the PLO's objectives - the most powerful former defenders

of Israel, like Ethiopia and the Ivory Coast, having broken relations the previous year. The PLO's chief foreign relations expert, Farouq Qaddumi, head of the Political Office, outlined a strategy during the conference which involved the gathering of support from the African and non-aligned nations leading to a presence at the United Nations, and despite a brief flirtation by Egypt with Jordan again in July, this strategy was successful. The Arab summit in Rabat in October reaffirmed its recognition of the PLO, with Jordan, reluctantly, agreeing. Subsequently, following an initiative from Arab and African nations, the PLO was invited to address the UN General Assembly in November. The delegation was led by Arafat and Qaddumi, and succeeded in persuading the world body not only to pass a resolution recognising the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and to return to their homes, but also to agree that the PLO should be granted observer status in the specialised agencies of the UN and in the General Assembly.

The 'Rejection Front', and those Arab states aligned with it, continued during the middle and latter part of 1974 to carry out a number of spectacular operations - such as the hijacking of a plane during the Rabat summit - designed to embarrass not only the Arab states committed to the PLO, but also the PLO leadership. But despite this, the overall strategic objectives of the PLO in the diplomatic field had been largely achieved by the end of the year.

Militarily, 1974 was not a significant year for the PLO, although by its end, a resumption of operations from the south of Lebanon had begun once again to inflict casualties on the Israelis in Galilee and on the north western slopes of the Golan range. Of more importance, however, was the isolation of Israel, and her major ally, the United States, in the diplomatic field. A clear majority of the world's nations were, by the end of the year, committed in favour of the PLO - or at least in favour of it being given the right to create a state on whatever section of Palestine that might be evacuated by Israel at a future date. The Israeli isolation continued during early 1975, and in April, the co-ordinating bureau of the group of non-aligned nations, meeting in Havana, agreed to press for the expulsion of Israel from the United Nations - a demand that seemed likely to be raised formally at the General Assembly later in the year. Given this growing support for the PLO - marked, for example, by permission to establish PLO offices in a wide range of countries, like Cyprus, and India, - Israel's diplomatic isolation was by early 1975 an established fact, and one from which no easy escape appeared possible. Moreover, the UN resolutions of November 1974 changed the basis of international debate about the Palestinian question,

from one of settlement of refugees to one of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people. As a result, the basis of the Geneva conference, whose reconvening was discussed in the middle of the year, following the collapse of a second round of disengagement negotiations by the US Secretary of State Dr. Kissinger, was undermined. The reason was that many of the countries involved no longer accepted the UN Security Council resolution 242, and its successor, 338, agreed in October 1973, but rather the new General Assembly resolutions, which, for the first time, were acceptable to the PLO and the Palestinians.

This diplomatic victory - which was conceded even by the United States, which began to show signs of considering some form of recognition by April 1975, when former Presidential candidate George McGovern met officially with Arafat - established the PLO firmly as a suitable participant in any reconvened Geneva conference, or other peace negotiations. Moreover, the Organisation proved itself capable of reviving its military strength as well. A series of Israeli attacks against southern Lebanon in January and April failed to dislodge the Palestinian guerrillas operating from that region. Instead, a better liaison was established between the PLO and the Lebanese army in that region. An attempt to provoke a civil war in Lebanon failed in mid-April when an attack by the right wing Phalangist party against the PLO met with a clear political and military defeat for the Phalange when the Lebanese army failed to join in, permitting the PLO itself to force the Phalangists to cease their operations. Inside occupied territory, operations admitted by the Israelis were running by mid-April at a level of thirty or forty a month - substantially fewer than in the hey-day shortly before 'Black September', but nonetheless a number sufficient to cause considerable losses inside Israel, and a considerable irritation to the Israeli security forces.

By May 1975, the PLO, ten and a half years after the launching of the first operation by Al Fatah into Israeli-occupied territory, had achieved substantial gains in both the political and the military field. It had managed to shake off most of the Arab tutelage that had dogged its early years, and to gain the recognition and support of most of the Arab states. It had, at the same time, played a major role in the re-establishment of the Palestinian case as a legitimate issue of self-determination on the international stage, defeating Israeli attempts to submerge the issue. Although the Government of Israel maintained its refusal to recognise the PLO, or, in the words of Premier Yitzhak Rabin, to meet the PLO 'anywhere but on the battlefield', the rest of

the world, including even the United States, had come, reluctantly, in most cases, to admit that the PLO was an essential factor in any settlement that might eventually be achieved to the Middle East conflict.

On the military front, despite the setbacks of 'Black September', for example, and despite the internal disagreements within the Organisation as a whole, the PLO had managed to survive, and to emerge as a potent military force, in the guerrilla sense, if not in the conventional sense. One result was that emigration from Israel rose to a new high level by mid-1975, with Israeli immigration from the Soviet Union declining dramatically as well, as many of those Jews permitted to leave the Soviet Union chose to settle in other countries. The impact of the changing demographic pattern of Israel's population was referred to by Moshe Dayan in a speech to the South African Zionist Federation in late 1974, when he said that one of the major threats to the survival of Israel was neither Arab hostility, nor the economic crisis, but the declining level of immigration from 'white' Jews.

Moreover, with the new escalation of guerrilla activity, the PLO was able to re-open its front across the Jordan River during April 1975, despite the continuation of clashes with the Jordanian army. Militarily, the PLO appeared by the beginning of May to have survived the low ebb of early 1974, and to have restored its own ability to strike deep into Israeli-occupied territory. However, the incidence of attacks against airliners and other targets from the Middle East, previously carried out by elements encouraged by Libyan President Qaddafi, appeared to be on the decline following the first evidence earlier in the year that the PLO was prepared to sentence the organisers of and participants in such attacks to prison sentences to be served in Syria.

The basic diplomatic and political problem remained. The PLO, slowly appearing to resolve its own internal differences characterised by the clash between the PLO Executive and the 'Rejection Front', still had no guarantee that it would be involved in any attempts at a peace settlement in any meaningful way, thanks to continued American and Israeli intransigence. Arab and Soviet diplomatic support - linked though it was to the prickly nettle of possible participation in a re-convened Geneva peace conference - had failed to remove the obstacles presented by the US and Israeli attitudes. The PLO also began to suspect the intentions of a Soviet Union keen to preserve its detente with the United States by helping to arrange some kind of Middle East settlement.

The internal debate within the Palestinian organisations - over whether or not to accept a partial settlement - should one be offered -

continued also to rumble, though less publicly than before. In general terms, however, the PLO leadership appeared slowly to be moving towards a public acceptance that some kind of partial settlement, though unwelcome, was better than nothing as a first stage. The joint command formed with Syria early in 1975, coupled with well-informed reports that a Government in exile was at last being planned indicated that the choice of liberation by stages was, however reluctantly, being accepted.

Whatever the shifts in the PLO's political and diplomatic stance, however, the basic problem that has confronted the Resistance since its foundation remained: the Israeli Government, despite its difficulties and setbacks, appeared completely unready even to hand back the Egyptian and Syrian territory seized in 1967, let alone make any concessions to the Palestinians. Another war looked, therefore, not merely possible, but probable, though the timing remained uncertain.

In that war, however, whenever it occurs, the Palestinians will be certain to figure in a major way both as military and diplomatic participants. That, in itself, is an indication of the achievements of the Revolution, despite its problems, despite its setbacks, and despite the lack of concrete achievement in the long term objective of liberating the people.

PALESTINIAN STRATEGY AFTER THE OCTOBER WAR

by SABRI AHMED

More than a year after the fourth Arab-Israeli war of October 1973, the Middle East is building up for another showdown.

Three salient features have marked the Middle Eastern landscape since the war:

- the quick build-up of Israeli military power;
- the spectacular decline of Israel's political dynamic, and its diplomatic isolation on the world scene;
- the political victories which the Palestine Resistance Movement has scored on major fronts.

This article, written in December 1974, is principally concerned with this last point, the Palestinian strategy, its basic orientation since the appearance of the Movement in 1965: the questions the October war

raised in regard to this strategy: the changes occurring in the wake of the war: and the perspectives and probable evolution of this strategy.

From the day Al Fatah appeared on the scene and launched its first military operation against Israel (January 1, 1965) the basic line of the Resistance Movement has been the practice of mass armed struggle, as opposed to classical warfare, in the conflict with the Zionist State. Fatah explained its strategy as the catalyst which will trigger off a chain reaction, and as the major disruption which will eliminate the obstacles which obstruct the process of liberation. In one of its political manifestos (after the first few military operations) Fatah expressed its hope that its action will disrupt the 'status quo of terror' in the area, and generate a revolutionary impetus crucial for the coming battle with Israel to be fought by the armed masses supported by the Arab armies.

This conception clashed from the very start with President Nasser's vision of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Egyptian press underlined the 'fundamental role of Egypt in the conflict' and presented fedayeen action as 'necessary but secondary'. It was emphasised that 'fedayeen action cannot evict Israel from the West Bank, or from the Syrian plateau (the Golan) or from Sinai ... it should only continue as a factor of harrassment for the enemy and thus keep the problem in movement until the next war'.¹

Second basic feature in Fatah strategy was that Arab Unity does not have to be achieved before action but rather that action itself has to precede unity and make it possible. In fact, the Palestinian line as defined by Fatah not only intended to take the Palestinian problem out of the Arab regime's sphere of control, but flagrantly contradicted Nasser's vision of the war with Israel. Nasser was conscious that the military balance of power was against him: to balance Israel's military superiority he prescribed Arab unity.²

For Nasser the initiative for military action had to remain in Egypt's hands. He could not afford to let a mass movement push him into an armed confrontation for which he was not prepared. However Nasser's vision was dictated by the conviction that the fight against Israel, whose existence was supported by the USA was in the end hopeless. Arab strategy had therefore to adapt itself to the realisation of limited objectives: the recovery of Arab occupied lands (since the June 1967 war) and a limited solution to the Palestine problem.³

This leads us to the third basic feature of Palestinian strategy. The final objective of the Palestine Resistance Movement was defined from the very start as the total liberation of Palestine and the destruction of

the Zionist State in order to establish a secular democratic State in Palestine in which Arabs and Jew will coexist. This objective was contradictory with the limited objective defined by Nasser. The confrontation reached a peak when, in July 1970, Nasser accepted the 'peace plan' proposed by William Rogers, then Secretary of State of the USA. Furthermore, Egypt had accepted the terms of UN Security Council resolution 242 in which the Palestine problem is reduced to a question of Arab refugees, a resolution which the Resistance fought from the very start.

Fourth feature: the whole ideological framework of the Palestinian strategy is that the Palestinian people are fighting a war of national liberation against the Zionist State, 'spearhead' of imperialism in the Middle East. This struggle was defined as part of the struggle for national liberation fought by all peoples of the world against imperialism. The Resistance practices revolutionary violence for liberation as opposed to Zionist violence for oppression.

Those were the dominant features of the Resistance Movement's strategy from 1965 until the October war.⁴ Military action was applied intermittently (the years 1968-1970 were those of intense military activity from the Jordanian front: after 1970, military operations were rendered difficult by the conditions at Israel's frontiers, and the severe measures the Jordanian regime took to liquidate the Resistance in Jordan). Relations with the different Arab regimes followed a more or less clashing pattern. Nevertheless, the predominant line remained that the Arab regimes were incapable of waging war against Israel: even to recover the occupied territories, and that only a popular war could deal fatal blows to the Zionist State.

The October war disrupted this pattern:

- It came as a total surprise and showed that the Arab regimes were still capable of taking a military initiative.
- It gave proof that a war conducted along classical lines and with classical material could seriously hurt Israel.
- The Resistance's 'maximum objective' to be attained through mass armed struggle was overshadowed by the Arab regimes 'limited' objectives, and the large-scale classical war launched for their realisation.
- It gave proof that the theory of 'action first and unity next' is right. For the first time, Arab unity became operational in action. Not before action. Nor coming after action. But in action. And this unity embodied all the Arab regimes, with the exception of Jordan.

Though Israel nearly achieved military victory during the October

war, the Arabs' political victory was by far more spectacular. And even though the Arabs had only attained the minimum objective that of freezing the status quo and inflicting on the Israelis losses of life and equipment without achieving territorial gains, the maximum objective seemed possibly attainable if the political battle were fought wisely.⁵

For the first time since 1965, a trend in the Resistance Movement embraced the notion that the struggle on the political diplomatic scene was of equal importance as the armed struggle itself. There were four immediate aims, and efforts were brought to bear in four complementary directions:

- The reinforcement of the national study which had always been a priority (in the preoccupations) of the Resistance.⁶ The Palestinian national identity, the political consciousness of the Palestinian people had to be sealed in order to form the fundamental background for the future development of the political and military efforts.
- The sphere of alliances had to be widened and the friendship with the Soviet Union reinforced. The USSR has influence in the region, and though unable to bring direct pressure on Israel, can do so indirectly through its relations with the USA.
- The isolation of the Hashemite regime in Jordan. The Arab countries had to be forced into recognising the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.
- The legitimization of the Palestinian objectives on the international scene.

National unity was achieved through months of discussions and debates on the various issues at all levels in the Movement: from the camps and fedayeen bases up to the higher echelons of the various organisations. New dynamism was injected into the Movement as the Palestine National Front proclaimed in the West Bank and Gaza (in August 1973) brought active support to it. These efforts were crowned in the ten-point decisions of the 12th National Council (June 1974) and the composition of the Executive Committee in which all the major organisations are represented.

With national unity consolidated the second step was to seek strong support from friends. The USSR and the Popular Democracies in Eastern Europe recognised the PLO as the only representative of the Palestinian people and declared their support of the aspirations of the Movement to establish a national authority in a Palestinian State on the West Bank and Gaza.

As both steps were under way, the Arab scene was in a turmoil due to King Hussein's obstinate determination to regard himself as the

representative of the Palestinian people. His attitude, as seen from the angle of his political interests, is logical. In 1967 he had lost the West Bank, Palestinian territory which his grandfather King Abdullah had annexed in 1951 after the proclamation of the State of Israel on the other part of Palestine, but the Israeli occupied West Bank is populated by nearly one million Palestinians. If Hussein were to relinquish his self-appointed representation of these Palestinians, and recognise the PLO as their representative, he would commit suicide for his regime. He would be left with the arid, economically non-viable Eastern Bank (Transjordan). Direct support was given to him by the USA. Support was equally provided by Israel. While refusing to recognise the PLO, the USA was putting pressure on Israel to come to terms with Hussein, and give him back parts of the West Bank. In the American view this tactic aimed at short-circuiting the PLO's authority.

Not that Israel preferred to negotiate with any Arab party. Israel had declared that if it should recognise a Palestinian identity, it would see it as part of Jordan, represented by King Hussein's regime. The American argument emphasised, in talks with Egypt and Saudi Arabia, that as long as Israel was unwilling to negotiate the future of the West Bank with anybody else but King Hussein, it would be useful if the Arab countries themselves conferred on Hussein the faculty of representing the Palestinians (at least those living under Israeli occupation, together with the others living in his kingdom), if progress were to be made in the march towards peace.

Initial success was achieved by the American-Jordanian joint efforts, when on the 18th July, King Hussein and President Sadat signed an agreement giving Hussein Egypt's support in this respect.⁷ From this moment, the Resistance had to redouble its efforts not only to deal with Hussein's machination but to make Egypt go back on its decision. But as the ball was in Israel's court, it quickly became apparent that the Israeli leaders were unwilling to negotiate the future of the West Bank even with King Hussein. Instead of short-circuiting the PLO's authority, the American-Jordanian plan backfired and dealt Hussein's regime a severe blow. The Arab Summit meeting (Rabat, and of October 1974) crowned the PLO's offensive on the Jordanian regime and the Movement came out as the sole representative of the Palestinian people recognised by all Arab States.

Fourth objective: The United Nations. On the 15th October, the UN General Assembly invited the PLO to represent the Palestinian people in the discussion of the Palestine problem. On the 13th November,

Yasser Arafat addressed the General Assembly. And at the end of the debate (during which Israel's diplomatic isolation appeared clearly), the Assembly voted a resolution which underlined the rights of the Palestinian people to struggle by every means in order to obtain its rights to return to Palestine, and the right to self-determination on the Palestinian soil.

The aims of the PLO at the United Nations were twofold:

- Reverse a basically unjust and illogical situation which Israeli policy had enforced on the international scene and which distorted the roles of who is the oppressor and who is the victim: the Palestinians aimed at placing the Resistance's role not as a reaction to the Israeli existence but as an independent revolutionary policy, thus making Israeli policy itself appear as a reaction.
- Legitimising of the strategic objectives of the Resistance by the international community.

Nonetheless, the strategic aim of liberating Palestine and establishing on all Palestine a secular democratic state remains unchanged. However, the means to achieve this are beginning to be better articulated and formulated. In opposition to the argument that all of Palestine should be the immediate aim of the Resistance and that no steps should be undertaken to proceed by stages, the decisions of the 12th National Council gave the PLO leadership a free hand to act in view of establishing a national power on all territories evacuated by Israel as a first stage. On the other hand secondary contradictions with Arab regimes were put on the shelf: all efforts should be brought on the Zionist enemy. The Resistance, thus, became a powerful factor in the united Arab front facing Israel.

Today, after a year of political-diplomatic efforts, what are the eventualities along which Palestinian strategy is to evolve? Three possibilities are conceivable at this moment. Three unequal possibilities, but each of which must be examined, in order to determine the course of Palestinian action:

- Will Israel willingly give up the occupied territories and recognise the PLO as representative of the Palestinian people and Palestinian rights?
- Will Israel be forced by combined Arab diplomatic efforts and American pressure to give up the territories and negotiate?
- Will war erupt on an Israeli initiative in an attempt to re-establish the status quo ante the October war?

Examined carefully, the first eventuality seems improbable, if not impossible. The persistent refusal of Israel to evacuate occupied

Arab lands can be traced to multiple reasons. The survival of the Zionist bet was laid from the start on the necessity of absorbing at least six million Jews - this so that the State of Israel, as an exclusively Jewish State, would be able to survive in a region populated by 100 million Arabs. In order to reach this figure no efforts were spared to attract Jews from all over the world in Israel. However, when the June 1967 war erupted, immigration was at its lowest and the population of Israel far from the 6 million figure. Between 1967 and 1973 an economic boom attracted more Jews than before although statistics showed that Western European and American Jews still preferred to stay in their countries and support Israel from afar.

Here we lay a finger on one aspect of the political credibility gap Israel reveals to the Jews of the world, and which in itself is one of the major results of the October war; Israel no longer appears to a potential immigrant as a prosperous haven where he can lead a comfortable life protected by an invincible army: it appears to him as a big ghetto which will sooner or later have to integrate itself in the area or disappear.⁸ Furthermore the disastrous economic situation in Israel makes it economically necessary for Israel to preserve the Arab lands. Three instances will help shed light on this aspect:

- The implantation of 'colonies' in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan is already at an advanced stage. Before the war Israel had announced that 35 new 'villages' were to be established in the Jordan valley, in the Golan, and near Rafah south of Gaza (August 18, 1973), not to mention the numerous 'shukunats' built around cities like Jerusalem and Hebron.⁹
- The Abu Rudeiss oil-wells in the Sinai provide Israel with a sufficient production to make it self-sufficient and this at a time when the West is suffering from an energy shortage.
- The West Bank, economically annexed to Israel has proven itself as being a 'reservoir' of cheap manual labour of tremendous importance for the development of Israel's capitalist economy.¹⁰

In this context, it appears that the current leadership in Israel cannot take an initiative in the direction of relinquishing the Arab lands without jeopardising in the long run its own interests, the interests of the rising capitalist class in the Israeli society and last, but most important in the final analysis, without abandoning the basic principles of Zionism. The Zionist enterprise was built on the premise of 'a people without a land to a land without a people'. If the Zionist establishment is to recognise the Palestinian people's rights to this same land, will it not be putting in question its own legitimacy?

Can the present Israeli leadership extract the country from this imbroglio? Recently, Nahum Goldmann, former President of the World Zionist Organisation and current President of the World Jewish Congress, urged the Rabin government to adopt the following plan:

- Dissolve the current Knesset and call for an election-referendum on the issue of peace and evacuation of Arab lands.

- If a majority should come out in opposition to this project, a Likud-led government would be formed and this government will find itself facing a double impossibility: that of making peace (for evident reasons) and that of making war (because the USA will not support such an initiative).

- Within Israel, this impasse would stimulate political consciousness of the fact that only evacuation of Arab occupied territories and the recognition of limited Palestinian rights can bring about peace. Thus the actual 'equipe' in power would come forcefully back and take the initiative of a peace move without fear of being disapproved by the country.¹¹ Of course, Goldmann sees the survival of Zionism or rather what some call 'spiritual Zionism', from a perspective not shared by the Zionist establishment in power in Israel and it is impossible to see how even such a manoeuvre can help the Israeli leadership avoid facing the long run problem of keeping the Zionist structures of the state intact ... This question is however out of the scope of this discussion.

The second hypothesis examined in the light of the criteria mentioned, shows that only American pressure on Israel can ultimately bring about a change in the Israeli outlook towards the future. This raises the question: will the USA put pressure on Israel, and can it possibly do so in the present state of conditions reigning in the American power establishment itself?

Washington will only put pressure on Israel if it comes to the conclusion that the Israeli intransigence is endangering American interests in the area. There is no doubt that the oil offensive against the West during the last war, and the political effects of the ever-present possibility that the Arabs might have recourse to use of this arm again, has made American policymakers reconsider their old system of alliances (based principally on Israel) in the Middle East. During the Nixon era, a gradual diversification of Washington's alliances began to appear as the alternative to the old policy, a survival of the Dulles era. The USA no longer relied exclusively on Israel but enhanced its relations with countries like Iran and Saudi Arabia, old allies who were getting edgy because of Washington's attitude towards

Israel.¹² After the October war, this line was still further developed in an attempt to attach Egypt to the American sphere of influence.

However since the Ford administration came into power, and with the results of the November Congress elections this course seems to be blurred, to say the least. During the Nixon years (except for the last few months when the Watergate scandal reached its peak), the decision-making in American foreign policy was on a White House-State Department axis. Since then, more than one centre of decision have sprung up: the White House, the State Department, the Pentagon, the two Houses of Congress, and the two main lobbys concerned, the Zionists and the oil companies. For the moment, the uncertainty that dwells on the American political scene makes American pressure on Israel difficult to conceive.

This leads us to the third hypothesis: war. Two possibilities are relevant in this respect:

- Either the USA gives Israel the green light and it is difficult at the moment to imagine why Washington would wish for an Israeli military adventure which will most certainly lead to the dangerous 'no war, no peace' situation which prevailed during the 1967-1973 years and therefore to a certain loss of ground of American influence in the area with the dangers which such an initiative will entail on the oil scale.

- Or, Israel takes the initiative without prior consultation with Washington and puts the USA in front of a 'fait accompli' where it will have to lend it a helping hand.

What political objectives can Israel gain by such a move?

- Israel cannot win a war as in June 1967, and cannot inflict a defeat this time similar to that of the June war on the vigilant and highly trained and equipped Arab armies.

- Israel cannot select a limited objective, isolate one Arab army, without leading to a major confrontation on all fronts.

- Israel can achieve only one very limited aim by attempting to strike the Resistance Movement in South Lebanon: to give the reputedly feeble Rabin government the necessary impetus to be able to manoeuvre freely. In fact, it will be the military pendant of the Goldmann proposition inasfar as its ultimate aim is concerned: strengthen the Rabin government.

In all likelihood, the USA today does not want a war, and if Israel were to trigger one the Americans will only help it not to lose the war; but not to win it.

However in all cases examined, the balance of power in the

Middle East on the political level is for the moment frozen. Any build up of Israeli force will only lead to a build up of an Arab counter-force.¹³ Consequently it appears that Israel is cornered: it will have sooner or later to give up the Arab territories and recognise the PLO. All other alternatives, even the military ones, only delay this outcome, but in no case do they remove it.

How does the PLO see the various possibilities of peace and war?

The PLO rules out the first two eventualities and sees in the current climate on the Israeli side a preparation to launch an all-out offensive to strike the Resistance, and more particularly to neutralise the effects of its recent political-diplomatic successes. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that should war erupt again, the Resistance will grasp the chance to develop its strategy along more favourable lines than those which came out of the October war. The October war was too short and Israel was not dealt a sufficiently severe blow.

During the past year, intensive action has begun in the occupied territories. If during the war, the mobilisation of the masses in the West Bank and Gaza proved to be slow and difficult to accelerate with the rhythm of the war itself, conditions for the eruption of this front in a war are now ripe: in case of war tomorrow, the fighting will reach the heart of Israel.

Even if military action cannot take a different course than that adopted in October on the Lebanese and Syrian borders, the better equipped fedayeen forces can today inflict on the Israeli forces more losses. More: Israel, this time, will have to mobilise parts of its forces to counter fedayeen action.

War will tarnish the American image and deal a severe blow to the so-called American peace plans, as the USA cannot but side (even on a limited scale) with Israel. Conditions therefore might reverse the current situation so that the 'Palestinian peace' supported by the Soviet Union can be enforced, and a Palestinian State on the West Bank and Gaza can be established with a real national power.

No change in the balance of power in the area is now possible in Israel's favour. However, the Arab side has a few pressure cards which it can use:

- the oil arm;
- mass action inside the occupied territories;
- military action, where possible to keep the Israeli forces on the alert;
- slight contradictions which appear on the surface of the Zionist

establishment itself can be exploited.

Can a national power therefore be established in a Palestinian State on the West Bank and Gaza? In the current conditions, the PLO sees that:

- Any Palestinian concession to Israel, as small as it may appear, will weaken the Resistance and strengthen Israel.
- Any political manoeuvring around the strategic principles of the Resistance will have the same effects on the balance of power between the Resistance Movement and Israel.
- An intransigent Palestinian attitude on the strategic principles, but a supple attitude on the diplomatic scene will strengthen the Palestinian hand, corner Israel, and eventually force its hand. Therefore a higher level in the armed struggle against the Zionist State is called for and in particular, a continuous build up of mass pressure in the West Bank and Gaza.

However, Israel and the USA do not want a Palestinian State established on the West Bank and Gaza. No national power in a Palestinian State can be obtained without the Soviet Union's help. Neither the USA nor Israel want a state allied to the Soviet Union.

Saudi Arabia and Jordan are against the establishment of a national power on the West Bank. Any progressive regime in a Palestinian State will necessarily have a contagious effect on Saudi Arabian masses, and the Hashemite regime will not be able to survive because of internal mass pressure.

Egypt and Syria are not against a national Palestinian power, but President Sadat prefers the future Palestinian regime to be 'more moderate' than the present PLO leadership. Therefore new Palestinian elements who have so far been kept outside the PLO leadership and who have been considered free from any organisational ties inside the Movement could be thrust forward by Egypt in order to colour the future Palestinian power structure.

The PLO, with the help of Algeria and of the Soviet Union, is determined to prepare the way for a national power whose elements will be composed solely from militant cadres of the Resistance and others from the National Front operating in the occupied territories.

Both the USA and Israel will play two cards to thwart PLO plans:

- The Jordanian card, which despite appearances is far from being discarded:
- Search for a puppet leadership amongst the Palestinian bourgeoisie, in particular amongst the elements who have collaborated with the occupation forces in the West Bank.

However the chances are slim. After the blow of the Rabat Summit meeting, King Hussein's regime is faltering, and even with the backing of Saudi Arabia cannot make up for the lost ground of this last round. And no Palestinian elements, even amongst those who have freely collaborated with the occupation forces, are willing to run such a risk today.

The PLO, with the help of Algeria and the Soviet Union will play the following cards basically:

- No possible peace can be made in the area without the participation of the Resistance Movement:
- No Palestinian State can be established without the active leadership of the Resistance Movement sole representative of the Palestinian masses.

The situation today is a deadlock. Peace seems remote. War is possible. In Israel, the Zionist leaders are playing a dangerous game.¹⁴ But it is the game which their reactionary and oppressive nature cannot but dictate: they are preparing for another military adventure which will only lead to more bloodshed.

The resistance offers peace to all Jews living in Palestine. A just peace based on the will to live together on an equal basis. All the course of Palestinian strategy is based on this objective.

Footnotes

1. See in particular Mohammed Hassanein Heikal's article in Al-Ahram, January 26, 1968.
2. According to various sources President Nasser used to communicate (in Arab Summit meetings) his conviction that the Arab soldier was only worth 17% of an Israeli soldier insofar as efficiency, technical standard, and intellectual capacity are concerned.
3. For a deeper insight into Nasser's vision see his 'memoirs of the first Palestine war', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol II No 2, Winter 1973, pp. 3-32.
4. Series 'Revolutionary Studies and Practices' published by Fatah, in particular No 1 'From the Starting Points of Fedayin Action'; No 2 'How will the People's Armed Revolution Explode'; No 3 'Revolution and Violence: The road to victory'; No 7 'On Strategy' as well as 'The Palestinian Revolution: How it thinks, how it works, how it faces the present, how it sees the future'. See also 'The Political and Organisational Strategy' - Resolutions of the PFLP Congress (February 1969) - All publications

in Arabic.

5. G. Tueni: 'After October - Military Conflict and Political Change in the Middle East', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol III, No 4, Summer 1974, pp. 116-130
6. For more details see No 9 of the series 'Revolutionary Studies and Practices': 'The Unity of the Palestinian Revolution' as well as the 'Project-Program for a United Palestinian Front' submitted by the PDFLP to the 6th National Council (September 1969).
7. For a complete viewpoint see I. Sus: 'La Resistance sur les Chemins de Geneve' in Le Monde Diplomatique, October 1974.
8. For detailed information about immigration and emigration problems see: Haaretz, February 3, 1974; Davar, March 22, 1974; Yedioth Aharonoth, April 4, 1974; Hatsofeh, July 2, 1974 and the excellent survey published in Al-Ard, Vol 2, No 2-3, October 15, 1974 - Analytical Bulletin published by the Al-Ard Institute for Palestine Studies in Damascus.
9. Since June 1967 and up to the October War, 45 'village-settlements' have been established in the occupied Arab territories.
10. On August 28, 1973, Haim Bar-Lev then Minister of Commerce in Israel, declared that the occupied territories, and Israel form one single economic entity.
11. In a series of articles published in Haaretz, mid-November, 1974.
12. See I. Sus: 'L'offensive Diplomatique de l'Arabie Saoudite: Crise Petroliere et Resistance Palestinienne' in Le Monde Diplomatique, October 1973.
13. G. Tueni: 'After October .. Ibid
14. See the recent Israeli insinuations about the use of nuclear arms in future conflicts and in particular the declarations made by the President of the State of Israel, Ephraim Katzir. An-Nahar, December 3, 1974.

Note: This article was previously published in Free Palestine, Vol. 8, No. 5, May 1975 - Eds.

SECTION FOUR:

SUPER-POWER POLICIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Introduction

In this section the focus shifts to the international level, to the interests and ideologies which underlie super-power policies in the Middle East, and which form the backdrop of political constraints against which the local struggles are waged. The fact that the super-powers may both constrain and accelerate particular political developments in the Middle East does not, of course, mean that the local powers should be seen as mere puppets of the super-power antagonists. As Fred Halliday shows, great-power alignments in the Middle East have continually shifted since the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. In analysing the causes of these superficially illogical changes, he argues that the answers have to be sought, not only in the geopolitical and economic interests of the two rival super-powers (and to a lesser extent the former European colonial powers), but also in the class nature of the Arab regimes themselves. Eqbal Ahmad's contribution concentrates on US policy in the Middle East which he sees as essentially motivated by three perceived threats to America's increasingly precarious global hegemony. These are identified as Soviet expansionism, Third World national liberation movements and the emergence of a United Europe as a new super-power. Thus the main thrust of US foreign policy at the global level has been to contain Soviet expansionism, repress national liberation struggles and to retain leverage over an increasingly powerful Europe (and Japan). The main part of the paper is devoted to examining the implications of these general US foreign policy motivations in the specific context of the Middle East. Malcolm Caldwell's contribution concentrates, in contrast, on Soviet policy in the Middle East and in particular on the Soviet energy policy with respect to the oil producing states. He shows how, despite the fact that the USSR has vast domestic reserves of oil, a major Soviet interest in the area arises out of the apparently paradoxical, but never-

theless real, Russian need for Middle East oil. Caldwell relates particular Soviet economic interests in the Middle East to the long-range Soviet goal of creating a 'world energy delivery system' and outlines some of the possible political implications of this in terms of Soviet/Arab relations.

INTER-IMPERIALIST CONTRADICTIONS AND ARAB NATIONALISM

by FRED HALLIDAY

The policies of the great powers in the Middle East since the end of World War Two have been marked by a striking inconsistency; this must indicate something about their policies in the region and about the local forces with which they have engaged. The inconsistency is evident from the record of the five major powers in the four Arab-Israeli wars that have so far occurred.¹ The easiest way to illustrate this is to tabulate the positions of the five powers for each war in terms of whether they were pro-Israeli or pro-Arab. These are of course crude labels: in one sense all the powers have been pro-Israeli all the time in so far as all have accepted, with varying degrees of emphasis, the legitimacy of an Israeli state; only China, in the wars of 1967 and 1973, may implicitly have diverged from that position. But, if this qualification is born in mind, then it is still relevant to chart the relative inflections of policy in the four different wars, basing judgement on the degree of diplomatic support given to one or other side in the dispute on each occasion. The result of such a tabulation is as follows:

TABLE 1

	SU	China	USA	UK	France
1948	1	1	1	A	A
1956	A	A	A	1	1
1967	A	A	1	1	A
1973	A	A	1	A	A
A - pro-Arab			1 - pro-Israel		

To begin with Russia and China. The Soviet Union supported the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, and considered the Arab forces involved to be agents of imperialism, and in particular of British imperialism.² The Chinese Communist Party, at that time in command of most of China and in at least public accord with the foreign policies of the Soviet Union, did not dissent.³ In 1956 both countries adopted strongly pro-Arab positions, and they both retained this affiliation in 1967 and 1973. Indeed, once their own dispute broke into the open in 1963, they accused each other of betraying the interests of the Arab peoples, a form of rivalry between them seen elsewhere. The two major non-capitalist countries therefore have each held the same position, and since 1956 both have supported the Arab side.

No such unity prevails on the imperialist side: indeed the record shows (a) that no imperialist country has supported the same side in each of the four wars; (b) that in no war have all three imperialist countries held the same position; and (c) that the line-up has been identical only in 1948 and 1973. In 1948, the United States, at this time under the strong influence of a 'Zionist lobby', backed the creation of the state of Israel and supported the Zionist cause. The economic interests of the US elsewhere in the Middle East, especially in Saudi oil, were not such as to deter this policy, and in any case the Saudis were too weak to do anything had they wanted to.⁴ Britain and France, on the other hand, the powers whose First World War collusion had originally constructed the problem, gave some diplomatic support to the Arab side.

In 1956 all was reversed: indeed for all five powers 1956 was the complete negation of 1948, and at least partly because the same factors operated. The key to the switch in the imperialist line-up lay in the changed position of the Soviet Union and in the emergence of Arab forces which were, to a certain extent, anti-imperialist (Egypt). But Britain and France, precisely because their interests in the Arab world remained strong, wanted to eliminate Nasser and chose Israel as the most convenient ally for this purpose. The USA, on the other hand, felt that the existence of Israel was not in danger at this time and had now to counter-act a factor not present in 1948: the Soviet support for the Arab states. Dulles' 'agonising reappraisal' was an attempt to prevent the Soviet Union from gaining influence because of the Anglo-French-Israeli tripartite collusion. The Eisenhower Doctrine, proclaiming US dominance in the Middle East, was the result.

The 1967 war was the only one in which the Arab-Israeli line-up

corresponded almost entirely to one dividing the imperialist powers which backed Israel, from the non-capitalist powers backing the Arab states. (France alone was out of line.) In one sense the 1967 war was less of a change than 1956 had been in relation to 1948: in the earlier case, every single state had changed sides, now only the USA and France had changed sides. Yet 1967 was in other ways distinct from all other three: first, because the lines of division corresponded to the global lines of division which were at that time highlighted by Vietnam and the spate of counter-revolutionary coups (Indonesia, Ghana, Greece); secondly, because it was the only war in which there was a conclusion that appeared to be decisive. In fact, it was, for a time, militarily decisive but after the demonstrations in Egypt in Nasser's support, the political impact was already blunted.

No such clarity prevailed in 1973. Here three changes affected the line-up, or, to be precise, the changed positions of the two junior imperialist powers, Britain and France. First of all, the dependence of these countries on Middle East oil and their vulnerability to the Arab oil states in economic matters as a whole, meant that they were less prone to back Israel. Secondly, the influence of the Soviet Union in the Arab world had so declined (especially following Sadat's expulsion of Soviet officers in July 1972) that the Arab-Israeli dispute no longer corresponded to a straight capitalist/communist one. The risks involved in supporting the Arab states were therefore less. Thirdly, because of the 1967 victory, no states seriously expected the very existence of Israel to be threatened, and the Egyptians let it be known that even they saw the war as a means of assisting their negotiations. It was in a sense a war for peace. The paradoxical nature of this result was extreme: in 1967 Israel launched a surprise attack and crushed the Arab forces, while the world outside supported it for fear it would be eliminated; in 1973, the Arab states launched a surprise attack, much of the world outside supported them, knowing that Israel would not be overwhelmed. In one case Arab martial rhetoric and in the other Israeli arrogance enabled the attacking force to attract sympathy.

Such an apparently illogical record requires explanation - all the more so, if one compares the degree of inter-imperialist conflict and inconsistency in the Middle East, with the record elsewhere. Nor is this inconsistency a product of the post-1945 era: the Middle East has been an arena of inter-imperialist conflict for well over a century, ever since Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798 and the Eastern Question, as it was later known, began to take shape, with the rival imperialist

powers manoeuvring around the dying, but surprisingly resilient, Ottoman Empire. An examination of the five major areas of the colonial world brings out this point clearly. In Latin America, the Spanish and the Portuguese dominated the mainland until the nineteenth century; indirect economic domination by Britain followed, and today the USA is the undisputed imperialist power in this region. In so far as the USA faces a challenge it is from various forms of indigenous opponents, nationalist, socialist or an alleged mixture of the two. In the Far East there has been considerable change in the influence of different powers, but this has mainly concerned the rivalry between the USA, UK and France, and Japan. Since the defeat of the latter in 1945, the three others have not been involved in serious dispute with each other. In Africa, there were disputes in the nineteenth and early twentieth century - interestingly enough, however, these tended to be in or near the Arab world (Fashoda 1896, Morocco 1911). Today, as in Latin America, what threat to the imperialist powers there is in Africa comes from indigenous political forces themselves.

Many factors contribute to this variation in imperialist policies. Geography is one, in that the Middle East is the area of the colonial world nearest Europe: it is too far away to annex outright (the Roman Empire, the Crusades, the Berlin-Baghdad railway notwithstanding) and too near to ignore. It is, above all, near enough to exert a differential influence on the various imperialist powers: Italy looks across the sea to Libya; the Germans could feel the Ottoman Empire crumbling on their south-east flank; France moved across the Mediterranean to Algeria. Only Britain enjoyed an apparent distance - for it the Middle East was constituted geographically by its location between London and Delhi. Another, and ever more important factor, is oil and the different dependences of the major imperialist countries on Arab oil. And it is yet a further paradox of the situation that (until the recent ownership changes) the US owned around 70% of Mideast production and sold it to Europe and Japan. This made the Europeans dependent for survival on the Arab states while the USA which owned the oil was more or less immune. In the 1973 war in particular, and in the various energy debates that followed it, this differential dependence was an important factor.

Here, however, I would like to concentrate on a further reason for the diversity in imperialist policies, one internal to the Middle East itself. This is the character of the Arab states themselves and of part of Arab nationalism. This nationalism has been strong in much of the Arab world since before the First World War, but throughout its history

it has exhibited two features that affect the policies of imperialism: (a) the role of genuinely left-wing forces, socialist or communist, within the nationalist movement has been very weak or non-existent,⁵ The most militant forms of Arab nationalism have been anti-communist in theory and practice (viz Nasser's imprisonment and torture of Egypt's communists; the Baath's killings of Iraqi CP members in 1963; Nimeiry's executions in 1971; Qaddafi's hostility to Marxist atheism); (b) throughout the history of Arab nationalism, many nationalist elements have tried to achieve their objectives by various forms of alliances with imperialist powers. Here one need only cite the alliance of Sharif Hussein with the British and the French in World War I; the attempts by Arabs in the 1930s and 1940s to play Germany and Italy off against Britain and France; Britain's sponsorship of the Arab League in 1945; and now Sadat's infitah, or opening, to western capital. Throughout the period of Nasser's closure of Egypt to the west (in essence, 1957-1967) a section of his entourage and many outside it were favourable to a re-establishment of closer ties with at least some of the imperialist powers. One can also trace, in earlier decades, the numerous attempts by the USA to win influence at the expense of the older-established colonialists, the French and the British, and in the middle and late-1960s, the equally duplicitous attempts by France to increase its position at the expense of the Anglo-Saxons.

The weakness of left-wing political movements in the Arab world is at the ideological level related to the extremely dense and powerful cultural atmosphere of the Arab world, which at first sight appears to hinder the development of any trend that is outside 'Arabism'. And this strong Arab ideology which has continued despite the lamentable record of inter-Arab political and economic co-operation is also one component of the history of Arab nationalism as a whole. However, the very force of this ideology might, initially, have been expected to preclude the kinds of alliances with western imperialism that have in fact occurred and which are very much the order of the day in the mid-1970s. Such an apparent contradiction is even larger because these alliances are not specific to countries like Egypt or Syria, where there exists a considerable body of western-oriented intellectuals and administrators. They are equally evident in the most politically and culturally conservative and unchanged areas of the Arab world - amid the arid hills of Amman, and further away in the oases of Saudi Arabia. It is not unreasonable to suggest that Cadillacs and colour TV are as much outside Arabism as are the hammer and the sickle.

The answer does not lie in the analysis of ideology alone, but in that of social analysis, of the class forces in the Arab world which have dominated Arab nationalism and whose interests have dictated Arab relations with the west. These ruling classes have, for ideological and political reasons, been opposed to the establishment and maintenance of the state of Israel: such reasons include the fact that demagoguery about Palestine helps to win favour with their own populations, and the fact that they may feel some form of religious/nationalist concern about Zionist occupation of Jerusalem and other Arab lands. But these same ideological factors and their material underpinnings also dictate a recurrent attraction to the USA - the very state that has been the main supporter of Israel since 1948. It is possible to see this by studying the recent policies of two kinds of Arab state, the oil states and Egypt.

The oil states might at first sight appear to have turned against imperialism, given the considerable damage inflicted on the advanced capitalist countries by the price rises and oil embargo of 1973. It is erroneous to claim that these changes were all organised by the oil companies and that there is no conflict of interest here. The oil companies have lost considerable power to the producer states. But while they have been deprived of their control at the point of production, they still retain control at the point of distribution; producer states rely on the companies to sell their oil for them. A new partnership has emerged, and as in all partnerships the members disagree about what the terms of the agreement are, and want to win more for themselves. It is a conflict within capitalism, similar to that between different firms or countries, and not one between capitalism and a progressive anti-imperialism.

The social character of the oil states helps to explain both why they have an interest in challenging the oil companies and maximising their income and why they wish to maintain their close ties to the western and Japanese markets. They need these markets to sell their oil; and as a source of imports; they want a prosperous industrialised world to invest in; and they still require technical assistance of all kinds to run their oil industry. As Yamani, the Saudi oil minister, has frequently stressed, the Saudis are 'responsible members' of the 'world community', and wish to play their part within it, but as equals.

The other side of these states is the character of their internal regimes and here the anti-communist and viciously conservative character of the ruling classes is evident. In all of the Arabian oil states (ie Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman) military forces have been built up with oil money and western

assistance in order to guarantee continued stability. In all of them women are denied the vote, forced to wear the veil, reared as the property of their husbands, excluded from all decision-making. Their position is worse not only than that of women in advanced capitalist countries (and here too women are oppressed) but they are also in a more subjugated position than women in any other area of the third world. In all of these states except Kuwait, trades unions are banned, and in Kuwait only Kuwaitis, ie 20% of the labour force, are allowed to participate in them. Abroad, Saudi Arabia uses its money to encourage right-wing trends in several Arab countries and beyond (through the Islamic Secretariat, the Islamic Bank etc). A convenient link-up therefore has taken place between these conservative Arabian ruling classes and imperialism. While intent on challenging previous imperialist economic domination, they are in no sense liable to swing over to the left politically. Hence the French, British, Germans, Americans and Japanese can compete for political, military and economic influence, and can patronise Israel, without running the risk of the Soviet Union or China intervening in the region. This says something very important about the political character of these states and goes some way to explaining the freedom of the imperialist powers to conduct themselves with such a lack of co-ordination.⁶

Egypt, a country with quite a different social system from the oil states, exhibits a parallel attraction to imperialism. Nasser's transformations did reduce the power of the old landowning class and establish Egyptian state, ie national administrative, control over the Egyptian economy. A minimal industrial base was built in the early 1960s. It is a matter of debate whether Nasser and his group carried out these reforms reluctantly, after the imperialists had forced the military junta to take a more radical line in the period 1954-1956, or whether they were immanent in the original Free Officers programme. Whatever the truth in this matter, there can be no doubt that once these reforms had been carried out they provided the context in which a new ruling class emerged, and this tabaga jadida, or new class, was interested in re-establishing the closer ties with the West that had been temporarily broken during the period of the Nasserite reforms. As had occurred in Turkey, an original phase of relatively anti-imperialist economic reform had created a bourgeoisie in and around the state-run economic and administrative structures. Once fortified this bourgeoisie was then able to act as the confident junior partners of a restored market economy. In Turkey the original Atatürk period (1921-1938) had consolidated the national-state sector, and this was then successively undone through

the Second World War boom in which private capital revived, and the ensuing democratisation, which with American encouragement, brought the Democratic Party to power in 1950. In Egypt, the nationalisations of foreign banks and companies in 1957 and the socialisation laws of 1961-3 were followed in the late 1960s by a progressive re-opening.

Sadat did not initiate this policy: it had already begun under Nasser, and it is quite bogus to express a critique of Sadat's policies in terms of a defense of the policies of his predecessor. In 1965 Nasser allowed his police to leave unpunished the landowners of Khamshish who murdered a local peasant leader, Salah Hussein; in 1967 Nasser capitulated to the Saudis at the Khartoum conference, when he agreed to abandon support for the national liberation movement in Arabia; in 1968 Nasser promised the demonstrating students and workers who opposed his social policies to reform government policy - and nothing was done. But Sadat has certainly developed these policies and his own particular conservative make-up (he was the Free Officer liaison man with the Muslim Brotherhood in 1951-1952) may have played a role.

Behind the policy of infitah there lie two considerations. The first is that since the USA is the patron of Israel, and since the Soviet Union has next to no leverage on Israel, the way to exert pressure on the Zionist state is by wooing its friend. The second consideration is that Egypt is in a financial crisis, and its ruling class needs to consolidate ties with its lost imperialist patrons if it is to be able to retain power. The first of these considerations is partly misconceived; the second less so. By breaking with the Soviet Union, Egypt, unlike Syria, has cut itself off from its main arms supplier: the threat of a future confrontation in Sinai is therefore much less menacing to the Israelis than it might otherwise have been, and a Syrian offensive without Egyptian support is impossible. Conversely, the Egyptians have less to offer the Americans than before: they have thrown in their lot with Washington, and can no longer use a Soviet presence as a bargaining counter. This was used, without avail, when they expelled the Soviet advisers in 1972. The one positive element in Sadat's policy is that the Americans may feel that Israel will be less threatened by Egypt if the latter is in close diplomatic relations with Washington too. But this depends on what pressure the USA is prepared to put on Israel to make major concessions.

The other aspect of the infitah is a failure, and tragically so as far as the people of Egypt are concerned. Large sums of money have been promised to Egypt - little of it by the USA directly, but most of

it through the oil states.⁷ However, even were all this money to be paid, and past precedents suggest it will not be, it will not solve Egypt's economic problems. It may only alleviate them for a time, and, by provoking inflation and supply shortages, may even worsen the situation. The corruption and wasteful consumer spending of the Egyptian ruling class is such that aid monies will be diverted into bourgeois control; and such projects as the prestige reconstruction of the Suez Canal towns are going to serve the interests of speculators and administrators rather than the majority of the people themselves. Little of the money will be used to expand productive capacity. The major socio-economic function of Arab aid is to provide the Egyptian ruling class with subsidies to strengthen their own political and economic positions.⁸

Per capita industrial output has been stagnant in Egypt since 1965. While the population of Cairo and Alexandria has more than doubled, that of some of the smaller provincial towns (Asyut, Aswan, Tanta, Fayyoun) has gone up by as much as ten times, without any comparable increase in employment. This indicates a protracted deterioration of economic conditions in the countryside, and has caused increasing homelessness and unemployment in the urban areas. This 'Calcutta-isation' of Egypt at the mass level has been paralleled by a flourishing of consumption amidst the upper sections of society. Increased imports of foreign consumer goods and cars, and a boom in higher-income housing and in prostitution are all indices of this, as is the increasing number of foreign banks now appearing in Cairo. Richer Egyptians and Arabs from the oil states living or holidaying in Egypt provide the stimulus for this development.

The greatest tragedy is that one of the reasons Sadat can carry this hopeless policy forward is the absence of any coherent and significant opposition capable of challenging the ruling group. All independent political parties have been banned since 1952 and the official Arab Socialist Union is above all an instrument of the state. Modern Egyptian history is punctuated with 'days of the masses' - occasions when the population of Cairo pour onto the streets to assert some political point: February 1946; January 1952, when they burnt Shepherd's Hotel in protest at the British presence on the Canal; June 9, 1967, when they called on Nasser not to resign; and a series of worker-student marches from 1968 onwards concerning domestic and foreign issues, the most recent in January 1975. There have been, and are, numerous underground organisations, but the mass actions have taken place apart from these organisations, and the latter remain divided, often transient and unable to find a significant implantation amidst the Egyptian

masses themselves. It is moreover a weakness of both the mass actions and the underground groups that they combine a militant realism on domestic and social issues with a generally delusive military perspective vis-a-vis Israel, calling as they do for 'wars of attrition' and 'offensives' when these are fundamentally idealist and militarist solutions to the problem of the Zionist enemy.

Sadat's infitah may therefore fail, but it corresponds to the social interests of the Egypt ruling class, and if and when it fails another representative of this same class is most likely to succeed. Sadat has himself played a constant game of illusion - making promises he does not keep, installing and then sacking a succession of technocratic prime ministers who will allegedly solve the economic crisis (Sidqi, Hegazi, Salem). The result will be that foreign capital will have re-asserted its hold over Egypt and the Egyptian people will be held down by a coalition of domestic and foreign oppressors.

There is another side to Arab nationalism, one that is more uncompromising and less opportunist in its relations to imperialism, but it has not achieved power in any of the states that determine dominant policy in the Arab world.⁹ But the willingness of many Arab governments to entertain co-operative relations with some or all imperialist powers and to oppose the communist powers is a striking feature of the postwar period as a whole. One final factor must be mentioned, which may both explain why such inter-imperialist diversity is evident, and why, after twenty-five or more years of evasion, US imperialism is finally making an effort to force a solution on its quarrelling clients. As in Southern Africa, there has been a protracted conflict between states that are, in their different ways, part of the capitalist world. So long as these conflicts remained non-explosive, or, if explosive, containable within a brief period, imperialism was able to allow them to continue. What has altered the situation in Southern Africa, and what has forced the Pretoria regime into concessions, is the crumbling of the Portuguese cordon around South Africa and Rhodesia. In the Middle East, it is the power of the oil states and the imminent possibility of certain other states - in particular Egypt - acquiring nuclear weapons, should they so wish.

This conflict could only have lasted as long as it has in this form because the Arab states were, in varying degrees, part of the imperialist system and because US support for Israel did not threaten oil interests as a whole. Without defecting to the Soviet Union, the oil states have now altered the terms of their economic relationship with imperialism and are making some effort to alter the political context of

the Arab-Israeli dispute. Were they determined, and skilful enough, they might be able to use oil to force the USA to put further pressure on Israel, to withdraw from some of the land she has seized and to allow a Palestinian state to be established. Such an eventuality is not impossible; and were it to occur, it would belatedly end one especially abject chapter in the long and continuing history of collusion between imperialism and the dominant regimes in the Arab world.

Footnotes

1. I have taken here the five permanent members of the Security Council: such a choice is not meant to imply any acceptance of this selection as representing the powers with a right to dominate UN or world affairs. They are all powers with public positions on the Middle East, but many others could be added - Japan, Italy, Germany, India, Brazil etc. I also reject the unscientific use of the concept 'imperialism' or 'social imperialism' as applied to the Soviet Union. Soviet policy is certainly to be criticised but this cannot be done with misused Marxist or Leninist categories.
2. For a critique of the Soviet position at this time see Fawaz Trabulsi, "The Question of Palestine", New Left Review 57.
3. I have taken the Chinese CP's position for 1948, rather than that of the Kuomintang, both because the CP were in power in the later years and because by 1948 they were in de facto control of most of China.
4. Saudi Arabia did not have an active and coherent foreign policy until Feisal gained control in the early 1960s. Before then Saudi initiatives had been sporadic, and their attitude to Palestine must have been influenced by their traditional hostility to the Hashemite rulers of Jordan, whom the Saudis had driven out of Arabia in the 1920s.
5. The best analyses in a western language of this failure and of its consequences is that of Maxime Rodinson, Marxisme et monde musulman, Paris 1972.
6. For further information on the social and political character of the oil states see the relevant chapters of my Arabia without Sultans, London 1974.
7. In a speech on 27 November 1974 then Prime Minister Hegazi gave the following figures for foreign aid agreements: \$500

millions from the Saudi Development Fund; \$200 millions from the United Arab Emirates; \$75 millions from Qatar; \$400 millions from Iran, plus various joint companies with Gulf states. Hence, without the USA investing anything directly, monies were being paid into the Egyptian economy from the advanced capitalist countries via the oil states, a clear case of the economic workings of sub-imperialism.

For my own earlier views on the class character of the Sadat regime, see "Egypt Goes West", Ramparts July 1971. Three major critiques of the Nasserite regime have appeared in the west: Anouar Abdel-Malek, Egypt: Military Society, New York 1968; Hassan Riad, L'Egypte Nasserienne, Paris 1964; and Mahmoud Hussein, Class Struggle in Egypt, New York 1972. All three provide coherent class critiques of the post-1952 regime, but none provides an analysis of the political character of the Egyptian masses and of their unknown history. Hassan Riad's is the only one to preserve an overall sense of political sobriety. Anouar Abdel-Malek reproduces the left Nasserist illusion that the achievements of the regime provide the basis for a transition to socialism, whereas any such transition will have to come through overthrowing this regime. Mahmoud Hussein offers the alternative illusion - that the masses are eternally militant and are spontaneously revolutionary. This position avoids the questions of why the masses have not risen so far, and of how the necessary organisation of the Egyptian workers and peasants can be achieved.

For a fuller discussion of the alternative forms of Arab nationalism see the Introduction to the Penguin edition of Arabia without Sultans.

US FOREIGN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE
EAST

by EQBAL AHMAD

This contribution will deal primarily with the strategy of the United States towards and in the Middle East. My essential argument will be that the strategy the United States has constructed there since 1968/69 is in very serious trouble. What this trouble means for the future of the conflict in the Middle East is not entirely clear. But before I discuss this, there are one or two things which should be said about US policy in general - apart from those of economic and corporate interest.

Some three or four ghosts have haunted American policy makers since the end of World War II and the consequent transfer of imperial power from Europe to the United States. What is interesting about the Middle East is that the ghosts which haunt American policy makers focus rather intensely in this area.

The first of the ghosts which haunts the US is the fear of the USSR as a rival superpower. There is strong feeling that only the USSR has the industrial resources, the natural resources, the kind of stable and dynamic government, the ratio between population and land, and the land mass itself stretching from Asia right on into Europe, to be able to compete with the power of the United States on a global scale. Therefore, the USSR has to be dealt with. The one change in US policy toward Russia that has occurred in the 60's is now described as 'detente'. It may be more accurately described as 'the politics of antagonistic collaboration'.

Why 'antagonistic collaboration'? Because detente is based, as revealed in the writings of Henry Kissinger during the late 60's, on a notion that the USSR is today both a revolutionary power and a status quo power. Consequently, what America needs in order to deal with the Soviet Union - especially at a time when the latter has gained strategic arms parity - is a policy of confrontation and containment in those areas which are of strategic interest to the United States. Simultaneously the US must strive to maintain and develop politics of co-optation and selective rewards in those areas which are not of key strategic importance. The essential point is that the policy of promoting 'junior partnership' in those areas that are not of true strategic importance to the United States, eg East Africa or the South Asian

continent minus West Pakistan, is linked to a policy of confrontation, full containment and considerable concentration of armaments in places of greater strategic value, especially the Middle East - for very obvious reasons.

The second phantom which stalks US foreign policy-makers is the movement for national liberation in the Third World. It is obvious why national liberation movements have always been an extremely threatening phenomenon in the eyes of American policy-makers. They have become even more so after the experience of Indo-China - not only because the United States suffered very heavy losses and the first defeat in war in its history, but more importantly because it has lost in the process what Henry Kissinger has called "a legitimizing principle of social repression".

It may be remembered that Kissinger has argued that national liberation movements constitute a particular threat to the stability of the international order because, unlike the constituted nationalist powers, they are not likely to be amenable to the dictates of diplomacy. In other words, they cannot be bought. Therefore, the one way in which they can be controlled within a stable international order is to find a "legitimizing principle of social repression" - a phrase which first appears in A World Restored.

What is the nature of a 'legitimizing principle of social repression'? In the 1950's and 1960's, of course, it was the doctrine of 'limited wars' - wars which the United States pursued between 1945 and 1971 at the rate of one intervention every 18 months.

Now these wars were 'limited' - but in a very special way. Obviously not limited in their consequences for the people in the invaded countries. They were limited, rather, in their consequences only for the intervening power. These so-called 'invisible wars' were invisible, not to the people being killed in them, but to the American and the Western public. The contradiction of Vietnam is thus that a war which was supposed to be forgotten instead became the most prominent. A war that was supposed to be invisible loomed large before the public. A war that was supposed to be limited became unlimited in its consequences for the United States. What has happened, then, is that the particular legitimizing principle of social repression - the doctrine of limited wars - has been put severely into question.

The third ghost that has haunted American policy-makers has been the possibility of the emergence of a United Europe. Here I should explain that, while there has been agreement on the broader issue, there has been disagreement within the American foreign policy establishment

on what tactics to follow in ensuring European subservience to American interests - and this has been true right from the introduction of the Marshall Plan in 1946. To Kissinger, this threat appears particularly serious because he perceives the United States to be an 'island power'. This, according to Kissinger, naturally pits the United States against the possibility of the emergence of a continental power - a fear clearly relevant vis-a-vis the Soviet Union as well. Therefore, Kissinger believes that if the United States were to lose its leverage over Japan and a Europe moving towards greater unity and greater consolidation as a continental power - leverage which has strategic as well as economic dimensions - the imperial aspect of American power would be gravely threatened.

These three threats - the USSR as a rival super-power, national liberation and the emergence of a new European super-power - converge in the Middle East; hence the locus of the international struggle for power has shifted in the 1970's from the Atlantic and the Pacific to the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean regions. Here the Russian influence was perceived as expanding; national liberation movements (which I should note are generally very weak and inauthentic in the Middle East with the exception of those of Dhofar and Oman - which are isolated even from the Arab nationalist forces) have been perceived as constituting a threat to the status quo, especially because of the rise of the Palestinians. Still more disturbing is the increasing militancy of even nationalist Third World regimes, above all the Arab members of OPEC, whose stance is clearly traceable both to the successes and anti-imperialist idioms of Third World liberation movements - a militancy that threatens the very foundations of American power. Finally there is the threatening possibility of Europe developing associational relationships independent of the United States with the countries of the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean regions.

Thus the strategy of the United States since 1968/69 has been to create a new constellation of American-oriented powers in the area to (a) act as a legitimizing instrument of social repression, backed up by the American Navy and Air Force; and (b) play the important role of outflanking NATO and Western Europe on its Southern rim.

This strategy underlay Nixon's trip to the Sixth Fleet during the 1970 civil crisis in Jordan, the reduction of US attention to NATO, the creation of Israel as a power on the western flank of the Arab East and of Iran on the eastern flank, the support of the Colonels in Greece, and the special relationship with Portugal after the signing of the Azores Agreement in 1970. Unlike the CENTO and SEATO pacts, this new

cluster of American client states had been created through bilateral US arrangements - arrangements primarily with fascist or proto-fascist regimes.

In addition to its military and geopolitical advantages, this strategy seems to be quite harmonious with the interests of the international corporations. You will notice that the very countries chosen to serve as key clients of pax Americana throughout the world - Brazil, Indonesia, Iran, Greece, Portugal and, emerging slowly, South Africa - are also the countries that the major corporations have chosen to be export platforms, ie countries to which their manufacturing and other activities could be transferred.

What happened to this strategy as a result of the October war? In my view two things. First, that the war created new opportunities for the integration of pro-Western Arab regimes, ie Egypt and Saudi Arabia, into this network of alliances, thereby overcoming its major structural weakness: the insufficient 'presence' of Arab countries. Originally, no provision had been made for Saudi Arabia or Kuwait or the Emirates - an obvious deficiency. Expanding arms trade with Saudi Arabia had provided a beginning for integrating that country more fully in the US led politico-military structure in the region. Despite these beginnings there remained the constant fear and conviction that effective headway in this area could not be made until Egypt was also included.

An added push in the direction of Egypt was natural because Egypt is potentially a good export platform country, a fact clearly understood by Sadat. This lure was one of his main reasons for saying to the Americans in a series of messages that passed between the two countries during the period 1969/74, "Look, we are going to get rid of the Russians, we will do anything you want, just give us something to work with."

The second consequence of the October war is that it severely damaged the basic structure of power which Washington had been constructing. Israel proved not to be such a good Sparta in the service of Rome, did not quite prove to be as invincible an instrument of social repression as the Israelis thought they could be or the Americans had hoped. Since then the Shah has obviously been getting a little bigger than his boots. The Greek military junta fell in the summer of 1974, the Portuguese fascists a few months previously. This series of disasters has created severe problems for this strategy.

What may be happening now is a certain shift in favour of the Atlanticists, those who have argued that nothing is wrong with the

strategy outlined above, except that it should include the community of advanced nations - ie Japan and Europe should be integrated within it. There has been a certain shift towards the Atlantic alliance over the last eight or so months. In trying this, the Americans think they can work out an extension of NATO, and believe that the Europeans will go along with such an extension into the Indian Ocean and Eastern Mediterranean.

In other words, the situation is, at the moment, quite blurred. The October war has thrown seriously into question Israel's own perception of the extraordinary role it had acquired since 1967 and of which it has become very enamoured. This is something new, and neither the Israelis nor we are quite used to this change. In an Israeli government dominated by ex-generals and Defence Ministry professionals, there will be a particularly strong temptation to try to recover this lost image, to restore Israel to its position as an effective instrument of regional power. Hence a fifth Arab-Israeli war is likely to be a product of Israeli initiative, and the Arabs will do well to deny it a credible pretext.

It is conceivable that in the event of another war, the United States might take over some countries, establish or try to establish protectorates - not so much in order to occupy, but to demonstrate its capacity to control the area, the effectiveness of its intervention, and then get out. To this extent, it makes sense to look closely at the headlines about the Pentagon plans for taking over the Persian Gulf, and training exercises of Marines in desert warfare, and so on. With an energy crunch and inflation still crucial facts facing the Western publics, these types of manoeuvres are part of creating a new legitimizing principle of social repression.

It is conceivable that the Americans might try something like this, because we are also dealing with people and with governments which have a particular taste for combining diplomacy with clear-cut and definable exercises of force. We are dealing with a kind of government that would make sure that a week before Nixon's trip to China the level of bombing missions over North Vietnam would rise by 37%; a government which ten days before his visit to Moscow, would go ahead and mine Haiphong and Hanoi harbours.

I do not know if I should say anything about how the Middle Easterners themselves are doing. I think they - particularly the Arabs - are doing very badly. It is very disappointing, but it is understandable. As I suggested, Sadat has been thinking that the Egyptian bourgeois dream may come true, if the kind of settlement the corporations and Kissinger

have promised comes to fruition. Then you will have the whole place look like South Korea, more Egyptian girls will be prostitutes, international free zones could be created, Port Said could be the Middle Eastern Hong Kong, and so on. It certainly does not sound appealing, but that is the stuff of which some people's dreams are made. The issues which underlie wars and violence in the Middle East - of restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people, of assuring the safety and well-being of the Jewish people, of ending the regime of occupation for Syrians and Jordanians no less than for Egyptians - will be shelved. A stalemate - so dear to Henry Kissinger - will be produced, and will be applauded by the Western press and politicians. But far from being the first step toward a peace settlement, it will serve as an interregnum for accumulation of grievances and violence.

RUSSIAN OIL POLICY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

by MALCOLM CALDWELL

This contribution does not attempt to delineate the totality of Soviet attitudes to and relations with the Middle East; rather it concentrates upon tracing the role of oil in these. A brief comment is in order on the general energy situation of the USSR.

There are several relevant considerations. The first is the geography of Soviet oil reserves and production. The older areas in the South-western part of European Russia have apparently reached their peak production, and it is to the vast reserves of Siberia that Moscow will in future have to look to meet both expected domestic needs and export requirements. Although Russian total reserves are vast (over 10% of the world's as compared with the less than 5% of the USA), the key index - the ratio of reserves to annual production - has been dropping steadily since about 1960, and those that will count in future are well to the east in remote and relatively underdeveloped parts of the country. The costs of developing these distant reserves and of building up a distribution system will inevitably be vast. It is for this reason that Moscow has so persistently wooed both America and Japan for both financial and technical assistance in unlocking Siberia's mineral riches. However, for various reasons, neither the US nor Japan is as interested in this

Table 1
USSR crude oil production
 (million metric tons)

	West Siberia	Other areas	Total
1970	31.4	321.2	352.6
1971	44.2	327.8	372
1972	62.7	331.3	394
1973	86.5	333.5	420
1974(est.)	115	335	450
1975(est.)	145	335	480
1980	270-300	-	-

(Source: P. Hill and R. Vielvoye: Energy in Crisis, London 1974, p.103; the estimates are official target figures)

kind of commitment as they once appeared to be; Japan may, without the enormous capital investment that would be entailed in extracting and transporting Siberian oil (somewhere between one and two billion pounds sterling), be able by the 1980's to import Chinese crude oil to the extent promised by Russia (some 25 million tons a year), thus rendering the expensive Siberian gamble unnecessary. If indeed both Washington and Tokyo cool to any Siberian involvement, then "... access to the vast reserves of the Middle East will clearly become of vital importance to them." (M. Tanzer: The Energy Crisis, New York, 1974, p.96)

As Tanzer goes on to point out, this is all the more so in the light of broader economic decisions which have been and are shaping the emerging Soviet consumer society. As long as Russian leaders stuck by and large to a traditional type plan, an integrated energy policy optimising the use of all the various available domestic sources (coal, oil, wood) was possible. But with the open adoption of Western-style consumerism as the long-term aim of the Soviet economy all this changed. With private passenger car production soaring - though still far behind the United States in this respect - the strain on Russian domestic oil capacity is beginning to show.¹ To haul Siberian oil the colossal distances involved to make it available to where car-ownership and use will be concentrated, namely in European Russia, would be extremely costly; better far to obtain purchase on the more proximate and cheaper Middle Eastern crude. What applies to the car applies, too, to other consumer durables, insofar as they reflect a substitution of multiple private ownership for collective provision (in Tanzer's

example, home washing-machines in place of large collective laundries).

There is, of course, nothing new in Russian interest in, and encroachment upon, the Middle East. As far as Britain in her imperial heyday was concerned this unconcealed expansionist ambition of the Czars was the 'Eastern Question'. It is not difficult to understand the concern of Russian leaders with control over or at least guaranteed access to such vital locations as the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus, and the Mediterranean via the Bosphorous and the Dardanelles. The discovery of oil in Persia simply enhanced the attractiveness of extending Russian power and influence in a southwesterly direction along the traditional axis.

The Revolution in 1917 put a temporary halt to historically conventional Russian diplomacy. Territorial losses during the civil war included the principle oil-producing areas of Azerbaijan, Volga-Ural and Turkestan, but these were soon re-incorporated in the 1920's. Oil became a Soviet state monopoly and one that could and did serve political as well as economic ends (as, indeed, did its capitalist-world counterparts, the oil majors). By the late 1920's and the 1930's, Soviet oil was competing effectively in such markets as Western Europe. During the war the Germans occupied most of the Russian domestic producing areas, and oil had to be imported - some by rail from Iran.

Post-war recovery was rapid. By the mid-fifties, Soviet oil production was such that significant exports could again be shifted into foreign markets for hard currency or in exchange for much-needed imports. Exports rose rapidly - from 8,000,000 tons in 1955 to 40,000,000 tons a year in 1961 - and sales were made not just in Eastern and Western Europe but as far afield as Brazil and Japan. Hand in hand with this sales drive went a concerted drive to penetrate the economies of Third World countries in order to participate in the exploration for and exploitation of oil. Both drives constituted direct threats to the global interests of the oil majors, and the whole battery of inhibitory powers at their disposal was brought to bear to call a halt to the process - culminating in 1962 in the threat by the US government to use nuclear weapons over Cuba (where the oil majors had suffered the loss of their refineries). Thus chastened, Soviet leaders moved more cautiously in the international oil arena, but objective factors outlined above cannot but sustain their interest in maximising their sphere of international oil interest. Indeed, there has been a steady expansion in their system of outlets - by pipeline, refineries, chains of petrol stations, tankers and so on - throughout Europe and beyond. As Odell comments:

"...it is obvious that the Soviet Union plans a long-term future for

its oil exports to Western Europe and in order to secure this is pursuing commercial policies not dissimilar to those followed by American oil companies wishing to break into these markets... The Soviet Union has demonstrated that an oil industry working on other than capitalist lines can be successful, and it will wish to demonstrate this in the Middle East in much the same way that American companies ... have exported their way of doing things. Commercially, the Soviet Union could thus gain access to oil on which it can make a 'profit' when selling in the world's markets. Here again, its behaviour is in line with good American oil company practice." (Oil and World Power, London, 1972, pp.49, 57.)

Odell fails to see the significance of the competition between the oil majors and the Soviet oil industry outside the limited neutral context of his 'geographical interpretation'. While I cannot here undertake an analysis of social imperialism² it is obvious that control over oil constitutes a vital component in the overall thrust of Soviet economic expansionism. Areas with crude must be courted for access. Areas with products - like tropical products - desired by the Soviet Union must be persuaded to exchange them for crude at Soviet disposal. As far as possible, these transactions should, of course (from the point of view of the Russian ruling elite), partake of an element of 'unequal exchange'. Recent years have strongly underlined that there is no lever for this purpose like the oil lever - and to make any great impression on that, one has to have a stake in the Middle East. For the Middle East still encompasses within its bounds over 60% of known world oil reserves.

Clear evidence of the direction of Soviet intentions emerge both from the understandings noted as accompanying the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-aggression Pact of 1939 ("The Soviet Union declares that its national aspirations centre south of the national territory of the Soviet Union in the direction of the Indian Ocean." Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office, US Department of State Publication 3023 1948, p.257), and from the war and post-war manoeuvrings of Moscow in the northern part of Iran.³ However, Russia emerged empty-handed from this game at that time. After the American overthrow of Mossadegh in 1953 in particular, Washington was able to make the running in Iran as elsewhere in the Middle East. Consolidation not only of American commercial primacy but also of a base and alliance network prompted Soviet leaders to embark upon a countervailing policy of initiative-taking in the Middle East. Between 1954 and 1956 trade agreements were signed

by the USSR with Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and the Yemen. It is beyond the scope of this paper to detail the developing Soviet interest in cleaving - with some ambivalence - to the Arab cause in the Arab-Israeli dispute, withholding promised oil from Israel, supplying war material to the Arab combatants, and in general attempting to secure favourable political foundations for the inclusion of the oil-producing countries of the Middle East in the net which is being cast for crude.

In 1957 Russia concluded agreements with Egypt and Syria whereby the latter obtained, inter alia, a geological map, improved oil storage facilities, and eighteen Soviet-drilled test oil wells, and the former a number of petroleum projects. Independent Algeria attracted the gift of a Russian technical centre for the instruction and training of oil and gas technicians; this connection was of course of particular significance in that Algeria was and is a major oil exporter. In 1966 the USSR and Iran reached an agreement whereby, in return for a Russian steel complex, Iranian natural gas was to be pipelined to the Soviet Union; the pipeline actually opened in 1970, and further agreements have speeded the flow of the gas to Russia. Also in 1966 Moscow contracted with Iran to undertake joint oil exploration and development operations in the Iranian Caspian region. In 1968 Russia concluded an agreement with Iraq whereby Soviet technical and consultancy services and equipment were exchanged for Iraqi crude. Four years later, the Soviet Union invested heavily in the nationalised Iraq Petroleum Company. By the first half of the 1970's, the Soviet bloc was importing crude oil from Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Algeria, Libya and Syria.

We are not, of course, privy to the innermost decision making processes of the Soviet top bureaucracy, but we may allow ourselves some comments which seem logically indicated by an analysis of the dynamics of the Russian energy situation in the context of present day international politics. It is the thesis of Lincoln Landis (Politics and Oil: Moscow in the Middle East, New York, 1973) that at the heart of the Soviet concern for Middle Eastern oil there is something of a paradox:

"Moscow's petroleum paradox is a function ... of three elements: an abundance of energy resources, increasing demand represented by growing domestic needs and foreign markets, and a deficient economic system unable to cope with the problems of short-range and long-range petroleum requirements. The paradox ... is structured upon a scarcity, or inadequacy, not of reserves, nor of markets, but of economic viability and petroleum productivity." (pp. 95-96)

There seems little doubt that the Soviet Union has experienced, is

experiencing, and will go on experiencing both short-term and long-term problems in oil extraction, oil distribution, and oil utilisation domestically - matters which Landis documents (see pp.83 et seq). "Waste at the extraction sites" reported the International Herald Tribune (22/11/74), "has caused concern. Western economic specialists say that Soviet equipment is extracting only half the oil available in the vast Tyumen oil fields, prompting a sharp Soviet interest in more advanced American oil technology. The exploitation of new oil areas has been limited, according to Pravda, because other branches of Soviet industry are not applying enough basic equipment. Because the Soviet Union has most of its industries and population centres in its western part and the bulk of its raw materials and energy resources in its eastern part, the long distances involved lead to attrition ... Quantities of oil and gas are lost in leakage from the low quality domestic pipeline. The Soviet Union recently secured West Germany's promise of credits for the purchase of nearly a million tons of large-diameter steel pipe from West Germany." This circumstance lies behind Moscow's eagerness to involve Japan and the USA in exploitation of Siberia's apparently plentiful reserves.

But there is more to it than that. In order to remedy the general deficiencies of Soviet industry - many of which exacerbate both the short- and long-term problems of fully harnessing the Russian domestic oil bounty - Moscow must find an export with a medium-term future and with excellent price prospects. Obviously in the world today oil meets these desiderata. Ironically, though, while Russia has vast reserves of the stuff, it is precisely in order to be able to exploit it efficiently that it needs to export it. The answer is, in the first place, to secure efficiently produced crude from elsewhere, to sell it in world markets, and to allocate the proceeds towards an upgrading of Soviet industrial productivity in general and of Soviet oil productivity in particular. Some indication of the complexity of the USSR-Middle East relationship with oil as the fulcrum should now be apparent. On the one hand, in line with an at least rhetorical concern for economic nationalism, Moscow cannot but applaud such actions as the export restrictions and price rises imposed by the OPEC group as a consequence of the October 1973 Middle East crisis. On the other hand, Russia's interests demand that when the Middle East's customers in Western Europe, the Americas and Japan run short, Russia should be in a strong position to meet and cash in upon the need. This, however, it can only do by preserving its own supplies of crude from the Middle East. In addition, while the USSR leadership must obviously try to keep Middle Eastern suppliers of crude oil and

natural gas to terms earlier entered into,⁴ it is equally in its own interest to hoist the prices it charges to the levels its various markets will bear - and here the countries of Eastern Europe, in their client relationship, fare exceptionally badly (see "Moscow tries to justify its oil price hike to E. Europe", Ta Kung Pao, 10/4/75).

We now come to the central concept in evaluating long-term Soviet goals with respect to oil in the Middle East - and therefore to the area as a politico-strategic concern in the round. This is the concept of a world energy delivery system - an integrated whole harmonising the resources and requirements of oil-producing and oil-consuming states and orchestrated not by the Western capitalist oil majors backed by their governments (and in particular by the government of the United States of America) but by Soyuzneftexport (the Soviet state oil monopoly) and the government of the USSR. Theorists such as L. Tomashpol'skiy appear to envisage...

"the eventual incorporation of the petroleum riches of the Middle East into ... a Soviet-dominated world energy delivery system. Steps towards achievement of such a system could be expected to be built upon present and planned Soviet-Middle East relationships; the USSR is (already) participating in exploration and production of crude oil, and, along with other members of the Soviet bloc, has contracted to import oil or natural gas on long-term barter arrangements. Future Soviet-Middle East relations could result in the USSR undertaking the preliminary roles in the region's petroleum industry, and, ultimately, that of strategic middleman, leading in the general direction of a world energy delivery system." (Landis, pp.103-104).⁵

Of the possible roles the Soviet Union could play and enlarge upon in pursuit of its objectives in the Middle East, we may note that it already has embarked upon operations in the fields of production, importing, broking (for instance, Russia has agreed, in connection with her arrangements with Iraq, to find markets for the Iraqi share of the oil produced), and strategic middleman-ing. The broking function, ably serviced by Soviet tanker tonnage, bids fair to bite significantly into what hitherto had been virtually a prerogative of the oil-active and oil-hungry capitalist powers. The possible and potential importance of an alternative 'global' system has already been signalled by Iraq's expressed interest in joining COMECON, the Soviet-bloc economic structure.

Short of sheer speculation, this is probably as far as the argument can be pushed at this point. Soviet leaders are, of course, aware of the various kinds of dependence Western capitalist countries and Japan have

evolved with respect to the Middle East. They can also no doubt perceive how the hitherto unequal ties might be eroded over and beyond the erosion occasioned by sharply shifting international circumstances. While the West still, despite everything (retreat in Indochina, general economic recession, etc), retains a clear edge in economic power and performance over the Soviet bloc, it is by no means certain that longer-term calculations necessarily favour imperialist interests when it comes to Middle Eastern regimes stretching their expectations and aspirations beyond the immediate future - not to take into account for the time being the prospects of social revolution in the area. True social revolution would blast equally the eager ambitions of US and SU alike, needless to say, but we cannot rule out of court the possibility of Middle Eastern bourgeois-nationalist incumbents prepared to collaborate in a Soviet-conducted 'world energy delivery system' to their own advantage and the discomfiture of the old and increasingly senile interests of the American-headed capitalist West. If this paper has suggested, far less shown, this much it will have served its purpose.

Footnotes

1. Note the following excerpts from an International Herald Tribune report of 22/11/74:

"The Soviet Union, which has reported to its people in detail on the energy shortage in the West, has begun somewhat more discreetly a domestic campaign to save fuel by reducing waste and inefficiency. A recent editorial in Pravda ... urged that 'every kilogram of fuel be treated carefully and its loss prevented'. ... Soviet supplies are being stretched to meet rising domestic needs at a time of increasing demand from abroad ... Officials concede that, while their country does not lack basic fuel resources, it does lack technology for their effective extraction and transportation."

This assessment somewhat conflicts with Odell's (Oil and World Power, pp.56-57), and is more consonant with that of Landis (Politics and Oil, passim).

2. In the rapidly proliferating literature on Soviet social imperialism, Charles Bettelheim's projected three volume analysis of Les Luttes de Classes en URSS promises to hold a special place; see the introductory review of the first volume by Paul Sweezy in Monthly Review, November 1974. Leaving aside the Chinese contributions to definition and depiction, there is a growing body of material from

the left in such subordinate constituents of the Russian world system as India, and some analyses from the English left (eg "The International Situation 1973, Part I", Politics and Money, Vol.4, no.3, July-September, 1973; M. Barratt Brown: "Soviet Economic Imperialism?", Economics of Imperialism, London, 1974). Undoubtedly much more in the way of analysis requires to be done, but a significant advance has already been made from the early days of assertion and allegation devoid of much in the way of substantiation and verification.

3. The Anglo-American-Russian oil tango in Iran is well conveyed and put in context in Gabriel and Joyce Kolko: The Limits of Power, New York, 1972.
4. Open controversy and polemics developed between the USSR and Iran in 1974 on the prices Russia was paying for Iranian supplies; see eg International Herald Tribune, 31/8/74.
5. See, as typical stories of the huge Russian effort to match capabilities in this respect to ambitions, the above and: Financial Times, 20/8/74: International Herald Tribune, 15/10/74 and 11/2/75.

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SECTION FIVE:

THE PALESTINIANS

Introduction

In this section two distinguished Palestinian writers describe the realities of Palestinian existence - both in exile and in Israel/Palestine itself. Fawaz Turki's contribution is an essay on the evolution of Palestinian consciousness during the past two decades. It evokes with powerful, angry and sometimes poignant imagery what it meant to grow up as a Palestinian refugee - harrassed, persecuted and despised in the Arab host states and often patronisingly 'understood' in other lands.

To those Jews whose political consciousness was pervaded by the obsessive idea of The Return, Turki's essay will make uncomfortable reading. Jews have the right of return to a homeland many have never seen: Palestinians are forcibly exiled from the land of their birth. Writing out of a long and bitter experience, Turki powerfully conveys both the deep outrage at the savage experience of exile, and the even deeper yearning for the return. He also explains the gradual evolution of Palestinian consciousness, from despair to the focussed rage which provides the motive force for the Palestinian resistance. Fouzi el-Asmar's essay focusses not on exile, but the prejudice, discrimination and persecution which Palestinians have faced under the Zionist regime in Israel itself. The author describes not only his own experience of persecution, but also the institutionalised system of repression in Israel which pervades even the education system. But like Fawaz Turki's article this is not simply a chronicle of suffering and humiliation. Fouzi el-Asmar also describes the growing resistance which this oppression has catalysed. In fact both essays delineate an evolution of consciousness which Mao Tse-Tung once aptly summarised: 'The will to defeat has been eradicated, the will to resist strengthened, and the will to victory is beginning to dawn'.

TO BE A PALESTINIAN

by FAWAZ TURKI

For certain peoples a time comes, along the evolutionary continuum of their existence, when they discover that their history has been deflected from its preordained course and that their political and existential reality has been mutilated. The world they inhabit as a consequence of this becomes terrifying and bizarre, one in which it is all but impossible to house one's human passions and to become a determining force in one's life. The world of the exile. The world of the occupied. The world of the refugee. The world of the ghetto. The world of the stateless. All these are worlds with blackened walls surrounding them, all these have a special tension crystalizing their reality, all these have a mosaic of active mythology that is incomprehensible to others. Few can truly understand such encapsulated worlds, their terror, their devastation, their anguish and the desolate helplessness of their denizens.

Standing from the outside, unable to relate to the idiom and the metaphor of these worlds, using a matrix of logic that is both alien and distorting, people see only blurred images. They create myths which in time become rituals. These rituals are then transformed into facts of life that begin to govern the construct of people's attitudes.

Hence those who inhabit the ghetto become 'hoodlums' or a different species of beings. The stateless become merely a people to be resettled. The refugee is a person from a refugee camp whose sole needs are the shipment of food and blankets that he is sent periodically. The exile is a terrorist. And so on until with none of these people is it possible to share your humanity.

I inhabit one such world. We are currently identified with the soubriquets 'international outlaws', 'Arab Refugees', and 'terrorists'. We are hateful, violent and murderous. To get a glimpse of my world and its existential concerns, it would be edifying if I were simply called a Palestinian. I am thirty three years old, I drink strong tea. I am married. When I am happy, I smile. When I am not, I feel pain. In the tempo and the metaphor of my culture I recently began to find an eloquent statement about the capacity of men and women to survive, and about how I am able to identify myself as a spiritual being.

Mine has been a typically Palestinian experience, one that I have shared with a whole generation over the last twenty five years. I have become angry, violently angry, at those whose system has created and perpetuated conditions that mutilated my reality; and I have become dedicated, predictably and inevitably enough, to removing these conditions, transcending this reality and to returning to my original self. To be a Palestinian means, to begin with, to be someone without a homeland. It is a condition whose

essence is difficult to transmute to others because the ravages of homelessness are a pain that can only be alien to those who have always lived in a homeland. There are three million Palestinians in the world today to whom this strikingly cogent experience, cutting as it does across class lines, has been an integral part of their lives. Half a million of them live within the borders of what came to be known, after 1948, as the state of Israel. Another million have lived since the 1967 June War under Israeli military occupation in the West Bank and Gaza. (Before that, they had been under Hashemite occupation.) The rest of the Palestinians live dispersed around the Arab world - many in refugee camps - and around Europe, North America and Australia. Before 1948, when a galaxy of events culminated with the Zionist movement having its day and the Palestinian its eclipse, these people had all lived in Palestine. They had lived in their villages, in their towns, on their farms and off their labour. To them their country was not just a place they had inhabited, a place they just lived in, a place they could vacate and move from with impressive ease. To the Palestinians, Palestine - no less than any country has always been to its people - was the land, the homeland, from which they had derived their repertoire of consciousness, their culture, their traditions, their ethos, their metaphor, their laughter. Disinherited of it, and relegated to that frightening world in exile, in refugee camps, under occupation and elsewhere, a Palestinian was robbed of more than just a piece of land. He and she were robbed of an exquisite link between them and their nature, of an intangible force with which they had identified themselves as spiritual beings.

For two decades after 1948, a state of quiescence characterised a Palestinian's life; a state of incredulity and disbelief that this would continue for too long - for men and women can not be indefinitely denied access to their homeland, they can not be robbed of it. This had happened to groups of people, but not to a whole nation of them. When it does, the concept of the Return will grip their senses and rule their lives, because that is all that they will have left.

To be a Palestinian. For two decades. It was to be the refugee camp on the edge of a city where a generation of people was growing up. It was to be the alien in Lebanon queuing up for work permits and travel permits and police permits. It was to be, as a consequence of your exclusion, desperately seeking employment in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf in order to avert starvation. It was to be under Hashemite rule - grafted on the region by the British - and to be put in jail, tortured, deported and killed because you objected to Hussein's repression.

To be a Palestinian. For two decades. This meant very simply to be inflicted with violence every day of one's life, to grow up with it, to

live with it. And there are variations of violence which can be more crushing in their effect on the soul than physical violence. Hunger and the cold are a form of violence. To be without a homeland, to be denied access to one's homeland, is violence. To live in refugee camps, to be isolated from the mainstream of events, of spontaneous activities that govern other mortal lives, is violence. To be occupied, to be dictated to by a military governor, is violence. To be given epithets and names, to be excluded and reviled, to be told that you do not 'exist' is violence. Above all, to be robbed of your sense of worth as a human being, to be expropriated of your national patrimony and national psyche as a people is a form of violence that is extreme in its nature. To be a victim, as an individual and as a people, to all this at a time of quiescence is to create conditions eliciting a response.

In the old city of Jerusalem an Israeli soldier with a machine gun slung over his shoulder and a look of contempt on his face walks into a Palestinian Arab coffee shop and proceeds to slap the patrons on the face and to demand identity cards. He kicks. He spits. He knocks. He hates. He walks out.

During the war, in Nablus, a shell shot leaves a hole in the wall of a shop. The shopkeeper later fills it with cement. He is dragged away by Israeli soldiers and tried in court for building 'without a licence'.

Across the Allenby Bridge, a young Palestinian student is returning home after visiting members of his family on the East Bank and in Syria. He gets arrested by border police because to them he is suspicious. Like many before him, he is held under the notorious Preventive Detention Law for months, without the mercy of a time limit, and questioned about his 'connections'. He gets beaten up and periodically hung by his legs, a common practice of the occupying authorities.

In Beirut a Palestinian refugee is not allowed to work. There and in other countries there are special laws for him that govern his movements, his business, his daily life. In the United States I give a lecture to an American audience. Someone asks me, in earnest and in all honesty, if it is not true that under Israeli occupation 'the Arabs' are not enjoying a wonderful standard of living now, are not living in houses, driving cars, watching television and if it is not true that Israeli hospitals have improved our health standards.

All this is violence. And more devastating than physical violence.

A Palestinian's response to it is best defined not in isolation of but in relation to the dichotomy that exists between the master and the slave, the oppressor and the oppressed, the occupier and the occupied, the coloniser and the colonised. The Afro-Americans, the Algerians, the Vietnamese, the Palestinians and other oppressed peoples before them, driven by the same force, the same human spirit, the same collective notion for liberation,

the same fathomless anger, responded in their own way to the shattering indignities and the fierce exigencies pressing on the soul.

At times, in my teens, I would walk the streets of Beirut, where I grew up and I would sense that I was a freak. In later years I walked the streets of cities from Brisbane to Singapore and from Madras to Amsterdam, and I continued feeling a freak. To be a Palestinian is to be different from others around you, to be denied a share in privileges that you know others took as a birthright. It is an unbearable situation that for two decades a whole generation of Palestinians, growing up in the ghurba (exile), brood on as they go about acquiring a past of their own. It gets to be as if it is written into your history that you are so and you grow up with this condition - unbearable though its pressure may become - like you grow up with your name or your skin. You are unable to flee it; try as hard as you will. Your Palestinianness, refugeeism, your sense of foreboding about how never-ending it all is, and above all your impotence to remove the distorted image that others have acquired of you, these form an interminable terror that follows you, like a shadow, every day of your life.

It is not that as a Palestinian you abstract yourself and your problems from the context of those problems shared by human beings elsewhere in the world; it is just that, as a Palestinian, you have problems all your own that are uniquely Palestinian. You are born heir to them. You live with them. But in so doing, you begin also to gain a tough sense - informal, indifferent, aloof - of what must be done to survive. It is difficult to travel. It is difficult to work. It is difficult to acquire an education. It is difficult to be with your family because its members, like the members of virtually every Palestinian family, are dispersed around the world. It is difficult to live under military occupation. It is difficult - it is so difficult - to be a person without a homeland. And because nobody wants to listen to you, your encounter with the outside world becomes characterised by distrust and resentment and anger and impatience and a numbling hatred of it and a blinding hate for it. So you live with a kind of violence all around you, engulfing you and reducing you to a naught in the scheme of things.

When I was still living in our refugee camp, my most persistent fantasy was to go to school. In response to the question on why I could not do so like the other children who lived within close proximity of us outside the camp, my mother would say, as if impatient with my ignorance: 'We have no money. We have no money for this kind of thing.' How so, I wanted to know. The only answer that my mother could come up with, in her own, peasant grasp of our condition was: "We are Palestinians. We are refugees. We have to wait till we go back to Palestine."

Everything was to be suspended, everything was to wait till the Re-

turn. It is all so complex for a child, that you stop trying to make sense of things like that. There are things you do and things you do not do, much in the manner, in the West, of a boy who is told to wear a tie in one place but not in another. However, as you grow older, into your teens and later years and you are confronted by a similar order of perplexity, you begin to want to review your condition, to defy it, to destroy it, or to be smothered by it. Whichever way you go, you can not escape it (even if you go as far as India and Australia, as I did). Whichever way you turn, it is violence that you come up against whose source you ultimately identify as being the sadistic regressions and the racist excesses of the Zionist movement and its aged, insecure, psychotic ruling classes.

It is impossible for me to be oblivious of my situation, to be, as it were, happy. Moments of gloom and fury overwhelm my being as I spend a restless life, stateless, seeing pictures of robust Israelis tilling our land, growing our oranges, inhabiting our cities and towns, talking in their grim, stubborn way about how our country was a 'desert' before they went there and explaining to the world - a world forever unable to understand who we are - that we do not 'exist'. I would gag with anger and mortification if I were not a Palestinian whose resilience has been proved by the mere fact that - in the face of all this - we have survived, and survived as a people who have reassembled their ethos and frustrated repeated attempts to do away with their identity.

And yet. These same Israelis are a people that, on a different level, have been oppressed and dehumanised by the same Zionist system that oppressed and dehumanised us. Whether I like it or not, their's now is a link to Palestine as equally acute as mine; their's is an ethos as equally indigenuous as mine; their's is a presence whose reality is as equally stark as mine. Whether I like it or not, our two irreconcilable dialectics have to become one. Whether I like it or not, no Palestinian can create a future vision, think up historic dreams and struggle for liberation which rules out the existence of the Jewish people in Palestine; nor, conversely, can an Israeli, who assumes a similar stance, any longer dismiss the Palestinian or hope, as the Zionist movement had done, that he would vanish. For years, for decades to come, this will be the thought that will - as if by osmosis - sink into each other's consciousness, that will gradually come to rule our lives.

Zionism, as alien to the liberal traditions of Judaism as it is to the Arab world, has been implanted in Palestine in defiance, as it were, of both, to act as a source of alienation of peoples from one another. For there is no historical basis for the hatred that presently exists between Jew and Arab in our world. This hatred, despite the passion with which

Jew and Arab has manifested it each to the other, is even less crushing in its intensity than the one that existed say, between the peoples of Germany and France. And had someone told a Frenchman, less than three decades ago, of the Common Market, of German tourists in Paris, of the open borders between his country and Germany, his exclamation of incredulity would have been matched only by that of the present day Arab and Jew of Palestine.

In all the years that I have lived in the ghurba (exile), it took a very short, seemingly insignificant encounter in a shop in Paris to give me an insight into the essence of the conflict in our world. I walk into a shop in the Marais section of the city and I am waited on by the shopkeeper, a swarthy middle-aged man who spoke French with an Arabic accent. Against the wall are posters and pictures from Israel. We talk. He asks me where I come from. I tell him. He tells me he is an Egyptian Jew for whom life in Egypt was no longer tolerable.

Then we fall silent. We say no more to each other. Before I pay for my goods and walk out, we look at each other quietly. For one moment, for one short fraction of a time, we just do that - look at each other. Whatever else there was in his look, I knew there was a twitch, a nuance in it. I knew we were looking into each other's eyes and seeing our own agony reflected there. However, only when the ruthless, blackened walls of Zionism that stand between us fall, will the commonality of our sense of helplessness come to be seen by our two people.

On March 15, 1954, I had a bicycle. I was fourteen years old. I lived in the Bourj el Barajni refugee camp. I grew up on the streets. I peddled chewing gum. I shined shoes. I hustled. I stole. I had been acquiring a street education from my contacts with a street gang called Awlad Filastin and a formal education from a free school sponsored by a church group. On that day in 1954 I rode my cycle to the UNRWA hospital to visit my uncle who was having an operation from which he was never going to recover. Despite his age, my uncle had a thick mop of hair on his head that was the colour of snow. He was lying back in bed propped up against two pillows. Around the ward, there were other old Palestinian patients mumbling incoherently to each other about Palestine, about the Return, about the recent UN debate, about the 1936-1939 Revolt, about their elder sons who were working in the Arabian Peninsula. My uncle was talking animatedly when I came in. They were all sitting up there, waiting to die in exile, tending the ashes of their burnt-out world, hoping for a spark to leap through. There was an intangible, yet fierce, feeling of helplessness about this scene, of desolation, of fathomless incomprehension. It was a feeling whose pitch was to stay with me forever, its image never leaving my mind, embedded in my consciousness.

There was so much pathos around me, there at this UNRWA sponsored hospital ward where these old men, these villagers and farmers, these shopkeepers and peasants, these artisans and professionals, were lying back in their sickbeds, never going to see their homeland again, cramped in a small space, and treated by freckle-nosed doctors for maladies that they were sure were only physical in nature.

As I rode back home on my bicycle, the sadness I felt did not stem merely from the fact that I knew I would not see my uncle again, but that his death would herald the death of a whole generation of Palestinians - a whole ethos and a whole construct of ideology - and the birth of another in exile, whose idiom and metaphor would be that of the disinherited, the oppressed, a generation on whose shoulders would rest the burden of raising a new sense of reality, raising a new flag of rebellion.

We would not be like other children, like other people. Our concerns would have to do not with children's concerns and people's mundane, everyday dilemmas; but with the lofty issues of determining how we could return to our place in history from which we had been dislodged; of starting a revolution or of dying in UNRWA hospital wards like our fathers and mothers before us.

March 15, 1954 was significant to me not only for its personal tragedy and its symbolism about the pathos of the Palestinian situation; but March 15, 1954, because of later events that day, became significant to me as an indication of the anger that I and many Palestinians would feel the rest of our lives and of the changes we were to go through in our later years as we were growing up. The day became a watershed, marking my transformation from a boy to an individual who sensed that thenceforth our history and its processes, our history and its demands, were to be every Palestinian's concern.

That day I travelled with my elder sister to the West Bank and Jerusalem where we were to stay with relatives for the holidays. We arrived at the Jordanian border from Syria. My sister stands in line clutching on to our identity documents - thin, tattered pieces of paper with our pictures on them, an 'X' next to nationality, and long-hand scribbles identifying us for the refugees we were. In front of us in the line there is an American couple. The immigration official, a Bedouin soldier with a two day stubble, treats them with deference and waves them through, his mouth cracking with smiles and avowals of welcome. When it is our turn, he begins to shout questions at my sister and to sarcastically accuse her of wanting to come to Jordan 'to pick up another ration card'. Now he calls her a damn Palestinian refugee, 'a godless Communist like all other Palestinians'. My sister becomes angry and tells the soldier that he is a 'bedouin son of

a whore' whose puppet king has taken the West Bank and Jerusalem from us, the Palestinians, and is now mistreating us. This is our country, what is left of it, she shouts, so leave us alone. Leave us alone, all of you.

At this point the Bedouin is shocked that a Palestinian, a mere Palestinian, is talking to him like that. He stands up, walks around his table and violently pushes my sister, who trips and falls. What she does after that is a graphic image that I carry with me, an image that forms part of that collage of images that is my Palestinian experience. Shunning help from me and from the other travellers, she stands up, so defiant, so dignified, and says to the Bedouin: 'Your days are numbered. Your days are numbered. I swear on the Holy Book that your days will be numbered.' She says that and spits on the ground near where he is standing. She walks away, one hand holding her suitcase, the other lifting her long, embroidered dress an inch off the ground. Her movements are so delicate. So exquisite.

After a great deal of shouting and hostility, we go through. I notice my sister has cut herself. Its a little wound that she covers with a hankerchief. But for me the wound never healed. In a sense it becomes mine. It becomes our people's wound and as I grow older it gets bigger and more painful.

Is it not strange that nowadays people come to the oppressed and wretched to ask them to explain their violence, to ask them to justify their their position, to ask them to prove their sincerity? Is it not strange that one refuses to go back to one's self instead for the answer, to one's value structure for the source of an oppressed person's expression of revulsion? The existential continuum, for this generation of Palestinians, stretching between 1948 and 1968 - between our expulsion from Palestine and the battle of Karameh - created and interlaced everyday life with the perception of an incessant dialectic that history and its processes had to be changed; that there was a delicate correlation between the politics of existence and the existence of politics.

Outcasts, shunned by a world that refused to recognise our existence, denied forever the right to participate in people's spontaneous and well ordered reality, yet we are called upon to respect laws that we did not frame, principles that were never applied to us, rules of a game that we were not invited to play, and borders that we did not draw. We are to respect international society, its morality and its 'free institutions', when international society rejected the notion that we be included in it.

For me as a Palestinian, respect for and adherence to the law, the law that oppresses me and perpetuates my sense of degradation, is meaningless and absurd. More than that, it is a blatant exercise in oppression against me.

In existentialist terms, I am to join in a pack with those who want to keep me as a freak and treat me as less than a human being.

The quest for liberation by individuals and peoples often begins at a moment in their history when the possibility of removing oppression crosses their mind, at which moment it becomes unbearable. This crucial juncture in the struggle is never reached so long as the perpetrators of oppression dispense their preventive welfare to hinder, block or otherwise appease the need for human justice and freedom. (In the case of the Palestinians at the present time, the idea of establishing a separate state for them on the West Bank and Gaza is one such move.)

When this moment comes, its first stirrings manifest themselves in the initial stage not in sophisticated ideology or revolutionary visions of the future, but very simply by a striving - whatever form this will take - for identity. The frenzied involvement of Palestinians, in the fifties and early sixties, in the Arab nationalist movement, was no more than a quest, paradoxically, to assert their Palestinian consciousness - that is to say a quest to identify their peculiar and alienated status in the Arab world which forever confronted them by the reminder that they were in it, but not of it.

In principle, the liberation of Palestine was of the most crucial concern to the Arab nationalists of the day (who had adopted an anti-imperialist position) but in reality the struggle against Zionism had reached the bottom of their list of priorities, being preoccupied, as they were, in a death struggle against the machinations of neocolonialism, imperialist puppets such as the Hashemites in Jordan and Iraq, reactionary rulers, feudal overlords and the vestiges of French and British occupying forces in our world. At any rate, when the nationalist movement, by 1965, had not made good on its promise to liberate Palestine, the Palestinians were becoming shut out. Being a fringe people, their concerns were gradually, and perhaps inevitably, acquiring a dialectical form. If their concern was Palestine and Palestine had by that time become not a geographical entity but a state of mind, a mystical reflection of a universal condition, then the Palestinian struggle would depart from the aims of the Arab nationalist movement which seemed static to a then nascent revolutionary consciousness.

As Isaac Deutscher pointed out in his essay, The Non-Jewish Jew, articulating the metamorphosis in the national psyche of fringe people: "Their manner of thinking is dialectical, because, living on borderlines of nations and religions, they see society in a state of flux. They conceive reality as being dynamic, not static. Those who are shut in within one society, one nation, or one religion, tend to imagine that their way of life and their way of thought have absolute and unchangeable validity and all that contradicts their standards is somehow 'unnatural', inferior, or

evil. Those, on the other hand, who live on the borderlines of civilisations, comprehend more clearly the great movement and the great contradictions of nature and society." No one can claim, with a sweeping set of generalisations, to define the consciousness of all people who call themselves Palestinians. This society is afflicted with the same stratification that characterises others and it has its own share of Uncle Toms, West Bank Notables, Bani Oui Oui* and others. But the active tension inherent in the Palestinian experience (expulsion from Palestine was not directed at just one class of people and the trauma was felt by everyone regardless of their socio-economic background) would make Palestinians share one set of intangibles and a collective sense of energy/motion.

The identity of Palestine and the Palestinian, and the inner emancipation of both from the traditionalist idiom, became over the years a matter of growth. In that decade between the late fifties and the early sixties I was not unique among Palestinians in finding the pressure of being a Palestinian intolerable; the pressure of being an alien in the Arab world, of being the member of an excluded group of people, of being robbed of that link with one's homeland and of being unable to convince people that I was human. So I wanted to escape my identity, to embrace the culture of others to escape not just myself but the pain of my reality. However, in the trip back to the Self, the Palestinian made the discovery; not only was there strength and gratification from one's own culture, but that the freak was not oneself; it was those who stood outside one's own world with their Phantoms, their napalm, the keys to their dungeons, their distorted value-structure and their racism and oppression. When I returned in 1968 to the Middle East from my wanderings, yet another generation was growing up. Many of them, like many of us before them sing a ditty that used to be popular around our camp when I was growing up: 'Who am I/ who are ye? I am the Returnee/I am the Returnee.' This time it sounds different, no longer plaintive. Returnee has acquired a capital letter to it. Returnee has come to mean one Returning not backwards but forward, the Return to one's Self, to one's pride, to one's sense of worth - the initial step in the direction of liberation.

In the refugee camp that I returned to in 1968 there was pride and defiance - still in the face of so much poverty and anguish - in people who were no longer looking down the bridge of their noses. Men and women walked around with a kind of hope. Some walked around with fatigues and carried arms. And there was a great deal of frenzied activity. It was so theatrical. But to hell with it. It was good. And right. And on time.

* 'Yes men' who cooperated with the French during Algeria's struggle.

TO BE AN ARAB IN ISRAEL

by FOUZI EL-ASMAR

When the Jewish State was established in Palestine in 1948, the Palestinian Arabs lost their homeland and most were turned into refugees. Some, however, remained in Israel - about 10% of the total Arab Palestinian population at that time. My family and I were among those who stayed, but the fact that we were not expelled was not due to the goodwill of the conquerors, who expelled 97% of the population of my home town of Lydda. People who worked with the railway administration were needed by the authorities, and were ordered to stay with their families. We remained together with others whose head of family worked for the railway administration, and witnessed the expulsion of our friends and their families who did not. The image of this callous eviction will never leave my memory, and there is no person who could convince me that 'The Palestinian Arabs ran away and left their homeland,' as Zionist propaganda proclaims. Overnight we had been transformed from a people constituting a majority in its own homeland into an oppressed minority. Previously subject to the foreign administration of the Ottoman Empire and, since 1914, to British occupation, we were now a minority under a military government of the newly-established settler state of Israel. Within months of the eviction of our friends and their families from Lydda, we were to witness foreigners occupying their homes.

At first I could not easily digest the rapid transformations I had seen, yet with time things became increasingly clear and I have since learnt much about Zionism, the Jewish State and its policies. For twenty five years I have lived under this regime and watched and suffered its efforts to oppress us, to expropriate our land, distort our history and our literature and transform us into its servants. Yet despite its vast resources, the regime's efforts have not succeeded totally. The history of the Arabs in the Jewish State shows yet again that it is possible for an oppressed minority to rebel and thus to retain its identity and personality, to struggle against injustice and to mobilize opinion against its oppression. This has not been easy, and was not achieved overnight. It was the result of our determination, our will and the struggle both of Arabs and progressive Jewish forces within Israel. In this article I hope to elaborate on a number of aspects of the oppression of the Palestinians in Israel and the resistance to this oppression on the basis of my own experience of twenty five years as a citizen of Israel.

The Jewish State

"Eretz Israel, as a Jewish State, does not mean class privileges to Jews except in one respect, and this is the right of entry (eg, the Law of Return, FA). Inside the State complete equality of rights will prevail for all residents without distinction of race or religion,

including the full right and equal access to all jobs up to the very top jobs ..."¹

Thus claimed the General Director of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency in 1946. On May 14th, 1948, David Ben Gurion read out the Israeli Declaration of Independence in the conference hall of the Tel Aviv Museum. It ran as follows :

"The State of Israel will be open to the immigration of Jews from all countries of their dispersion; will promote the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; will be based on the principles of liberty, justice and peace as conceived by the Prophets of Israel; will uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinction of religion race or sex; will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, education and culture; will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and will loyally uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter."

But what course did the Zionist State follow in practice, especially with regard to the non-Jewish minority? The first point to note is the absence of the word 'national' in both the statements quoted above. This is a critical omission, and one which has marked all official Israeli statements since 1948. There is no national equality in Israel. On the contrary, Zionism has transformed the people of the other nation - the Palestinian Arabs - into third-class citizens, and exploited them politically, culturally and economically. Secondly, the Zionist movement has insisted since its foundation on not separating religion and nationality. It therefore defined Jewishness, or Judaism, in both senses: as a religion as well as a nationality. Thus, when I examine the Israeli Declaration of Independence and compare it with reality, to me it reads more accurately as follows :

"The State of Israel will be open to the immigration of Jews from all countries of their dispersion; will promote the development of the country for the benefit of all its Jewish inhabitants; will be based on the principles of liberty for Jews, justice for Jews and peace for Jews as conceived by the prophets of Israel; will uphold the full social and political equality of all its Jewish citizens, without distinction of religion, race or sex; will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, education and culture for the Jewish people; will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and will not loyally uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter."

This paraphrase is not simply playing with words, for it reflects reality more accurately than the official version. My version of the Declaration also falls well short of the truth, however, since, contrary to the Declaration, many Jewish citizens are also the subject of discrimination, especially Jews of Asian and African origin (approximately 60% of the Israeli-Jewish population). Since

in what follows I shall be dealing largely with the internal policies of the Zionist State vis-a-vis the Arab minority, I should also point out en passant that since 1948 Israel has consistently refused to implement any United Nations resolution concerning the rights of the Palestinians. It was Ben Gurion who coined the famous phrase 'Um Shmum', which means essentially, 'I don't give a damn about the United Nations'.

As an Arab who lives in Israel, the concept of my country as a Jewish State is both alien and arrogant. It implies, necessarily, the oppression of one people by another. Both socially and culturally, as well as nationally and politically, I feel that I live in my own homeland, but am rejected by the ruling majority which wants the State to be the State of the Jews. This rejection has led the authorities to use every means in order to get rid of us Palestinian-Arabs. They have expropriated our land, used the Defence (Emergency) Regulations, 1945, against us and prevented us from being integrated into the life of the State as full-fledged first-class citizens. Oppression has been a fact of life for the Arab population under Zionism. To be more specific, between 1948 and 1967 90% of the remaining Arab lands were confiscated by the State. Most were handed over to the kibbutzim and moshavim - agricultural settlements which are not allowed to accept Arab members. Expropriation furthers the Zionist aim of creating an exclusively Jewish State while turning largely independent Arab small peasant farmers into wage labourers, forced to commute long distances to find the most menial unskilled jobs in order to survive. Expropriation and other forms of exploitation and oppression were facilitated by the use of the Defence (Emergency) Regulations, 1945. First introduced under the British mandate in 1936 and used that year against the Palestinian revolt, these draconian regulations were renewed in 1945, when they were directed primarily against the Jewish military and para-military organizations which were fighting the British (the Irgun and the Lehi). In 1948 the new State adopted the Defence (Emergency) Regulations and has since used them against the Arabs, primarily to justify the confiscation of Arab lands but also to prevent the formation of independent cultural and political organisations. These give the military governor a free hand in arresting, confining and restricting the movement of Arabs, as I know to my cost, having been imprisoned for fifteen months' administrative detention without trial, and subsequently under house arrest for a further twelve months. When house arrest was lifted my movements were limited, and both East and West Jerusalem placed out of bounds (Regulations 111, 110 and 109). My case was by no means unique for such was the fate of many Arab intellectuals and others who fought for the rights of their people in Israel.

Zionist apologetics for the exploitation and non-integration of the Arab population tend to stress the 'accidental nature' of the Zionist conquest. Thus

J. M. Landau, in his The Arabs in Israel, states :

"The original official position was that the problems of the Arab population in Israel are temporary in their nature, and that when peace agreements finally substitute the temporary armistice agreements the fate and location of the Arabs in Israel will be settled by mutual consent. Therefore the implementation of the military regime and other means was originally thought of as being only temporary. Although peace remained distant, official circles, preoccupied with what they considered were more pressing problems, got used to considering the issue of the Arabs in Israel as temporary issues. As a consequence they did not feel under any urgent pressure to propose permanent solutions and the postponement of decisions on these issues has slowly become an undeclared principle of policy."²

The authorities believed that when 'peace' came they would get rid of us and transfer us from the Jewish State, but when they saw that this would not work they exercised other pressures to cause us to leave the country. These pressures were brought to bear through almost every institution of the State. An Arab intellectual, for instance, could not get work other than manual labour, or as a teacher, or a clerk in a bank, and even then only after the authorization of the Secret Police. I remember one of the interrogations to which I was subjected, I was offered work in a bank if I 'would keep quiet and return to the line'. 'You will not get any work except with our authorization,' the person in the police Special Branch informed me.

But despite these pressures the Arabs who had remained after 1948 did not emigrate in massive numbers- indeed the highest emigration figure for any one year (1966) was only 1,500. Against this has to be set the natural birth rate of the Arab population in Israel - one of the highest in the world at 4% per annum. This burgeoning natural growth has become something of a spectre for some Zionist leaders: we read that Golda Meir cannot sleep because 'she thinks about how many Arab children are being born every night'. She was by no means alone. Shimon Peres, the Israeli Defence Minister, has expressed similar fears (Ha-Aretz 30.4.67). Should such sentiments have been expressed with respect to Jewish communities in any other part of the world, the outcome would rightly have been one of outrage.

Official Politics

Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, all attempts to establish an independent Arab Party have failed. The obstacles are not rooted in any legal proscription per se - there is no law against the establishment of such parties - but there are many other ways of blocking Arab political initiatives. For example, any groups wishing to stand for election in the Israeli Parliament

must first obtain 750 signatures supporting their nomination from the public. But obtaining these signatures is no guarantee of success. Several groups in the past have acquired the requisite number of names only to have the Israeli Secret Service visit the signatories and pressurize them into withdrawal. In response to this tactic, one party, Al-Ard, in the 1965 elections collected thousands of signatures, and despite Secret Service pressures still ended up with enough names to satisfy the electoral requirements. This did not help. The party was accused of being 'against the security of the State' (a standard accusation levelled against groups and individuals which oppose established policies), and was successfully prosecuted. The Israeli Supreme Court declared the group illegal. Since 1951 there have been seven attempts to form an independent Arab Party, and each has failed.³ In Israel's multi-party political system an independent Arab Party could be extremely dangerous to the ruling elite especially in situations where the Government could be brought down by one or two votes. The Civil Rights Party led by Shulamit Aloni has occupied just such a strategic role in Israeli politics - making its vitally needed support for the Government conditional on certain concessions. For example, the present Israeli Government has a majority of one vote in the Parliament (61 out of 120 votes). This deciding vote could be an Arab vote - indeed when Golda Meir established her Government after the 1973 war she was attacked by the Rabbi Cook for constituting a government which depends on the vote of Arabs: 'Rabbi Zvi Yehudah (Cook) is furious with the National Religious Party (Mafdal) which joined the Government with Mustapha and Ahmad. This is the origin of the crime and the beginning of sin. Thus Golda brought shame and disgrace upon herself and upon us all. Thus, she has desecrated the name of the Lord and the name of Israel.'⁴

Arab parties do exist - affiliated to the so-called Zionist 'sister' parties - but they are in no sense independent. The Mapam Party has always boasted of its token Arab membership and has traditionally had one of its Arab members in a relatively high ministerial post. The Labour Party which was formed out of an amalgamation between Mapai (the main Zionist party) and two smaller parties in 1965, and which joined with Mapam in 1969 to form the Labour Party-Mapam Alignment, did not open its ranks to Arab members until 1973. Only the Communist Party gives full equality to its Arab members, allowing them to take equal part in determining the party's political line. In Mapam the Arab members have been tokens only. For example, in 1967 the Arab member of the Mapam Central Committee was asked not to participate in the meeting to discuss issues relating to the forthcoming war with the Arab States. Mapai - until 1973 - recruited Arab votes through affiliated sister-parties dominated by Arab 'vote bosses'. The fact that significant numbers of Arabs

vote for Zionist parties might seem paradoxical. But it is no more paradoxical than the black vote which Chicago's Mayor Daley receives every election, despite the fact that the Daley administration's treatment of the black population in Chicago is one of the worst in the United States. For the politicians themselves there is the security of undemanding jobs, providing the 'correct' political line is followed. For the Arab voters, allegiance to a Zionist party opens opportunities for jobs in junior government administrative posts - health, education, welfare and agriculture in particular. It may also secure work permits, minor privileges in taxation, and so forth. By the same token, not voting for a Zionist party entails risks that work permits won't be granted, official discrimination may be increased, and so forth. Ballots are nominally secret, but there are many informal ways of determining local voting patterns.

The leaders of these Arab parties can in no sense be said to represent the interests of real needs of the Arab population. On the contrary, they have been faithful servants to Zionism. In 1964, there was a critical vote in Parliament on whether or not the Defence (Emergency) Regulations, 1945, which have been consistently used to repress Arab political opposition, should be retained. Parliament split evenly on the question, and the decision to continue to maintain the Regulations in force was passed by a majority of one - this was the vote of an Arab Member of Parliament. On the day before the crucial vote a number of us had gone to Jerusalem to plead with an Arab Member of Parliament to vote against the continuation of the Defence Regulations. The man got very angry and shouted, "What do you know? You are still children. I know what I'm doing ...". It is said of this Arab MP that during one of the sessions of Parliament he was sitting in his place in line with the Mapai Party Members and fell asleep during one of the speeches. He started snoring and was prodded awake by a neighbour. He woke with a start and automatically raised his hand indicating a 'Yes' vote...

As Landau has pointed out in his *The Arabs in Israel*, the main role of the official Arab parties is to get Arab support for the Labour Party in the elections on the one hand, and support the Labour Party in critical votes in Parliament on the other, - "Arab Members of Parliament... have carefully avoided as a rule making speeches on the subject of military government or the relationship of Israel to the Arab States."⁵ I cannot see such people representing me. And with respect to Landau's quotation the real question is: did the Arab politicians avoid controversial issues out of free choice, or because they were given instructions to avoid them? In my view it was both. I have had a chance to hear some of their speeches and can quite definitely state that all their speeches had to undergo internal censorship, notwithstanding their fidelity to Zionism. The Labour Party invented the co-

ordinating committee for minorities in Parliament consisting of five Labour Party Jewish Members of Parliament. Its task is 'to meet whenever necessary and maintain contacts with the Arab Members of Parliament linked to the Party, listen to their demands and co-ordinate their speeches - and their speeches and their votes with that of other Members of Parliament of the Party'.⁶

In the eyes of the Arabs, Labour affiliated Arab Members of Parliament brought shame and disgrace on us as Arabs, who had to face the cultural challenge of Jewish society in Israel, though they were formally, in the eyes of many Jews truly, representatives of the Arab population in Israel.

Zionist resistance to independent Arab political parties in fact extends to any independent Arab organizations, due to the regime's fears that such organizations may become politicized. Thus the Zionists have consistently - and successfully - thwarted every attempt by Arab youngsters in the Triangle to set up their own youth clubs even to the extent of using the Defence (Emergency) Regulations to declare the clubs illegal. These attempts took place after an experience of total frustration with the sports club directed by the Histadrut Labour Federation. These independent initiatives, which involved fund-raising and the initiation of a number of sports meetings and gatherings throughout the Triangle, the establishment of football teams, pingpong teams, libraries etc., were frowned upon by the authorities both politically and socially. 'This is sure to lead to organization and the development of the Arab youth, which will endanger the existence of the State of Israel unless we control it' a journalist claimed to me in a meeting we held in Tel-Aviv. These sports clubs were finally liquidated in 1964 by an order from the Defence Minister based on Defence (Emergency) Regulations 1945, which declared them illegal. The direct cause was the decision of the sports clubs to organise a sports day in the village of Qara'. The club in this village invited sister-clubs in other villages to bring their football teams and hold a regional competition. The villages that were invited were Tira, Umm al-Fahm, Qalansawa and 'Ar'ara. At this point the military governor intervened and forbade by invoking the authority of the Defence (Emergency) Regulations 1945, any entry or exit of the village of Qara'. The order was disregarded and as a result a number of leaders of the Qara' sports club were detained, and were accused of violating the law.

Religion and the State

Ever since the establishment of the Zionist movement following the first Zionist Congress in Basle in 1897, there have been strong pressures to maintain links between religion, nationality and State. Theodor Herzl, the movement's founder, came under strong pressure to retract a suggestion put forward in his

book The Jewish State - namely that such a State could in principle be established anywhere in the world: in Uganda, for example, as the British had at one time offered. Herzl was later convinced that the identity of Jewish religious sentiment with Zionism would be an effective means of convincing Jews to emigrate to Palestine, and the conception of a Jewish State as a religious State still permeates the entire structure of the present Zionist system. Non-Jews living in Israel feel this much more acutely than Jews. For example, I know no other State which so effectively paralyses public transport on its sabbatical, and during the Week of Passover it is difficult to find in Israel a restaurant that serves bread with the meals. I have had to travel from Tel-Aviv to Jaffa in order to get some Syrian bread in the Arab quarter, and this was what many Jews did as well. My question is: is it the case that one cannot find meat in restaurants or even at butchers during the Great Fast of the Christian communities in a Christian State? Or is it the case that one cannot find food during the day in a Muslim State during the month of Ramadan? Of course these are relatively minor matters, but the non-separation of the Jewish religion from the State influences the entire network of relationships between the Government and the non-Jewish citizens of Israel.

Israel Shahak of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and Chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, has argued in a pamphlet entitled For Judaism of Truth and Justice: Against the Treatment of Non-Jews in Judaism (private edition, Jerusalem, 1966)⁷ that there can be no equality for the non-Jewish, and especially the Arab, community in Israel without a clear separation between religion and the State. The pamphlet is based upon quotes from Jewish religious authorities and their interpretation and comments on Jewish religion and the rules and regulations relating to non-Jews. For example:

"Political equality: Just as non-Jews are forbidden to testify so they are forbidden to every position of political rule, and it is forbidden to appoint them to a position of power. Especially it is forbidden to appoint them as judges, or to bring disputes for their arbitration, even if they rule according to the rules of Israel (the Talmudic Encyclopaedia 'Goy', page 354.)"

What is worthy of mention is that we did not hear of any debate among the learned and Jewish Halakhic authorities and among those demanding 'a State ruled by the Torah' on this issue. Are they, or are they not, for disqualifying non-Jews for judicial positions in the State of Israel: yes or no?

The sense of superiority which western Ashkenazi Israel-Jews brought with them from Europe did not derive simply from western culture and technological and military superiority, but also from the traditional Halachic

Law, with its emphasis on the Jews as 'the chosen people'. The Zionist movement entered into the Middle East equipped with the technological progress of the West, and has succeeded in establishing a relatively developed western society. One of the central slogans of Zionism was, 'We come to help the nations of the area to develop and carry their country towards progress.' Similarly I have often been told, 'If there will be peace we shall help you, we shall teach you, we shall develop the Arab countries', and many many more scores of such 'we shall's'. As the Chief Military Rabbi, Rabbi Mordechai Piron, wrote in an article in Yediot Aharonot (April 5th, 1974), entitled 'Israel and the Diaspora in the Teaching of Rabbi Yehudah ha-Levi':

"The essence of the nation and the pillar of its existence is to serve as a living witness to the Divine Presence, and to its natural and miraculous action within the theatre of global history. As a result of the selective process within the human community the people of Israel have alone been endowed with a biological and metaphysical special capacity that enables this people to transcend the natural causality operating within the cosmos and approach the uppermost level of divine comprehension. This miraculous fact transforms the people into the centre of spirit and culture of the entire world - a people whose influence constitutes, according to this view, a human characteristic of extreme spirituality which embodies the highest level which the human species can attain, and which finds its expression in that only within the people of Israel has the miraculous phenomenon of prophecy appeared which is the peak of the ideal of the identification of man with the Divine Plenitude ... To the people of Israel there is therefore given the unique possibility of uniting with the Divine and comprehending the Divine in the highest form conceivable by human comprehension."

This article did not appear in some obscure religious publication but was published in a paper which has one of the highest circulations in Israel, and published furthermore on a Friday, when circulation is usually highest. The religious philosophy which underlies such an outburst is not only generally accepted in Israel, but constitutes a compulsory part of the education programme in Hebrew schools as we shall see later. As an Arab I am proud that progressive Jews in Israel categorically rejected such views. For example, as Israel Shahak has written in the pamphlet noted earlier (p. 7):

"In my opinion this disgusting teaching does not fall short in its viciousness and dangers of the racist teachings of the Nazis. And although the former speaks in terms of 'spirit' and the latter in terms of 'blood' and racial origin, they are both equal in that they

arbitrarily designate whole groups of people as not sharing the image of God."

In retrospect I am not sure whether the policies pursued by the Israeli State towards the Arabs are rooted in an education system which incorporates and promotes the views that such teachings imply, or simply in political hatred of the Arabs. Of the latter there is ample evidence - not just from embittered cranks, but from holders of the highest office in the land. When David Ben Gurion was Prime Minister he refused ever to visit an Arab village or town. He once visited an Arab Druze village, but then only because he thought that Druzes were not Arabs. The same Ben Gurion threw away his Israeli identity card when he saw Arab words were printed on it. Such sentiments from such a man are surely not merely evidence of religious antipathy, but also racial and political hatred.

But to return to the religious question, it is no accident that following the '67 war, articles started appearing in the Israeli press arguing that the war was a war against the Amalekites - a biblical reference to the tribe which Joshua was ordered by Divine Command to exterminate en masse - men, women, children and even animals. After the 1973 war a booklet was published by the Military Headquarters of the Central Command, the Military Rabbinate: it entitled, In the Wake of the Yom Kippur War: Matters of Thought Halakhah and Investigation. Once again the acceptability of killing civilians is made quite clear. Consider the following quotations:

"Paragraph 3: When our forces encounter civilians in war, in ambush or in a raid, so long as there is no definite evaluation that these civilians are incapable of damaging our forces, it is permissible and even obligatory by the Halakhic Law to kill them.

"Paragraph 4: In every case one should refuse to trust the Arab, even when he gives the impression of being a civilised person.

"Paragraph 5: The rules applying to the person assisting the enemy or a terrorist are the rules applying to the enemy or the terrorist himself."⁸

This, of course, is nothing less than an official call for murder; it is again no accident that the phrase 'by the Halakhic Law' should be used. What does the Halakhah have to say on this issue? "A Jew who murders a Goy, (ie non-Jew) is accountable only before the Courts of Heaven".⁹ In other words, killing a Goy is not a crime punishable in the human courts. What worries me particularly is that the majority of Israelis do not raise their voices in protest when such sentiments are expressed, nor against the education system which embodies them - and this includes political parties who style themselves 'Socialist' and 'Revolutionary', like Mapam. This brings us again to the question of the Israeli judiciary: to what degree are the courts influenced by

Halakhic precepts such as those noted above? Under Israeli State laws, murder of non-Jews is as serious a crime as the murder of Jews. But consider the sentences which were meted out following the notorious Kufr Qasim massacre. On the eve of the 1956 war 49 Arab citizens from the village of Kufr Qasim in the Triangle were murdered as they returned from their work in the fields. Among the dead were pregnant women, old people and children. Those responsible for the massacre received sentences ranging from 4 to 14 years' imprisonment. Yet, on appeal to the Supreme Court, these sentences were reduced and the President gave them amnesty. The result was that the longest period spent in jail by any one of the convicted was only $3\frac{1}{2}$ years.¹⁰

Zionism, the Jewish State machine and the Halakhic Law - three dimensions of a repressive system, and all succoured and sustained by a system of education which consistently denigrates the achievements of the Arab people while elevating those of Zionism. Equality of human, civil and political rights for all involve the Israeli-Jewish and the Palestinian-Arab peoples and are inconceivable on a Zionist basis.

Education

I was ten years old when Lydda was conquered, thus most of my education took place within the newly-established State of Israel. Overnight a fundamental change was wrought in our school programme. We were not allowed to use the books we had been using before the conquest, and there were no new ones. We were not taught Arab literature, and the lessons in Arabic history were very poor - mostly we had to learn Jewish history. We were no longer allowed to sing Palestinian songs but instead were forced to stand in ranks and sing the Zionist national anthem, Ha-Tikvah (The Hope). Many of our teachers were Jews of Arab origin, who treated us with contempt while praising the achievements of Zionism. Without books - a situation which lasted into secondary school - we had to copy everything from the blackboard. Arab contributions to human culture were ignored; Jewish contributions were emphasised, and so forth. When we studied the Bible we studied the Old Testament, with much emphasis on chapters relating to the Land of Israel given by God to the people of Israel, the Promised Land. We learnt no Koran - the repository of our language, history and national pride even for those of us of a Christian background - and nothing at all from the New Testament.

My own experience was in no sense unrepresentative, as a study carried out for the US Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) by the Hebrew University in Jerusalem showed.¹¹ The HEW report, undertaken by a distinguished team of Israeli sociologists, leaves no doubt that the separate primary and secondary school education programmes for Jews and Arabs

discriminate heavily in favour of the former. For example, the failure rate in the State Matriculation Examinations (necessary qualifications for higher studies) for Arab students was 90% in 1963 and 70% in 1965. In the tertiary education section the evidence of discrimination is even more dramatic. Out of a total student population in 1969/70 of 37,343 in all Israeli higher academic institutions, the total Arab student population was a mere 700. Even more important, the HEW study reveals how the Zionist authorities consistently use the compulsory education system to undercut our pride.

By juxtaposing the stated aims of the teaching of history studies for Jewish and Arab students respectively, the HEW researchers were able to show quite clearly the ideological biases - sometimes subtle and sometimes crude - which permeate the entire education system. Jewish achievements are maximised, Arab achievements minimised, Zionist claims to Israel are emphasised, Palestinian claims wholly ignored and so forth. In literature and language studies similar biases emerge. For Jewish students the first aim of studying literature is 'to impart to the student a love of the ideals, outlook and experience of the nation ...'. For Arab students the first aim is merely: 'Correct reading and understanding of the written and spoken language.'¹²

How these biases work in practice can be seen by examining some of the statistics produced by the HEW study on the relative amount of time children from the two communities spend in secondary school studying various subjects. For example, Arab students in the humanities stream spend slightly more time studying Jewish history than they do studying Arab history (20 hours against 19 hours). Jewish students, on the other hand spend 39 hours studying Jewish history, and only an hour and a half studying Arab history. Arab students have to learn Hebrew and study Jewish literature, while Jewish students learn no Arabic and study no Arab literature.* Arab students have

With the exception of the Orientalist Stream, available as an option only in a very limited number of secondary schools. As the following report indicates, the Orientalist Stream is largely geared to meet Israeli army intelligence needs:

The Army is in Urgent Need for Arabic Speakers by Yair Amikam

"The Intelligence Department of the army in cooperation with the Ministry of Education decided to attack the problem and its related aspects ... In every secondary school that has an Oriental Stream a senior Intelligence officer is posted. An effort is made that in all cases the posted officer will be a graduate of the school. His task will be to nurture among the students an awareness for Middle East affairs assisted by written material prepared by the Intelligence Department specifically for this purpose." (Yediot Aharonot, 14.2.75)- Eds.

to spend 256 hours studying the Bible and Oral Jewish Tradition, while only spending 30 hours on the Koran. Jewish students spend a total of 640 hours on religious studies, but learn nothing at all of the Muslim religion, and so forth.¹³

Confronted with such an education system we had no choice but to embark on a programme of self-education, and despite the obstacles the Israeli-Arabs succeeded in reconstituting an intellectual and literary culture which had previously been destroyed. The first obstacle was the lack of books. Not only were these scarce, but those we possessed were printed before 1948. The Hebrew University had new Arabic books, but many needed a permit to go to Jerusalem, and some couldn't afford it - and anyway the books available there were not accessible to the mass of the Arab population. We got round some of the problems by copying what books were available and circulating the copies, and this was the best we could achieve until 1958, when the Mapam Party started up the Arab Book Publishing House reprinting books published by writers from neighbouring Arab countries. The demand was so great that profits soared, and similar publishing houses were set up, making it possible for us to buy virtually any book that appeared on the Arab market. We thirsted for knowledge, and bought and read almost everything. Initially most of the books published were novels; later came historical studies and translations of foreign classics. There were even a few political books but the authorities fought this and banned the distribution of the published books. During 1961 and 1962 I ran my own publishing house, turning out specifically political books like The History of Algeria by Ihsa Abbas, and Gamal Abd al-Nasser's The Philosophy of Revolution. Each time a new book was published I was detained by the authorities.

But in the struggle for self-education we were not simply learning about literature and politics. Many of us were also writing, and in the wake of the 1967 war, Israeli-Arab literature was being published and read in the Arab world and compared favourably by prominent critics with published work outside Israel. By the late 1960's, and in response to the reception our writing was receiving in the Arab world, some Jewish scholars and writers started showing an interest in our work. Today much Israeli-Arab poetry and literature has been translated into many different languages and published abroad. This progress has been hard-won. Not only were we prohibited from establishing a union of Arab poets and writers for ourselves, but the official Union of Hebrew Writers refused - and still refuses - to accept Arab writers to its ranks. Ostensibly this is because the membership is composed solely of authors who write and publish in Hebrew. In fact there are among its members Jewish writers who write and publish in other

languages - Yiddish, for example. The persistent refusal to admit Arab writers to its ranks led to a number of Jewish writers in the Union resigning at the 1973 Convention, and establishing an alternative, unofficial union of writers open to all Israeli writers - Arabs included. This latter union is in fact paralysed and completely inactive because it is denied any form of government support, which is granted exclusively to the official union.

The State education system in Israel as it affects the Arab children who are forced to endure it, has a dual function. It contributes to the under-development of the Arab minority, while at the same time attempting to foster the quite false image of a democratic secular State. And for some leading Israelis, the idea of any education for Arabs is clearly anathema. As the former Prime Minister's Advisor for Arab Affairs, Mr. Uri Lubrani once said:

"It would have been better, perhaps, if there were no Arab students. If they remained hewers of wood it would perhaps be easier to rule over them. But there are things that do not depend on our will and are inescapable and we have to study the matter and learn how to contain the problems."¹⁴

No accident, perhaps, that the phrase 'hewers of wood' is drawn from a passage in the Bible which has historically been used as a religious justification for racialism. Public statements as frank as this are rare from the Israeli authorities, but I have little doubt that few among the political elite would not prefer the Arabs in Israel to be docile 'hewers of wood and drawers of water'. Lest this be thought too partial a view, let me quote again from an article based on the HEW report:

"The juxtaposition of the Jewish and Arab secondary school curricula clearly betrays the educational structures necessary in order to maintain Israeli domination on the one hand, and the systematic attempt to undercut the Palestinian Arab's sense of his particular cultural history as an Arab, as well as the history of his own position as a Palestinian Arab, on the other.

"The curricula merit careful reading: they reveal a standard formula always correlated to 'problems of educating a national minority'. Once the structures of domination have consolidated to the extent that the dominated population has no structural option but enter into the state schools, one invariably finds that every endeavour is made to utilize the state education system to 'instil recognition in the student of the importance of the state of Israel for the Jewish people throughout the ages (have the dominated legitimize their oppressors' privileged position and monopolistic control); to implant a feeling of the common fate of the two peoples (as dominated and dominating) in the past and

the present, in order to develop his sense of personal responsibility for the consolidation and development of the state; to implant the desire and the readiness to serve the state in all ways'.

"One can imagine the effect on the Palestinian Arab mind attempting to articulate its own particular identity in terms of 256 hours of Bible and Jewish Oral tradition, and 30 hours of Koran. (It is to be noted that there are, moreover, no provisions for the study of the New Testament.) This procedure correlates to the inferior Arab political and economic position, a position of cultural and historical inferiority in Israel. It is predicated upon denying to the Arab, as far as possible, effective tools with which he could critically confront the presentation of the Israeli Jew as the bearer of modern enlightenment and progress in the area; it attempts to present the Israeli Jew as having a long-standing genealogy of historical and cultural superiority stemming right out of the introduction of the first documented, abstract and monotheistic religion."¹⁵

It was this system of so-called education that has led many Arabs to embark on the difficult but rewarding path of self-education. Self-education is not only difficult, it poses itself as a threat to the Zionist state. Many Arab intellectuals who have dared to resist discrimination in Israel have been expelled or forced to flee from their country. In exile they constitute a key force in the intellectual and political struggle against the Jewish State. They argue forcefully that co-existence between the Arab States and a Zionist Israel is impossible, and their arguments are based on experience. For if Zionism cannot live in peace with the Arabs in their own homeland, how can it make peace with its Arab neighbours?

Footnotes

1. Moshe Sharett (Shertok), General Director of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency in his testimony before the Anglo-American Investigation Committee of Inquiry, Jerusalem, 26.3.46 in his Be-Sha'ar ha-Umot (In the Gateway of the Nations) p.44. Quoted from A. Cohen, Israel and the Arab World (Heb ed.) Sifriyat Poalim, Tel Aviv, 1964, p.504
2. J. M. Landau, The Arabs in Israel (Heb ed.) Haarakhot Publishing House, Israel Defence Forces, Ministry of Defence, 1971, p. 46 (emphasis added)
3. 1) Abu Laban (from Jaffa) 1960
 2) Da'ud Khuri (from Nazereth - the Popular Party), 1951
 3) Niqula Saba (from Nazereth - The Democratic Party) 1951-2

- 4) Nimar al-Hawari (from Nazereth), 1951
- 5) Nimar al-Hawari, Abdallah Khayr (Daliyat al-Karmil) and Elias Kusa (Haifa) (The Israeli Arab Party), 1955.)
- 6) Mas'ad Qasis (from Mi'ilya), 1959
- 7) Al-Ard
4. Yediot Aharonot, 29.3.74
5. J. M. Landau, Op. Cit., p.25
6. Ibid., p.96
7. See U. Davis and N. Mezvinsky, Documents from Israel, Ithica Press, London, 1975
8. Ha-Olam ha-Zeh, No. 1915, 15.5.74
9. Shahak, Op. Cit., p.7 (emphasis added)
10. For full account of the Kufr Qasim massacre see Sabri Jiryis "From Deir Yasim to Kufr Qasim" in his The Arabs in Israel, Institute of Palestine Studies, Beirut, 1969, pp.91-118
11. Research Report: Some Problems of Educating a National Minority, prepared by Dr. Yochanan Peres and Mrs. Nira Yuval-Davis, for the Division of Higher Education Research, US Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, DC. Grantee: The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel. Project No. OE-6-21-013. Report period: 1.10.1965 - 30.9.1968
12. HEW Report, ibid. pp. 71-2
13. HEW Report, ibid. p. 81
14. Ha-Aretz, 4.4.61 in Sabri Jiryis, Op. Cit. p. 155
15. Uri Davis "Palestine into Israel", Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 3, No. 1., Autumn 1973 pp. 102 and 104

SECTION SIX:

WESTERN JEWISH DIASPORA

Introduction

The success of the Zionist movement in establishing an exclusively Jewish state in Palestine has tended to overshadow its equally successful efforts to equate Judaism with Zionism. Zionism has become the secular alternative to Judaism, with the consequence that extensive support for Israel can be mobilised in Jewish communities in the West, while anti-Zionism is stigmatised as anti-semitism or Jewish self-hate. In the papers in this section Everett Gendler, a non-Zionist American Rabbi, challenges some of the key Zionist assumptions about Israel and its relationship to the Jewish Diaspora. Gendler argues forcefully for non-Zionist Judaic traditions and against the pervasive belief that Israel provides either physical security or a progressive spiritual haven for Jews. Steve Vines on the other hand concentrates on the 'zionisation' of world Jewry and demonstrates how Zionist organisations have brought pressure to bear on Jewish communities throughout the world to give political and material support to Israel - often at considerable cost to other Diaspora Jews. He also shows how Zionist organisations ruthlessly attempt to stifle even relatively mild dissent from Israeli policies. Professor Shahak's contribution is a response to an article by Jack Winocour in the London Times which argued that it was the duty of Diaspora Jews to give unstinting support to the Zionist State. Shahak argues against this view both in terms of a non-Zionist Judaic tradition and in terms of its practical consequences. Diaspora support for Israel, he argues, corrupts both giver and receiver - in the Middle East it promotes perpetual warfare. Outside it promotes anti-semitism.

TO BE A JEW IN THE DIASPORA

by RABBI EVERETT GENDLER

For many centuries following the Exile of 70-135 CE, Zion served as a point of spiritual reference for the Jew. Prayers sought mercy for Zion, Psalms were recited singing its praises, the imagination of Jews outside of Israel was stirred by the very word Zion.

Yet throughout those centuries, Jewish life for the most part had its effective centres in the places where Jews actually lived. Jews prayed, studied, celebrated, and organised their communities where they happened to be. The ideal of Zion may have hovered over those various places, but as an ideal unrealised it served as the spatial analogue to the Messianic temporal expectation. At once an anticipation of the future and the embodiment of present ideals, it served well to concretise aspirations. A memory from the past projected into the future, its non-realisation throughout those centuries prevented its becoming a substitute for the day-to-day life that Jews lived in other places. At no time during that long stretch of time was Zion treated as a particular place offering vicarious experiences for Jews elsewhere. As Messianic expectation did not fall prey to other-worldliness, the hope for Zion did not succumb to other-placeliness.

Neither did Zion as an ideal decide among varying interpretations and understandings of Jewish values and traditions. By virtue of being an ideal, an anticipation of a situation yet to be, it could be invoked on behalf of various ideals and could encompass many of them. The exact shape which Zion was to assume in its realisation was also open and indeterminate, here too offering a wide range of options.

With the coming of modern political Zionism, much of this began to change, and with the establishment of the State of Israel, a radical transformation occurred. The State of Israel became widely identified with Zion, and the consequences were several.

First of all, the power-political unit Israel inherited a religious aura from the repository of ideals long associated with Zion, though it is far from clear that those ideals were intended to issue in a modern nation-state established by military-political means. Secondly, by identifying the State of Israel with Zion, other interpretations of what it might mean for Zion to be approximated within time and space were foreclosed. Non-nationalist visions of Zion, for example, were widely dismissed, even though their claims to standing within the Jewish tradition had hardly been addressed, let alone refuted. Finally, Zion now purportedly realised, a particular political community in a particular place could claim to serve as the focus for the lives of Jews elsewhere, thereby inviting the kind of vicarious Jewish living which has been one characteristic of Diaspora-Israel relations in

recent years.

The further effects of these developments have been far-reaching. The first, the religious aura surrounding the State of Israel, has tended to make many Jews both in and outside of Israel less critical of particular policies of the Israeli state than they might otherwise be. Giving full weight to the genuine concern for Jews in Israel that has muted some criticism, there are still signs of religious associations making possible widespread acquiescence in policies which otherwise would have been subjected to severe questioning. Seizure of Arab lands, purportedly on the basis of Scriptural sanction, is one example.

The second, the reduction of various interpretations of Zion to but one, the modern nation-state called Israel, both distorts the past and limits the future. Rarely do history books remind us of even recent facts such as the significant proportion of the Yishuv (the Jewish population of then-Palestine), fully 40%, which as late as 1947 opposed political partition and the establishment of an ethnically defined Jewish State. Not that the clock can be turned back, but by such omissions options for the future are thereby reduced, and the present Middle East political impasse is made the more difficult of resolution. Additionally, the forgetting of things past has contributed to a steady narrowing of the Jewish religious understanding of what Messianic fulfillment might mean, and there has been some tendency to identify the true aim of Judaism as the establishment of the State of Israel.

It is the third consequence, however, the vicarious living through Israel by Jews elsewhere, on which I should like to focus, for it is in this area that some serious negative results of recent developments can be most clearly seen.

There has been in recent years a tendency to under-value Diaspora Jewish experiences and to over-value Israeli Jewish experiences, and this has worked out badly both for Israeli and for Diaspora Jews. Israeli Jews often complain that Diaspora Jews expect too much of Israel and its Jews, and in many cases that is true. But that should come as no surprise given the present mood.

To Israeli Zionists I would suggest the following consideration: If you insist on regarding lightly our Diaspora lives and experiences, then expect your own to become correspondingly heavy, burdened by our expectations and hopes which you ideologically insist cannot find fulfillment in our lives here where we live. If you want to maintain such claims, then expect either critical rejection by those of us who esteem our lives in many particular places throughout this world which He has created, or burdensome acceptance by those who look to you to provide vicariously the satisfactions which you tell them they cannot possibly know in Diaspora.

The real tragedy, of course, is that both the under-valuation and over-valuation may well be false, and that tendencies to such facile comparisons ought to be resisted. It is as a contribution to such resistance that I want to devote the remainder of this essay. I regret that in places it may appear defensive of Diaspora experience, but since Diaspora experience has been called into question in recent years, there may be some value in defending that realm of experience from its detractors.

Perhaps to begin it will be helpful to consider the topic now being discussed, "To Be a Jew in the Diaspora". At first glance the title seems plausible, the assignment reasonable. It is widely accepted, after all, that Jewish life can be most significantly differentiated by whether it takes place in Israel or outside of Israel. Yet as I think about sharing something of my life as a Jew 'in the Diaspora', I suddenly realise that there is a presumption in the category.

The category 'Diaspora' assumes that the most significant Jewish fact of my life is my not living in Israel, but subjectively this fact, I find, matters hardly at all. I live my life in this place at this time. It is constituted by a series of specific experiences which involve and are informed by cultural and religious considerations, but these are quite different from the ideological abstraction of the term 'Diaspora'. Since specifics seem to me to reveal the essence of life, let me now be specific.

We (my wife, our two young daughters, and I) live on a small acreage in a town of 20,000 about 40 minutes north of Boston, in the Northeast of the United States. Five temples are found in the two small cities near us (population about 100,000), and the usual US educational, medical, industrial and cultural facilities are part of the general surroundings. Our immediate area still has a few small farms, several market gardeners grow food in our town for shipment to the city, and quite a few home gardeners struggle, as do we, with the stony sub-soil which contributes more than a reasonable quantity of rocks to the thin layer of top-soil from which proceeds the food we eat. Working in this setting, the precious few inches of fertile top-soil built up over stretches of time beyond our minds' imaginings, provide mute but eloquent testimony to the slow, steady, irresistible surge of life upward throughout our planet. In this setting, rhythmically attuned to seasonal shifts, there are moments for me when the sense of *chei ha-olamim*, the Life of the Universe, moves from the pages of the prayer book and almost palpably courses through the earth, making itself felt here in this very place, the place where we live. It is not hard, at such times, to appreciate the Hasidic saying cited by Buber:

Everywhere

"God says to man as he said to Moses:

'Put off thy shoes from off thy feet,
for the place whereon thou standest
is holy ground' (Exodus 3:5)....

put off the habitual which encloses your foot
and you will recognise that the place on which
you happen to be standing at this moment is
holy ground. For there is no rung of being on which
we cannot find the holiness of God everywhere
and at all times."

This is one 'Diaspora' Jewish experience which I have been granted.

Outside of the house in which we now live is an old well, dug nearly fifty years ago by those who built the house. Field-stone lined, it was later filled with trash, dirt, and old shingling when town water was piped to this part of town. When I remove the cap to have a look, there is hardly an inch of water in sight, but old-timers tell me that when first dug and throughout its days of use, the well provided a steady supply of cool, clean water, thus vindicating the diviner whose rod suggested just this location for digging. It beckons, this well, and invites re-digging - reminiscent of Isaac's re-digging of the stopped-up wells in his place and his time. Digging through the muck takes much of the summer, and the bottom is finally reached the Friday afternoon before the Sabbath whose Biblical reading includes the ancient Israelite Song at the Well:

"Spring up, O Well

Greet it with song" - Numbers 21:17

The well now re-dug and cleaned, crystalline waters gush through the fissures of the bedrock 18 feet below, by taste delicious, by test pure. The waters do well up, inviting song in this place at this time. And I find myself momentarily wondering: is it 'here' or 'there', 'now' or 'then'? Or have time and place, no longer bounded, met and mingled across time and space?

The following morning I attend Sabbath services at the Havurat Shalom community in Somerville, founded five years earlier by the gifted religious teacher and leader, Rabbi Arthur Green. Although it is mid-summer at least forty persons are present, in age mostly from teens to early thirties. All are seated in cushions on the floor, and the service begins with Reb Avram offering some personal reflections on the well and water as symbols of religious inspiration. He then begins a nigun and slowly we all join in, our bodies swaying, our voices rising and falling in unison. After some silence, parts of the morning service are recited, at times introduced by words which suggest the personal meaning of a particular phrase. How

beautifully tradition and the moment blend.

The Torah reading that morning is characterised by lively and diverse discussion of the passages read, and a deeply moving moment comes when a member of the community who had narrowly escaped death in a boating accident is called to the Torah and recites the 'gomel' prayer (a blessing traditionally recited by one who has survived a dangerous experience). Following the service there is a kiddush, and the shared wine and halla seemed especially precious that morning. Symbols of life and joy, these are all the more appreciated as we realise the great blessing which is ours, the renewed life of one dear to all of us.

The morning has been rich indeed: A davening experience at once individual and communal, contemporary and traditional, and a sharing of excitement about Torah and concern for the life of a friend.

These are 'Diaspora' Jewish experiences, and they could be multiplied by countless other examples. The proliferation of Jewish scholarship and studies in academic departments of US universities; the widespread development of extra-departmental 'Free Jewish Universities' on campuses throughout the US; the quest for more intimacy within established synagogue structures; interfamilial religious support and personal sharing of groups such as the Alternate Religious Community of Marblehead; - each one of these could provide numerous additional instances of Diaspora Jewish experiences.

'But are they typical?' one might ask. 'Are they representative of Diaspora experience?' Such questions as these are perfect examples of a tendency of thought, the urge to categorise and lump together discrete particulars of experience. Operating in many areas of human life, within Jewish life this century it has had free reign in attempted generalizations about 'Diaspora' Jewish experience. Yet when attention is paid to particulars, experience itself seems to resist such a lumping together.

But let me nonetheless face the question. Are the 'Nature' experiences 'typical' or at least possible for 'Diaspora' experience? The answer clearly depends on the particular place, the particular persons, and the particular politics of the place. For a Jewish grape-grower in Chile or Argentina, given certain traditional grounding, certain personal sensibilities, and the continuation or restoration of political liberties in those places, such experiences are quite conceivable. On the other hand, for a Jewish apartment-dweller in the heart of Buenos Aires or Boston, such experiences are not very likely.

By the same token, the nature experiences cited might be available to some moshav or kibbutz residents, yet far-removed from the apartment-dweller of Tel-Aviv.

As for the inspired t'fila of a Havurat Shalom, is that 'typical' of Diaspora services? Again the question is amiss in its categories. There are US synagogues and temples where little if anything of a warm or inspiring nature happens, and others where worshippers come away feeling truly strengthened and inspirited. And is not the same true in Israel? Are there not places of worship whose religious emptiness deadens the person, and others where life flows freely and vigorously?

And can one imagine the resentment if it were now to be asked, which is the 'typical' or 'representative' Israeli experience? 'Are we specimens?' Israelis rightly retort, a reply equally appropriate in the mouths of those of us who live elsewhere.

What is clear is this: the line of demarcation for the experiences cited does not correspond to the line which is often thought to be the most significant, that between Diaspora and Israeli Jewish existence. The Diaspora-Israel distinction is not significant in these cases.

'But how can you begin to compare Jewish religious experiences elsewhere with those which might take place in the Holy Land or at the site of the ancient Temple? Is all space the same?'

No, all space is not the same, but from this it does not follow that there is only one proper place for religious experience and worship. With respect to the Land of Israel, it is helpful to remember that Abraham was spoken to by God outside of as well as within the land. The Torah was given in the desert. Moses, our greatest leader, never entered the land. The most influential Talmud is the Babylonian, not the Palestinian.

As for the Temple site, however impressive the legends which regard the Temple as situated upon e-ven ha-sh'tiya, the Foundation Stone of the world, one who knew the Temple well proclaimed clearly: 'the whole earth is filled with His Glory.' (Isaiah 6:3) Furthermore, Judaism had always acknowledged places other than the Temple site where worship was both efficacious and esteemed. Before the Temple was established, worship was widely diffused; even while it stood, worship took place throughout the land as well as abroad; before its destruction the second time, the prototype of the non-fixed place of worship, the synagogue, had seen its beginnings; and with the destruction of the Temple, the institution of the synagogue facilitated and validated the worship of the Divine in many places, not less in the Diaspora than in Israel.

Clearly Jewish religious experiences never were limited to the land of Israel, and there is no reason to think that they are now. Traditionally and religiously speaking, whatever special atmosphere the land may contribute, that is an addition to, not a sine qua non of valid religious experience.

However, it has been primarily in the realm of political life that the

full significance of the distinction between life in Israel and life in the Diaspora has been most often asserted. Yet is this really so, either at the individual or at the group level? Upon consideration, I think not. Once again, specifics are revealing.

As an individual Jew, I should need to ask quite concretely how my effective political freedoms would differ were I living in Israel. Here, of course, answers will vary greatly as comparisons are made from political unit to political unit throughout the world. Replies from Chile at this point are surely different from those of last year, and sadly at variance with those from Great Britain or Canada. Brazil is not Mexico, and neither is the USA. It must be strongly emphasised that here too the attempt to characterise 'the Diaspora' with a single description shows a disregard for the particularity of life in different places.

Once more let me be quite specific. Were I a woman, would my personal liberties in relation to marriage and divorce be enhanced by my living in Israel? Hardly, for the male dominance of Orthodox laws defining personal status, backed by State power, would reduce my liberties significantly as compared with life in most Western or even Soviet bloc countries.

As a conscientious objector to war, unless I happened to be an Orthodox Jewish female, my situation would be far worse as an Israeli than as a citizen of Great Britain, the United States, the Scandinavian countries and numerous other places in the world. Israel has no provisions for conscientious objection to war as we understand that right in Western democracies.

Were I an Israeli with concerns about life and politics in Israel extending to the situation of the Palestinians, and were I to undertake there direct action of the kind to which many of us here in the US participated during the civil rights movement in the days of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., would I find the political atmosphere more respectful of civil disobedience than I did here? I think not.

Furthermore, from what I have read of the Emergency Defence Regulations instituted by the British and still invoked by Israeli authorities against the Arabs and in some cases of radical political dissent by Israeli Jews, it seems to me that as a Jew concerned with issues of social justice, my freedom to participate in dissenting political activity is probably greater here in the US than it would be in Israel. The same, I suspect, would be true for most Western European democracies compared with Israel.

On the other hand, the reverse judgement might obtain were I a Soviet Jew, not to speak of numerous other places in the world where Jews do experience oppression and for whom Israel appears as a land promising greater freedom. (That the promise is not always experienced as fulfilled is

given sober testimony by the figures of Russian-Jewish emigration from Israel.)

Once again, however, the central point should be reiterated: there is no uniform experience of being 'a Jew in the Diaspora' from which generalisations can be made. As for specific comparisons, they yield results which do not invariably support the vague impression that 'of course it's better for a Jew to live in Israel'.

'But what of Jews as members of a collectivity, as members of a people? Surely in that respect you must concede the superiority of Israel as a place for Jews to live? There is no anti-Semitism, no threat of expulsion, no marginality as in Diaspora lands. Here truly a Jew can stand erect and assert him/herself as a Jew, a fully independent human being at last'.

The above argument, or something like it, was the classical argument of political Zionism, and had this essay been written earlier, it might have required extensive counter-argument. At this point in time, however, the post-October 1973, era, the pathos of such expectations unfulfilled invites a sigh rather than an argument.

No threat of expulsion? No marginality for the Jew? Viewed as an isolated entity, as a nation-state unto itself, such may be true of Israel. But of what value is any view which ignores the regional realities of the Middle East? Sovereignty is nowhere on this earth what it once appeared to be, and even less so in the Middle East. The collective security of Jews in Israel is far from what Zionism had expected, and the precariousness of the Israeli position is widely felt among concerned Jews throughout the world.

Independence? Just after the October War, during a debate in the Knesset, Menachem Beigin attacked the government for feeding the Egyptian Third Army, and referred to the embittered feelings of soldiers at the front concerning this act. Replying to this Likud attack, the then-Minister of Defence, Moshe Dayan, said the following:

"What the soldiers did not know, but what Mr. Beigin did know, was that the shells they fired today were not in Israel one week ago," Dayan said in a reference to the US resupply operation. Israel did not feed the Third Army out of humanitarian reasons "but because we had no choice", he said ... "Whoever suggests that we conduct a war while having a break with the United States suggests that we conduct a war without the capability to win," he added. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency despatch in Boston Jewish Advocate, November 1, 1973)

Rabbi Arnold Jacob Wolf expresses it most pointedly:

"If Zionism means political self-determination of the Jewish people ... concentrated in one centre, we are no less vulnerable than were our

pitiable ancestors in the diaspora ... We are all galut Jews now, children of exile."

In a world unredeemed, could we have expected otherwise? By what misreading of secular, not to speak of sacred history, could we have imagined that 'normalisation' would yield anything other than the present fluctuations of Israeli fortunes marked by such dates as June, 1967, and October, 1973? Whatever the particular circumstances of its establishment may have contributed to Israel's present plight, such fluctuations have been, ever-repeated, precisely what we, as a Diaspora people, have witnessed in the case of nation after nation engaged in power struggles throughout the centuries. The romanticisation of nation status contributed to the success of the Zionist movement, and the success of that movement now begins to de-romanticise that status. Sought for and achieved, we now find nation status to be less than we had previously hoped.

So we may once again as a people come to appreciate the profound point of the Lurianic understanding of Exile: the essence of the human condition at this stage of history is galut, not less for Israeli Jews than for Diaspora Jews and not less for non-Jews than for Jews, if I am not mistaken. It would be helpful for this, the kernel of a Theology of Diaspora, to be restated and applied in quite specific terms to the situation in which humanly we find ourselves today, and perhaps another occasion will invite such a restatement. From it might come both a deeper understanding of our common human condition and a more balanced relationship, critical as well as admiring between Diaspora and Israeli-Jews. This will not happen easily. It will require both a renewal of Diaspora self-esteem and an end to excessive Zionist claims. Meanwhile, my present sense of the inter-relations between Judaism, Diaspora, and Israel is probably best summarised in these words of Rabbi Aaron Samuel Tamaret (Ahad Harabbanim Hamargishim), written in 1930 and still applicable:

"The one who travels to the land of Israel must go for his own sake, not for the purported sake of the Jewish people. Let him there build for himself a house, plant for himself a vineyard, take for himself a wife, sire unto himself children and grandchildren. But let him not build a 'national home' for the Jewish people nor a 'spiritual centre' for Judaism.

"The Jew who immigrates to the land of Israel for self-fulfillment, and does so without any pretence of perfecting the Jewish people as a whole, does, in fact, yield satisfaction to that people; for it is a delight to the spirit of the people that its children are to be found living in the holy land of its longings and desires. Such immigrants are indeed precious to all the Jews of the Diaspora.

"But he who enters the land of Israel with trumpets and shouting, who

proclaims that he 'goes up' for our sake, the community of the Diaspora, that he goes to the 'homeland' and the 'national refuge' – such a one is, plainly put, a 'troubler of Israel.' For whoever builds a 'national refuge' acts mistakenly, conceding thereby the Sodomite measure by which the dwellers of this planet are declared to be either 'owners' or 'intruders' with the former having the privilege of disposing of the latter as they see fit. Furthermore, such a one narrows the universal image of Judaism, demeans the image of Diaspora Jews, and casts upon them shadows of despair.

"As for building a 'spiritual centre' for Judaism, such advocates reveal a failure to grasp the nature of Judaism. For Judaism at root is not some religious concentration which can be localised or situated in a single territory, with a 'throne' for the sacred, anointed leader who draws the heavenly stream earthward through the doors of the heavens which are opened directly opposite that 'sacred place' he being intermediary between mortal men and God. Neither is Judaism a matter of 'nationality' in the sense of modern nationalism, fit to be woven into the famous three-fold mesh of 'homeland, army and heroic songs.' No, Judaism is Torah, ethics, and exaltation of spirit.

"If Judaism is truly Torah, then it cannot be reduced to the confines of any particular territory. For as Scripture said of Torah: 'Its measure is greater than the earth ..' (Job 11:9) ...

"And if Judaism is ethics and exaltation of spirit, then its task is not simply to perfect peoples, societies, or other such abstractions, neglecting on their behalf the particular man. Rather is its task the perfection of the individual man, living and actual.

"Hence the true locus and centre of Judaism is within the heart, within the heart of every Jew whose heart is of flesh, not of stone. Wherever on all this earth such a Jew is found, there is the place of Judaism."

THE ZIONISATION OF WORLD JEWRY

by STEPHEN VINES

It has always been a central tenet of Zionist thought that the creation of a Jewish state would not only be of benefit to those Jews who were fortunate enough to reside within its borders but also to Diaspora Jews who would derive a sense of security and well being from its existence and would share in the warm glow of its achievements. With the partial realisation of the

Zionist dream, embodied in the present day State of Israel, the reality of the Zionist promise requires an urgent examination. Surely what has happened in practice is that the creation of the Jewish State has produced at least as many problems for Jews as it has solved and this is quite apart from the disastrous impact of Zionism for the Palestinian Arabs. World Jewry has in a sense become a willing accomplice in the creation of a whole host of problems which arise directly from the existence of the State of Israel.

Before the foundation of the State of Israel, Zionism was but one of many movements competing for the attention of Jews in Europe and the Americas; Middle Eastern Jewry was only drawn into this sphere at a later stage. Communism in the shape of the Bund and various forms of religious mysticism from false messiahs to the Baal Shem Tovs' of Hassidism and various crazy schemes for Jewish settlements in the most unlikely regions, all competed with the attractions of Zionism. Less organised (except by the socialists and various Western Europeans) but probably more potent, was the growing strength of assimilation spurred on by the breakdown of an entire social order brought about by the expanding forces of capitalism. It took the most rigorous and savage anti-semitic persecutions in history combined with an unusually fluid conjuncture in world politics, and the sheer physical effort and determination of a highly organised body of Zionists to bring their movement into a position of unchallenged supremacy in Jewish affairs and finally achieve the establishment of a Jewish state.

The success of this endeavour seemed to carry with it such an optimism that all other problems were swept aside. For example, even though a proportionately greater number of people were killed during the 1948-49 War of Independence there was far less despondency than in the aftermath of October 1973. Initially, the disorganised and highly fragmented Arab peoples were hardly in a position to do anything to realise their desire to maintain Palestine as part of the Islamic World and consequently their protests could be overlooked. Above all world Jewry and indeed the people in many countries throughout the world felt there was a certain justice in the creation of a state for the Jews in the aftermath of the terrible Nazi persecutions.

The Centre of Zionism Moves to Israel

The Zionist movement, itself originally inspired and directed from the Diaspora, moved the centre of its thinking and operations to Israel. A tendency already in evidence during the 1930's for the Palestinian Zionists to carry a greater weight and perhaps display some arrogance in the deliberations of the Zionist movement was strengthened. Embodied in the Israeli Proclamation of Independence is a call 'to the Jewish people all over the world to

rally to our side in the task of immigration and development, and to stand by us in the great struggle for the fulfillment of the dream of generations for the redemption of Israel.' Later the call for aid was translated into a demand. In the words of Louis Pincus, former Chairman of the Jewish Agency executive in Israel:

"Israel is entitled to expect unreserved and undeviating support from Diaspora Jewry."¹

This view was echoed more recently by the controversial Jewish statesman, Nahum Goldman:

"The Jewish people must be prepared to stand by Israel more than ever at this juncture as Israel has to overcome daunting internal and external dangers from without and from within, especially, the threat to the Jewish identity of the succeeding generation and to the unconditional solidarity of the Jews of the world with Israel."²

The 1972 Zionist Congress held in Jerusalem on the seventy fifth anniversary of the founding of the Zionist movement stimulated a campaign to collect signatures and support for a programme which is quoted below in full:

"The aims of Zionism are: the ingathering of the Jewish people in its historic homeland, Eretz Israel through aliya from all countries; the strengthening of the State of Israel which is based on the prophetic vision of justice and peace; the preservation of the identity of the Jewish people through the fostering of Jewish and Hebrew education and of Jewish spiritual and cultural values; the protection of Jewish rights everywhere."

The statement is quoted in full because it represents a succinct summation of current mainstream Zionist thinking. There is insistence on the 'centrality of Israel in Jewish life' and the emphasis on the unity of the Jews around the State of Israel. This is a unity stimulated by the kind of sentiments expressed in a letter to the, Jerusalem Post, written by a recent immigrant to Israel, who says "We have a few friends, but they are so helpless that even they feel they are fighting a lost cause. Israel is alone. Israel has always been alone and the sooner we face that sad fact then the stronger we shall be."³

What is 'Good for the Jews' ?

It is perfectly logical that Israelis should feel themselves to be at the centre of the Zionist movement, and that they should urge their seemingly only reliable allies in the world, their fellow Jews, to perform great efforts in support of the Zionism cause. What is disturbing, however, is the extent to which Jews around the world identify their own interests with those of the State of Israel and the expectations these feelings engender within Israel's present

political leadership. This leadership seems to expect world Jewry to provide a kind of unbending shield protecting Israel from the criticism which its policies continually evoke. The feeling of isolation and desperate self reliance leads Israeli leaders to demand from Diaspora Jews an attitude of loyalty to Israel which transcends all other loyalties.

Whatever may be the rights or wrongs of the introspective approach to the world and its problems which has largely typified Jewish thinking for some hundreds of years there is at least a logic in an approach which produces the question: is such and such event 'good for the Jews' or not. No such logic, other than that of ideological commitment can explain the tendency for Jews, nowadays to see the interests of the Israeli state as a central point of reference. In an unusually critical article (unusual by virtue of its publication in a leading Jewish newspaper) Willy Guggenheim, a supporter of the World Jewish Congress reflects on the problem in the following manner: "In the past Jews used to ask the question: 'Is it good for the Jews' now they ask 'Is it good for Israel' . Must the Diaspora renounce its moral attitude only because it is in the political interest of Israel?"⁴ Mr. Guggenheim recalls that the former Israeli Ambassador to the US, Ithzhac Rabin took the unprecedented step of urging American Jews to support the re-election of Richard Nixon as President - because this was in the interests of Israel. Even in the wake of the Watergate revelations there was a remarkable rallying to Nixon's cause by Jewish personalities reflecting their gratitude for his pro-Israeli stand. Characteristic of this attitude was the following spirited defence of the beleaguered President by the Philadelphia Jewish Times columnist, Philip Rosen: "While every great power, including those under the NATO shield, has supported the Arabs, Nixon alone has stood up for Israel, even to the extent of threatening the Russian bear with all out war, should he place his bloody paw on the Promised Land. Massive arms flowed to the Jewish defenders before official announcements were made . . As for me I prefer not to play craps with the survival of the Jewish state. Support President Nixon."⁵ When Jewish groups protested against the American bombardment of North Vietnam, Israel opposed the demonstrations and tried to stop them. Similarly in the recent French Presidential elections there was, according to the Paris correspondent of The Jerusalem Post, a terrible problem for French Jews to enable them to decide which contender would be the most pro-Israel. No mention was made of other 'passing' problems like inflation, environmental issues, the French role in NATO, etc., all of which were crucial points in party programmes.

The possibility that the unpopularity of Israel, be it of her own making or that of others, might affect the position of Diaspora Jews who become closely identified with Israel is not just theoretical. Typical of what might

be expected is a statement by the Chairman of the US Joint Chief of Staffs, General George Brown who bemoaned the fact that Israel had too much influence in the American Congress, and went on to say that should a severe oil embargo lead to suffering as opposed to inconvenience, then Americans might 'get tough-minded enough to set down the Jewish influence in this country and break that lobby'.⁷ Obviously, run of the mill anti-semites will always be able to rationalise their racist views but the possibility that anti-semitism will spread beyond this dangerous fringe group to influence wider sections of the community seem to multiply when the Jews defend 'as a matter of principle' anything that Israel does.

There was a time when Jewish bodies, led by the non-Zionist controlled World Jewish Congress, demanded some kind of say in the affairs of the running of the Israeli State in return for their moral and material support. This demand was effectively squashed during the time of Ben-Gurion's premiership. It is a curious fact that although Israeli claims to speak on behalf of, and act in the interests of, world Jewry; there is no single Israeli government department dealing with international Jewish affairs other than those departments or agencies which handle immigration, settlement and Zionist activity abroad. The danger of the relationship becomes evident when it is openly said (albeit unofficially) by Israeli officials that a little anti-semitism abroad is not a bad thing if it provokes emigration to Israel. It is no coincidence that Israeli officials are concentrating the bulk of their efforts on aliya campaigns (outside of Eastern Europe) in Argentina where the emergence of a quasi-fascist and anti-semitic regime is a real possibility. It is a possibility which the pro-Zionist International Herald Tribune correspondent, C. L. Sulzberger, reporting on this situation admits is attractive to some Israelis.⁸

The most serious of the charges against the Israeli leadership relate to allegations made in Israel by some Jews of Middle Eastern origin who maintain that the Jewish flight from Iraq was in part stimulated by a campaign of terrorist bombs placed in Jewish buildings by special agents of the Israeli Secret Service under instructions to speed up the progress of emigration during the mid-1950's. Rumours have recently been reported of a similar plan being promoted by an Iranian Jewish community leader who apparently feels this would be the only way in which the tide of assimilation in Iran could be checked.⁹ These suggestions are highly controversial and their factual validity has been widely challenged. Nevertheless it is hard to challenge the factual basis of the revelations contained in an article published by a leading Israeli evening paper which was written by a member of the team sent to Iraq to perform these operations.

The Israeli leadership is not only concerned with the actual processes

of bringing Jews to Israel but also with the imposition of its ideological hegemony and control over the representative bodies of world Jewry. Every organisation which calls itself Jewish is supposed to look towards Jerusalem for leadership and direction; synagogues, mens clubs, womens clubs, sports organisations, youth movements and student groups. In other words the whole spectrum of organised Jewish social life is included. Israeli HQ sends out 'schalichim' (emissaries) to advise and encourage these organisations, even to the extent of despatching representatives to local Jewish community centres. Leadership courses of duration from two weeks to two years are held in Israel for everyone from Zionist fund raisers to Jewish social workers. The expected results of this tremendous effort are clear, Israel intends to remain in the centre of Jewish life everywhere and the highly organised aid which is provided ensures that even those organisations which are nominally not Zionist will be drawn into the Zionist camp.

Opposition to Zionism

Obviously within the ranks of world Jewry there are disagreements and indeed outright opposition to the whole concept of Zionism, an opposition mainly emanating from socialist sources - a point to be discussed shortly. More surprising perhaps to non-Jews, is the violent opposition of the Naturei Karta and similar ultra-orthodox religious groups who see the State of Israel as both ungodly and premature, having been established before the coming of the Messiah. The conspicuous advertisements of this group in papers like the New York Times denouncing Israel and vowing to 'Rededicate themselves to the elimination of Zionism and its disastrous deeds,'¹⁰ are a constant source of embarrassment to Zionist leaders. Aside from the proponents of outright opposition there are a whole host of groups and individuals who, while adhering to Zionist ideology in general oppose some of its aspects and various government policies inside Israel. Towards such voices of opposition there is a remarkably high degree of intolerance. During the debates of the last World Zionist Congress delegates who had criticised various aspects of Israeli policy were bodily dragged from the microphones by members of the neo-Fascist Herut group. The President of the World Jewish Congress, Nahum Goldmann was denied the right to address the Congress as a result of various very mild suggestions that he made concerning the reluctance of the Israeli government to explore all avenues for peace and the need to fight for Jewish rights inside the USSR. When Dr. Goldmanns organisation unforgiveably planned (some two years later) to hold an Assembly in Miami rather than Jerusalem, the Jewish Agency's chairman, Arya Dultzin threatened a boycott by Israeli delegates. More serious was the reaction

to declarations by the World Union of Jewish Students to the effect that they thought the Jewish people should 'devote their energies to the social emancipation of mankind,' while reaffirming Zionism as the 'natural and social' means of 'liberating the Jewish people'. Since these statements were made in 1972, there have been demands for the replacement of this Organisation by a 'non-political body' (sic) and for punishment by means of widespread budget cuts which have in fact been made. The message from Jerusalem is clear and has been repeated time and time again. In the words of Premier Rabin, 'Jewish support for Israel cannot be qualified by the sort of government which enjoys the Knesset majority at the moment. The Jewish people stand by Israel because it is Israel.'¹² In other words whatever the policies of the present regime they must be supported because they are the policies of the State of Israel - and on this issue there can be no argument. Such arrogance has provoked surprisingly few protests. Goldmann again is an exception. He criticises Diaspora Jews for 'blindly supporting the mistaken course of Israeli policy' and for 'telling the Israelis only what they wanted to hear'.¹³ What emerges is a facade of unanimity pressing down the forces of imaginative thought and initiative, imposing a one dimensional gloss over a once vibrant and extremely thought provoking community.

The Left and Zionism

It is no coincidence that Jews have consistently played a prominent role in movements working for social change. From the Russian Revolution to the uprisings in Budapest and Berlin, from Baghdad to Buenos Aires, Jews have been conspicuous in the leadership of revolutionary and radical movements. With the rise of Zionism as a political force a small percentage of Jews were drawn away from involvement in wider social issues and brought into a movement which they believed was fighting for the 'liberation' of their own people. Herzl, the founder of contemporary Zionism believed that his movement could be used as 'a dam against the involvement of Jews in the socialist current.'¹⁴ Herzl no doubt reiterated this view to Plehve the notoriously anti-semitic Minister of the Interior in Tsarist Russia, in a 1903 visit during which he hoped to gain Plehve's support for the Zionist cause. The present day ascendancy of the Zionist movement with its ranks being drawn from the whole range of political opinions from left to right creates a sharp dichotomy between those Jews who stand within and those who stand outside the Zionist movement. The greatest animosity is reserved for Left Wing Jewish anti-Zionists. Probably this is the result of the growing hostility towards socialism in the Zionist movement, the

effectiveness of this vocal minority and above all the sense of betrayal which Zionists feel they are experiencing at the hands of fellow Jews. Much of the argument relating to this question goes well beyond the bounds of reason. The general tendency is for anti-Zionism to be equated with self-hatred and there is a firm conviction that any anti-Israel statement is de-facto anti-semitic. Two Americans, B.R. Epstein and A. Forster have in fact published a book called The New Anti-Semitism in which they attempt to demonstrate the anti-semitism of what they call 'the totalitarian radical left' as opposed to the 'democratic liberal left' who they feel are not anti-semitic.¹⁵ They accuse the former group of failing to 'eschew anti-semitism' and actively using 'hostility against Jews as a weapon in its political struggle'.

The hostility to the left in general and the Jewish left in particular, is no doubt encouraged by the Soviet Union's treatment of its Jewish population and in this respect has a somewhat logical basis. But the continuing slide towards right wing control of the Zionist movement can only really be explained by looking at the place which Israel occupies in world politics - itself a product of the internal situation. Israel was once described as a 'socialist utopia' largely due to the presence of the kibbutzim (collective settlements) and the large trade union movement. Israel today is not only developing a rabidly reactionary domestic policy with widespread anti-working class legislation and ever-increasing discrimination against Arabs, but also is desperately trying to prove itself a loyal ally to the capitalist camp in the wider sphere of foreign affairs. Israel's main ally, is of course, the United States and in the UN, support for Israel usually comes from countries like Costa Rica and Bolivia who are ruled by reactionary and corrupt regimes. Growing ties are also being fostered between Israel and South Africa and, less conspicuously, Iran. Israel also had good relations with the Thieu regime in South Vietnam. It is therefore hardly surprising that alliances on the left are regarded as an embarrassment and a threat to the few areas of support which Israel is still able to cultivate.

Jews are consequently encouraged to maintain their distance from socialist movements and those who are tarnished by their association with such bodies become the target for small scale hate campaigns. Naturally this produces a kind of paranoia among some of those subjected to this treatment and they do indeed overstep the bounds of rational criticism and make statements which can be interpreted as being anti-Semitic. Some (and it must be emphasised that it is only a few) Socialist organisations, perplexed by the complexity of the problems surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict formulate simplistic ideas relating to the causes and possible solutions and in their crudity they do make statements with an anti-semitic tinge.

The net result is an unhealthy climate in which the Jewish community is identified by the Left with the forces of reaction and by the extreme Right, who are traditionally anti-semitic, with the usual distrust.

During the present economic crisis there is little doubt that Fascists and like-minded groups are gaining greater support. It is a damning indictment of Jewish leaders that they refuse to participate in anti-fascist movements, the ranks of which were swelled by Jews during the 1930's. Generally this refusal is based on the grounds that the left individuals who organise these movements are just as bad as the people against whom they are protesting. But the evidence clearly shows that, at least in the fight against racism, if in no other, the record of the Left is extremely good. The belief that by sitting silently in the middle in present and coming confrontations without taking sides, it will be possible to protect the interests of Jews is absurd. If the Jews cannot learn from their tragic history then it is hardly surprising that tragedy seemed to be a constant factor in Jewish life. The blind anti-socialism encouraged by the Zionist leadership not only isolates the Jews from the forces of progress but renders them, once again, in the role of passive spectators to their own misfortunes. Zionism, of course has an answer to these problems and that is emigration, 'after all a little bit of anti-semitism never hurts anybody.' Or does it?

Those within the Zionist movement who regard themselves as Socialists are in a very difficult position. During the heightened euphoria of the events of May 1968 in France and Belgium, the Berlin and Berkeley campus 'uprisings' and the growth of the urban guerrilla movement in Latin America the Zionist movement (in the shape of Mapam and similar socialist Zionist parties) made a big drive to attract new members. On the basis of their socialist credentials, these parties appeared to offer Jews the possibility of participating in their own struggle for liberation. In Uruguay, Mapam leaders even made a deal with a group of Tupamaros guerrillas which offered them the opportunity to play a role in class struggle in Israel if they left Uruguay as soon as possible. In Europe and North America, Socialist Zionist groups sprung up in universities everywhere - there was a general feeling that the time had come when Jews could play a role in the revolutionary movement without having to sacrifice their identity as Jews. But the honeymoon these groups enjoyed with the Zionist establishment was short lived and their growth soon came to a halt. The Zionist movement's tremendous ability for cooptation worked overtime to neutralise the influence of the newly converted enthusiasts. The disillusioned, who found that the highest achievement of Socialist Zionism could become

orange picking in a 'socialist' kibbutz alongside a hired Arab labourer, often found their way into anti-Zionist groups. Those who remained became part of a movement which plays the role of a loyal opposition, genuinely disturbed by what it sees as injustice in Israel but impotent to create a real opposition because of its loyalty to the Zionist idea; an idea which apparently cannot survive at the present time in the face of divisions within the movement. Socialist Zionists therefore fall behind the leadership of the Zionist movements' right wing majority and do little to challenge the picture of unity which this leadership has as its own self image and offers as its reflection for others to see.

The Material Disadvantages for Jews

No examination of the impact of the Zionist movement on world Jewry is complete without a brief consideration of examples of the way in which Jewish communities have materially suffered as a result of placing Israeli interests above all else. The most commonly heard complaint is that the Jewish poor around the world are being deprived of badly needed aid which is being sent to Israel. From an editorial in the Chicago Jewish paper, the Sentinel, the following plea is typical: 'Would it be so terrible if we gave \$5,000,000 less and our Jewish Schools and yeshivot \$5,000,000 more to cover their deficits,'¹⁶ The problem in this area is not really so serious considering the Jewish community's good record of self-help in material matters.

The areas of real concern seem to exist in those cases where the Zionist movement prefers silence regarding Jewish problems if this silence is beneficial to the State of Israel. In Turkey thirteen Jewish teachers were put on trial last year for teaching Hebrew and Jewish History, without a single protest being heard from any Zionist organisation. The fact is that Turkey is practically the only Muslim country to have good relations with Israel, albeit precariously so. Similarly there is the distressing business of reparations payments for the victims of Fascist Germany, first discussed by Ben-Gurion in 1951, much to the fury of many Nazi victims who felt that monetary gifts were no recompense to the sufferings of the survivors. Aside from considerations of the whole concept of 'collective responsibility' upon which reparations payments are based, and even ignoring the fact that a good part of the money goes to the Israeli treasury, and not to individual victims, the problem of how to pursue these claims remains. While Israel wages a vocal campaign demanding payment from the German Democratic Republic she asks nothing from the large sections of Austrian big business who were so active supporting the Nazi cause. The net result is that the attempt to provide some kind of material comfort for the Jewish victims of

Nazism is bogged down in a cynical attempt to gain political capital from an anti-socialist campaign aimed at the GDR.¹⁷ The treatment of Ethiopian Jews (Falashes) who are probably the poorest Jewish community in the world, is also a subject of much debate owing to the indifference of their bretheren to their plight. It is interesting to note that since the Ethiopian Jews have expressed an interest in going to Israel quite a considerable amount of aid is now flowing in their direction. The Chief Rabbi of Israel has even come to 'officially' recognise them as Jews. Finally there is the problem of many Soviet Jews who, having been permitted to emigrate to Israel have decided after their arrival in the Promised Land that they are unable to live there. These Jews, many of whom are now in Belgium are treated virtually as lepers in the Jewish community, and are presently sustained solely by the efforts of a Catholic organisation. As for the Jews who remain in the Soviet Union, the Zionist movement's efforts provide only problems by insisting that the only solution for Soviet Jews is emigration. Those who wish to remain in the USSR are obviously anxious to see an end to anti-semitic discrimination and are faced with the problem of distinguishing themselves from the Zionist element of Soviet Jewry who can easily be accused of disloyalty. When Dr. Goldmann of the World Jewish Congress, suggested that Jews should not only campaign for free emigration to Israel but also, as was mentioned previously, for an improvement of conditions within the Soviet Union his remarks were greeted by a storm of abuse from Jerusalem.

A relatively minor matter of interest should be added to this brief chronicle of problems (minor that is for those outside the circle of dedicated Yiddish and Ladinoists who consider it to be of considerable importance). The problem is that of the destruction of the Yiddish and Ladino languages and culture. Yiddish is the language of Ashkenazi and Ladino that of the Sephardi Jews. In the attempt to create the 'New Jew', a conception dreamed up by the idealists of the Zionist movement, it was felt that all remnants of the Diaspora existence should be eliminated. Yiddish and Ladino were seen as symbols of the old world in which the Jew was a despised person - someone to be reborn as a free man in the Jewish State. The 'New Jew' had to be equipped with a new language and new cultural trimmings. Those who spoke the old language, who performed the plays of the great Yiddish writers like Sholem Alechem or who sung the haunting melodies of Ladino folk tunes were considered to be backward looking and were despised for their efforts. Nothing short of a new persona would satisfy certain Zionist fanatics.

Some Conclusions

It would be wholly erroneous to imagine that the problems created for world

Jewry have resulted from a sinister conspiracy of coercion by a secret cabal operating from some Jerusalem headquarters. On the contrary a central thesis of this article is that these problems are primarily a product of the voluntary support and association which most Jews today give to the Zionist movement. It is the sad, if not inevitable product of the last thirty years or so of Jewish history. The two forces of persecution and (ironically) assimilation have produced the situation which prevails at the present time. For a people which has witnessed the extermination of one third of its number the yearning for some sense of security needs no elaboration. That a Jewish state in which more Jews have been killed than in any other country since the Nazi holocaust should represent the symbol of this security is a tragic illusion. Obviously many will argue that there is a difference between those who did fighting and those, who, to use the famous phrase, are 'led like sheep to the slaughter', even though there is no question that the net result is the same. This attitude reflects a very unhealthy form of pessimism. However, it is precisely the idea of this fighting image which has captured the imagination of world Jewry. From the walls of the ghetto, the chambers of the moneylenders and the back streets of pious poverty has emerged the 'New Jew' who is proud, free and stands bravely, sword in hand to defend his honour. This at any rate is a rather crude description of the ideal which the Zionist idea tries to portray. The existence of this idea is enough to ensure continued support for any state which calls itself 'Jewish'.

The memory of the holocaust presents yet another problem which further complicates clear thinking on the Zionist question. The problem being that there is a clear tendency for the Middle East conflict to be seen in Jew versus Nazi terms. Therefore Yasir Arafat is seen as Adolf Hitler, every war is a war of 'extermination', the Palestinian guerillas are 'Gestapo like' and the indifference of the world towards the fate of Israel mirrors the indifference of the allies during the war to the fate of European Jewry. Seen in this light the battle of right, in the shape of Israel and wrong in the shape of all the Arabs clarifies an otherwise complicated picture. It is a form of clarification which, although comforting to many, completely obscures reality. Israel is not an oppressed nation in the sense that her citizens are exploited or denigrated as a people by a superior force, be it of a single nation state or a foreign ruling class. Certainly Israel's position in no way mirrors that of oppressed Jewry standing helpless in the face of Fascist reaction. Yasir Arafat for all his faults cannot become Adolf Hitler simply because, like it or not, he is the representative of an oppressed people lacking any access to the instruments of mass genocide which are more readily available in a developed state. It is Israel which is responsible for the dispossession of the Palestinians; they are the second class

citizens in a Jewish run state; they suffer the indignities which are associated with the lives of the oppressed throughout the world – the destruction of their homes, arbitrary arrests, denial of elementary civil liberties etc. etc. This does not make Israel a Nazi state as some propagandists suggest, but it does mean that the Jews in Israel seem to have learnt well the methods of their former oppressors. To even suggest this will probably cause many Jewish readers to label this article as being unquestionably anti-semitic but such a reaction can only confirm the blindness towards reality which is encouraged by a failure to see events as they are and not through the distorted prism of earlier tragedies.

Even more basically the Zionist idea responds to a need which Jews experience in their search for an identity in the contemporary world. Capitalist society, and indeed the deformed version of socialist society which exists in the Eastern European states, imposes a kind of conformity on its members. The broad divisions into social class are too vast to produce a feeling of intimate identification. No other form of society before the present day has ever offered the Jews a better chance of assimilation, even if this is threatened by periodic reversions to Fascism. Every group seeks a focal point of identification, especially the Jews who have traditionally relied on a certain cohesion if all else has failed. The overbearing influence of religion has gone, religious observance is often more habitual than devout; the existence of a separate language from the rest of the population has disappeared; the great cultural institutions of Jewish life are a mere skeleton; the only really living symbol of Jewish unity – the only real sense of purpose appears in the form of the Jewish State. The Zionist movement in other words, responds to a vacuum in Jewish life and adherence to its dictates is willingly given.

Zionism also conforms to the needs of the increasingly affluent Jewish society which prevails in Europe and the Americas today. Identification with the Zionist movement is less demanding and less restrictive than an adherence to the all-embracing dictates of the Jewish religion. Zionism is presented as a cause. Obviously this has to be paid for but as long as the method of payment is in terms of cash, this presents little problem. This is by far less demanding than the kind of separate existence from the rest of society which is expected from the devout Jew.

The problems of Zionism today like that of all other movements based on the projection of an ideal, is the impossibility of living up to the promise of its own creation. The reality of contemporary Zionism is the existence of a state at war on all sides; built at the expense of a people who, like the Jews previously, are now dispersed and oppressed. As the situation in Israel deteriorates and the calls for support become more desperate, there is a growing awareness of the problems which exist and the response from

world Jewry is positive. A situation in which people adhere to a movement on the basis of an ideal is not disturbed by news of the difficulties in attaining that ideal. On the contrary, efforts are redoubled in order to maintain the illusion. The fact is that the idea that such a state could provide security for all Jews everywhere, let alone its own inhabitants, is an illusion. And the ultimate conclusion of these illusions will only be realised in the wake of a truly cataclysmic eruption of forces - an event which may well occur at a stage beyond which there is no possibility of any kind of satisfactory solution to the problems which the Zionist movement creates for those Jews in Israel and beyond.

Footnotes

1. Jewish Chronicle, London, 23.6.72
2. South Africa Jewish Times, 20.9.74
3. Jerusalem Post, 25.10.74
4. Judische Rundschau, Basle, 11.4.74
5. Jewish Times, Philadelphia, 10.1.74
6. Jerusalem Post, 29.4.74, (article by Jack Maurice)
7. Evening Standard, London, 13.11.74
8. Herald Tribune, Paris, 26 and 27.10.74
9. Israel and Palestine, Paris, No. 33, Oct. 1974
10. Reconstructionist, New York, May 1974
11. Taken from the "Arab Programme", published in the WUJS journal Elul
12. Jerusalem Post, 8.11.74
13. Jewish Chronicle, London, 7.6.74
14. Taken from Theodor Herzl's The Jewish State
15. See review in the Jewish Digest, New York, July 1974
16. Sentinel, Chicago, 28.2.74
17. Background material regarding reparation payments and Turkish Jewry from Flashpoint, London, No. 9

A JEWISH DUTY OR JEWISH APOSTASY?

by ISRAEL SHAHAK

I want to argue against the notion that Jews should be devoted to the State of Israel. I will try to show that such devotion is both immoral and against the mainstream of Jewish tradition. Also, such 'devotion' - as preached by Jack Winocour (The Times, January 13, 1973) must bring disaster both on Israel and on Jews everywhere.

I am a Jew living in Israel and consider myself a law-abiding citizen. I serve in the army every year, in spite of being nearly 40 years old. But I am not 'devoted' to the State of Israel or to any other state or human organisation. I am devoted to my ideals, I believe in speaking the truth, and in doing something for securing justice and equality for all human beings. I am devoted to the Hebrew language and poetry, and I like to think that I follow in my small way some of the values of our ancient prophets.

But to be devoted to the State? I can well imagine Amos or Isaiah splitting their sides with laughter if somebody had demanded of them to be 'devoted' to the Kingdom of Israel or the Kingdom of Judah. "Hate evil and love good and establish judgment in the gate", says Amos (Chapter 5, verse 15) and does not spare a word of devotion to the great, warlike and successful Kingdom of Israel of his times. "Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed", says Isaiah (Chapter 1, verse 17) and has nothing but scorn for the riches and the power (the 'ample style' of Mr. Winocour) of the Kingdom of Judah.

In fact this new doctrine preached by Mr. Winocour as a Jewish duty, is nothing but Jewish apostasy. All Jews used to believe, and say it three times a day, that a Jew should be devoted to God, and God alone - "And thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deuteronomy, Chapter 6, Verse 5). A small minority still believes it. But it seems to me that the majority of my people has left God, and has substituted an idol in its place, exactly as happened when they were so devoted to the Golden Calf in the desert that they gave away their gold to make it. The name of this modern idol is State of Israel.

The first sign of this idolatry - of any idolatry - is the disappearance of any concern for justice and fairness. It is not the State of Israel - which denies rights to a million human beings in the conquered territories and to many of its non-Jewish citizens - which is in danger of 'being sold down the river', as Mr. Winocour pretends.

Or to take another example. One of the main ways in which the devotion of misguided Jews to the State of Israel expresses itself, is by donations to the so-called 'Jewish National Fund' (those white and blue boxes). Now this is an openly discriminatory organisation. It buys land from non-Jews only in Israel and the conquered territories and rents it afterwards to Jews only.

I could well imagine what Mr. Winocour would say if an 'English National Fund' would begin to buy only Jewish shops in the Jewish quarters of London, in order to rent them to non-Jews only.

The second sign of this idolatry is the excessive - indeed almost the exclusive - concern with money and the flattery of the rich. This also is something new in Judaism. Without being a socialist, I still believe that money-grabbing does not form over-nice human beings, or, to put it plainly, that a great number of rich people are nasty and brutish; although I admit that there are exceptions to this rule. I find it most repulsive as a Jew that almost all the examples of prominent Jews that Mr. Winocour brings are millionaires, and that in his list of professions, he puts 'think-tank merchants' before scholars and judges. There is no better sign of the degradation of Judaism - always the penalty of idolatry - than this. I do not see the prophet striving for justice and opposing his government and the majority of his own people, or the scholar spending his life in poverty and studying for the sake of learning, but rich conformists.

But we should understand a little more closely what forms this 'devotion' of Diaspora Jews to Israel take. The answer is that the main form it takes is money - enormous sums of money, which are given to the government of Israel, and to Israeli political parties, without any control whatsoever. Two consequences follow: First, the Israeli government has much greater power over its citizens than any other, for a great part of its money does not come from Israeli citizens. Because of this, any democratic attempt to change the government in Israel becomes most difficult, if not impossible, for a great part of the power of the Israeli government is not derived from any sources inside Israel: it is derived from the pockets of Diaspora Jews by means of their idolatrous 'devotion' to the State of Israel.

The second necessary consequence is that since as a matter of proven experience, Diaspora Jews give more money when the danger of war is greater, therefore the Israeli government has a great financial interest in not making peace: it would receive so much less 'easy' money. Some figures are appropriate here: the debt of the State of Israel not only increases tremendously, but the rate of increase also goes up, year by year. The total debt was £10,127m in 1968; in 1969 £12,142m (increase of twenty per cent); in 1970, £16,429m (increase of 35 per cent); in 1971 - £21,570m (increase of 31 per cent); in 1972, £30,661m (increase of 42 per cent). Obviously a new doctrine of indulgence is operating here. The force of Jewish devotion to assembling money is thought to be infinite.

In order to help the infinite potential, Jewish donors are taken to Israel and made to watch fights on the Syrian border, and a special school for people who will gather money from rich Jews for Israel operates now in Israel.

This school teaches how to assemble information about rich Jews and 'efficient persuasion methods which are good to employ on such people'. This school belongs to the 'United Jewish Appeal' and the 'Zionist Federation', but had I not been told this by the Hebrew press, I would say that the idea comes from some group of anti-semites.

Ask a Jew in the Diaspora who proclaims his devotion to the State of Israel, who usually knows no Hebrew, is ignorant about Jewish culture and history, participates only in some religious Jewish ceremonies which he does not understand, to what exactly he is devoted; and he will answer that without Israel, or strong Israel, he will not be able to carry his head high, that he will feel low or insulted, or similar answers.

Nevertheless, this situation where, for all practical purposes, the Diaspora Jews think that they can buy our blood with their money and feel good and devoted cannot last, for it has a corrupting effect on both the giver and the receiver. (As an Israeli, I would say that the Diaspora Jews are being corrupted much more than we. In the Middle East, it promotes perpetual state of war, and outside it promotes antisemitism). After all, Mr. Winocour sees something strange that Messrs. Schumann and Debre act in what they see as the French interest and not according to their 'Jewish origin'. This is not a new theory. The late Adolf Hitler held similar opinions. According to him, once a Jew, always a Jew. Conversion, conviction, free choice, does not matter, for a Jew will always follow only 'Jewish interest'. I am very glad that Messrs. Schumann and Debre prove this theory to be false at the grave risk of appearing paradoxical to Mr. Winocour.

Similarly, Mr. Winocour appears to expect that President Pompidou, because he was an employee of Rothschilds, owes 'them' or all the Jews a debt of always working in Jewish interest. Again Mr. Winocour should acknowledge priorities. Hitler had it before, and for that reason he insisted that Jews should not employ non-Jews. This is but a small example of what the doctrine of devotion to the State of Israel has done already to Jews, and what it can do further.

Reprinted from The Times, London, 27 January 1973

SECTION SEVEN:

ORIENTAL JEWS IN ISRAEL

Introduction

Since the state of Israel was conceived in large part as a solution to the 'Jewish Problem' of anti-semitic prejudice and discrimination, the realisation that the Israeli ruling Ashkenazi Jewish elite (of European origin) has systematically practised policies of discrimination, economic exploitation and cultural repression against Jews of non-European origin (known as Oriental or Sephardi Jews) comes as something of a shock to outsiders. Yet, though obscured by the broader confrontation between Israeli Jews and Arabs in the Middle East, it is a fact that Israeli Jewish society is deeply divided along European/non-European lines. The Oriental Jews, who now form a majority of the Israeli Jewish population, also form a distinct underclass. International attention was focussed on these differences in 1971 when militant Oriental Jewish youths, forming the Israeli Black Panthers Organisation, started a series of dramatic demonstrations protesting against European Jewish discrimination in general, and in particular against the preferential treatment that new European immigrants were receiving while Oriental Jews stagnated in the sordid slums of Jerusalem and other cities. In the first paper in this section, Andrew Mack, examines both the contemporary causes and the historical roots of Oriental Jewish deprivation in Israeli society, and traces the events which led to the Black Panther demonstrations of the early 1970's. The second paper consists in large part of an interview with one of the Panther leaders, Kokhavi Shemesh; it articulates perhaps the most radical political line to have thus emerged from the Black Panther movement.

ORIENTAL JEWS: CLASS, ETHNICITY AND IDEOLOGY by ANDREW MACK*

The popular image of the Israeli in the West is that of the Ashkenazi Jew - blonde, blue-eyed and muscular. This image is neither accurate nor surprising. Not accurate because it ignores almost wholly the majority of the Israeli-Jewish population - the so-called Oriental Jews - who came originally from North Africa and the Middle East, but nor surprising because the Israelis who figure most prominently in the news media - even in Israel - are Ashkenazis. Almost without exception, the political, military, social, cultural and economic elites of the State of Israel are drawn from these Jews, or their Israeli-born children, who came originally from Eastern or central Europe, or the United States. Those who speak for Zionism abroad are also, without exception, European or American Jews. The Oriental Jews by and large make up the lower strata of Israeli society through not the lowest - that position is reserved for the original Arab inhabitants. Grossly over-represented in low status, and low income occupations, Oriental Jews in Israel, like most under-privileged groups, become newsworthy only when they revolt against the discrimination and prejudice which is directed against them.

Israel's Oriental Jews found themselves the focus of just such attention when, in March 1971, a small group of Jewish youths of Moroccan origin living in the slums of Jerusalem, organised the first of a series of dramatic demonstrations protesting the ethnic discrimination directed against the majority of Oriental Jews by the Ashkenazi minority. Despite the fact that these 'Black Panther' demonstrations were neither massive nor violent, and despite the fact that the Panthers themselves, though highlighting deeply felt grievances, had little active support among the mass of the Oriental Jewish population, the demonstrations sent a shock wave rippling through the Israeli establishment, and were widely reported abroad. That Arabs should protest about discrimination and prejudice was to be expected; that Jews should do so in the 'Jewish Homeland', and with the degree of bitterness and hostility that the Panthers had expressed, was deeply disturbing to the Ashkenazi Establishment. The development, and the historical roots and evolution, of the Black Panther protest movement and the ideological strains which it has undergone, exemplify unusually clearly both the analytic and strategic problems which may be raised by the contradictions between class and ethnicity in situations of political struggle.

* Without considerable assistance this article could not have been written. Many thanks for their helpful comments to Nira Yuval-Davis, Cynthia Enloe and David Caploe and in particular to Deborah Bernstein for permission to use the paper referred to frequently in the text.

Political Zionism was the *idee fixe* of certain sections of European - particularly East and Central European-Jewry. As a political ideology it differed from other European nationalist ideologies in many respects but it retained the characteristic European emphasis on the equation of nationalism with the modern nation state. The early Zionists - preoccupied with the fate of European Jewry - tended to ignore the Jewish communities of North Africa and the Middle East. The absence of any significant link between Zionism and non-European Jews did not, however, mean that there were no links between Palestine and the non-European Jewish communities. On the contrary, prior to the commencement of Zionist-inspired emigration, there had long been a Jewish settlement in Palestine which became known as the Old Yishuv and which was largely made up of Sephardi Jews. But in contrast to the Zionist settlers the old established religious Jewish communities did not see Palestine as the physical base for an exclusively Jewish nation-state but rather as the symbolic centre of the 'in-gathering of exiles in Zion.' Presenting no nationalist challenge to the indigenous population, either in terms of sheer numbers, or ideology, the traditionalist Jewish communities lived in relative harmony with their Arab neighbours. This pattern of peaceful co-existence was to continue until Zionist emigration began to gather momentum in the 20th century.

In the strife-ridden decade following World War II, a huge increase in Jewish immigration to Israel/Palestine took place. Relationships between Jews and Arabs in Palestine, already hostile, deteriorated still further as Zionist immigration accelerated. Not only was the population ratio of Jews to Arabs being shifted in favour of alien immigrants who espoused an openly nationalist ideology, but native Palestinian lands were being dispossessed by the intruders who used methods which, even when technically legal, flouted immemorial customs and which relied with increasing frequency on brute coercion.

In the aftermath of the 1948 war and the creation of the Zionist state of Israel the Ashkenazi leadership faced a critical problem of labour shortage - not just for agriculture and industry but also for a military machine which had taken the Napoleonic concept of a 'levee en masse' (national mobilisation) to its logical conclusion. Immigration from Europe and the United States was simply insufficient to fulfill these needs. Fortuitously, for the Zionists at least, when the need for immigrants was at its height and the traditional sources were proving inadequate, a new source was becoming available. During this period Jewish communities from the Arab countries, the Near East and North Africa had themselves become victims of a conflict in which they had played no part. Usually in a marginal position in the societies in which they lived, Jews - in the Middle East and North Africa

especially - found themselves targets of suspicion, hostility and in some cases physical persecution. Zionist emissaries who had previously paid relatively little attention to these non-European communities began actively organising emigration facilities in North Africa and elsewhere. Pushed by hostility and persecution at home and pulled by the prospect of jobs and the apparent security of an exclusivist Jewish state in a land to which they already had deep religious ties, 'Oriental Jews' migrated to Israel in tens of thousands. In the peak period following the creation of the state of Israel (1948-51), a third of a million non-European Jews poured into Israel. (Previously, in the 1920's and 30's there had only been a trickle of Oriental immigration). In the twenty years that followed immigration continued, with another 400,000 Orientals entering Israel. The net consequence of this emigration, plus the higher birth rate of the non-European immigrants, has been the transformation of Israel into a state in which a predominantly European Jewish minority rules over a non-European Jewish majority - and of course the remaining Palestinian Arab population.

The new non-European immigrants thus found themselves citizens of a state whose political and education system and dominant social values reflected the cultural mores of Europe and whose ruling elite - the Ashkenazi Jews - saw Israel's future as a modern, technological, above all, 'western' state. To succeed in such a context the non-European immigrants had to adapt to a society which, though characteristically Jewish in some respects, was also characteristically European both in culture and its emphasis on western education, industry and technology.

In this situation the new immigrants faced something of an identity crisis. Formerly they had defined their Jewishness essentially in religious rather than nationalistic terms, in contrast to the Ashkenazi elite for whom Jewishness was symbolised primarily in the existence of an exclusively Jewish state. In the Diaspora, religion served to differentiate Jew from non-Jew. But in a state where the dominant majority are all Jews, Jewishness per se becomes an important category only in dealing either with the outside world or the oppressed Arab minority within the state. Differences of course exist - those between the 'religious' parties and the more secularly oriented 'moderate Zionist' parties, for example - and these are important politically. But the social dichotomy of Jew/non-Jew, which to a large degree determined social relationships in the Diaspora is not salient for the majority in Israel.

For the non-European immigrants, arrival in Israel meant in a very real sense being plunged into a social vacuum. Uprooted from societies in which their places - albeit precarious in many instances - had been well-defined, they had lost one social identity without, at least initially, gaining another. To 'fit in' to the new society they had to adapt to the social and

cultural mores of the dominant Ashkenazis. To become 'true Israelis' they had to reject their past. To succeed in an alien cultural environment they had to reject - or at least to repress - their old self-identity. There was no question of Ashkenazi Jews adapting themselves to the mores of what was shortly to become the majority of the population. Assimilation did not mean a merging of cultures - a 'melting pot' - neither did it mean pluralist diversity in the eyes of contemporary Ashkenazi leaders. On the contrary. As Abba Eban succinctly put it: "So far from regarding our immigrants from Oriental Countries as a bridge towards our integration with the Arab-speaking world, our object should be to infuse them with an Occidental spirit rather than to allow them to drag us into an unnatural Orientalism."¹ Since the sheer number of non-European immigrants was seen by the Jewish Agency as threatening 'to inundate with its flow all our achievements', strong pressures were brought to bear to ensure that the newcomers conformed to the dominant social model.

While the non-European immigrants might have differed quite radically in terms of geographic and social origin, as well as culture and language, their most salient characteristics as far as the Ashkenazi Jews were concerned was their non-Europeanness. The label 'Oriental Jew' (which was applied to all non-Western immigrants) did not imply the presence of certain shared 'Oriental' characteristics but rather the absence of European ones. On their arrival in Israel the 'Oriental Jews' did not perceive themselves as such, but rather as Jews from a specific place - a village, region or country. According to Deborah Bernstein, the new immigrants have, over time, come to accept the definition of 'Oriental Jew' imposed on them by Ashkenazi Jews as a self-definition. As a consequence: "The pressure to abandon their original identity and to take on the existing dominant one in the name of social homogeneity, paradoxically facilitated the emergence of a new separate (though not separatist) identity."²

Confronted with the problem of an influx of immigrants, the Ashkenazi elite faced a number of critical problems. First the Oriental Jews had to be pressured into rejecting their own cultural and social mores - otherwise the threat of swamping Ashkenazi culture with an 'unnatural Orientalism' might become a reality. Second, there were excellent reasons for the ruling elite to encourage genuine assimilation and integration into Ashkenazi-defined Israeli society. Too deep a social gulf between Oriental and Ashkenazi Jews could threaten the internal stability of Israel and this in turn would have obvious negative implications for Israel's external security. This perception makes sense of David Ben Gurion's belief that it would be no bad thing for Israel to be isolated from its neighbours by a hostility which fell short of war for a considerable period - until in fact the 'desert generation' died, and

the Israeli nation was truly crystallised by the complete homogenisation and acculturation of the Oriental Jew.

In any modern capitalist society 'integration' - the creation of a social consensus - is a rational policy for the ruling class to pursue since it minimises disruptive and threatening social conflict. With marginal groups - aborigines in Australia or Indians in the United States - the need for integration from the ruling class point of view is much less problematic than in a society like Israel, where the ethnic underclass constitutes a majority of the Jewish population. In the former case the marginal ethnic minorities can - on their own - never pose any threat to the ruling class.

The minimal necessary condition for integration is the acceptance of the social mores of the ruling elite - the Ashkenazim in the case of Israel. But where these social mores incorporate an ideology of equality - or at least the concept of equality of opportunity - this poses problems for a ruling elite confronted by an ethnic group which is both a majority and a distinct underclass. Since inequality is an inescapable fact of any capitalist society no matter how 'liberal', the rational policy to avoid divisive social conflict is to minimise social polarisation by creating a situation of cross-cutting loyalties. If individuals are ranked low on some dimensions - say ethnicity - then they should be ranked high on others to compensate. Israeli sociologist, S.N. Eisenstadt, argued for just such a goal in his study, The Absorption of Immigration. A key point being that the aim was for the immigrant group to be distributed across the class system and not polarised at one point within it.³ In other words in an ethnically divided society social mobility is essential to prevent polarisation. If ethnicity determines class position, social status, educational achievements etc. in a society in which the dominant ideology (accepted by the ethnic group in question) also stresses equality of opportunity, then the resulting social polarisation is almost certain to lead eventually to acute social conflict. Perfect social mobility - ie, genuine equality of opportunity, in no sense threatens the underlying structure of a capitalist society though it may well affect individuals within it. On the contrary it serves to co-opt potential leaders from the underclass into the ruling hierarchy. This strengthens the ruling class while weakening the underclass. Much of the liberal criticism directed against capitalist societies both in the 19th and 20th centuries has been from a meritocratic perspective. The nature of capitalism per se has not been questioned, indeed an equation is made between 'free' market relations and political freedom. Rather the critique has been that ascribed status rather than achieved status has tended to determine the nature of the ruling class. This is seen as both inefficient and politically dangerous in the long term. The point is not of course that capitalist societies are meritocratic but rather that the

pursuit of meritocratic goals is perfectly rational.

Lest this be thought a too instrumental or cynical view we should also add that in Israel the emphasis on integration was also quite consistent with that strand of Zionist ideology which equated itself with traditional Judaism - which believed that it had to encompass all Jews regardless of national origin. Yet despite this, within Israel it is quite clear that the integration of non-European Jews into the dominant Jewish community has failed, except in the relatively trivial senses of their adopting the national language and conforming to law. The current situation is the polar opposite of a meritocracy; to be a member of the non-European Jewish majority is to belong to the underclass. Overt conflict between Ashkenazim and Oriental Jews has been largely suppressed over the last two decades (for a number of reasons which will be dealt with later). But there is no reason to believe that the ruling Ashkenazi Jews were not aware of the dangers of this situation, nor should it be assumed that the policies designed to offset these dangers - to generate the social mobility - were not genuinely intended. That these policies have failed is obvious. In 1968-69 only 16% of high school graduates and 12% of university students were Oriental Jews. Ashkenazim per capita income today is roughly twice that of Oriental Jews and the evidence of discrimination in various forms of employment is unambiguous. As Sammy Smooha has noted:

"The general distribution of resources (such as income, education or occupation) between Ashkenazim and Orientals is roughly two to one. Disparity of power is much more considerable and discrete. Ashkenazim are in full control of the three power centres in the state - the state government, the Histadrut and the Jewish Agency - as well as the public and private sectors of the economy. In the intermediate power echelons, Ashkenazim are several times more overrepresented than Orientals. The ratio is five to one respectively. Only in the local power positions is there a roughly proportional representation (short of equality) of each group. The Ashkenazi group is also the dominant cultural group in a culturally diversified society. Aside from a few token examples like the humus and taini dishes and Yememite traditional crafts, the Ashkenazi or western values and practices predominate. History texts used in Jewish schools hardly mention Oriental Jewry of the last 500 years. Literature is exclusively Ashkenazi. Music follows suit. The prevailing social ideals are completely Ashkenazi - a small middle-class urban family, a kibbutz member, the sabra, the socialist society. The Oriental Jew cannot recognise himself in such images of Israel."⁴

Like migrant workers in Europe, Oriental Jews have been concentrated in

low status, low paid and often menial jobs in industry, agriculture and the service sectors. Unlike Europe's lumpenproletarian migrants however, Oriental Jews do not constitute the lowest stratum of their society, that position has always been reserved for the Palestinian Arabs who live in Israel and the occupied territories. The Arab population is not only more oppressed and discriminated against (economically, culturally and socially) but is also denied elementary political rights which even the worst off Oriental Jews can take for granted simply because they are Jewish. That this particular social dichotomy (Jew/non-Jew) is so manifest and so obviously related to the Arab/Israeli antagonisms in the broader Middle East context, is one important reason why the underlying conflict between Oriental and Ashkenazi Jews has been less conspicuous than would otherwise have been the case. But the fact that the contradictions within the Jewish community have had a relatively low profile in so sense diminishes either their reality or their long term political importance.

I suggested previously that integration - which meant increasing the socio-economic status of Oriental Jews as well as indoctrination with Ashkenazi culture and history via the education system - was a rational policy for the ruling elite. Evidence that attempts were made to implement this policy can be found in the various compensatory education programmes for Oriental Jews, the so-called 'ethnic benign quotas' of political representation and so forth.

Why then has integration failed so conspicuously? The Ashkenazi answer - not unnaturally - is that progress for Oriental Jews has been constrained by 'traditional values', that 'more time' is needed, and that in some cases that Orientals are simply incapable of adapting. This response is interesting in its implicit racism. There is no suggestion that perhaps Ashkenazi Jews might have adapted to the social mores of the new majority - nor any suggestion of a possible meeting point between different cultures.

On the contrary paternalism has evolved as the benign face of prejudice:

"Orientals (but much more so Arabs) are not expected to excel or to lead Ashkenazim in any area. They should passively accept the light of western civilization (the kibbutz, the moshav, the Histadrut and so forth). They are housed, educated and employed by the enlightened state which let them in in the first place. They should not forget to be grateful, to appreciate what has been done for them and always to keep in mind what could have been their situation should they not have come under the auspices of the civilising state. Orientals have never been expected to show initiative or independent thinking or action. As children they are considered to be culturally underprivileged, and as adults they are thought of as backward individuals who should be

resocialised or undergo the process of modernisation, a panacea that established sociologists in Israel see as the final solution for the ethnic problem. Only then can they be counted as equal citizens or full partners."⁵

This is not to say that if the initial premise - that the European model is the model - is accepted, that the Ashkenazi argument then has no validity. It would indeed be remarkable for people from one culture to totally reject their past, embrace a radically different culture and succeed in the terms of that culture within a generation. In the United States European immigrants have taken on average two generations to assimilate. Assimilation is not intended here to mean total absorption into American society - though this has happened in some cases - but rather that, in addition to the obvious requirements of learning language and laws, 'ethnicity' should no longer determine class position. But to point to the obvious difficulties posed by assimilation in no sense undermines the main thrust of the argument of Oriental Jews themselves - that their continued deprivation is a consequence of Ashkenazi prejudice and discrimination. It may have been strategically rational for certain Ashkenazi political leaders to argue for policies of integration which stressed various forms of 'positive discrimination'. But this in no sense implies that such policies as were implemented were nor actively or passively obstructed by other Ashkenazi constituencies (in particular lower middle class elements who were among the more recent and thus less senior immigrants) who correctly perceived Oriental Jewish advancement would be at a certain cost to themselves. Elite reformers rarely have to pay the costs of the reforms they pursue (often quite genuinely) - which is of course one reason why they pursue them. To put it crudely, in an inegalitarian society, those who move up must displace others who move down. If the deep social gulf between Ashkenazi and Oriental Jews did not exist; if the distribution of high and low status occupations were not determined within the Jewish community by ethnicity then, since they formed a majority of the population, Oriental Jews could occupy a far higher percentage of the high status posts in the polity, the economy and the military. By the same token far more Ashkenazi Jews would be employed as building workers, waiters, dustmen and the like. Discrimination arises in part out of racial prejudice but it is also based on an accurate assessment of the material costs of not being discriminatory. For socialists it is an unpalatable fact that it is frequently the case that those closest in social position to a discriminated ethnic minority are also the most 'prejudiced'. Cabinet ministers and university professors do not generally pay the material costs for the reforms they advocate - they would be unlikely to lose their jobs if discrimi-

nation was to be effectively banned. Those most threatened in this respect occupy the positions a few rungs up the socio-economic ladder from the group against which discrimination is exercised. This is also one important reason why class alliances across the ethnic divide between Palestinians and Oriental Jews have been - and will most probably continue to be - difficult to forge.

In pointing this out one is not suggesting that a fairly generalised racist European prejudice against 'unnatural Orientalism' does not have a dynamic of its own, but rather that, in addition to this, and given an acceptance of the mores of an unequalitarian society, discrimination is not 'irrational'. The former perception sees discrimination as a consequence of prejudice. It is a typical liberal view and, equally typically, advocates 'education' as the means to break down prejudice and hence discrimination. The second view sees discrimination as rational rather than irrational and prejudice as its rationalisation. The prescription in this case is usually for a radical transformation of the socio-economic structure. The two dynamics are obviously in no sense incompatible - indeed each feeds the other.

A further point with respect to rationality needs to be made here. Measures which some relatively long-sighted politicians (or those who advise them) may see as rational for the long term can well conflict with the pressing political needs which confront a ruling class in the present. Consider the position of politicians confronted by riots, demonstrations or strikes from an ethnic underclass. The long term rational capitalist solution is, as I have already suggested, to adopt (relatively) radical reform strategies designed to increase social mobility. But such solutions are not only slow to take effect but are also extremely costly, and the costs of necessity have to be borne by the better-off sections of the community. An alternative short term strategy, one which is invariably adopted in practice, is to put into effect some mix of repression, bribery and co-optation. This in no sense solves the long term problem but it buys time. It was the US government's response to the ghetto riots in the long hot summers of the 1960's, the British government's response to 'race riots' in London and Liverpool, and the Israeli response to the Black Panthers' demonstrations.

I have suggested thus far some fairly general reasons why Oriental Jews may have been unsuccessful in overcoming their exploited and underprivileged status. Oriental Jews in denouncing Ashkenazi prejudice and discrimination as the root cause of their deprivation were in so doing accepting as legitimate the European model of society which the Ashkenazi defined as 'truly Israeli'. They were not questioning the fact that they

were supposed to conform to an alien culture (though they did not wish their own culture to be wholly swamped in the process) rather that they were being excluded from a just share of that culture's rewards. The contradiction between the policies of integration pushed by at least some of the more long-sighted members of the Ashkenazi elite and the practice of more generalised Ashkenazi discrimination resulted - as it usually does in such circumstances - in tokenism. As Sammy Smooha notes: "Too little is done and often too late. Token changes function as an alibi for the establishment and as a pacifier for the ethnic groups. The problem is not solved but only put off".⁶

The type of discrimination noted above undoubtedly exists in Israel and has been a factor in blocking Oriental advancement. But as, if not more important, has been the nature of the Israeli political system itself. What might be called 'the Ben Gurion' approach - ie that of attempting to increase social mobility in order to increase integration - faced and still faces fundamental obstacles which were built into the very nature of Israeli politics. The Israeli state system - as has often been noted - is heavily bureaucratised. But this bureaucratised political structure does not operate according to 'rational' universalistic rules in any Weberian sense. On the contrary relationships are determined by a complex web of political patronage - on particularistic and personalised relationships and not on such universalistic criteria as 'efficiency' or 'meritocracy'. If analogous examples are sought then the manner in which the Israeli political system operates has much more in common with the 'machine politics' of Mayor Daley's Chicago than - say - the British Civil Service. In other words no matter how 'rational' the ideas of implementing a meritocratic system (ie pursuing the goal of socio-economic mobility for Oriental Jews) might be in a 'normal' capitalist system, in Israel it simply would not work. For such a policy to have succeeded the patronage relationships of machine politics would have had to be destroyed and replaced by something quite different. Since all politically relevant organisations in Israel are already coupled into the state system there were no alternative channels for the articulation of Oriental Jewish demands. (Post-1967 this system became severely strained but not to such a degree that it offered clear political alternatives to Oriental Jews who were plugged into different elements of the political machine). Thus those who argued for - and indeed tried to implement - policies designed to increase social mobility of Oriental Jews in order to prevent acute social polarisation emerging were doomed to disappointment. They were arguing for policies simply impossible to realise without dramatic changes in a political system which - in different contexts - they themselves both supported and

promoted. Ironically this system which obstructed efforts to promote integration through social mobility was also a system which - through the complex mechanisms of patronage - also pacified, co-opted and controlled Oriental Jews and prevented any significant organised Oriental Jewish political opposition on a mass basis.

But in marked contrast to oppressed ethnic groups in many other societies - blacks and Chicanos in the US. Basques in Spain, Catholics in Northern Ireland, or indeed Palestinians in Israel - Oriental Jews are potentially in a relatively strong position. Not only do they form a majority of the population (in contrast to the other groups mentioned) but they also occupy key strategic roles in the economy - ie the co-ordinated withdrawal of labour could act as an enormously powerful source of political leverage. Why then has this potential strength not been exercised in practice? That it has not been successfully exercised is also evident in the total failure of any independent Oriental Party to succeed in any election to the Israeli Parliament.

The first point to be borne in mind - as noted before - is that 'Oriental Jew' was, initially at least, an artificial category imposed from above and used to denote groups from widely differing geographical, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds. In other words there was not the degree of cultural homogeneity which, for example, characterised the working class in Britain in the late 19th century. In the years immediately following their arrival in Israel, the most salient reference system for the new immigrants was, not unnaturally, that of their former region or nation - or even in some cases local kin group. This the Israeli government found to its cost when it attempted initially to disperse the new arrivals geographically in an attempt to accelerate the process of acculturation. This led to bitter conflicts between groups of immigrants from different countries and a rapid reversal of these policies. Although many non-European immigrants came in time to accept the definition of Oriental Jew as relevant in terms of general relationships between themselves and Ashkenazi Jews, within the Oriental Jewish community as a whole other identities remained more salient. Sephardic Jews (those originating in Spain who had previously been dispersed to various parts of North Africa, Turkey, Greece and Egypt), for example, differentiated themselves from non-Sephardic, non-European Jews; tension and distrust between Iraqi and Moroccan Jews has become somewhat notorious and there have even been cases of bitter feuds between extended kinship groups from within one country. In other words a formidable initial barrier to co-operation between Oriental Jews was their own internal differentiation along cultural, national and even kinship lines.

If national/cultural differentiation was one important factor preventing the growth or organised protest and political action against discrimination on a mass basis then there were others perhaps equally important. Not the least of these has been the geographical dispersion and political co-option of Oriental Jews in the Moshavim (agricultural small holder settlements) and the Development Towns. Initially new immigrants were assigned to tasks which reflected the perceived needs of the new state regardless of whether or not the new immigrants had any training, experience or indeed enthusiasm for such tasks. In the countryside, a special category of village, the non-European immigrants' settlement, or moshav olim, was created. The key point being that each village was affiliated to and dominated by different moshavim organisations which were in turn affiliated to different Israeli political parties. Thus in moving to a moshav settlement the Oriental Jews were also being 'plugged in' to the Ashkenazi political system. Whether or not the new immigrants felt any identification with the particular policies and doctrines advocated by the party in question was in a sense irrelevant - there were material reasons for conforming to the party line. The village settlement would be dependent to a large degree on the Moshav political organisation for supplies, credit, marketing and advice. This is a major reason why no popular independent Oriental Jewish party has yet emerged, despite the fact that Orientals make up a majority of the population. In the Development Towns, geographical isolation was again a factor in preventing the mobilisation and organisation of Oriental Jews on a mass basis, and again the Development Towns were critically dependent on the Zionist establishment in one way or another. As Iris and Shama have noted:

"Instead of politically socialising the eastern immigrants who had been widely excluded from political activities in their country of origin and felt passive towards participation, Israeli political parties found it more expedient to buy votes. Candidates could either bribe the individual voter, bribe the father, (thus ensuring the support of the entire family) or bribe a potential leader of immigrants."⁷

Thus ethnic differentiation, geographical isolation and the co-optative nature of machine politics have all been important factors militating against the emergence of a politicised Oriental Jewish mass movement. But there have however also been a number of countervailing forces which have served to heighten Oriental Jewish political consciousness and which have led, if not to an organised mass movement, then at least to a dramatic protest movement which shocked and surprised the Zionist elite.

The Six Day War of 1967 was critically important for Oriental Jews -

who had not participated fully in either the 1948 war or the Suez campaign of 1956 but who, by 1967, formed a numerical majority in the army. In confronting the threat from without, ethnic differentiation both within the Oriental Jewish community and between Oriental and Ashkenazi Jews became much less salient. The war juxtaposed Israeli Jews as a whole against their Arab opponents, in a context where the former shared a common survival interest which transcended their differences. But after the war:

"... the full-scale deep-rooted Ashkenazi prejudice became obvious in the many public statements and lead articles in Israeli papers condescendingly praising the Orientals for their unexpected excellent showing in the war. The stereotype of the Oriental soldier as a poor undependable fighter proved unrealistic. As a result the Ashkenazim were 'relieved, and in turn the Orientals gained self-confidence'.⁸

Not unnaturally one consequence of the war was that many Oriental Jews felt that their claims to be 'true Israelis' had been considerably strengthened - they too had given their lives for Israel. The argument to the effect that Ashkenazi Jews had also had to endure hardship and deprivation in the early years of settlement, and that the Orientals should 'be patient' began to wear somewhat thin. The transient solidarity generated by the war ebbed considerably as the threat from the Arab states appeared to subside with the signing of the Cease-Fire Agreement of August 1970, and the end of the 'war of attrition' on the Suez front. Oriental/Ashkenazi conflict again assumed a renewed significance.

The post-war years had also seen a general increase in living standards for a majority of the Jewish population in Israel. Within the Oriental Jewish community some sections benefitted from this increase more than others - thus increasing class differentiation and decreasing the potential basis for class solidarity. However increases in family income are quite compatible with much smaller increases, or even decreases, in per capita income in the Oriental Jewish community in view of the larger size of Oriental families. Furthermore the relative position of Oriental vis a vis Ashkenazim Jews did not change. The poorest members of the Oriental Jewish community, who tended to live in neither moshavim nor Development Towns, but rather in festering slums like Musrara in Jerusalem, were both much less affected by the general increase in prosperity and more affected by the parallel increase in inflation. The slum dwellers also found themselves severely economically threatened by competition from Arab labour from the Occupied Territories.

In attempting to analyse the causes of the eruption of bitter, and to many Israelis, shocking protest that characterised the emergence of the

Black Panther movement, the decrease in the salience of the external threat and the changing economic conditions are two important pre-disposing factors. More important as a general precipitating factor was the issue of 'Western' immigration which included immigrants from the Soviet Union. In 1970 Russian immigrants coming to Israel found themselves recipients of preferential treatment which the Zionist establishment had always claimed the state could not afford to give Oriental Jews. Golda Meir called the Russians, "The real Jews for whom we have been waiting for twenty five years" and there is no doubt that the new immigrants:

"... received low-interest mortgages, access to apartments, an initial period of exemption from the onerous income taxes, deferred military service, substantial waivers of customs and consumer taxes (which saved more than half the cost of consumer durables such as cars and heavy appliances). The newcomers enjoyed relative luxury while the native-born Sephardim stagnated in the hovels of Musrara".⁹

No longer could it be claimed that Oriental deprivation arose simply because they were the most recent immigrants. And as Bernstein has noted: "... it was not merely a question of material benefits. The great enthusiasm with which this immigration was received became a source of serious attention".¹⁰ For Oriental Jews the enthusiasm for the Russian immigrants exhibited by a ruling elite which had its roots in Eastern Europe, and the parallel indifference to the plight of the Oriental Jews had clear racist overtones.

In the face of the preferential treatment offered to the new Russian immigrants the various arguments and calls for patience which the Ashkenazi establishment had used to attempt to pacify Oriental demands in the past must have seemed both cynical and hypocritical. That this issue was one of key importance in catalysing the Black Panther demonstrations is clear since the preferential treatment of European immigrants had been the major cause of an earlier upheaval:

"In 1958 there had been an unexpected immigration from Poland. As in 1970 the Israeli establishment, which is mainly Russian and Polish, went out of its way to accommodate this special class of immigrants. Apartments built for Oriental immigrants who had been living in transit camps since their arrival in the early 1950's were re-allocated to Polish immigrants. In addition, large apartments were bought from private contractors in the privileged quarters of urban centres to satisfy the needs of 'our brethren' while Oriental immigrants were sent to the newly established towns in the remote regions of the country. The resulting Oriental protests and demonstrations peaked with the well-known riot in Haifa in July 1959 and led to unrest in several

other towns".¹¹

However if the foregoing discussion provides some insight into the deep-rooted resentments felt by Oriental Jews in general they clearly cannot provide a complete explanation for the emergence of the Black Panther protest movement since, at the outset at least, it was highly localised and restricted to slum dwellers who were both young and primarily of Moroccan origin. The following account leans heavily on Deborah Bernstein's analysis of the evolution of the Panthers as a protest movement which was referred to earlier.

Pre-1967 Musrara had been in the border zone, but after the war the extension of the border through conquest left Musrara well away from the front line. The people who lived in the neighbourhood had hoped that these changes would create a considerable improvement in local conditions which were appalling. But in the face of hopes for improvements, rumours were circulating that the area was to be 'redeveloped' which would mean displacing many people who lived there. At the same time the local neighbourhood council - which had been extremely active since 1960 - had, for various reasons, become less effective and the lack of effective action in turn alienated the local population from the active participation in council meetings. The fact that the Oriental Jewish population had become alienated from the local power structure was important since such had been one of the most effective channels in the Ashkenazi co-optation of the Oriental Jewish population, providing not only a place within the system for potential leaders but also a link between the underclass and the establishment. The general disaffection of the local community was far more intense among young people in the neighbourhood for whom any idea of social mobility was a sick joke. Trapped in the classic poverty cycle of impoverished homes, sub-standard schooling, and unemployment, many Musrara youths had criminal records and had spent time in state youth 'correctional' centres. For these youths the state, in the form of the local police, was not primarily a bastion of defence against a hostile Arab world but an oppressive institution whose officials detained them on the slightest suspicion.

A majority of Oriental Jews, though they resented Ashkenazi prejudice and privileges, still believed that they stood to gain more than they stood to lose by co-operating with Zionist institutions. But the slum youths had nothing to gain by 'working within the system' in the traditional way. During 1970 these youths were influenced both by militant street workers who believed that political action was possible through legitimate - if not normal - channels, and by young radical Ashkenazi Jewish Left groups. The message received from both groups was similar - that demands

had to be made at a national rather than a local level and that social activism was the means for articulating these demands.

As a consequence of these contacts, the changes noted earlier, and their own internal discussions, a core group of Moroccan youths in Musrara gradually began to transform themselves from a neighbourhood street gang into a political group. During this period of transition - one not dissimilar to that which occurred in the black ghettos of many American cities - the group adopted the title 'Black Panthers' and the first contacts with the media were established.

On March 3rd 1971, the first Black Panther demonstration was held generating considerable interest. In the months that followed membership of the group expanded - though the core remained some 30 to 40 youths from Musrara who were almost exclusively Moroccan in origin. Panther members met with members of all parties in the Knesset, with cabinet ministers and even the Prime Minister. Both demonstrations and the meetings with political leaders were widely published in the media. But the demonstrations continued, not just in Jerusalem, but also in Tel Aviv. Initially, despite some arrests, there had been no serious clashes with the police. This changed on May 18th when a big demonstration ended with a hundred arrests and the somewhat shocking (for Jews) spectacle of Jewish police clubbing Jewish demonstrators being shown on TV screens throughout the land. Demonstrations continued throughout the summer of 1971 with the media - as is usually the case - only giving prominence to those which were violent or dramatic in some other way. They culminated in a large demonstration on August 23rd which led to the burning of a poster of the Prime Minister, police intervention, violence, arrests and - this time - much longer periods of detention. August 23rd, according to Bernstein, marks the decline of the first and most dramatic phase of the Black Panther movement. Increased state repression was undoubtedly part of the reason, but the fact that the Panthers - despite the widespread publicity - had failed to mobilise active grass roots support on a widespread basis was equally important.

Why did the movement fail to gain active support and build up a solid organisational base, given both the objective deprivation of Oriental Jews as a whole, and the intense subjective resentments which were a consequence of Ashkenazi prejudice and discrimination; the immigrant issue and so forth? The Panthers certainly publicised widely held grievances, but the very marginality of their position within the Israeli Jewish community, which was a major factor in their being first to protest, also made it extremely difficult for them to mobilise the majority of Oriental Jews - especially those in moshavim or Development Towns. Oriental Jews

in the latter areas were still firmly plugged in the the patronage system of Zionist machine politics. Furthermore ethnic differentiation still counted in some communities and the Panthers were mostly Moroccan. The Panthers may have articulated grievances which all Oriental Jews felt to a greater or lesser degree, but identifying with Panthers who aired these disagreements and took the risks which this involved, was not all the same as actually joining the Panther movement. The Panthers were still slum youths, uneducated delinquents, and drop-outs. Their chances of success must have seemed minimal to most Oriental Jews. The Panthers had nothing to lose - other Oriental Jews had. If the Panthers succeeded one could join them later. This is a rational view for an individual to take but if such attitudes prevail widely then failure for the movement is a certainty.

Furthermore it was never clear what joining the Panthers would mean in terms of concrete political programme. Because of their marginality the Panthers were not constrained by the concrete demands of a mass base. They could - and at different times did - advocate a wide range of different and often contradictory policies. Political lines which had their own intrinsic logic almost invariably created controversy. To protest against ethnic discrimination from an ethnic position implied excluding Palestinians as potential class allies. More importantly in terms of the discussions held at that time was the issue of possible alliances with the Ashkenazi poor. The Left groups who were in close contact with the Panthers, on the other hand, emphasised the class nature of the struggle which meant downgrading the element of specifically ethnic protest, and thinking in terms of potential alliances with the Palestinians. As noted later a few Panthers did in fact argue for an alliance with the 'screwed Arabs'. But the demands of political consistency - exemplified, for example, by those who advocated struggle on a class basis - conflicted with the realities of prejudice and discrimination. Oriental Jews were the section of the Israeli Jewish population for whom Palestinian Arabs represented threats to job security, and many Oriental Jews had memories of Arab persecution in their former homelands. The latter is one of the major reasons why Oriental Jews tended to vote (against their own class interests) for the most hawkish and right wing Israeli political parties. It should also be noted that this vote is in a real protest against the ruling Labour Party. But whether they posed their demands in terms of class or ethnicity the response from the establishment (politicians and media) was the same - that the Panthers were attempting to increase social divisiveness and hence threatening the security of the state. The Panthers' response to this criticism was to reply that 'We are also security'; that without a redress of grievances, without

greater socio-economic equality than Israeli-Jewish society would not only be divided but also less efficient. One Panther spokesman noted the Israeli Army depended not on numbers but highly educated and motivated soldiers. If a majority of the Jewish population did not receive an equitable education then the quality of army recruitment would suffer and hence security would be weakened. Ironically those Panthers who argued from this perspective were repeating the same arguments which had led the more far-sighted Ashkenazi leaders to argue for the policies of genuine integration which were noted earlier.

In the initial period (four to five months) the Panthers seem to have gone out of their way to emphasise that their protest was not directed against the fundamental goals and values of the Israeli state, rather Zionist values were invoked to protest the inequities within the system. Even though the form that protests took initially had short-circuited the 'establishment channels' there was no call for the system itself to be dismantled.

Yet the dilemma of the external security issue persisted. In a state the majority of whose citizens see the external threat as the key political issue, it is difficult to mount a successful programme of political demands which appears to the elite and to would-be constituents to undermine national security. Thus a second theme which Bernstein notes in Panther political ideology is the attempt to ignore the whole external issue. From this perspective the problem of Arab exploitation is that of the Arabs; the problem of state security belongs to the state, and the role of the Panthers is to act like a trade union arguing for the rights of its own membership only. Over time, according to Bernstein, the broad tendency seems to have been for the Panthers to avoid affirming their national loyalty to the Zionist state and instead to evade the issue by arguing that it was irrelevant to their particular demands.

In this article it is not possible to provide anything which even begins to approach a full analysis of the political developments within the Oriental Jewish community in general or of the Black Panthers in particular, since 1971. Suffice to say that in the case of the Panthers the contradictions and tensions which were manifest in the initial stages persist. Some Panthers who believed that it was necessary to base political struggle on 'existing realities' joined in alliance with Shalom Cohen and his movement of Israeli Democrats. This move gave the Panthers involved both financial support and an organisational framework - both of which they had previously lacked. New branches were established in more than twenty different settlements and the new party did remarkably well in the Histadrut (Labour Federation) general convention elections. But this election was followed shortly afterwards by the October '73 war when once again the focus of

Israeli politics became concentrated on security issues. The Panther/Israeli Democratic Party failed to gain the minimum number of votes necessary to enter the Israeli Parliament in the general election shortly after the war and the Panthers returned to extra-parliamentary action once again, this time organising demonstrations against inflation. The government reaction to the Panthers has remained fairly consistent over time - embarrassment at Jews raising protests based on ethnic criteria, attempts to repress the more militant expressions of that protest and attempts at co-optation of the 'moderate' elements into Israeli machine politics. It has also adopted the classic response of all ruling elites faced with militant opposition from an underclass in blaming the militancy on 'outside agitators' - in this case the Israeli Socialist Organisation - Matzpen (the anti-Zionist radical Left) and Siah (the so-called Israeli New Left.)

Some Panthers have rejected totally the idea of working within the system and have argued for a political programme based on both class and ethnicity. Oriental Jews are Jewish Arabs from this perspective, since Oriental Jews have more in common with Arabs than they do with the Ashkenazi elite both in terms of class and ethnicity - Jewishness being seen as merely a religious distinction. Thus Black Panther leader, Kokhavi Shemesh, argues: "In my eyes there is no difference between the Arabs and me. The only difference is religious. Those who claim that it is religious background which determines an individual's national affiliation must concede that the Catholic Arab and the Catholic Frenchmen, for example, belong to the same nation."¹² The logic of this position points to links with the PLO and these have been discussed. But the Palestinian terrorist bombs which explode in Israel, quite apart from the human carnage they wreak, have the political effect of welding the Oriental Jews (the most frequent victims) ever closer to the more reactionary and hawkish political wings of the Israeli state, while further undermining the basis for Oriental Jewish/Palestinian Arab co-operation whether based on ethnicity, or class, or both.

One of the ironies of the Middle East conflict is that while the policies adopted by the PLO in their attempt to destroy the Zionist State may impose serious strains on Israel both militarily and economically, they only serve to strengthen it politically. If the perceived threat from without were removed it is hard to believe that the Zionist state machine could last more than a few years. Without the spectre of Arab hostility, assiduously fostered by an intransigent Zionist elite (and understandably real enough without that encouragement), Israel as presently constituted would rapidly succumb to its own internal contradictions.

The point of this essay has not been to provide anything approaching

a definitive analysis of the evolution and emergence of the Black Panthers in Israel. Still less has it been to prescribe a 'correct' socialist line - for an outsider to attempt to do so would be invidious. Rather the point has been to attempt to show how the concepts of class and ethnicity are extraordinarily complex. That the dynamics of ethnic relations can not be understood simply in terms of class relations is clear. It is equally clear that any attempt to reduce ethnicity to class (or vice versa) in a simplistic manner is doomed to failure. To ask whether or not it is more appropriate or 'correct' to analyse a situation in class or in ethnic terms is to pose a false dichotomy. It should be clear from the foregoing discussion that whether or not class or ethnicity is the most salient reference system for individuals or groups is contingent on context. Since contexts change so too do the relative salience of different reference systems.

It is possible to argue that 'in the last analysis' class is the determining factor in the evolution of conflicts but this in no sense implies that appending the label 'false consciousness' to those who do not identify themselves in terms of their objective class position is a substitute for serious analysis. Classic Marxist analysis was based on an analysis of the evolution of the contradictions of capitalism within an economic system. In such a context ideology was clearly related to class position, though not of course in the simplistic manner which vulgar Marxists and anti-Marxists have suggested. In Israel there is no reason to assume that ideologies can be similarly explained since, for example, a major determinant of the ideology of a majority of Oriental Jewish immigrants arose not only, or even primarily, from their class position within Israeli society, but rather from their historical experience of prejudice, discrimination and persecution in their Middle East and North African homelands. This experience was, of course, a consequence of both the Zionist colonisation of Palestine and other political developments in these areas. A historical legacy of persecution, combined with the contemporary reality of a generalised Israeli Jewish dispossession and persecution of Arabs, and a more particular Ashkenazi Jewish prejudice and discrimination directed against Oriental Jews, presents a conjuncture which is unique. Its uniqueness means that no Marxist model developed in a different context to deal with different problems could hope to deal with it adequately. This does not mean to say that a Marxist methodology which bases itself on the analysis of contradictions is not appropriate. On the contrary it is the only approach which can lead to the correct understanding of the present which is a necessary condition for successful political action to determine the course of the future.

Footnotes

1. Abba Eban, quoted in Mark Iris and Abraham Shama, "Black Panthers: The Movement", Society, Vol. 9 No. 7 (May, 1972) p.42
2. Deborah Bernstein, "The National Identity of Oriental Jews as Seen in the Protest of the Black Panthers", unpublished MSS, University of Sussex, 1974, p.10.
3. S.N. Eisenstadt, The Absorption of Immigration Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1954
4. Sammy Smoocha, "Black Panthers: the Ethnic Dilemma", Society, Vol. 9, No. 7 (May 1972), pp 34-5
5. Ibid. p.35
6. Ibid p.36
7. Iris and Shama, op cit. p.38
8. Smoocha, op cit. pp 32-3
9. Iris and Shama, op cit. p.39
10. Bernstein, op cit. p.12
11. Kokhavi Shemesh, "This is My Opinion", Matzpen, January 1973

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF ISRAEL'S BLACK PANTHER MOVEMENT *

This contribution consists of an interview with Black Panther leader, Kokhavi Shemesh, given to Israleft, plus additional material by Israleft editors. Shemesh was first asked about the origins of the Panthers:

Shemesh:

Israel has social problems which became very acute in 1970-71 as a result of the immigration during those years. For twenty-one years, people sat in rotting buildings in Musrara (a poor neighbourhood in Western Jerusalem - Ed.) and all that time they were told that the military situation prevented the improvement of their living conditions. After the Six Day War, however, even though the border moved far away from Musrara, nothing was done. Around Musrara, however, in Ramat

* By courtesy of Israleft News Service, No. 6, November 20, 1972

Eshkol (a new Jewish neighbourhood in East (Arab) Jerusalem - Ed.) luxury apartments have sprung up, entirely for new immigrants. All the political parties had been talking, either sincerely or demagogically, about doing away with the poverty problem. But since they hadn't done anything, some young people got together in independent groups to raise the problem in the most dramatic way possible. For a broad segment of the population economic conditions were getting worse day by day while other segments were prospering. Since there was no organisation in Israel which was ready to press for the interests of the poor, who are mostly Sephardim (Jews of North African and Middle Eastern origin - Ed.) we set up our own. We hunted around for a name which would attract attention, which would help to get our problem into the headlines. Since a black group with the same name had arisen in the United States, and since Israel's propaganda had claimed that its members were the enemies of Israel and since most of Israel's foreign capital comes from the United States we chose the name 'Black Panthers' in order to give a jolt to Jews both here and abroad.

Q: What do you see as the solution to the poverty problem?

A: At first we believed that all the problems would be solved by the government if only they were brought to their attention. We had been told that all Jews were brothers and we were certain that the government would find solutions. Today, after two years, we can see that the government cannot solve these problems. If it wants to solve them it will have to change the social structure of Israel and it just isn't willing to do that. Our job, therefore, is to prepare our own plans for changing the shape of society: that is changing the distribution of income and national resources and in particular changing the criteria which today guide educational, housing and welfare policies.

Q: Why can't the government solve the poverty problem?

A: Oh, it can, but it just doesn't want to. The government is supported by and represents the wealthier classes. Any real change in Israeli society will have to be at their expense. If you want the less successful classes to make progress you will have to take something from the more successful.

Q: In what way must society be changed?

A: We don't have any easy formulas. We just have to work for a society with social justice and equality and an opportunity to abolish the private accumulation of capital.

Q: Isn't that what is called 'socialist'?

A: I've never learned what socialism or Marxism are. If what I am

describing is socialism, then let it be socialism. Definitions aren't important to me.

You asked me about a solution. Take delinquency as an example. It's a big problem composed of many smaller problems. Delinquency arises from injustice in the society, in incomes, housing, and education. The delinquency problem can only be solved if these component problems are solved. Institutions for juvenile delinquents have to be turned into institutions for vocational education; more delinquents have to be sent to kibbutzim; more attention has to be given to them; and so on.

Q: Have you tried to enlist kibbutzim?

A: We've appeared in many kibbutzim to raise the problem. The kibbutzniks say that they are ready to take in delinquents, but that's only demagoguery. Courts send delinquents to institutions and not to kibbutzim. I'm certain that the kibbutzim wouldn't be so willing if there was really any real prospect for delinquents to be sent to them. Like a factory, the kibbutz wants more profits, and juvenile delinquents don't bring in profit.

A kibbutz which took in fifty delinquents would have more expenditures and less income. Their standard of living would have to go down and I'm not certain they'd be ready for that.

(Israleft comments)

The Israeli Government asked the Horowitz Committee to investigate the problem of poverty. One of its statistical tables compared living standards of Israelis of Afro-Asian origin with those of Israelis of European-American origin as follows:

	<u>1959/60</u>	<u>1962/64</u>	<u>1968/69</u>
Expenditure per family	96	86	84
Expenditure per person	63	57	52
Gross income per family	74	71	71
Gross income per person	48	47	44
Net income per person	80	76	76
Net income per family	52	51	48

Another way of illustrating the problem was used by Edward Geffner in his Sephardi Problems in Israel (p.18)

In percentages

	Afro-Asian origin	European-American or
4 or more persons per room	5.3	0.5
3.0 - 3.9 persons per room	11.3	1.5
2.0 - 2.9 persons per room	30.3	11.5

The fact that the problem is getting worse rather than better does much to explain the leftwards trend of the Black Panther movement. An article by Dr. Katz, the Director of the Israeli National Insurance Institute published on the eve of the Jewish New Year, 1972, and entitled : "Who and what prevents the reduction of the socio-economic gap" points out that some of the measures intended to reduce inequality are in fact increasing it: "Social security has been considered by most people to be the main instrument for reducing the gap in incomes. It sets the tone for present social welfare policy. It is becoming more and more apparent however, that this conception is basically wrong. Social security is simply unable to reduce the gap as effectively as the architects of the affluent state had expected. Studies which have been conducted in various affluent countries over the past twenty years prove that there is no truth in the widely accepted view that all public services help to redistribute income and resources in favour of the poor. Higher education, which is one of the most expensive public services (it enjoys a large government subsidy)... cannot be used by many young people from large families".

Over 90 per cent of the large families in Israel are of Afro-Asian origin. Of all children from Afro-Asian origin families who started elementary school in 1969/70, only 6 per cent passed their matriculation examination, as compared with 35 per cent of children of European-American origin.

Q: What is the scope of the Black Panthers' activity?

A: We've done some good things in the past. We have had three good demonstrations which were dispersed by the government, one was on May 18, 1971, the other on August 23, 1972 (with 6-8 thousand participants) and the third was at the Zionist Congress. At that last demonstration, with a small force of our own and the help of students we succeeded in frightening the entire Establishment which needed 1000 policemen in order to 'defend' the Congress. We also had a demonstration on May Day, 1972. We were forbidden to celebrate the holiday, even though every one else could (the holiday is recognised by the Histadrut - Ed.). We still had a demonstration despite the prohibition but it was dispersed by the police.

Q: Why did you have a May Day celebration?

A: It is the holiday of the workers and especially of the oppressed, manual labourers. It is the symbol of struggles.

Aside from the demonstrations we've done things like the 'Milk Campaign'. We took milk from rich neighbourhoods and distributed it in poor neighbourhoods. We've also held educational activities,

distributed newspapers and leaflets. We plan to concentrate on more political activity and set up a strong organisation.

Q: Why are your demonstrations 'violent'. What do they accomplish?

A: Looking backward, the object of the demonstrations was to raise the problem. In this we succeeded fully. Everyone in Israel is now aware of the poverty problem. Part of this success is due to the police. On May 18, the police, in using violence against 250 demonstrators contributed to the fact that many Jerusalem youth joined us and helped in the struggle against them. The demonstration developed into battles in the centre of Jerusalem which lasted 7½ hours and which ended in 260 arrests.

Q: Will these demonstrations solve your problem?

A: The young have begun to believe in this kind of struggle. Young couples(who often find it next to impossible to afford an apartment - ed.) and other groups have begun to organise and struggle for their demands. We were an example which others followed.

Q: Then why did you stop?

A: We haven't stopped. However, instead of attacking the entire poverty problem as we had done in the past, the nature of our demonstrations have become more specific. They are now organised by our activists who distribute leaflets in as many places as our strength and money allow. We distribute leaflets outside of Jerusalem as well. We've never had trouble recruiting volunteers when they were needed. We have branches in cities other than Jerusalem, and these work in quieter ways. We have connections throughout the country from Eilat in the south, to Shlomi in the north. In development towns, Shlomi for example, demonstrations are meaningless. We demonstrate in Jerusalem for Shlomi and not because we don't have people there. Noisy activities in Jerusalem simply have stronger echoes.

Q: Do you have a stand with regard to the Israel-Arab dispute and to what extent is that dispute connected with the poverty problem in Israel?

A: The organisation has no official position, although we are trying to reach an agreed solution. My own position has changed with time, as have those of others. Most of the people in the organisation have reached the conclusion that the inequality problem in Israel is an inseparable part of the Palestinian problem, the security problem and other external problems. More than this we have reached the conclusion that the problem of ethnic inequality between Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews will only be solved together

with the Palestinian problem. The gap will not be closed without a solution of the Palestinian problem and vice versa. In addition, as long as there is cheap non-Jewish labour available there are going to be unemployed Jews. Palestinians will work in their places. For example, if Jewish sanitation workers stop working they'll be replaced by workers from the (occupied) territories.

Q: Do Sephardi Jews hate Arabs?

A: There was hatred towards the Arabs but it is disappearing. The main reason for the hatred is the government's propaganda. The government says that as long as there is a war situation, it will be impossible to solve the problems of poverty. The poor see the Arabs as the reason for their poverty. They are told that they want to throw us into the sea. All the communications media say the same thing so there are very few who do not believe that the Arabs want to throw us into the sea. So it's natural for the poor to hate the Arabs. However, there is some progress. In poor neighbourhoods, for example, one can hear expressions like 'the Ashkenazim are worse than the Arabs'. Everybody says that today. You're right if you say that's not a good expression but in the future it will lead to progress since the government's not going to return the territories in the foreseeable future. The Israeli bourgeoisie have found the territories full of workers who can be milked for profits. No one in history ever gave up a cow like that. Thus any identification between Jewish and Arab workers will help ease the tension between the two peoples and push them towards a common struggle against Israel's rulers. The Sephardim realise that the Arabs are worse off than they are in this country and that could lead to a joint struggle.

Q: What is your position with regard to Zionism and to what extent do you believe that Israel constitutes a solution to the Jewish problem?

A: I grew up in a Zionist home. We came here because of Zionism and were in the Zionist underground in Iraq. Many people, including myself, have come to the conclusion that Zionism hasn't solved anything for us. Perhaps it has solved problems for Jews from Russia and Eastern Europe, but it hasn't done anything for Sephardi Jews. Most of the Sephardi Jews live in conditions that are no better and often worse than those in which they lived in the Arab countries. Zionism solved Rabinowitz's problem without doing a thing for Buzaglo or Arono (Rabinowitz is a typical European Jewish name: Buzaglo and Arono are typically Sephardi - Ed.). This is obviously true in economic terms. In terms of security, it is more danger-

ous to be here than in America or in any European country.

Q: What about anti-Semitism?

A: There wasn't any large-scale anti-Semitism in the Arab countries. Only in 1941, under a pro-Nazi government, was there any anti-Semitism in Iraq, and even that wasn't on a large scale. In Israel today there is anti-Semitism. What happens to the Jews abroad happens to the Sephardim here. It comes out in expressions such as 'Franks' and 'primitives' which come from the same racist way of thinking. For instance, I saw an Ashkenazi child on television who said that his mother had told him not to play with Sephardim.

Q: What are your relations with the left?

A: Personally, I support leftist ideals, although I have disagreements with all the left in Israel about how to act. We expect help from the left and not from rightist organisations, like Kahane's. The left has given us a lot of help in our activities, in spreading our ideas abroad, and in publicising attempts to repress us here. In the universities, in Jerusalem especially, only the left supported us and acted with us. Nonetheless, I don't believe that the left is capable of leading us to struggle and victory, because the left in Israel is too busy fighting within itself. Even though we, succeeded in uniting the left behind us, I think that it is our task to lead to the very end the struggle of all the 'screwed'.

Q: Has the Establishment tried to buy you off?

A: They've tried all sorts of means but without success. When these failed, they tried to break our organisation, to arrest and to harrass us through the police. Rather than be harrassed, two or three of our members decided to give up being active. That doesn't indicate a willingness of the organisation to sell out. It would be very hard to buy off those who have stayed and I hope that they'll never succeed in this.

Q: What are your plans for the elections?

A: We are considering setting up a political party for the next Knesset elections. Of course it won't be a party on a purely ethnic basis, but a party which will try to represent the problems of the poor. Even in our programme today we do not make demands for Sepharadim alone. We demand equal housing for all, Ashkenazim, Sepharadim, and Arabs. The same goes for delinquency and education. The elections will also give us an important opportunity for organisational cohesion. We'll measure our success, not by whether or not we manage to build an organisation, whether inside or outside the Knesset,

which can function after the election, all over the country in an organised fashion. We prefer to go to the elections alone. We have yet to receive proposals from other groups, but if we do, we'll have to consider what good it can do us. Before the elections we'll send a delegation to the United States and Europe, to get financial contributions for our party. Since we see that there are strong ties between Jews abroad and Jews here and Jews abroad contribute to the parties here, we'll try to organise contributors for our own cause.

Note: Israleft is published by Siah, the Israeli New Left group which adopts a critical anti-establishment position (Eds.).

SECTION EIGHT:

WESTERN JEWS IN ISRAEL: A VIEW FROM THE LEFT

Introduction

In the previous section some of the non-traditionalist religious objections to Zionism were discussed from the perspective of Diaspora Jews. This section however deals with Western secular opposition to Zionism in Israel itself. The first two papers describe and analyse certain features of the state of Israel but they focus primarily on the authors' personal experience. Uri Davis relates the process of radicalisation of a Western Israeli Jew, while David Caploe, an American Jew who lived for a year in Israel, describes the impact his stay made on him personally, and on his attitudes towards Zionism. Many 'moderate' Zionists have objected to what they see as the 'excesses' of particular Zionist policies while still accepting the basic assumptions of the Zionist endeavour. Israeli revolutionary socialists on the other hand reject not just particular policies but the entire framework of legitimacy which is claimed for the Zionist state. Since the kibbutz has played a key role in various Left myths (both in Israel and abroad) concerning the 'socialist' nature of Israel, Paula Rayman's paper is particularly important. She demonstrates how the evolution of the kibbutz movement in Israel, far from serving any socialist causes, in fact played a critical role in Zionist colonisation policy. Secular resistance to Zionism in Israel has its roots in the Israeli Communist party and in the last article in this section Moshe Machover shows how various ideological disagreements within the party led, during the early 1960's, to the formation of the Israeli Socialist Organisation, Matzpen. Machover, one of the founding members of Matzpen, traces the growth and evolution of the organisation and analyses the tensions and ideological disputes it has undergone during the last decade.

THE RADICALIZATION OF A NON-ZIONIST ISRAELI JEW by URI DAVIS

"You will not participate in the Gadna (Israeli high school para-military training)" - said my father - "this can definitely wait until you are 18 and conscripted into the army." Quite a decent liberal position, refusing to condone high school military indoctrination, considering the military to be a necessary evil, but nothing to be proud of to the extent of having it incorporated into the high school curriculum. He won his point, and the principal of Tichon Ironi "A" ordered that I be released from all Gadna lessons that involved training with a gun.

So the gun was bad for a 14 year old, it was also bad for a 15, 16, and 17 year old, but why on earth was it good for an 18 year old? I started thinking; I started thinking very hard towards the last months of high school. If the gun is bad for high school kids (and of this I was quite convinced) then its bad for all. I declared Conscientious Objection.

Interviews with the military authorities. Threats. Do you want to ruin your future? Mother: Okay, what you say makes sense but why are you asking for trouble? Why must it be my son rather than anyone else? Do you want to spend your time endlessly in jail (military authorities)? Imagine to what good use you could put your time if you dropped your demand to serve in uniform but with no gun training. Why can't we grant you this demand? Are you crazy? Imagine if we granted everybody's particular demand, what shape would the army be in?

I was granted my demand; likewise all CO's in pre-1967 Israel, though draft resistance is illegal for males (women can be released on grounds of religion and conscience). I served almost half of my military service in uniform. I passed my basic training in uniform in a regular non-combat outfit; consented to having a gun (I love shooting at targets), but refusing to wear a bayonet and participate in exercises that involved shooting at human-shaped rather than square or circular targets. It is difficult for me to comprehend now how I could figure out such a self-contradictory situation to be compatible with my integrity as a pacifist, yet I definitely thought so then. I must have looked like an earnest caricature of a pacifist, and my presence was so unthreatening to the integrity of my unit that my officers found no reason to harass me for being a special case. In all other respects I was, of course, an exemplary soldier with an unblemished behaviour record (on which, obviously, I prided myself).

All Israeli soldiers swear allegiance on the gun and the Bible. The ceremony is very impressive. It takes place at night in the light of burning torches. Very solemnly the units are marched into the grounds, the oath is read aloud, and one by one every soldier's name is read aloud,

in response to which he steps out and says "I swear" or "I declare" (an avenue is established for those who have principled objection to swearing on the Bible). I asked for an interview with my commanding officer a few days before, since I knew I would not swear allegiance and wanted to be released from participation in the ceremony. My repeated requests were systematically ignored. I was marched into the ceremony with all others, and stood there literally in fear and trembling and indescribable anguish. I was certain the whole thing would explode when my turn came. My name was read aloud, I stepped forward and said "I cannot take the oath". The explosion never came. In emphasised nonchalance the next name was read aloud. "I swear !.. I swear".. "I declare" ...

So at no point during my basic training and my professional military training as a non-combat medic was I harassed for being a special case. I somehow even sensed a certain respect from both my fellow privates and my officers; tremendous curiosity; long discussions; a sense of almost awe that emanates from a man of compromise feeling a certain amount of guilt when in immediate contact with a more principled person. And in a sense, I believe this reflects to some degree a certain element in the pre-1967 Israeli value system. Never a dominant element, an element that was consistently over-ruled and sacrificed whenever seriously tested both in Israeli and foreign internal policies, yet a perceptible element, finally eliminated after the 1967 war.

Ayn Rand's Atlas Shrugged shrugged me out of that precarious complacency and triggered off my further radicalisation. It suddenly highlighted the impossible hypocrisy in my situation as a pacifist in uniform, and as if in a kaleidoscope, what I considered in good faith to be a perfectly satisfactory solution for a pacifist in a military society presented itself to be as a disgusting compromise of individual integrity. By the time I actually filed a request for release from uniformed service and substitution of alternative service I was already a trained non-combat medic. My request was denied. The official negative reply reached me at the military camp at Sedeh Boker, in response to which I openly deserted.

Waiting for a month at home with a harassed mother and a frightened little sister for the military police to pick me up was a nerve-wracking experience. Pricking up your ears at the sound of every approaching footstep. The sigh of relief when finally they did come. A number of days in military jail, much easier to bear than the month at home; at last I could read decently without having to constantly fight the terrible tension of anxiety and the invisible yet how tangible burden of family distress.

A number of days in military jail - and then the announcement of transfer to an alternative civil service outfit in Kibbutz Erez (near the Gaza Strip).

I was granted my demand; it was the early '60s. Ten years later Reuben Lassman, 18, was court-martialed for refusing induction after making public, together with three others, his refusal to serve in an occupation army, contending among other things that they "were not born free in order to become oppressors" and that they "refuse to inflict upon another nation what has been inflicted on our parents and grandparents". He was sentenced to 21 days and sent to the most notorious military jail (military jail No. 6) where, according to information that leaked out, he was severely beaten by his fellow prisoners, incited to do so by their jailers. In 1962 Uri Davis sighed in relief when finally the military police picked him up. At least he could read decently. In 1971 Reuben Lassman was severely beaten in jail for a similar offence. In 1962 Uri Davis wasn't even brought to court for draft refusal. In 1971 Reuben Lassman was immediately court-martialed for the same offence and it was made clear to him that he would be repeatedly sentenced and re-sentenced until he withdrew his objection to being drafted. Uri Davis declared draft resistance in an oppressive yet somewhat liberal state of Israel. Reuben Lassman, together with three others, declared draft resistance in a state of Israel that is, I believe, in the accelerated process of consolidating along highly chauvinistic, and in the last analysis probably along ultimately fascist lines.

"How can you advocate the right of the Palestinian refugees to repatriation and compensation in Israel?" said one of my colleagues in Erez.

"Don't you know this kibbutz was erected on the lands of an Arab village, the inhabitants of which are now refugees in Gaza? Don't you know the Arab inhabitants of Ashkelon just north of us were actually driven out by sheer threat of the bayonet in 1952 and driven out into the Gaza Strip? Where are you living, man?" I began reading Buber in Erez. That inconsistent philosopher who up until the creation of the Jewish state of Israel was bitterly opposed to it and advocated the creation of a bi-national state; not that he liked very much advocating bi-nationalism; he had serious misgivings on that score too. What he would have liked was the creation and sustenance of a decentralised, community-controlled socialist league of leagues, a country which would sustain equally the Palestinian-Arab and Israeli-Jewish communities, equally sharing the country's available resources in co-operation, while cultivating simultaneously their cultural, religious, and national uniqueness wherever they lived, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Jerusalem, or Hebron. A socialist society which would allow both peoples full and equal national, cultural, and religious self-determination because no community would demand a privileged position or monopoly of the available resources

for itself, but rather would equally share it with all others.

But Buber decided to engage in realpolitik, and therefore began the endless contemptuous road of compromising his vision and finished up supporting sheer oppression. He joined the Zionist movement (the leading members of which had called him a traitor); he joined that movement which is characterised by the demand for an *a priori* privileged position for Jews in Palestine-Eretz-Israel. The Israeli nationality laws bestow on every Jew who expresses his desire to settle in Israel, Israeli citizenship. Jadaect the Israeli Ministry of the Interior is authorised to grant Israeli citizenship to any Jew irrespective of whether or not he has ever set foot in Israel. This is made possible by the existence of the Israeli law of return. Seemingly, this is the most advanced immigration legislation in the world, but actually it is the most discriminatory, since it applies only to Jews, and no one else, obviously not Palestinian-Arabs. Concerning the latter, the law is formulated so as to create in Israel a category of stateless Arabs. It is possible for an Arab to be born in Israel, and yet in terms of the Israeli nationality law be stateless. Buber supported the kibbutz movement as an exemplary socialist community, though knowing full well that many of them were established on lands quite openly (and legally) robbed from the Arabs. Finally, this advocate of decentralist socialist Paths in Utopia, and the reluctant advocate of a bi-national state ended up stating:

"I have accepted as mine the State of Israel, the form of the new Jewish community that has arisen from the war. I have nothing in common with those Jews who imagine that they may contest the factual shape which Jewish independence has taken."

The man who had all reasons, ethical and political, to contest the factual shape Israel independence had taken, ended up by saying that, his previous criticism of the Israeli state notwithstanding, he now had nothing in common with those Jews who did contest the form Jewish independence had taken. And it was this man who had sent me, through his Pointing the Way to the Arab village of Deir al-Asad. Both my father and my initial philosophical teacher were, in the final analysis, quite ordinary and decent liberals.

I decided to take an elementary course in Arabic. Mapam - the United Labour Party - has a study centre at Giv'at Havivah, and I enrolled as a paying external student at its Centre for Asian and African Studies, which offered a sound course of Arabic language and culture. It was there, at the age of 21, that I, Israeli-born, first had any contacts with Arabs.

I travelled much. Visited the homes of my Arab fellow students. Experienced at first hand their impossible situation, citizens in a political structure which by definition and necessarily excludes them from equal

participation and denies them equal rights. For the first time I heard of extensive land expropriation, saw the military government in operation, experienced the shame of seeing a friend having to renew his pass. And was introduced to the confiscation of the Deir al-Asad-Bi'na-Nahaf lands.

In 1955 the military governor of the Galilee declared approximately 1250 acres of lands on the villages Deir al-Asad, Bi'na, and Nahaf closed for military exercises. The villagers feared (and rightly so) that closing their agricultural lands, olive groves, and marble quarry lands in this manner was the initial step to expropriate them and hand them over to monopolised Jewish use. The lands were expropriated in 1962 and the city of Karmiel is now erected on just these lands.

From 1964 to 1965 I was involved in organising the public campaign against the expropriation. I decided to make Deir al-Asad my base and struggle with the oppressed rather than struggle in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem for them. In 1963 this was still possible. In 1972 any Jew who attempts organising non-violent resistance in the occupied territories, and for that matter in Israel proper itself, will be immediately banned from the area and his movement restricted to areas of Jewish population. Probably he will also be accused of establishing contacts with enemy agents, sentenced, and jailed.

The anti-land confiscation campaign built up slowly. Demonstrations. Attempts at joint Jewish-Arab illegal cultivation of the confiscated lands. More demonstrations. A semi-official investigation committee. A two-week protest hunger strike before the Premier's offices in Jerusalem, which was interrupted by my being ordered to Nazareth before military court and court-martialed for eight months and immediately sent to jail where I completed my hunger strike. I was charged with violating the military law by entering the quarry area of Karmiel without a military permit. The only Jew entering the Karmiel area thus charged, and probably the first Jew since 1948 who was court-martialed for entering an area within the state of Israel that is not a military encampment without permit. The first, and thus far the only, but probably not for very much longer.

So far as the Israeli-Arabs were concerned (and after 1967 the Palestinian-Arabs in the occupied territories), such procedures were and are their daily lot; if not in terms of actually being subject to them, in terms of living in constant terror of being subject to them. There are no Israeli-Arab radicals, poets, writers, students, CP activists, Matzpen (Israeli Socialist Organisation) members, people who were approached by the Israeli security service and refused co-operation etc. etc. who were and are not subject to one kind of military restriction or another, administrative detention in jail, home confinement, regional confinement, renewal of travelling permit every

two weeks, month, six months ... While in Israel proper, civil and military law simultaneously govern the life of its Arab inhabitants, in the occupied territories military law is the only law of the land. It is in terms of this law that lands are expropriated for new Jewish agriculture settlements and towns, houses of Palestinians suspect of guerrilla affiliation and activity blown up, thousands administratively detained in jail, hundreds, if not thousands administratively detained in two detention camps in Sinai (one for male relatives and the other for female relatives and kids of people suspected or court-martialed for affiliation with or actual guerrilla activity). By this law, mass expulsion of the Palestinian refugee population of Gaza to the West Bank and El-Arish is carried out and below-subsistence wages for Palestinian-Arabs employed in Gaza (approximately \$1 to \$1.50 per day) are determined. Little surprise that in such a situation the policy of torture is pursued (though hypocritically enough it is permitted by no military code and that in full awareness that military rule, occupation, and oppression cannot be sustained unless, inter alia, in terms of systematic torture).

Possibly the biggest protest demonstrations in Israel took place in protest of my arrest. About 1000 people drove from Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa, entered the same area for entry into which without military pass I was court-martialed, and demanded to be arrested. Of course no one was. Up until today one might encounter on walls in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem the slogan 'Free Uri Davis', usually by now augmented by right-wing slogans reading 'Death to Uri Davis'.

In 1970 Dr. Israel Shahak was elected chairman of the Israeli League for Civil and Human Rights (affiliated with the International League for the Rights of Man) and I was elected vice-chairman. The League hit the Israeli headlines after submitting a memorandum to the UN Commission on the Israeli Practices in the Occupied Territories in June 1970. It was the only Israeli organisation to do that, and was obviously brutally attacked by both the Israeli Mission at the UN and the Israeli press. Shortly after that, in November 1970, I came to the US to complete my Ph.D studies, and the main burden of the League's activity was carried by Dr. Shahak. The League hit the headlines again and again. It was, for instance, the living force behind the demonstrations that took place in Israel protesting the atrocities committed in Gaza by the Israeli occupation forces in January 1971 and numerous other issues. While in 1965 right-wingers advocated death to Uri Davis, in 1971 the Jewish colonisers of Hebron painted on their pickup wagon the slogan: 'Dr. Shahak to the Gallows'. Nothing can indicate better the qualitative changes taking place in the post-1967 Great Israel than the difference between the slogans 'Death to Uri Davis' and 'Dr. Shahak

to the Gallows'. 'Death to Uri Davis' is abstract rhetoric, a slogan that testifies to the almost complete lack of political reality to support it. 'Dr. Shahak to the Gallows' is concrete, a slogan pronounced by a group of lynchers who are quite confident that if they actually execute their verdict they will come to no serious harm. They are of course correct. The mere fact that they can travel around in Jerusalem with that slogan painted on their pickup wagon without being challenged is the best testimony to that.

Out of the eight-month sentence I spent six months in jail, since certain categories of Jewish criminals almost automatically get a third of their jail sentence reduced. With my papers, a military ordinance was handed to me banning my re-entry into any area in Israel north of Acre, surely for a period of one year.

A friend recently sent me the following clipping:

Closed to Non-Jews - was the answer given to a retired Druze

Officer who wanted to start a quarry. (Yediot Aharonot, 8.2.1971)

"The area is closed to non Jews" - thus replied in writing the director of Israel Land Authority to Mr. Ismail Qablan, a Druze from Usafiyya, who wanted to start a marble quarry next to the development town of Karmiel.

"Mr. Qablan, recently retired from the Israeli Border Police in the rank of officer after 20 years of service, has decided to start a business and after deliberation and consultations decided to start a marble quarry in the Galilee. He turned at first to the Israel Land Authority office in Nazereth, and the manager gave him a written authorisation to start the quarry and asked him to locate and prepare the land.

"From the office of the Israel Land Authority Mr. Qablan turned to the regional planning office, and the engineer prepared for him (the required) contour plan. For final authorisation he had to turn to the Ministry of Interior in Acre, and after filling out at the regional office all the required forms, he was told that within four-five months he would get a reply. Toward the end of this period the reply finally indeed arrived and it said that the Israel Land Authority does not authorise the plan. The reason: the quarry area is closed to non-Jewish citizens.

"Mr. Qablan was deeply hurt by this reply and turned immediately to the security authorities, the Chief of Staff, the director of the Israel Land Authority, and all other related offices asking: why did the Nazareth office of the Israel Land Authority give me 'green light' (to go ahead) and the main office in Jerusalem refuses to recognise that?

"In response Mr. Qablan received a simple reply from the director of the Israel Land Authority: "The matter is in consideration."

It was while preparing for my US lecture tour, and from the relative detachment of an Israeli-activist-in-the-US vantage point, that I first had to come to grips with two fundamental issues:

- that the post-1967 Israel occupation is here to stay;
- that, essentially, the right-wing Zionist contention that there is no essential difference between the colonisation of Tel Aviv-Jaffa prior to and immediately after 1948 and the colonisation of Hebron after 1967 is correct.

Both issues could not be dealt with in terms of the demand of Israeli withdrawal to June 4, 1967 borders. For me, and for many of my colleagues, though definitely not all, the slogan of Israeli withdrawal to June 4 borders was bankrupt.

With this realisation, the ideologically-liberal-and-in-praxis-radical pacifist Uri Davis was down the drain. The problem could not be accounted for unless in terms of a radical ideological position: the ideology of a socialist, decentralist, libertarian, social revolutionary.

Socialist commitment to the destruction of privilege stands diametrically opposed to Zionism. Zionist ideology is an ideology that demands above all Jewish state monopoly and an priori privileged position for Israeli-Jews in Palestine-Eretz-Israel. In its minimalist interpretation such privileges are demanded in a part of that country. In its maximalist interpretation, the entire country is included, and in its ultra-maximalist interpretation, all the lands within the boundaries of the Biblical Promised Land. No such demand is acceptable - not in Nablus and not in Tel Aviv.

Socialism means equal distribution of available resources and equal rights for all; the recognition of the inalienable right of freedom of immigration of every individual and every community to any place; the right of every individual and every community to upset the demographical balance anywhere; the right of Palestinians to settle en masse in Tel Aviv (or for that matter in any other place) in any number whatsoever, and the right of Jews to settle (not to colonise, not to exploit, not to occupy, but settle in terms of sharing equally the available resources) in Nablus (or for that matter in any other place). Equal distribution of available resources, not Israeli-Jewish monopoly over available resources (eg lands). Equal rights to all: equal rights of national self-determination, community control, and self-government in all parts of Palestine-Eretz-Israel for the Palestinian-Arab people, and equal rights of national self-determination, community control and self-government in all parts of Palestine-Eretz-Israel to the Israeli-Jewish people.

The above is possible only in terms of the ideology of radical, non-armed, social revolutionary struggle aiming at the creation and sustenance of a socialist libertarian-decentralised country. It requires recognition of the validity of the Buberian concept of decentralised socialism coupled with unequivocal rejection of Buber's capitulation, so typical of liberals having to make their basic choices in situations of polarity that are resolvable only in terms of radicalism. (All this is said with a full awareness of my insignificant position vis-a-vis the Palestinian-Arab people: the position of an Israeli-Jew who does not share their day-to-day oppression).

And finally the realisation that a necessary, though by no means sufficient, condition for the liberation of both Palestinian-Arabs and Israeli-Jews from oppression is the unequivocal undermining of Israeli-Jewish privileged position both in Tel Aviv and in Nablus; that just as the American army will not withdraw from Vietnam so long as the established American administration is not effectively undermined in Washington, so the Israeli-Jewish army will not withdraw from the Jordan valley unless the Israeli established Zionist administration is effectively undermined in Tel Aviv.

All this is said with full awareness that the above is a commitment shared at the very generous best by a tiny fraction of my people, but I believe it is in this tiny fraction that the hope for my people lies. If anything can be adopted from the teachings of the founder of Zionism, it is his famous dictum: 'If you will it - it is not a legend'.

AN AMERICAN JEW IN ISRAEL

by DAVID CAPLOE

Since to me Judaism had always meant tolerance, openness, intellectual and moral honesty, it was self-evident that a Jewish state would by definition embody those values. That was why it was worth defending, and why any talk of its destruction, no matter how just the cause of the Palestinians, was so upsetting. The slogan 'Israel must live' seemed to me to be saying more, much more, than that. It said to me that justice, morality, decency - in a word, humanity must live. For Israel to perish would mean to tear out the world's heart, to confirm once and for all that indeed there was no justice in the world.

Thus when I arrived in Israel, I may have had vaguely non-Zionist ideas, but I also had heavily Zionist emotions. When I left Israel, not only did I have a highly specific anti-Zionist analysis, and deeply antipathic

feelings towards Israel, but I had also been forced to rethink my whole attitude to Judaism. What happened to effect such a transformation? Partly it was because I had unrealistic hopes and illusions about Israel (however widespread they may be among American Jewry), which no reality could have ever fulfilled. But I had done some reading before leaving and had talked with some people who had been to Israel before, so my expectations were considerably less than they might have been. And while Zionists will point to this as an example of self-hate and having unfair and unreasonable expectations of Jews, I can only answer that it is in good measure a result of the ideas they themselves promote about Israel. But more importantly, no matter what I may have expected, I at least kept my eyes open once there.

Another element was simply the emergence from ignorance which derives from experiencing a situation first-hand - such experience usually tends to be de-mystifying. Israelis and Arabs became real human entities, not just symbols. I went to the Wailing Wall and was overcome with emotion - but not in the usual sense. I found myself disgusted with the division at the wall between men and women, by the sickness of people actually putting notes for God in the chinks in the masonry. I was shocked by the sight of an eight year old boy with paysis*, wearing a long black silk coat on a broiling summer's day, davening**manically, almost completely out of touch with the rest of the world - and most terrifying of all, with the gestures and mein of an old and world-weary man.

In place of a picture-postcard image from LIFE, Jerusalem became a real city with traffic jams, pushing people, a weird deadness on Shabbat as everything is locked up and closed-in, some eerily beautiful vistas, and a sense of melancholy and sadness. Tel Aviv became more - an ugly, vibrant place in which I lived and felt comfortable, but which always remained strange. And today, the name, Golan Heights, no longer conjures the Alps to mind, but rather the key strategic nature of the hills in which I drove and walked.

Certainly a good deal of my disillusion came from actively investigating the Israeli political scene. It soon became apparent that Israel could be called a democracy only in the most technical sense. It seems to embody the Eastern European idea of democracy: you can say whatever you want (as long as you're Jewish) but if you say the 'wrong' things (ie anti-Zionist) too loudly or too often, you'll find your access to the media cut off, your mail being delayed for long periods and your name being slandered

* paysis: curls worn by religious Jews

* davening: sing-song praying accompanied usually by gentle rocking

by Israeli officials. But thrown into jail? In most cases, no, not unless you actually do something.

Of course if you're an Arab, then even these 'democratic' constraints on the power of the state are absent, as other contributors to this anthology can relate better than I. And no matter with which political side you align yourself, any Israeli can tell you that it doesn't matter what you say anyway. The same people have been in power since the pre-State days and only those who devotedly follow the line of the ruling clique make any progress.

A great deal of reading and research into the history of Zionism as a colonising and expropriating force in Palestine-Eretz-Israel deepened my disillusionment. The case is too well-documented to require restating here. But it was still a shock to realise the human truth of dispossession, to see empty Arab houses which had been evacuated by force, or still-inhabited homes marked for destruction with a big red 'X'. Even if he hadn't analysed the phenomenon correctly, Camus has accurately described it; the slaves (in this case of European Christian culture) had become the masters (of Palestine and ever-growing sections of the Arab East). The realisation that Jews could be responsible for crimes similar to those committed against them was a heavy blow indeed.

But undoubtedly the most sustained and overwhelming impact on my ideas about being Jewish came simply from the day-in-day-out experience of living in that pearl of the Zionist tiara, the State of Israel, 'so central to Jewish life everywhere in the world', as Zionists are fond of saying. I stayed in Israel from July 1973 until April of 1974, teaching at a high school near Ashkelon and doing free-lance journalism.

During this period, Israel suffered a serious crisis. The 1973 October war, so unexpected and confusing, the facts of which were so contrary to almost all political and military thinking in Israel prior to its outbreak was a traumatic shock. The setback Israel suffered as a consequence of the war immediately undermined the credibility and social power of the Army, one of the two pillars of Israeli social stability. It also triggered a political and economic crisis which spelled the beginning of the end for the Labour party, the other pillar of social cohesion in Israel.

Thus many Israelis told me that I had come at a bad time, that I had gotten 'the wrong impression', what with the war, the social crisis and so forth. To the argument that I had come at a bad time, I would reply, following Marx, that a thing is best understood during times of change and conflict, when pretences are stripped away, and elemental forces flow most freely.

Nor in fact did it seem that many of the more repugnant features of Israeli society were simply a result of the current bad times - the

incredibly pervasive and almost violent sexism, for example, made human relationships between men and women difficult at best; an elevation of the petty and inconsequential in life to the divine; an arrogance and obstinacy, pigheadedness that served as a cover for a hysteria which erupted at the slightest push; a paranoia deeply and almost universally felt and displayed, at the slight provocation, a morbid fascination with suffering and death which, mixed with a genuine anguish, seemed to find in Israeli Jews a perverse kind of vindication of the paranoia and hysteria so fundamental to the Israeli way of life; and finally a capacity for moral cowardice and self-deception almost impossible to believe.

Among the many examples which spring to mind I remember particularly the magazine editor who told me in all seriousness that, "In Israel you need four balls to survive. We don't have any place for weaklings here." Then there was the newly-arrived American immigrant, the principal of the school in which I worked, telling me contemptuously that one of the most intelligent and most sensitive students could never make it in Israel because, "He's too much of a Galut Jew." The oppressiveness of a place where the rejection of sensitivity is so rampant and only the most sentimental and cheap emotion is approved has to be experienced to be believed.

One can talk about lying, how the lie is a standard unit of communication in Israel, employed not only by political leaders, but by almost everyone. Can I convey the sense of futility and despondency that arises when time after time the school principal tells you and your students things you all know to be lies, but about which you can do nothing because he has all the power and simply doesn't give a damn? But this happens everywhere, you may say. Agreed - except that in other places there is at least a surreptitious (if only symbolic) resistance to power which is so nakedly and crudely displayed. But in Israel almost everyone accepts the arbitrary nature of authority claiming that: 'There is no choice'.

It requires no deep analysis to see that these existential horrors are rooted in the soil of political Zionism. For why shouldn't people push and shove? They are there only because they pushed and shoved the Arabs who lived in Israel right off their land. Why shouldn't aimless aggression be a characteristic of Israeli society? Doesn't the arbitrary yet powerful use of force keep the Arab population in Israel in line - and the Palestinians who live in exile in the refugee camps at bay? Why should people show consideration to other people? To be concerned with other people's rights might lead to questioning the justice of a settler state.

Why should one expect to find sensitivity a common characteristic in a society which is based on a wholesale disregard of the human rights

and sensibilities of anyone but Jews? Why shouldn't people be expected to lie to each other and to themselves, when their whole existence is built on a lie: that Israel did not come into being at the expense of the Arabs who lived there but as a result of moral superiority and 'making the desert bloom'?

For the old people who saw what existed previously, the lie comes harder, the hysteria is quicker to rise. Their burden is much the heavier: they know the truth, they created the lie. They have made their bargain with their conscience and must pay the price of troubled sleep. For those who came after, and especially for the children these Sabras of legend, these wonderful, simple trusting sons and daughters of the founders, the lie comes easier. It is unconscious with them - they have no second thoughts. How could they? The lie has been drilled into them from birth. It is the cornerstone of their 'metaphysically meaningful cosmos.' A challenge brings out the immediate response: 'we don't like it, but we have to', *ein brera* - there is no choice. And they are right - for to begin to question would be to start to unravel an already threadbare raiment. Unfortunately for them, it is the only thing they have to protect themselves from an often fatal confrontation with reality.

The fate of some of those who do question, who do try to confront reality is tragic. Those who become political are the lucky ones - they at least have a tool with which to confront the lies and try and fight back. Politicals are often in exile. At home, they are isolated and alone, cut off from the mainstream of Israeli life, with only each other for emotional sustenance in a clawing environment. The others who eschew politics, if they persist in questioning - go slowly mad. Most either compromise or have to leave. Those who remain lack even the group support of the political people - their fate is bitter and quite literally crushing.

I fell in love with a girl in this latter category, a young girl of 19, but already a person. Soon after we met, I told her that if she stayed in Israel, she would be destroyed, and that she had to leave. She looked at me silently and replied: "My father has been here for 25 years and last night at 5.00 am he told me what you just did, that I had to leave, that I would be crushed, that Israel would suck me dry and leave me even more closed off than I am already and he is now. How can this be, how can this be?"

On return from Israel, I stopped in Holland to stay with some American-Jewish friends living there - Sarah and Seymour and their son Aaron. Among the things we discussed naturally enough, was Israel. Over the week or so I was there, this discussion branched out into other areas, especially Judaism and what it meant to be a Jew. One morning, Seymour stopped short and said, "You know, I really hate those American Jews like Goldwyn and Mayer and that whole bunch out in Hollywood. They gave America the

crap plastic culture. To me they're not Jews." As he spoke, I felt something click inside me. For he had shown me how I had dealt with a dilemma that had obviously plagued him as well: what to do with those elements of Jewish culture that didn't fit our secular-liberal notions. The answer was simple: define them as something else - as not-Jewish. In effect, throw them out and act as if they didn't exist.

In America that is relatively easy. As a pluralistic society, becoming increasingly fragmented, there are all kinds of ethnic, national, and religious groups in varying stages of decomposition or constitution. Furthermore, personal belief in America has traditionally been a matter of eclecticism - people feel quite free to pick and choose what they want to believe in. Though it is rigged there still exists something of a marketplace of ideas.

Thus for an American Jew, living in America, it becomes fairly simple to deal with those parts of Jewish culture which don't 'fit' by ignoring or caricaturing them. Since America has a secular, if not pagan, cultural system, it's easy to ignore those funny looking individuals dressed in black, with wispy, ugly beards and payis, one can classify them as relics of a bygone age and place, or lump them together with slightly bizarre fundamentalist sects like the Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses. Besides, for most American Jews living in the metropolitan suburbs, Orthodox Jews simply do not exist as a day to day reality.

What does exist is the type of conservatism and mildly repressed hysteria known as Jewish family life. By now, the Jewish mother has become not just a Jewish cliché, but an American one as well. This aspect of Jewish life has become a standing joke in American culture - with the result that no one takes it seriously anymore.

So when the idea of Jewish culture is taken seriously in America by a secular population, what's left of Judaism is the humanistic, liberal and tolerant tradition of secular American Judaism. Thus American Jews, as Paul Loeb so perceptively pointed out in Liberation (February 1974) are able to unite their humanism and particularism without seeming contradiction.

But what is easy in America is not so easy in Israel. And as a Western liberal, enlightened Jew living in Israel, I came up against the fact that Judaism is simply not the monovalent culture I thought it was (and which Seymour and most other secular American Jews still think it is). Rather Judaism falls between two conflicting tendencies which, while existing together, demand that a choice be made between them.

One stream is dynamic, open, liberal, and potentially revolutionary. In Jewish tradition, this tendency is symbolised by the Prophets, men who

defied the powers of their day to state the truth as they saw it, to say what had to be said regardless of who was offended, whose interests might be compromised, or how greatly they might suffer for it personally. Men to whom the obligation to obey God's commandments meant first and foremost a devotion to truth and justice among men.

The other stream is static, closed, conservative, and, when backed by the power of a modern nation-state, potentially Fascist. It is the Judaism of fathers who disowned their children for marrying non-Jews; of Joshua son of Nun who, acting on 'orders from God' exterminated the inhabitants of Jericho; of the Sephardic Jews themselves in exile in Amsterdam who excommunicated Baruch Spinoza for heresy; of Yehuda Halevi, who divided mankind into two groups: speaking animals and Jews. This tendency is represented today by Zionism and the State of Israel.

These are not easy things to say about the Jewish State, especially for someone who to this day loves the idea of an Israel which can be 'a light unto other nations,' and for whom Judaism has always meant a devotion to truth and justice. But if a Jew is to take seriously the model of the Prophets, there comes a point at which he or she has to say what must be said about the Jewish community as Israel, regardless of how well or badly his or her words may be received. And that is why I am an anti-Zionist. As a Jew I feel responsible for acts which, either as an American or as a Jew, are perpetrated in my name.

Just before I left my friends in Holland, I had a conversation with Sarah, who had taken a somewhat oblique, if basically sympathetic, stance toward my long diatribes against Israel, and the doubts which Israel had created for me about my Judaism. "Look," she told me "from the time I was three until I was 18 I went to a Yiddish day school in Detroit, where we studied everything - science, world history, Marxist dialectics, Yiddish poetry, Jewish history. You went to Sunday school and got Bar-Mitzvah and Confirmed. So don't tell me about what it means to be a Jew. You've just had a rough experience in a tough place. But you seem to be angry and bitter about it and want to throw out everything. Obviously, you feel a tie to Israel - otherwise it wouldn't matter. So I'd suggest that before you go out talking, you'd better do a little rethinking, a little searching, a little finding out about your roots - your real roots. You seem to forget that there was a Judaism long before there was a State of Israel, and if your analysis of the world political situation is correct, there'll be a Judaism long after Israel is gone. So if you're really not a Zionist, don't fall into their way of thinking. According to you, Zionism is not identical with Judaism. If you're right, and you may well be, then sooner or later, the truth will come out."

KIBBUTZIM: THE VANGUARD OF ZIONIST-SOCIALISM by PAULA RAYMAN

"If I ask myself why at the time I selected the kevtzah, then I must confess that it was not the desire to be a world reformer and also not because I was a socialist, but firstly and primarily because I was a Zionist and I desired to realise the Zionist aspiration in the Land of Israel." Kadish Luz, founder member of Kibbutz Deganyah 'B'.

Martin Buber once wrote that kibbutzim were 'an experiment' that did not fail. Considering the kibbutz as an institutional form of Jewish colonisation, Buber's prognosis is an understatement though not quite in the sense he meant. The kibbutzim during the Yishuv period in Palestine played a critically important political, military and social role in the development of the Jewish State and their pioneering ethos was the symbolic image of the entire nation. To be a kibbutznik was to be part of the leadership elite of the Zionist settlement. However, kibbutz socialism has never been more than a pragmatic response to the unique historical conditions of the creation of the Jewish State in Palestine and must be judged from this perspective. If we remember that Zionist-Socialism was primarily tied to a particularistic rather than universalist goal we can better understand the evolution of the kibbutz movement and not be surprised at its present individualistic and capitalistic character.

In the Diaspora the image of a kibbutznik is still that of a muscular pioneer holding a hoe in one hand, a gun in the other. It is an image reminiscent of the Wild West American heritage and the heroic mythology of many colonisation movements. The hoe marked the return to the soil by Jews who accepted their separateness and attempted to achieve a 'normal' nationhood by creating their own worker-farmer class. The gun was necessary to defend the foundation of the Jewish State against the indigenous population in a 'land without a people for a people without a land'. Today only the latter half of the image is accurate: less than half of the kibbutz population works in the agricultural sector, while the gun has become an even more significant part of daily living. In border kibbutzim, for example, members are now expected to carry guns at all times - in the dining hall, to work, and in the children's houses. This defensive posture reflects the nature of the larger Israeli society and the consequences of the policies of political Zionism.

Jewish Socialism and Zionism

From the 1909 inception of the collective settlements in Palestine, (Deganyah) kibbutzniks were implementing rather distinct concepts of

socialism and nationalism. Zionist Socialism was a mixture of Marxist and non-Marxist thinking, growing from the needs of colonisation and the cultural norms of the second and third Aliyah. Its Marxist component stressed the importance of creating a Jewish proletariat and land-based class to prevent a reoccurrence of the situation which had previously excluded Jews from the trade-guilds and agriculture. Ber Berochov, the leading Zionist-Marxist, utilised the term 'conditions of production' which referred to intra-class struggle over control of the means of production.¹ This concept posits that workers compete amongst themselves for land and capital. Since Jews did not have a base for control in the Diaspora they needed a homeland which would allow them such an opportunity. Only by becoming owners of land could Jews then participate as revolutionaries in the class struggle.

The non-Marxist Zionist socialists were influenced by European scouting culture, the Tolstoian sacred view of a return to nature and elements of the Haskelah (Jewish Enlightenment) which embraced the ideals of equality, mutual aid and community. A. D. Gordon's philosophy of the 'religion of labour' synthesised the productiveness of the Puritan Ethic with the release that comes from meaningful labour. It gave the kibbutzniks a spiritual basis for their organisational life-style.

Both forms of Zionist socialism emphasised the concept of 'normalisation' for the Jewish people. Assimilation was not seen as a solution to the problem of anti-semitism or Jewish exclusion from primary production. If Jews were to be excluded people, the solution was for them to control their own exclusivity in their own State. Zionist Socialism thus became an integral part of political Zionism. It subverted all other goals, including that of joining an internationalist workers' struggle, to the primary task of building a Jewish nation-state. Kibbutzim directed their energy to strictly national priorities and the lack of any international concern, particularly among kibbutz youth is still very evident today.

Zionism, Jewish colonial nationalism, was itself an unusual form of nationalism. As Isaiah Berlin suggests, "Jews could not be defined by ordinary definition of nation - to do so is artificial and unnatural."² The constituents of the proposed Jewish nation were scattered throughout the Diaspora and were, in a sense, pitted against all non-Jews rather than against a single specific enemy. Zionism affirmed the 'otherness' of Jews and linked self-realisation for Jews to national renaissance. The nation-state was prophesised to be the security-guarantee of a people emerging from marginality. The historical result has been an 'exile from exile' - an escape from the Diaspora to a Middle East ghetto;

from the shtetl of Europe to a Jewish State whose security comes from the barrel of a gun. The kibbutzniks were first and foremost Zionists and their form of socialism indicates this:

"Settlement was never simply a way of making a living but of creating the reality of Zionism. Some Mapam kibbutzniks claimed that all they really sought was a place to create a more just society which they could not do abroad but despite the protest their Zionism always showed. In fact, a settlement has always had a political motive."³

Kibbutz Beginnings

Contrary to popularly held opinion, the initiation of the kibbutz did not emerge from an idealist theoretical blueprint but from the concrete needs of Zionist land settlement. The technique of group settlement offered advantages to individual settlement since it was less expensive, more efficient and promised greater stability. As Dr. Arthur Ruppin wrote:

"The question was not whether group settlement was preferable to individual settlement; it was rather one of either group settlement or no settlement at all."⁴

The utopian-communal spirit of the vattikim (veteran pioneers) was an important additional factor in the realisation of Zionist colonisation. The collectivist spirit reflected vattikim rejection of their petit bourgeois shtetl background, their idealisation of rural manual labour and, again, their overwhelming desire to become an elite, but 'normalised' constituency. As Stanley Diamond, a cultural anthropologist who has lived in a kibbutz notes:

"... the kibbutz was not a rationally planned society whose furniture merely needs some detailed re-arrangement in order to reveal to us the lay out of the future. It is, and the point cannot be emphasised strongly enough, a highly specialised society, satisfying the historically created needs, both objective and subjective, of a Jewish generation in transition from the Shtetl, or its equivalent, to Statehood."⁵

Vattikim notions of collectivisation were moulded by the institutional forms demanded by settlement in Palestine. Harsh geographic conditions, threats of malaria, and a military confrontation with the native population were among the problems which had to be faced. Communal child care, a central dining hall, collectivised consumption – all emerged as responses to the colonising situation. These institutions were the classic symbols of what only later became a kibbutz ideology.

The history of Deganyah 'A', the first of today's 236 kibbutzim (population approximately 100,000), provides an insight into some of the guiding principles of Zionist land settlement and the critical function of kibbutzim in the Yishuv society. The initial experiences of the 'Romani Komunah', the founders of Deganyah, are well summarised in Darkah Shel Deganiyah Alef ('The Way of Deganiyah 'A'):

"We were four companions in our town Romani, bound by a pledge to become agriculturalists in Israel ... on the morning following (our arrival in Israel) we proceeded on foot to Petah Tikvah ... four others joined us and we were a kevu'tzah of eight ... we were referred to as the 'Romana Komunah'.

"... We saw hundreds of Arab workers who were employed while the Jewish workers returned to their empty rooms depressed ... A rumour reached Petah Tikvah that the Jewish National Fund was planting a large olive tree nursery in Ben Shemen for the Herzl woods. And the work was being done by Arab labour under supervision of the agronomist, Mr. Berman. This created considerable excitement in the Jewish labour community and there was a protest meeting that non-Jewish labour was being used on Jewish National Fund land and in the memory of the nation's leader (Herzl). And there was a declaration of war."⁶

The Romani Komunah took to direct action and in the words of member Miriam Barataz, 'uprooted the trees planted by the Arabs; returned the next day and planted nursery trees to replace those which had been cut.' Soon after, the group left for the Kinneret (Jordan Valley) to work on a farm and, in December 1909, joined a strike against the farm manager because he was hiring Arab labour:

"At about this time Dr. Arthur Ruppin was the manager of the (Palestine) Office (of the World Zionist Organisation) ... While Dr. Ruppin admitted the justification of the workers' demands to discharge Mr. B ... he made a counter-suggestion - the area of the Eastern side of the Jordan will be turned over to the workers on their sole responsibility without foreman or a supervisor. The proposal was accepted ... There were six men and one woman. One of the seven was a member of our (the Romani) komunah. They accepted the responsibility as an experiment for one year.

"It became necessary to replace the ... group with a settled group. Dr. Ruppin applied to us ... On October 28,

1910, we (ten men and two women) came to Umm Juni * and took over the inventory from the occupational group. And we started to establish an independent community on national land - a co-operative group without exploiters and exploited - a komunah."

Land Colonisation, Militarisation and Self-Labour Policy

This description of Kibbutz Deganyah's establishment illustrates the thrust of Zionist colonisation of the land and the concept of 'avodah tzmit', self-labour. The former was carried out by an agency of the World Zionist Organisation, the Jewish National Fund (JNF) which as a land trust held purchases as "the inalienable property of the Jewish people".⁷ No non-Jew could ever legally purchase land, lease it or purchase its crops, once it was owned by the JNF. At first rather cool to collectivist development, the WZO soon recognised its potential as a land settlement institution.

Dr. Ruppin's agency encouraged kibbutz pioneers, giving them JNF land in strategic areas for Jewish settlement. (It is worth noting that by 1947 JNF holdings in Mandatory Palestine amounted to 4%, approximately half of the Jewish holdings in Palestine before the establishment of the State).

The 'Stockade and Watchtower' kibbutz settlements of the 1930's are especially interesting with respect to the convergence of kibbutz land settlement and the political and military functions of colonisation. Responding to the growing struggle with the Palestinian nationalists and the British Mandatory Government, the Stockade and Watchtower kibbutz system attempted to create a network of armed Jewish communities in previously all-Arab regions. Kibbutz Hanitah, my home in 1970-71, was established by East European Jews as part of this system:

"A few days before its birth hundreds of Jewish settlers gathered to begin the march to Hanitah, located on top of a mountain, eight kilometers from the Mediterranean Sea. On foot and on donkey the settlers carried provisions to the mountain top ... On the final day

* Many Hebrew names of settlements are adaptations from the original name of the Arab village they came to replace. Deganyah was established on the lands of Umm Juni. After the purchase of these lands from the Arab feudal landlord by the Jewish National Fund, the Arab peasants were removed and exclusively Jewish settlements were established on the evacuated land. Though tilling the land for generations, the peasants were legally serfs, devoid under Ottoman rule of any legal rights to their land - Eds.

of transport 200 vattikim remained with the make-shift tents and supplies in the new kibbutz. Late that night neighbouring Arab villagers attacked Hanitah, and by the time the attack was successfully resisted, two vattikim were dead and many injured on both sides. The history of Kibbutz Hanitah had begun and reflected similar incidents throughout Palestine in the pre-State years."⁸

During this period political socialisation functions well-suited to the intense collectivist spirit of kibbutzim, including ingathering of youth groups, and Hebrew language training, became secondary to Zionist military needs. One of the leading Kibbutz Federations, Ha-Kibbutz ha-Me'uhad, was instrumental in the formation of the pre-State predecessors of the Israeli Defence Forces, the Palmach.⁹ Moreover, national security interests have directly influenced kibbutz internal economics as well as geographic location through Jewish Agency and Israeli government financial aid policies. A post-1967 War example is given by Hanitah's factory manager, Michael:

"In 1968 the government did not want to rely on factories abroad so they wanted us in Israel to start factories for security items. They gave us one-half the investment so it was easier to make it."¹⁰

The strong Kibbutznik pre-State advocacy of self-labour was complementary to the nature of the Zionist colonisation policy. Its main goals were to replace Arab labour and to insure work for Jewish immigrants. In the first days of the first Aliyahs many Jewish land owners preferred hiring Arab labourers because they were both more skilled and would work for lower wages. However, pressure by groups such as the Romani Komunah, the formation of a Jewish labour union (the Histadrut) and the exclusivist policies of the JNF for leasing land led to compliance with the Jewish labour principle. For the kibbutzim this concept became a 'sacred' kibbutz tenet which prohibited all forms of wage and salaried labour.

Originally affecting the native Palestinian population, the prohibition against wage labour was later to exclude the entry of the large Sephardic Jewish immigrations of the 1950's and 60's from Asia and Africa to the meshek (kibbutz economy). The three main Kibbutz Federations, Ha-Kibbutz ha-Heuhad, Ha-Kibbutz ha-Artzi and Ihud ha-Kevutzot ve-ha-Kibbutzim which emerged in the 1920's, had supported the view that the entire Zionist State would eventually be a network of collective communities, thus eliminating the problematics of hired labour. This perspective was a serious misjudgment in itself and was compounded by the unforeseen (to the early pioneers at least) replacement of the

Ashkenazi-Western population majority by a Sephardic majority of Arab origin. Sephardic Jews for the most part were not only strangers to the ideas and culture of kibbutz life, but were rejected as equals by the veteran elite membership of the Zionist spearhead institution. Over time it became clear that the purest conception of self-labour was beginning to harm the national economy, and Prime Minister David Ben Gurion condemned the kibbutzim for obstructing the national interest:

"To the credit of the new immigrants, it should be noted that it is they who have built the majority of the settlements founded since the creation of the State, thus refuting the vain words of so-called 'progressives' from Russia and Germany who believed that the only people capable of pioneering work are those who read Pushkin and Goethe."¹¹

Ben Gurion was correct in pointing out that Zionist-Socialists had extended their discriminatory practices towards a large segment of the Israeli-Jewish population.

Kibbutz population declined relatively from a 1948 high of 7.9% of Israeli-Jewish population to a rather consistent 3.6%. (In absolute terms, however, population figures for kibbutzim went from approximately 54,000 in 1948 to 100,000 in 1974). The kibbutz did not escape the processes of capitalist industrialisation of the country as a whole, and pressure from national, military and economic requirements prompted a shift towards industrialisation. Industrialisation was further stimulated by lack of additional farming land for agricultural development (this, of course, has now changed since Kibbutzim have been colonising the land occupied since the 1967 war), constant problems of water supplies and the need for employment for the older generation. Kibbutz membership labour power has become quite strained as a result and today wage workers form 20% of the kibbutz farm work-force and 59% of the industrial work-force. Thus the issue of hired labour has dramatised the failings of kibbutz socialist ideology, and is a major source of concern and debate within the movement.

Ha-Kibbutz ha-Artzi

In demystifying the phenomenon of the kibbutz and its image as a progressive socialist institution it is important to mention the Ha-Kibbutz ha-Artzi Federation, often thought to be the most socialist revolutionary of all kibbutz federations. It is true as Aharon Cohen relates that the pre-State political platforms adopted by Ha-Kibbutz ha-Artzi envisaged a 'binational socialist society in Palestine and its environs', and stated

'the chief guarantee for Arab-Jewish peace is the creation of a joint common front formed by Arabs and Jewish workers in towns and country'.¹⁶ To further good relations with the fellaheen (Arab peasants) the Federation set up an Arab department which, among other projects, conducted training programmes for kibbutzniks in Arab villages. By 1942, in co-operation with its urban ally, the Socialist League, and the League for Arab-Jewish Rapprochement and Co-operation, Ha-Kibbutz ha-Artzi agreed to basic principles for Arab-Jewish unity including the 'non-domination of one people by the other, regardless of their numerical strength'. However, the same year the World Zionist Organisation adopted the Biltmore Programme which called for a 'Jewish Commonwealth' and virtually subverted all movement for binationalism. Ha-Kibbutz ha-Artzi was among the Zionist minority opposing this development, but post-1948 its oppositionary role greatly diminished as the nationalistic viewpoint came to dominate over other issues.

One should, however, assess the Ha-Kibbutz ha-Artzi history in context. Its advocacy of Arab-Jewish rapprochement did not preclude it from establishing its kibbutzim on lands taken from the Palestinian Arabs both before and after 1948. * Its affiliated party, Mapam, eventually joined the Israeli-Government Coalition which has ruled since the State's creation. S. Eisenstadt provides an insight into Mapam's current position:

"Emphasis on organisational discipline as against ideological commitment grew. The political organiser gained importance over the movement type leader."¹⁷

Regarding its internal organisation, Kibbutz Artzi has more rigidly adhered to Zionist-Socialist 'kolektiviyut ra'ayonit' (collective ideology) and its institutional forms - communal child care, central dining hall etc. - than other federations. Melford Spiro saw the sectarian ideology of the Artzi federation as 'a new transcendental religion replacing the orthodox Judaism of the European past.' Whether one agrees with Spiro's analysis, it remains true that Kibbutz Artzi cannot in any rational way be considered part of a revolutionary socialist movement. Its many inner-directed debates add little to energizing

* The best known and most notorious case is that of Kibbutz Bar'am, established on the ruins of the maronite Arab village of Bir'im. For further details see Dissent and Ideology in Israel: Resistance to the Draft in Israel 1948-1973 and Documents from Israel 1967-1973: A Story Seldom Told, Ithaca Press, London, 1975 - Eds.

socialist organisation within Israel and elsewhere. (It may be noted that though Artzi members deny they have hired labour, they practise subcontracting - the hiring of outside workers from an agent, and by this indirect method feel themselves non-exploiters of labour).

The Role of Women

The situation of women in the kibbutz has posed other serious problems for kibbutzim. The question of a women's place in the kibbutz was present during Dehanyah's early days:¹³

"We were also concerned with the problem of the women members and their place in the productive sector ... Yosef (Bussel) endeavoured to change the pattern of the economy so that female members would be freed from the narrow confines of housework ... Bussel pressed for the adoption of the principle of joint care of the children ... since it would free the women-mother, who could be used for all other kinds of work ..."

Communal child care was hailed as the kibbutz solution for women's emancipation. However, purely economic considerations (ie being able to work an eight hour day) are insufficient guarantees of personal liberation. Questions of status and power, which are integral to any struggle for equality, reach into all dimensions of action.

While communal child care facilities free them to work, job opportunities for kibbutz women are primarily typical female service roles but on a public rather than private level. Almost all kibbutz women work in the kitchen, laundry, ironing or child-care facilities. Since personal status in the kibbutz is positively correlated with productive (income-producing) job roles, the service branch inherently offers less prestige. Yoninah Talmon, the kibbutz sociologist, reports "women are less attracted to life in the kibbutz (than men) and feel it more difficult to adjust."¹⁴ On this point a kibbutznik woman friend once asked: "What is liberating about washing clothes for four hundred instead of four?"

The 'politics of reproduction' also bears a heavy weight on the women of the kibbutz. Continuation of the 'Warfare State' preoccupations of the entire Israeli nation puts pressure on women to produce as many children as possible for national needs - this in addition to the labour power needs of the local kibbutz community. Much pressure is placed on young women to marry young and reproduce as quickly as feasible. A single woman of even 23 is looked upon with a mixture of suspicion and pity. Yoninah Talmon's research, ties discouragement

of population control and emphasis of the mother-role of women in the kibbutzim to its Israeli-State function:¹⁵

"We need children not only to guarantee our own (kibbutz) future, we must put part of our second generation at the disposal of the State, the army, guidance of new immigrants, border settlements, youth movements - we will be able to participate in all that only if we have many children."

But even when a woman bears children the sense of fulfillment is distorted. The reality of death, ever present in Israeli society, pervades even the moment of birth: if a boy is born, a wish is made that he should not be killed in the war; if a girl, that her children will not be killed. One kibbutz woman said she felt the need to have many children, so that if she lost one she would still not be alone. Thus the political situation invades the most sacred moments of life for a woman, and has continually undermined the possibility of women gaining equality in the kibbutz, where to be male, fighter of the nation-state, is to be dominant.

Conclusion

When the State first came into being, kibbutzniks carried on their leadership functions in all spheres of national development. Although less than 4% of the population, the kibbutzniks often held 16-20% of the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) and Cabinet seats. As late as the 1973 war 18% of all Israeli casualties were kibbutzniks (25% of the 1967 War totals).

Yet for two decades there has been clear indication of gradual reduction of kibbutz influence as an institutional force. When Ben-Gurion took office, one of his first actions was the break-up of the kibbutz-based Palmach in favour of a state army. The Israeli Army (Israel Defence Forces) rather than frontier kibbutzim is today's main protector of Israeli military security. From the economic perspective the kibbutzim's position also altered. As kibbutzim began to industrialize they ran into the problem of balancing the prohibition against hired labour with the necessities of a large factory plant. Moshavim and agrobusiness enterprises, which were not constrained in this way, increasingly undermined the national reliance on the kibbutzim as food suppliers.

To offset the limitations on agricultural expansion, the kibbutz responded with industrialization but the problem of hired labour and greater dependence on capitalist investment has created new complications. As Yoninah Talmon notes of the process of kibbutz 'routinization':

"As enterprises came to be managed on an entrepreneurial basis, the criteria of profit and cost-efficiency became increasingly

important. Divested of its special aura, (the kibbutz) economic activity turned into routine and individuals increasingly disassociated from the community".¹⁸

This process, accompanied by the impact of increasing professionalism and bureaucratisation affected the possibility of job-rotation and consequently increased differentiation between workers - not only between kibbutzniks and hired labour but between men and women, skilled and unskilled workers. Work in itself is no longer as meaningful, no longer as self-fulfilling. The technician has replaced the pioneer. The kibbutz, in a sense, has fulfilled the Zionist-Socialist goal of typical modern 'normalisation' of Western capitalist society.

Throughout kibbutz history, the service of kibbutzim to Zionism has predominated over all other concerns. Their brand of 'socialism' reflects this, and is best testified in the critical role the Kibbutz Federations are playing in the colonisation of the post-1967 occupied territories. In a context where consolidating occupation over another people can be termed 'socialism', there is little wonder that the implementation of policies of domination and dispossession should be called 'pioneering'.

The book, The Seventh Day, contains interviews with kibbutzniks who fought in the 1967 war. Amos, from Kibbutz Geva asks:

"Can we go on holding the sword in one hand only? ... how can you go and talk to others about education towards kibbutz life? It seems to me that there's some sort of contradiction here. There's something here that contradicts the basic tenet of kibbutz life which says that every man has his own world and the right to fashion it. The question is whether this really applies to every man as a man, or whether it only holds good for the man who's a kibbutznik and a Jew and an Israeli. Is it only people in this category that have a right to create something?"

His question raises important issues for those believing the answer to anti-semitism is a Jewish nation-state. For those of us interested in securing an environment which supports cultural pluralism the above suggests we be wary of relying on the kibbutz as a positive model.

Footnotes

1. Ben Halpern The Idea of a Jewish State, p.90, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1960
2. Isaiah Berlin's "Origins of Israel" in Walter Laqueur, The Middle East in Transition, Books for Library Press, NY 1971

3. Lea Ben Dor commenting on the Sebastia affair, the July 1974 religious group settlement in occupied held Samaria, Jerusalem Post (Overseas Weekly), 6.8.74
4. Arthur Ruppin, The Agricultural Colonization of the Zionist Organization in Palestine, (translated by R.J. Ferwal), London, 1926
5. Stanley Diamond, Dissent, Spring 1957
6. Excerpts from The Way of Deganyah Alef, Harry Viteles, A History of the Co-operative Movement in Israel, Vol. II, Vallentine and Mitchell, London, 1967. All quotes in text from this book.
7. For a critical account of Zionist land settlement see Fouzi el-Asmar's, I Will Remember the Land, American Jewish Alternative to Zionism, 1973
8. Quoted from the author's unpublished paper "The Middle East Conflict - A Look at Israeli Kibbutzim"
9. Ben Gurion's Israel A Personal History, Funk and Wagnells, NY, 1971 - contains an especially interesting account of the role of Hakibbutz Hameuchad and the formation of the Palmach.
10. Rayman, "The Middle East Conflict", op. cit.
11. Israel A Personal History, op. cit. Eisenstadt notes that Sephardic Jews today constitute less than 7% of kibbutz population, see his Israeli Society, Basic Books, NY, 1967
12. Dan Leon in his, The Kibbutz - A New Way of Life, Pergamon Press, London, 1969, calls the introduction of hired labour to kibbutz life "The trojan horse of capitalism." The figures are from this book.
13. The Way of Deganyah Alef, op. cit.
14. Yoninah Talmon, Family and Community in the Kibbutz, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1972
15. Ibid
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18. Talmon, op.cit.

MATZPEN: THE ISRAELI SOCIALIST ORGANISATION *

Quaderni Del Medio Oriente: Comrade Machover, we are preparing a special issue of our Quarterly on the Extra-Parliamentary Left in Israel. As one of the founder members of the Israeli Socialist Organisation (Matzpen), which is the oldest and best-known group of that Extra-Parliamentary Left, would you be prepared to tell our readers about the history of your group?

Moshe Machover: Yes, but you have to understand that at the moment I can only give you a rather personal account, based on my own recollections, not a 'scientific', completely documented history.

Q: From what you have said we understand that your group was first formed as an opposition in the Israeli CP. What was your criticism of the party?

A: Well, in fact only four of us were actually members of the CP. In Tel-Aviv there were Oded Pilavsky, who is the editor of Matzpen, and a second comrade, who left our group about a year after it was founded; in Jerusalem there were Akiva Orr and myself. The four of us also contacted other people we knew who had not been in or around the party. Two were young people who had just finished school and were looking for an extra-parliamentary oppositional activity. But the majority of the comrades who participated in founding Matzpen came from the CP and its periphery. (By the way, all this was of course three years before the CP split into two parties, Rakah and Maki. In 1962 the CP was like Rakah of today. Rakah now continues the line of the old CP, while Maki turned very far to the right and has now become more Zionist than the Zionists.)

Q: Well, what were your differences with the party?

A: We felt that the CP (in Israel as in other countries) was not a revolutionary party but a club of the friends of the Soviet Union. The policy of this party was determined not by any revolutionary strategy, but by the needs of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was following a policy of 'peaceful co-

* Abridged from an interview given by Moshe Machover to the Italian revolutionary socialist journal, Quaderni Del Medio Oriente

existence', which meant, in practice, preservation of the global status quo. In harmony with this, the CP became committed to the 'peaceful parliamentary road to socialism'. In fact, these parties had become completely reformist; they were not thinking at all of a revolutionary struggle, and they imagined that socialism would finally, in the distant future, come not as a result of class struggle, but in some magic way from outside. They were saying that when it would become clear that the Soviet Union is beating the West in the 'peaceful economic competition', all the people of the world would understand that socialism is better than capitalism, and the world would then peacefully become socialist. We understood that all this was rubbish.

Q: Were you influenced by the Chinese dispute against the Soviet Union?

A: No, in fact we were not. We made this critique before we knew about this Sino-Soviet dispute; this dispute became completely public only after we founded our group and our paper. Then we saw that many points in the Chinese critique were similar to conclusions that we had reached ourselves. But we understood that Khrushchev was continuing (perhaps in a different and more open form) the old line of Stalin, while the Chinese were accusing Khrushchev of 'revisionism' against the old Stalinist positions. No, we were not really influenced by Maoism, but by Trotskyism. Without being Trotskyists, our critique of Stalinism and Khrushchevism were influenced quite a lot by the Trotskyist tradition.

Q: In what way?

A: Well, a few years before 1962 (perhaps in 1959) we, some of us, read Isaac Deutscher's biography of Trotsky. Then we went on to read Trotsky himself - My Life and History of the Russian Revolution. We came to these books to find an answer to the confusing problems that were raised but not answered by the 20th Congress (of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union). We became quite influenced by some of Trotsky's ideas: the concept of the world revolution as opposed to the idea of 'socialism in one country', and the theory of permanent revolution. The latter was particularly important for us, since Israel is situated in an under-developed part of the world. Personally, I was also influenced by my stay in Poland. I spent there one year (1960) in connection with my academic work; I was preparing my Ph.D. thesis in Mathematical Logic. What I observed there convinced

me that that was no socialism at all, and this tied in quite well with what we read in Trotsky.

Q: You said that you were looking for answers to problems posed by the 20th Congress. Were you not influenced also by the Hungarian uprising in 1956?

A: No, not really, although in retrospect I see that we should have been affected by it, and in this case our development would probably have been quicker. But the reason why the Hungarian events did not affect us so much at the time is very simple. The Hungarian revolution of 1956 coincided with the Suez war, the Anglo-Franco-Israeli attack on Egypt. This was much closer to us; and the line taken by the Israeli CP on the Suez war was quite good. As a result, our faith in the CP increased in the autumn of '56 and this delayed our critical development against the CP line on other issues. Actually the development of our critical position was very strongly influenced by some political events, but these events took place a few years after '56 - in 1958-62.

Q: What events?

A: Cuba and Iraq. For us these were proofs of a theorem and of the corresponding converse theorem. The development of the Cuban revolution seemed to confirm rather well Trotsky's theory on permanent revolution. More important, perhaps, was the fact that almost until Castro's victory, the Cuban CP was against his revolution, was denouncing him as an 'adventurist'. But we were completely in favour of such 'adventures' ... And we thought: the Cuban CP is clearly not a revolutionary party; but other CP's are not any better. They have become quite degenerated, reformist parties that were afraid of getting involved in complications, and creating unpleasant international complications for the Soviet Union. If we want to be revolutionaries then there is no point in continuing to be in such a party. We have to start a new group. In Iraq, on the other hand, there was in 1958 a popular revolution against the Nuri Said neo-colonialist right-wing regime. General Qassim came to power. But the Iraqi CP, which was then extremely strong, did not try to push the revolution any further, and was quite content to support the Qassim regime. The CP had tremendous and virtually undisputed influence among the workers, the peasants, the intelligentsia, and even had a big support in the lower and middle ranks of the army. Objectively, it would have been much easier for them to

make their own 'October' than it had been for Lenin in 1917. But here came the other difference: there was no Lenin, no April Theses, no revolutionary will at all. The policy of the Iraqi CP was (at best) like that of the Bolsheviks before the April Theses. Well, we understood that this would lead to disaster. The chance for an Iraqi October was missed. And in fact, when the revolutionary wave started to recede, when the regime no longer needed the vital support of the CP, the latter was forcibly liquidated and in the end the communists were cruelly massacred en masse. (Rather similar events, by the way took place in Indonesia a few years later; but the Iraqi lesson was even clearer). So for us the joint lesson of Cuba and Iraq was that the CP was no longer capable of becoming a revolutionary force even when a revolutionary situation does arise. So the answer was to start something new. Of course, we did not believe that a revolutionary situation was coming soon in Israel, but the task of revolutionaries is to work towards it and to be prepared when it does come.

Q: The events you were talking about happened a few years before 1962. Why did it take you so long to draw the practical conclusions?

A: In retrospect it does seem rather strange. But you must remember that in the late 1950's and early 1960's the left was still almost totally dominated by a seemingly monolithic official communist 'church'. In retrospect it is now clear that the creation of Matzpen was part of a world-wide phenomenon: the regeneration of a revolutionary left, the creation or re-creation of many groups to the left of the CP in almost every country. But at the time, even in 1962, we were not aware of this; partly because the process was still in its beginning, and partly because of our ignorance of what was going on in the left in other countries. We were part, a rather provincial part, of a world-wide historical process, without knowing it. Nowadays it seems a rather easy and everyday thing to set up a new revolutionary group to the left of the CP. But - how the world has changed - ten or twelve years ago this seemed an infinitely more daring step. The only famous example in this direction was Cuba. (I am sure that the Cuban revolution had a deep and decisive role in the emergence or re-emergence of the revolutionary left all around the world.) So even when we understood the need for creating a new force, to the left of the CP, we were a bit hesitant about it; we wanted to prepare very cautiously, to discuss, to look for more people thinking along the same lines. Inside the CP it was very difficult. It was com-

pletely forbidden to organise as a faction, or even to make contacts with dissenters in other branches of the party; the organisation of the party was utterly Stalinist. We guessed that there must be dissenters like us in other branches, but we didn't succeed in finding such contacts outside our own branches, (Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv). We tried in Haifa and other places where there were many Arab members, but didn't manage to find the right people. (Later, after we started our paper, we did find them) So we met in a small circle, almost in secret, and had discussions. And at the same time we started in each of the two branches to criticise the party leadership openly (but of course without revealing that we were one group - containing also people not belonging to the party - that had been meeting and discussing). We attacked the party's reformist line, its utter subservience to the foreign policy of the Soviet Union; we also attacked them for suppressing every debate and dissent; we demanded the creation of an internal bulletin for theoretical debate; we also pointed out that the party had not even written its own history and we hinted that this was because it was afraid of revealing some embarrassing facts. We sent some criticism for publication in the party paper, but they were refused, of course. So all we could do was to distribute duplicated material in our own branch. All this went on for some months, and we were slowly preparing ourselves, discussing, trying to contact more people inside and outside the party. We were making some programmes and we wanted to continue in this way for a little longer, in order to consolidate ourselves before we would come out openly as a new group with our own paper. But then our hand was forced. Since we wanted to make contacts also outside the party, we could not hold the existence of our circle completely secret, and in September (1962) the bourgeois paper Ha'aretz disclosed the existence of our circle. The four of us who were party members were expelled at once. All of us (about 15 people, if I'm not mistaken) then met in Tel-Aviv, and decided to start publishing a paper as soon as possible. The first number of our paper came out in November.

Q: What were the main topics discussed in your paper? Did you publish a programme?

A: There were two main topics that occupied most of our attention and most of the space in our paper in the initial period. The first topic was our critique of the reformist line of the CP (in Israel

and around the world). In our first issue, for instance, there was a long article about the October revolution and especially about the April Theses (giving, more or less, Trotsky's version of the debate around the Theses). Later on, when the Sino-Soviet conflict came more into the open, we discussed it as well, trying to show that this dispute raised again the spectre of the old Trotsky-Stalin dispute of 'world revolution' versus 'socialism in a single country'. The second important topic was the class struggle in Israel, and especially the trade-union situation. We pointed out that in Israel there did not exist a trade-union in the accepted sense of the word - not even a reformist trade-union. The Histadrut is not really a trade-union, but a very important part of the Zionist establishment, which owns a big part of the economy. It is more similar to a fascist corporation than to a workers' union; by regimenting the workers from above it actually restrains their struggle even for economic, day-to-day demands. I should explain that at the time there was a period of great expansion in the economic activity in Israel. There was actually a shortage of labour-force. In this situation, the spontaneous tendency of the workers is to fight for increased wages, and the bosses cannot resist this fight, since they need more workers than they can get. But the Histadrut did its utmost to restrain these struggles and did not authorise any strikes. So the workers organised themselves in unofficial action committees that were not recognised by the Histadrut, and there was a big movement of unofficial strikes. There was even some tendency of these committees to meet together and co-ordinate the struggle in large parts of industry. This was going on when Matzpen was founded. We regarded this as extremely important. The non-existence of a trade-union is a very abnormal situation, and creates very strong pressures. It was conceivable that the workers could organise through their committees and overthrow the power of the Histadrut over them - either from the inside, or, more likely, by setting up a trade union outside the Histadrut. Since the Histadrut is a very important power centre of the Zionist establishment, the Israeli regime, such a development would shake the existing structure very considerably. This may not lead to revolution, but it would still be very important. We saw in this direction a very important field of activity for us. So, in our first issue, we carried a programme for a total, far-reaching changes in the whole structure of the Histadrut; and

at the same time we called for the consolidation of the movement of workers' unofficial committees into a permanent organisation (rather than a merely ad-hoc arrangement for practical co-ordination, as it was in fact then). This was a completely new approach to the problem of trade unionism in Israel. All the 'left' parties (including the CP) merely demanded that the Histadrut should change its policy. The CP regarded the Histadrut as an ordinary right-wing union, which should only be made more militant. We pointed out that this was a total misconception. Actually, we found out that what we were saying was in harmony with the intuitive feeling of the workers.

Q: What came out of your propaganda?

A: In the end, not very much, unfortunately. We found that in the last analysis the bureaucracy had a very tight hold on the Israeli worker. For example, health insurance is in the hands of the Histadrut. The workers are afraid that if they antagonise the Histadrut bureaucracy too much, they will find their own families, their small children, without medical care. Also, since the Histadrut owns 25% of the economy (and the State owns another 25%) it is very difficult to defy it. But nevertheless I still think that our approach was valid, and it retains its basic validity even today.

Now to return to your earlier question: we did not publish any programmes, except on the trade-union problem. We felt, I think quite rightly, that we were not yet ready for this; our thinking was still in the process of crystallisation.

Q: You have omitted to mention the thing for which you are mainly known - your position on Zionism and the problem of the Middle East.

A: It may seem to you very strange, but at that time, in the beginning, we did not have a special independent position at all on those problems. We accepted almost entirely the line of the CP on this (the idea that was later continued by Rakah). This was not one of the points on which we had opposed the CP when we were still in it. On the contrary, in 1961 two of us (A. Orr and myself, under the pen-name 'Israeli') had published a book about the Israeli-Arab conflict; the book was mostly documentary, but the analysis was in the line of the CP. The other comrades too did not have any other position. There was just one point on which we were critical; we noticed that the CP attacked Zionism for its international connections (attachment to imperialism and

hostility to the Soviet Union) but did not have a critical analysis of Zionism as such, no inherent serious criticism of Zionism. However, we ourselves had not developed a coherent conception on this subject. Part of the reason was that at that time the Israeli-Arab conflict was relatively dormant and there was no objective immediate pressure for re-assessing our position. The most recent big event in this sphere had been the Suez war of 1956, and the CP line seemed rather adequate to deal with this event. Another reason was that in many ways we had not completely shed our previous Stalinist skin; we were still in the middle of the process. Finally, in the beginning there were no Arab comrades in Matzpen. But this changed very soon after we started to publish our own paper, when some Arab comrades - and especially A. Said - made contact with us.

Q: How did this happen?

A: Said was a veteran member of the CP, who had developed a Trotskyist position in the 1930's and especially in the 1940's. He was still in the party, at least formally, but had been pushed out from all work of direct political nature and confined to work in the party's literary publications in Arabic. For this reason he was not known to us. Also, at the moment when we emerged in public he was out of the country, on a visit to Europe, and one Israeli paper even said that he had left the country permanently. But in fact he was away for just a short time. With him in Israel were also a very small circle of other old Trotskyists (but he was the only Arab among them, and the only member of the CP). When these people saw our paper, they noticed at once that some of what we said had a sort of Trotskyist flavour, so they made contact with us. Well we started to discuss together, particularly with Said.

Q: How did Said contribute to the development of Matzpen?

A: Oh, I think I can say that his contribution was very important, even decisive. You see, first of all he was much older than us, the founders of the group, about 20-25 years older. He had gone through the earlier 30 years of the history of the world revolutionary movement, but was not soiled with all the Stalinist shit. He remembered from his own experience things we know only from books. In particular, a vital period of the Zionist colonisation process was for him a living memory. But more important than this; he had exactly what we lacked - a coherent conception of the Zionist colonisation process, and in particular the way in

which it had affected the development of the Arab society in Palestine. From him we got a much better and deeper understanding of Israel as an embodiment of Zionist colonisation. Also, he had a conception of the Arab revolution as one indivisible process. Matzpen's position on all these matters was adopted essentially under his influence. Some of his points we adopted almost at once, because we saw immediately that they were very plausible. Other points we accepted after a longer period, with some modifications perhaps. Of course, it was not a mechanical or completely one-sided process, but a dialectical one. Anyway, his influence is clearly discernible in practically all our documents on Zionism and the Arab East. The earliest document which embodied some of this theoretical development was written as a set of theses in 1966. In duplicated form it circulated (in Hebrew) in our group. An English version was printed in a booklet "The Other Israel", a selection of documents published in 1968.

Q: Let us go back to the early years. Did other dissidents from the CP join your group? Was there no split in that party after the Sino-Soviet dispute became a public scandal?

A: On the whole, the Sino-Soviet dispute did not have a big effect on the Israel CP. But in one branch - Haifa - there was a group of comrades (most of them Arabs) who on the whole supported the Chinese position, except on the question of 'the cult of personality' (this is jargon for saying that these comrades did not accept the Chinese position on Stalin). These people were in touch with Said, and through him with Matzpen. At the end of 1963 or the beginning of 1964 they were expelled from the CP and published a statement about this in issue 15 of our paper (January 1964). We had discussions with these comrades and they decided to merge with Matzpen. The union was based on a short programmatic statement which was published in the next issue of our paper, in February. In fact, to the best of my recollection this was the first general programmatic document we ever published.

Q: Could you please summarise it?

A: Well you can see it is not very long. In the first few lines we report that the Haifa group has merged with Matzpen, 'after a series of joint discussions about the problems confronting a Marxist organisation which operates in the reality of Israel, in both the Jewish and the Arab community'. Then there are five very brief points which sum up our common position, as follows:

1. Opposition to Zionism, both theoretically and politically - in

contrast with all Zionist parties.

2. An unequivocal acceptance of revolutionary socialism as the basis of our position.

3. Opposition to 'the cult of the Soviet Union' with all its theoretical and political consequences - in contrast of the Israeli CP.

4. Acceptance of genuine international solidarity.

5. Total opposition to Stalinism and 'the cult of personality' - in contrast with the various 'Chinese' communists.

After that there follow two 'principles' in somewhat greater detail. First, the 'Class Principle' in which give a short (and not very good) description of the division of Israeli society into classes. We state our aim as 'a revolutionary transformation of social and economic relations, of the political regime and of the ownership of the main means of production'. We point out the existence of a class struggle and explain that socialism corresponds to the interests of the working class. It is explained that the working class will be the main social force which will make the socialist revolution. Further, we state that we must tie ourselves to that class.

The second principle is about the national question. It states that the fundamental problems of Israel, including the Israel-Arab conflict, 'can be solved fully only by the integration of Israel in a Socialist Arab Union.' And 'this integration must be based on recognition of the right to self-determination of the Arab people and of the Israeli people'.

Well, you can see that here, in a nutshell, and in a rather embryonic form, are the main elements of our present position.

Q: What impact did Matzpen have on the general public in Israel?

A: In the beginning very little; almost zero. I have told you how we made some efforts at first in connection with our programme on the Histadrut and the trade-union question. This did not produce any real effect, and then the economic situation changed and the phase of intensive class struggle was finished. We became quite inward-looking; I suppose that this was not an entirely wasted period, because we continued our theoretical development and consolidated ourselves. We got some new members - one here, one there. But all that time we were practically unknown, a small circle with a small monthly paper, about which hardly anyone had ever heard. The first time we came out of our shell and started to interact in public political life was during the

episode of our co-operation with Uri Avneri's 'New Force' movement.

Mr. Avneri is a journalist who published a rather sensational weekly. He has strong political ambitions and clear demagogic inclinations. Well, in 1965 he got rather fed up with being just a journalist, so he decided to form a new mass movement of his own and to run for elections to the Israeli parliament. His agitation was directed against the hawkish, anti-Arab position of the government, and he even made some criticism of Zionism - although in a very partial and half-hearted way. On social questions he had a populist petit-bourgeois line. In internal politics he came out very clearly against violation of democratic rights in general, as well as against the oppression practised against the Arabs in Israel. He also had a very clear line against theocracy and religious compulsion. On the whole, his platform was calculated to attract young people (Jewish and Arab) who were fed up with the old existing parties (which are quite corrupt) and were looking for something new, progressive, secular and non-Zionist (though not anti-Zionist). He wanted to attract masses on a rather vague platform. In fact, his rhetoric which his journal had been printing for several years, had great appeal to many young people who were gravitating to an oppositional outlook and were critical, in a general way, of the existing regime.

Well, he came to us and offered to give a good place in his electoral list to one of our Arab members. (In Israel elections are strictly proportional: you vote for a list of candidates, and the first ones in the list get into parliament; the number of delegates that a list gets is proportional to the number of votes it has polled in the elections). In return he asked us to participate in his movement and help in his election campaign. He knew that we were dedicated people, with experience in organisational and political work (which he did not have) and we could be of great help to him.

We rejected his offer for a place in his list of candidates, because we did not want to be identified too closely with him. On the other hand we were prepared to consider working in his movement and election campaign. We debated this very hotly among ourselves. On the one hand we did not trust him and his politics and did not want to compromise ourselves. On the other hand, many of us saw that his movement may initially attract good young elements with whom it would be useful for us to come in contact. His platform was after all progressive. But just because it was so

vague, his movement would be bound to split sooner or later into left and right, and from such a split we may come out rather stronger than we came in. To be honest I must add that some of us probably had illusions about the possibility of this movement becoming a rather more permanent progressive front containing within it several independent groups. Our internal debate was very difficult. Finally, we decided not to enter this 'New Force' movement as a group, but to allow those of our members who wanted to do so to work for and in it.

So some of our comrades became very active in Avneri's campaign and movement, and he got elected. This collaboration went on till the end of 1966. In December of that year the first formal congress of that movement took place in which a more detailed programme was to be adopted. In this connection very sharp political differences emerged and a split became inevitable. Actually, Avneri himself pushed for a split because he was worried about the influence we were acquiring among the members of the movement. You see, I think he had hoped that we would liquidate our own group and simply become his followers; when he saw that this was not happening he demanded that we stop having double loyalty - both to his movement and to Matzpen. We told him plainly that our first and supreme loyalty is to Matzpen. And so the split became inevitable, both for political and organisational reasons. The split occurred in the end of the congress, after an intensive fight. When we got up and left the hall, some other delegates who were not members of Matzpen left with us. In particular, practically no Arab remained sitting inside.

Q: How do you sum up this episode in retrospect?

A: This question of yours is a good one, in other words it is a bit difficult to answer. My personal opinion is that both the pessimists and optimists among us were proved partly right and partly wrong. On the one hand, Avneri's movement attracted rather fewer people than some of us had expected, and therefore it did not provide us a big arena. On the other hand, we did come out of our own shell, we flexed our muscles in struggle with opposing views before a public that had not known us before, acquired some experience and even recruited some new members (though not many) and a few supporters. But it is difficult for us to judge whether the results justified the efforts we made and the political risks we took. One thing

is quite clear to me; we have to thank our lucky stars that the break with Avneri occurred before the June war of 1967. If we had still anything to do with him at the time of the war, when the positions he took in his paper and in parliament became nauseatingly chauvinistic, then until this very day we would still have to scrub ourselves, and still we would not be able to remove the patriotic stink that would have clung to us. But as it was, we got away in time, with some gain in experience and contacts.

Q: Could you specify the main political differences that emerged during the Congress of the 'New Force'.

A: They concerned three subjects. First, social questions, class question. Until it came to formulating the programme of the movement for the congress, it had been agreed that the 'New Force' as such would not have a common position, so that there could be various tendencies, various positions. Without such an understanding we could not, of course, participate in any way in such a heterogeneous front. So we continued to advocate our revolutionary socialist positions. By the way, on questions of trade-unionism and on the Histadrut we had held the initiative all the time. Avneri knew very well that he had very little to say on this topic that would be of interest to workers, so he left it entirely to us. When we started our collaboration with his movement, our comrade Oded Pilavsky was co-opted to the provisional Centre of the movement, and in this capacity too he agitated among workers for our ideas on the Histadrut. The election campaign of 1965 gave him plenty of opportunity for that. Well, when it came to the congress at the end of 1966, Avneri and his friends proposed on social questions a programme that was typically and unmistakably petit-bourgeois. He also declared that the movement must not be right or left but only 'forward'. You know exactly what this means. We exposed him during the congress on these questions.

Secondly, we exposed the half-heartedness of his 'opposition' to Zionist ideology. For example, in the programme he proposed there was a paragraph which said that the connection between Israel and world Jewry not only exists, but is actually a good thing. And at the same time he refused to include the assertion that Jewish people all round the world must not be considered as having inherent political rights over the country.

Thirdly, there was the question of borders. Both Avneri and

we advocated integration of Israel in the Arab World. But the meaning we and he gave to this slogan were very different. We thought (as we do now) in terms of a revolutionary solution, a socialist Israel integrated into a socialist Arab East. Within such a socialist state there would be a Hebrew-speaking autonomous part, whose borders would be internal borders inside the United Socialist Mashreq; these borders would be determined by mutual agreement on the basis of practical considerations and conditions prevailing at the moment when the agreement would be made. We refused to commit ourselves to any specific borders, and in particular we refused to give a legitimation to the territorial gains Israel had made as a result of the 1948-49 war. Avneri, on the other hand, was thinking of a federation in which Israel would be a dominant element. In his draft programme he proposed that we should commit ourselves to the existing borders. Here I would like to boast a little. I got up and said: "Suppose that in the coming year there will be a war and Israel will annex some more territory, will we then, by the same logic, have to be committed to the new territorial situation, when it will become as factual as the 1948 conquests are now?" Of course, at the time the supposition about the possibility of a war and annexation within a year seemed quite fantastic. I myself raised it in a purely hypothetical way. (I also reminded the delegates that in 1956-57 Avneri had been against Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip). But in fact, my prediction proved to be rather accurate. When the June war broke out, Avneri called at the top of his voice for an attack on Syria (in the beginning, you remember, Israel attacked only Egypt and Jordan). And shortly afterwards he voted in parliament for the annexation of East Jerusalem to Israel.

Q: So the 1967 war did not catch Matzpen unprepared?

A: Well, of course we did not know that such a war was coming. But politically we were prepared, in the sense that our political positions on Zionism, the Palestinian question, the Arab revolution etc. were already adequately formulated and internalised quite some time before the war, and therefore we did not have to grope for new analyses and positions after the war. You can see this from a document we wrote in the beginning of May 1967, before the beginning of the crisis that immediately preceded the war. We wrote this statement at the request of a friend, the Belgian Trotskyist Nathan Wein-

stock, who had been invited by the Arab students in Paris to speak at their Palestine Day meeting which was to take place on the 15th of May. We wanted to make the point that there is a revolutionary socialist (and ipso facto anti-Zionist) group inside Israel itself, so he asked us for a document he could read at the meeting. Basically the position stated there remains our position even now.

During the war we were isolated from each other, we could not meet. Practically all our Jewish members were in the army; they had been called up about two weeks before the war started. Some of the Arab members were interned, imprisoned by administrative order, without trial; and the others could not go out of their houses in that atmosphere of anti-Arab pogrom. Still, when we did finally meet, we found that on the whole (with very few exceptions) the comrades remained firm in our positions. And we could sit down immediately and write a statement about the war and its possible consequences. This was published under the title "The Third Round" in issue 36 of our paper, in July. In it we apply our old position and analysis to the new post-war situation.

Q: Can you perhaps summarise this document?

A: I'm afraid it is a bit too long. But it is a good document, in my view, and I'm sorry it has not been circulating more widely in foreign translation. We ourselves published it at the time in Hebrew and Arabic.

Q: Please tell me about your activity after the war.

A: Right after the war there was a big flux of Israelis going to tour the newly 'liberated' parts of their holy 'homeland'. This was before the start of real guerrilla activity. The Israelis used to come in great crowds, looking at everything with big eyes and buying up all the goods offered for sale in the oriental bazaars. Well, we too joined the crowds, merged with them, and distributed our material in Arabic. We had some very interesting conversations at the time. I do not remember the names of the people we talked with; you understand, we didn't ask their names for obvious reasons. After a while things tightened up and we had to stop these contacts; they became rather dangerous, especially for the Arabs.

At the same time we made many new Jewish contacts. You see, the war caused a great polarisation in Israel; the vast

majority moved far to the right, but just for that reason a small minority - one here, one there - who had genuine socialist principles and had kept their eyes open and their heads clear, felt the need to rally together. They found their way to us, either as actual members or as active supporters. So, while we became fantastically isolated (at least in the Jewish community) our influence actually increased. We had some very fruitful contacts with young people, mostly students, who came to Israel as volunteers or immigrants. Many of these people were left-wing, but in their countries or origin they had been hoodwinked by Zionist propagandists, who sell Zionism with red packaging. (You see, Zionist emissaries and propagandists are great experts in presenting Zionism painted in all kinds of political colours, according to the tastes of the consumer-victims). Well, some of these elements were quite shocked when they actually came to Israel and confronted its reality, which was rather different from what they'd been led to believe. We found them, they found us. From this work we found how important is the work of giving our anti-toxin to those young Jews who are infected with Zionist propaganda in various foreign countries. We learned to do this work rather well.

Q: Didn't you get many supporters among the Israeli Arabs?

A: Among the Israeli Arabs our situation is quite different than among the Jews; it is both easier and more difficult. Easier, because we are not isolated among them, they are willing to listen to us and are very interested in what we say. This is so, although the CP (Rakah) which has quite a lot of influence in this milieu, makes propaganda against us, sometimes not hesitating to use lies. But it is also more difficult, because the Israeli Arabs are subjected by the authorities to very harsh repression, much much harsher than Jews are subjected to. So for an Arab to become a member or active supporter of Matzpen requires much more courage and involves more hardship than for a Jew.

But to return to your previous question, I must stress that all this activity I was talking about was on a small scale, not public. We still remained rather inward-looking, although we had acquired new contacts both at home and abroad. We were still practically unknown to the public and very far from realising, in our activity, our full potentialities. Then

all this changed very abruptly, and our activity rose to a qualitatively higher level. Paradoxically, this was a result of persecution by the authorities. This happened in January '68.

Q: What happened?

A: Our comrade, Khahil Touama, was arrested and accused of harbouring a person from East Jerusalem, a certain Ahmed Khalifa. Khalifa was a left-wing intellectual, a member of the Qawmum Al-Arab. (From this group later came both the PFLP and the PDFLP). I think he was rather to the left within the Qawmum. Anyway, in Jordan he had been a highly 'undesirable' element; he was on Hussein's black list. Now, when the West Bank was conquered by Israel, the Jordanian black list fell (or, more probably was delivered) into the hands of the Israeli authorities. You know, it is the story of almost every occupation in history: all the scum, the police of the occupied people, with their spies and informers etc., change sides and start working for the new master. After all - what's the difference? Well, Khalifa became wanted by the Israeli Authorities, as a member of a 'hostile organisation'. This meant simply that he was regarded by them as a criminal because of his politics (it was never proved, or even alleged, that he had taken part in armed struggle). Our comrades met Khalifa and discussed with him; he is a sincere and intelligent man. Then he came and stayed with our comrade Touama, who was a law student in the University of Jerusalem, and was living in the Jewish part of the city. By the way, Khalil Touama was at the time the secretary of the union of Arab students in the university. After a while (if I remember correctly, on New Year's day, 1968) Khalifa was arrested, and shortly afterwards To'ama was arrested as well. (Later they were both given a prison sentence by a military court. Khalifa got 2 years for his political 'crimes'. After his release he went to one of the Arab countries. Touama got 18 months for harbouring such a dangerous 'criminal'; but half of his sentence was suspended. When he was released, he was confined - practically put under house arrest - in his village; this was by administrative order, without any trial. Later he went to Europe to study.)

When our comrade was arrested, we not only became well

known to the whole country; we also had to mobilise ourselves to his defence. I mean mainly political defence; and the best form of defence is attack. We made plenty of noise - small demonstrations, leaflets, press releases etc. At the same time we appealed to our friends abroad, to the international left, for solidarity. The response we got was fantastic. Various forms of protest were organised in many countries. This gave us a feeling of strength and courage, and also a feeling of obligation to live up to the solidarity we got.

We discovered a few things. First, we discovered that even a small group like us can have a big effect - far out of proportion to its actual size - if it mobilises itself properly. Since then, the average level of activity of our comrades is higher than that of any revolutionary group known to me, except groups engaged in armed struggle. (This does not mean to say that we work in a completely efficient way or that all our comrades have tapped all their potentialities; everything is relative). Secondly, we discovered how much the authorities and the mass media that fabricate public opinion for the authorities are frightened of people like us. An enormous campaign of vituperation started against us. We were attacked almost every day in the press etc., we became the embodiment of evil, the incarnation of the devil himself. The term Matzpen has come to mean in Israel the same kind of thing that 'communist' or 'red' meant in the USA in the mid-fifties. In many cases this leads us to be blamed for various things for which we really are not responsible. But in some sense this is as it should be: it is now firmly implanted in the public mind in Israel that we stand for the polar opposite of the existing order of things. On one side there is the Establishment, with all its overt and covert defenders and allies, all the forces of Zionism, chauvinism and social-patriotism; at the opposite end we stand. This is quite correct. For example, when the police wanted to prevent the first demonstration of the Israeli Black Panthers, they knew whom they had to arrest; the leaders of the Panthers - and our comrades. Of course, we didn't create the Panthers; they were created by poverty and discrimination. But the police knew that we would be active at the side of the Panthers right from the start.

Besides, until 1970 we were the only revolutionary socialist (and ipso facto anti-Zionist) group in Israel. Even now, when there are several such groups, all of these groups actually come from Matzpen, they were created as a result of splits in Matzpen.

Q: How did the splits come about?

A: Perhaps the question should be turned around: how did it come about that there was no split for 8 years? You see, from 1962 till 1970 Matzpen by itself was the whole of the revolutionary left in Israel; it occupied a place in the political spectrum, which in most countries is fragmented between many groups. In most countries you find several Maoist groups (I use this term to mean those that are actually Maoist); several Trotskoid groups; and several anarchoid groups (which may be further sub-divided into anarcho-Marxist and non-Marxist ones). This is a classification in terms of theory, of doctrine. Then there is another classification, in terms of organisational concept; it is related but not always identical with the doctrinal classification (eg, there are Maoists who are 'spontaneists' in their organisational concept). All these differences give rise to a plethora of revolutionary socialist groups.

We had several doctrinal tendencies represented within the one group, Matzpen. The prevailing one (at least until recently) was Trotskoid but not Trotskyist; in addition there were comrades who were actually Trotskyist (some adherents of the 4th International and others Lambertists) and there were comrades with Maoist views. We were of course quite aware of these differences, but we all accepted the over-riding need to try to work together in one group. The reasons for that were, first, the small size and extreme isolation of our forces; and second, the fact that in Israel all political life is dominated by one problem: Zionism and the Israeli-Arab conflict. If we could agree about our attitude to Zionism (and in fact we did agree) then we were able to work together, at least for a number of years.

As for questions of organisation, they did not loom large. For an isolated and rather persecuted group, the choice between a cadre-organisation and a more loose, mass organisation does not exist. Joining such a group almost automatically implies a rather high level of consciousness, commitment and activity; a person who does not have this level

or does not attain it rather quickly, would normally drop out anyway. Also, in a small group the internal organisational structure is not really problematic, especially if the personal relations between comrades are friendly. Problems of democracy, hierarchy, bureaucracy etc. don't arise naturally (though of course they can be raised artificially, in a doctrinaire way) in a group where members know each other well, work very hard together and can all meet quite often to discuss. All we needed was to elect a Centre (to run our affairs between general meetings), an editorial board for the paper, and a treasurer. Sometimes the Centre and the editorial board were identical. The composition of these bodies was changed quite often. In the beginning of 1964, when we adopted our short programmatic document (about which I have already told you), we also solemnly adopted a whole constitution, a set of organisational rules. This was written on a nice piece of paper and given to one of the comrades to keep. Well, for about 5 years nobody ever had any need to look again at that paper, and it got lost. Later, of course, organisational problems did come up, in connection with the internal factional struggle.

Q: You said that you had all understood that in the special circumstances of Israel there was a need for people of different socialist revolutionary tendencies to work together. In this case, why did the split occur?

A: This is a rather complicated question. There were many factors. For example, personal quarrels, which in a small group always acquire disproportionately great significance. Also, Matzpen was growing, new people joined and some of them did not internalise the tradition of mutual tolerance that the more veteran members had developed. But these factors are imponderable, and I find it difficult to analyse them in detail, especially since during the splits I was not in Israel but here in London. So let me concentrate on the political differences, which in any case were the dominant factor.

During 1970 it became clear that it was not enough to have a common position on the all-important question of Zionism; it is not enough to be anti-Zionist. What is needed was also a common strategic conception concerning the problems of Zionism, Israel and the Arab East. Here differences started to emerge.

A group of comrades adopted a Lambertist position (they were

led by a comrade who had recently joined Matzpen after returning from a stay in France, where he had been a member of Lambert's group). These comrades, while being of course totally opposed to Zionism, tended to minimise its unique specific characteristics. In particular, they tended to regard Israel as a more or less normal capitalist country. This meant that they did not accept Matzpen's analysis of Israeli society. Their strategic conclusion was that in Israel, just as in any normal capitalist country, a socialist revolution could develop out of the internal contradictions, out of the class struggle of the Israeli working class against Israeli capitalists - without this being necessarily dependent on the development of a revolutionary process in the Arab East. They therefore demanded that we concentrate practically all our activity in the industrial struggle of the Israeli working class. Now, from what I've told you before about the beginning of Matzpen you know that we were not against intervening in the industrial struggle, on the contrary. We put quite a lot of effort into this activity, not only in 1962-63, but also later, especially when the economic class struggle was in intensive phases (eg, during very recent years, when there has been a wave of unofficial strikes); and we have a very clear and very good programme in this sphere. But the Lambertists wanted much more: they dismissed all our political and propagandist activity (among secondary school students, our political demonstrations in Israel and our anti-Zionist propaganda abroad) as 'petit bourgeois'. They kept attacking the other comrades, trying to make fun of them in this superior tone that is typical of Lambertists. So a split became completely inevitable. It was both necessary (because of the clear strategic differences that had practical consequences) and not very damaging for Matzpen since the Lambertist group was small even relative to such a small organisation as Matzpen.

This split took place in the autumn of 1970 - in September, if I remember rightly. The Lambertists then started a group called 'Vanguard'. At exactly the same time, another small group split from us. This second group is now called Ma'avak ('Struggle'), and represented a sort of Maoist or 'third-worldist' position. This position, by the way, was almost the exact opposite of that of the Lambertists.

But it was not so coherently or clearly articulated, it was a bit more vague. Essentially, these people (who, by the way, were almost all relatively new members) tended to deny the possibility of any revolutionary work among the Israeli Jews. It seems to me that they did not believe that there was any revolutionary potential at all inside Israeli society. The majority of Matzpen members did not reach such extreme conclusions. We believe that, given a changed set of circumstances, and in particular revolutionary developments in the Arab countries, a revolutionary process might be triggered off inside Israel too.

In addition, those 'third-worldist' comrades tended to hold a 'two-stages' view of the Arab revolution; they envisaged a separate first stage - a 'national democratic' one. They tended to think of Arab petty-bourgeois nationalism as still having a revolutionary role to play. This was also contrary to the views of Matzpen. Finally, these comrades entertained rather exaggerated expectations about the Palestinian resistance movement, and even tended to some extent to tail behind its ideology. (The views of Matzpen on the ideology of the Palestinian movement were rather critical; they were expressed in an article by Said and myself written in 1969. This article was adopted as the official view of Matzpen). The practical conclusion of their view was that we should concentrate almost all our activity among the Israeli Arabs. The majority of our comrades were not, of course, against working in this area - in fact, Matzpen did quite a lot in this direction - but we never thought of our role as confined exclusively to this. So for this group too a split became inevitable.

Q: How did relations between Matzpen and these two groups develop after the split?

A: In Israeli conditions it would be mad, almost suicidal, for different left tendencies not to co-operate at all. Matzpen was always non-sectarian and was prepared to co-operate with any group on any issue on which a common position is possible. The Lambertists - everywhere, and also in Israel - tend to be very sectarian; but in Israel even they cannot avoid a minimal amount of collaboration. As for the other group, Ma'avak - their parting from Matzpen was not accompanied by such bitterness as in the case of the Lambertists. Also,

the theoretical and strategic arguments they had tried against us were more vague, not so sharply formulated. (A few minutes ago I tried to explain their positions to you - but these were my own formulations, not ones that they would necessarily use). Finally, it so happened that at about the time of the split, in September 1970, the Palestinian movement suffered a defeat, a very big one. I personally believe that in view of this defeat the positions that these comrades held at the time of the split became quite untenable, and to some extent they have come to realise this. For all these reasons, after a while relations between Matzpen and these comrades became not unfriendly. There is a greater degree of co-operation with them than with the Lambertists.

Q: Are you prepared to say something about the more recent split, which occurred in the beginning of this year? (1973, eds.)

A: This is a much more serious affair, much more damaging. I consider it as a bad split primarily because between the two groups that came out of this recent split there is no real difference on the most important strategic problems: those concerning Zionism, the Arab revolution etc. On these issues, which in my opinion are of supreme importance for us both of them have the same theoretical and strategic views. Also, this last split was not a case of a small splinter leaving the main group, but a split right down the middle, into virtually equal halves. Because of our small numerical force, this means that both groups are - at least for the time being - much less viable. In my personal opinion, this was a split on doctrinal and organisational questions that could have been avoided, at least for the time being. (I mean of course that the split could have been avoided, not the questions; these could continue to be discussed).

Q: What was the split about?

A: Well, in the last few years the two main branches of Matzpen gradually drifted apart. This became even more noticeable after the 1970 split. On the one hand, practically all the comrades in the Jerusalem branch became Trotskyists, adherents of the 4th International. On the other hand, in the Tel-Aviv branch a non-Leninist (and to a certain extent even anti-Leninist) tendency began to be noticeable. (A majority of the rather smaller Haifa branch is also 4th International). Most of these Trotskyists in Matzpen are new ones, whereas Said has been staying in Europe for the last couple of years.

Now between these two halves of the group there also grew up a feeling of mistrust, and even hostility, which created a sort of vicious circle. So long as the 4th International tendency in Matzpen had been represented mainly by Said, there were no real problems of 'dual loyalty'. Of course, he always wished that Matzpen, as a group, would adhere to the 4th International, but it was never felt that this aim - whose realisation would mean automatically a split - was for him a supreme one. He argued for his opinions, but did not act in a way that put his factional interests above those of the whole group and of the common cause. But after he had left for Europe it was felt that the new Trotskyists are more insistent, and behave in a more factional way. I have some tentative psychological explanations for this. First of all, these comrades were perhaps not quite sure of themselves as Trotskyists, and especially in view of the pressure from the Lambertists they felt the need to compete with the latter on the title of 'genuine Trotskyism'. I suppose that they felt obliged to prove to their Lambertist competitors that they were not making too many concessions on orthodox Trotskyism. Secondly, and for similar reasons, these new adherents of the 4th International were much more dependent on guidance from their international centre in Paris.

In any case, it seemed that these Trotskyist comrades in Jerusalem were giving a very high priority to the task of transforming Matzpen into an official or unofficial branch of the 4th International, even at the cost of having to push out some of the best comrades in the Tel-Aviv branch. These suspicions strengthened the anti-Leninist feeling, or bias, of some comrades in Tel-Aviv, who wanted more and more to regard every Leninist as a bureaucratic manipulator. This in turn, reinforced the wish of the Trotskyists to cleanse the organisation of these anti-Leninist elements. Soon a wall of mistrust grew between the two groups, and each of them was saying (and partly believing) that the other was planning to expel it.

Personally I think that this was basically what led to the split. Of course all this was accompanied by debates on theoretical and organisational questions. The Trotskyists drafted what they called a 'minimum' platform, and they demanded (almost

as an ultimatum) that Matzpen as a whole should adopt this document. In it were included some points which are specific theoretical positions of orthodox Trotskyism, and are not accepted even by the whole of the Trotskyist movement. On the other hand, some comrades in Tel-Aviv presented organisational demands that were excessively decentralistic. In my opinion all these are very interesting problems, but they need not have led to a split, and were actually raised in such an insistent way only because mutual trust and tolerance had been eroded. After all, we could work together for a few more years even if some of believe that in order to achieve socialism in the Soviet Union it is necessary to have there a social revolution, while others believe that only a political revolution is needed. As for the organisational questions, they seem to me a bit academic in the context of a small (and persecuted) group, where there is very little scope for both centralisation and decentralisation.

But perhaps I am naive. Still, I wish revolutionary socialists would not be quite so fanatic about the differences among them; I do not mean that these differences are unimportant and should be blurred, but it seems to me that very often they are inflated beyond all proportion.

SECTION NINE:

POSSIBILITIES FOR A JOINT PALESTINIAN- ARAB AND ISRAELI-JEWISH STRUGGLE

Introduction

This section consists of four short contributions based on a panel discussion at the December 1974 conference held by the Richardson Institute in London. Each of the participants was asked to outline briefly what they, as political activists, considered to be the key problems, as well as the possibilities, which were raised by the issue of active political co-operation between Israeli-Jews and Palestinian-Arabs. Dr. Ghada Karmi, the first of the speakers, noted that the time available for presentation was simply too short for a proper exegesis of what was not only a very complicated issue but also one which was extremely sensitive. Dr. Karmi's caveat is important since the presentations (which have been transcribed and printed here) of necessity ignore the many nuances and subtleties with which the speakers, had they had more time, would doubtless have wished to qualify their arguments. However, being forced to ignore complexities has one advantage - that of demonstrating clearly how different tendencies in the anti-Zionist movement (Arabs and Jews) see the nature of the problem of joint struggle and precisely what they see as the key issue.

Ghada Karmi puts the case strongly for the PLO 'democratic secular state' solution as the basis for a strategy of joint struggle. She argues that the 'democratic secular state' objective represents a genuine goal and not merely a slogan. Nira Yuval-Davis starts from a very different position - that of an Israeli-Jewish socialist and internationalist. In dealing with the issue of joint struggle she asks under what conditions Israeli Jews can embrace a joint struggle with the Palestinian-Arabs. She reviews and rejects a number of possible leftist approaches to the problem of joint struggle and points in particular to the difficulties raised by the Palestinian resort to indiscriminate terrorism. Finally, she gives her own views on the necessary prerequisites for a principled, but critical, collaboration in joint struggle between Israeli revolutionaries and Palestinians. Khalil Touama's contribution points out various difficulties facing the Palestinians in contradistinction to other Third World liberation movements. These

differences he argues make a joint struggle between Israelis and Palestinians not only desirable but essential. However the struggle should not be seen in purely nationalist or local terms but rather in relation to a revolutionary struggle in the Mashreq (Middle East) as a whole. Finally Akivah Orr, argues that the conflict in Palestine is essentially one between two political systems and not one between peoples. This conflict will simply change in form and not in substance if Jewish domination of Arabs through the exclusivist Zionist state is replaced by an Arab state based on similarly exclusivist principles. The goal argues Orr must be a multi-national political entity in Palestine. Such a goal in the current context may appear 'unrealistic' but the so-called 'realists' of the present either have no vision for the future or one based on ideas of a nationalism which incorporates discrimination.

Following these four short contributions is a brief synopsis of some of the main points which arose in the discussion following the panel presentations at the conference.

Dr. Ghada Karmi: When we speak about the possibilities of joint Palestinian-Israeli struggle and its place in the solution of the Palestine/Israel problem, we should in my view speak about such a struggle in the context of the 'Secular Democratic State' idea. In brief, this means the establishment in the whole of Palestine/Israel of a state for Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews, in which both communities may live in amity, without discrimination of any kind. Naturally, the first step towards making this a reality will be the dismantling of the Zionist character of the present state of Israel. The secular democratic state idea - in my view, the most interesting and progressive to emerge from the region for a very long time - was first propounded by the Palestine resistance movement (Al Fatah to be exact) as long ago as 1967, when the movement was very young. Later, other guerilla groups took it up. And since that time, there has been a very active, continuous, and serious discussion about the new state. Hitherto, it has most frequently been characterised as being 'secular' and 'democratic', and further definition has not been completely agreed. For instance: should the new state be socialist? Should it be part of a pan-socialist movement in the Arab world, of which it is the vanguard? Or Should it be an Arab state, part of the larger Arab world, with a Jewish component? But though such matters await further definition, what should concern us here is the fact of the basic idea itself. Though the Zionists and their sympathisers have seen the proposal primarily as a slogan designed to fool the Israeli masses into a false sense of

security, the Palestinian resistance movement has nevertheless taken it very seriously as the only possible solution for the future of the area. To demonstrate the continuity of discussion of this idea in the movement, I would like to quote a few passages from pronouncements that different sections of the PLO have made at different times:

In 1969, the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine had this to say: "The struggle for a democratic popular solution of the Palestine question and the Israel question is based on the elimination of the Zionist entity ... and is based on the establishment of a democratic, popular Palestinian state in which Arabs and Jews will live without discrimination: a state opposed to all forms of class and national suppression, conferring the right on both Arabs and Jews to develop their own national culture."

In 1969, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, also joined Al Fatah in declaring that the goal of the revolution should be the creation of a unitary, secular, democratic state in Palestine. This goal was officially adopted by the seventh session of the Palestine National Assembly in June, 1970: "The objective of the Palestine struggle is the liberation of Palestine in its entirety, for the coexistence inside it of all citizens, with equal rights and obligations, within the hopes of the Arab nation for unity and progress".

Today, this is the official policy of the PLO, and Yassir Arafat in his address to the UN General Assembly in November, 1974, put it in this way: "In my formal capacity as Chairman of the PLO and Leader of the Palestinian Revolution, I proclaim before you that when we speak of our common hopes for the Palestine of tomorrow, we include in our perspective all Jews now living in Palestine who choose to live there in peace and without discrimination".

There are many other pronouncements on this subject that I could quote, but time does not permit. Suffice it to say, that we are not dealing with slogan but a serious idea and a serious aim. Whether it can be realised will depend on many factors, and not the least of them will be joint struggle of the Palestinian Arabs and those among the Israeli Jews who will work and fight to overthrow Zionism and then to build the new state in which they and the Palestinian Arabs shall live in peace and friendship. And to this end, the words of Yassir Arafat should be carefully listened to and taken seriously by all right thinking people. For, I think it needs to be emphasised that in putting forward the secular democratic state idea, the Palestine resistance movement is making a profound concession to the Israeli presence in Palestine. I feel it necessary to point this out, because even among those who are friendly and sympathetic towards the Palestinians there are some who do not understand that

Palestinian willingness to accept the Israeli presence in Palestine - to try and live with it, to learn its language, to give it equal rights, is a highly significant concession. As a matter of fact, any friendly gesture towards that Israeli presence is a concession on the part of the Palestinians. Nor is it only Zionists who fear and dislike the idea of the democratic state; it should not surprise you to learn that many Palestinians, and particularly those of our parents' generation, view with grave misgivings the prospect of taking to their bosoms those same people, or their offspring, who were the cause of their dispersion and dispossession. No one can possibly pretend that the situation will not be charged with difficulties. Nevertheless, the Palestine resistance movement has persisted in putting forward this solution, despite the difficulties, and has tried to educate the young generation to look to the future, and not to the past. And I think that it is in this context, and bearing in mind all these aspects of the situation, that we should assess the value and the validity of the secular democratic state solution. It is my fervent belief that it is the only possible goal to aim for, and it is for that that we Palestinians and Israelis should strive together.

Nira Yuval-Davis: In a conflict in which the issues are seen almost exclusively in national and colonial terms the difficulties posed by the problems of joint Palestinian-Arab/Israeli-Jewish struggle are almost too obvious to require recitation. Yet a 'resolution' of the conflict which does not embrace the possibilities of such co-operation is meaningless from any radical viewpoint.

Since the problems of joint cooperation from the Palestinian point of view have been discussed by the Palestinians on this panel - and the particular problem of a West Bank Palestinian state is being dealt with by another panel - I will restrict my discussion to the implications which the problem of joint struggle poses for the Israeli-Jewish Left today.

'Joint Struggle' is in itself an ambiguous term. It raises not only the question of the aims of the struggle in the short, medium and long term but also of its nature. Joint struggle against a common enemy, for example, may be very different from joint struggle for a common political goal. People may share a common hostility towards a particular social-political institution for very different reasons.

From my own perspective the long-term aims of the struggle are clear. As an Israeli-Jew I belong to a persecuted people which has itself turned persecutor. As such I - and this applies to the Israeli Left in

general - am particularly sensitive to the double-edged sword of attempting to transform the social order in the Middle East and doing so in such a way that the ending of Jewish domination over Arabs will not be replaced by the emergence of Arab domination over Jews, but rather by a situation in which the Arab and Jewish communities can co-exist without exclusivity, domination or privilege on either side.

In the current situation such a conception undoubtedly sounds utopian. In Israel, Palestinians endure systematic economic, social and political discrimination. Any attempt at political organization is repressed, political leaders are arrested, tortured or thrown out of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Some Israelis do seem ready to recognize the PLO and are willing to discuss the idea of a West Bank state. But they do so largely because they believe that the existence of such a state will buy off Palestinian nationalist aspirations, thus bringing a degree of political stability to the area with a consequent lowering of Israeli defence costs. The '73 war did nothing to challenge the key assumptions of Zionist ideology, despite a wave of fashionable self-criticism, and any coherent political line which has been adopted since then continues to push Israel towards a more sharply defined Rightist stance. Only a tiny and powerless, anti-Zionist Israeli-Left has continued to hold to a consistent position which does not assume some form of Zionist superiority in future relationships between Jews and Arabs in the area.

The situation on the Arab and Palestinian side is no less difficult. The Israeli Left cannot even ally itself completely with the small political Palestinian organisations which explicitly define themselves as socialist-revolutionaries and anti-nationalists. (This excludes, of course, the many Israeli-Arabs who have been the firm allies of the Israeli-Left all these years). Israeli Leftists cannot ally themselves with these organisations since, despite their socialist ideology, even they share with the mainstream of nationalist resistance a common means of struggle, namely the resort to indiscriminate terrorism.

There is an inherent connection between means and ends. Use of indiscriminate terror implies that all the Israeli-Jews are legitimate targets, and that Palestinians who resort to these means attribute to all Israeli-Jews the collective guilt of dispossessing the Palestinians and occupying their land. Such approach tends to solidify the enemy, identifying the masses with the policy-makers. It does not reconcile with an analysis which differentiates between different strata and classes in the society, and which relies upon being able to widen the contradictions within the system in order to revolutionise Israel and

transform Israelis into future allies.

For outsiders to the conflict, for whom the critical issue is who is being oppressed today, and not who may possibly be repressed tomorrow, these concerns may seem somewhat academic. Nor are outsiders concerned to the same degree with the problems of indiscriminate terrorism, which might seem to them as the only way open for the oppressed to struggle for their liberation. But Israeli revolutionaries cannot take such a position. To them the arguments are not academic.

The dilemma of Israel's anti-Zionist Left is in no sense unique, it is the same dilemma that revolutionaries within the ruling community in all settler states experience - with the critical difference that there is no 'metropolis' in the case of Israel to which a retreat is possible. In extremis flight may be possible for the rich, but it is certainly not possible for the majority, which is why in the last analysis co-existence is essential and why, in the present context, terrorism (quite apart from the ethical considerations) erects ever more formidable barriers to progress.

As a sociologist I am of course aware of the connection between the marginal position of Israel's revolutionary Left and its insistence on universalistic rather than narrowly nationalistic means and aims of struggle. But awareness of the social origins of a particular ideological position in no sense undermines its intrinsic truth. It seems to me that once we do relate to social reality in terms of struggle for liberation, justice and equality - no other claims but universalistic ones can be of long-term value.

But the argument is not merely one of desirable long term goals. The Palestinian struggle would stand a much greater chance of success if the Israelis could not claim with some credibility that for Israel: 'there is no other alternative' to warfare. The Israeli Left's struggle for political revolution within Israel would also stand a chance of making a further progress if the class contradictions within Israeli society were not constantly obscured and transcended by the 'national unity' which is cemented more firmly by every act of indiscriminate terrorism.

Having said that I should hasten to add that I believe that the current possibilities for a universalist - ie non-national struggle between Jews and Arabs against Jewish, Arab and superpower exploitation are extraordinarily limited. This pessimism is shared - to a greater or lesser degree - by most elements of Israeli Left today.

Given such a situation, what prescriptions for political action emerge? It seems to me that four possible courses of action are open to the Israeli Left, in what pertains to their relationship with the

Palestinians today.

The first barely deserves to be called Leftist at all but has the support of many Israelis who do so describe themselves. From this perspective, barriers to progress are located exclusively or primarily on the Arab side. As long as the Arabs continue to pose a threat to the survival of the Israeli state - there can be no compromise. Over time and faced with continual military defeats the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular will, it is argued, come to realise that the state of Israel is here to stay. Once this realisation is gained, and only then, will it be possible to be politically and economically 'generous'. Until such a time it will be necessary to resort to military force and other admittedly unpleasant forms of repression, but the moral responsibility in this situation rests with the Arabs as a consequence of their refusal to recognize the right of Israel to exist.

It hardly needs pointing out that such a position cannot be held by those who define themselves as socialist revolutionaries. Furthermore, the sad but ironical aspect of the matter is, of course, that given the long term constellation of power in the area, this insistence on a 'fortress state' is the one sure way for the Jews in the Middle East to undergo a catastrophe in the future.

The second alternative is a prescription for inaction rather than action. As long as the Palestinians do not adopt a genuinely revolutionary programme which, despite the window dressing of 'democratic secular state' remains wedded to the idea of a state which is nationalist rather than socialist; as long as they continue to use indiscriminate terrorism against our people - then one should not come out publicly against Israel or the Zionist establishment. To do so would be objectively to ally oneself with the present Palestinian policy. Faced with such a dilemma, withdrawal into political paralysis may seem a relevant option. But this ignores the fact by not fighting now against Israeli oppression, from fear of similar policies should the Palestinians come into power, one passively helps to preserve the current situation. And in the current situation there is no symmetry. The Zionist state is the oppressor - the Palestinians are the oppressed. Should the Palestinians come to power it is very probable that the situation would be reversed. I have personally heard a Palestinian, an ex-Israeli Arab, tell another Israeli Arab - a friend who shares our political position - that should the Palestinians achieve power, he would take care that our friend (if he continued his radical political activities) would be thrown into the jail which both men had occupied under the Zionist regime. The common fate of continuing persecutions of the Palestinians

Communists in the West Bank under British, Jordanian and Israeli rule is well known. But the fact that one may face new forms of repression in the future is surely no argument against fighting the grim repressions of the present.

A third possible course of action open to Israeli Leftists is to totally internalize the nationalist Palestinian position and analysis - to side with the Palestinians 'right or wrong'. This would mean agreeing with a position which essentially claims that the country should return to the exclusive rule of the Palestinians and that the only positive contribution Israeli Leftists can make in this context is to help the Palestinians to destroy Israeli-Jewish society (as against transforming it). This is a self-destructive position. It does not relate to the Israeli-Jewish reality which has been created in the area in the last thirty years nor to the fact that the Jewish settlers in the Middle East have no metropolis to return to, even if one thought in such terms. I am glad to say that till now only a couple of the Red Front organization members might seem to have been convinced by such a position.

Finally there is the course of action which the anti-Zionist Left in Israel has - internal differences and disagreements notwithstanding - in fact attempted to follow. It is not an easy path and is unlikely to gain many adherents for this reason. It involves a continuing struggle against Zionist policy and ideology. It also involves co-operation with the Palestinian Left, but in a very limited and critical way. This co-operation involves, on the one hand, common protest against Israeli policies, and on the other hand, common political and analytical arguments and discussions.

The dilemma of co-operating with Palestinians given their present political positions is very complex. Without common activity with the Palestinians there can be no hope of arriving at a common analysis. With no common analysis there can be no hope for real co-operation and co-existence. When there is a gap between tactics of action and ideological analysis, as seems to be the case with several Palestinian groups - then the analysis - even if it is the right one becomes invalidated.

It is, I admit, a magic circle. Almost a vicious one. The contradictions which are involved obviously do not help the issue of joint Israeli-Jewish and Palestinian Arab struggle to become a popular one. The weaknesses of the Israeli Left's position are starkly obvious. The alternatives to this position are not at all obvious. But I believe that only if such a position continues to be present in the Middle East - despite all the difficulties - will there be some hope for a just and stable solution.

Khalil Touama: I think there are many questions which are more important than that of the possibility of a joint struggle of Palestinian-Arabs/Israeli-Jewish struggle. To deal with the question of joint struggle is the task of this panel. But by merely expressing our hopes, showing good will and referring to examples from the past, we shall not be able to make any progress.

The questions I have in mind are for example: Who needs a joint struggle in the Arab East (Mashreq)? The Palestinians? The Jews of Israel? Those of us here in London? In other words, why seek a joint struggle? Secondly, with whom are we ready and able to participate with in such a struggle - with which forces, groups or classes? What do we really want to achieve? I do not think one can discuss all of these problems in the time available but I hope the discussion that will follow will clarify some of these questions.

It is very easy to say that because I define myself as a revolutionary internationalist, a joint struggle involving different national elites, is for me a fundamental and essential issue. Although this is true, it is not reason enough and it does not make the realisation of such a struggle possible. Of course, in dealing with this issue I cannot be objective because I have a certain interest in the developments in the Arab East and in the world and because I am involved politically and ideologically, on one side in the conflicts in the Mashreq region.

What are the challenges we face and what are the problems or conflicts we have to solve? It is true that the Palestinian people are both the direct and principal victims of Zionism, but they were and still are also the victims of the whole political situation in the Arab world. In other words, the situation in the Arab world has played a decisive role (at least passively) in creating the Palestinian tragedy. In addition, we can now see that the Israelis themselves are also victims of Zionist ideology and practice. Zionism, which was seen by its founders as the solution to the Jewish problem, did not solve any problem but rather created new problems and new dangers. It is no secret that the situation of the Jews in Israel is worse than that of Jews in any other Jewish community in the world. This is very important. The Palestinians have an immediate interest in defeating Zionism. The Israeli Jews must also have, potentially, an interest in defeating Zionism. If one could make this clear, or if it became clearer to the Israeli Jews themselves then one could hope to neutralize the hostility of wide sectors of the Israeli masses or maybe even win them to the same struggle. But in order to achieve this one has to offer those masses a 'substitute' to Zionism which,

as they understand it, is the only guarantee of their continued existence.

But do the Palestinians need such 'co-operation' or such 'neutrality'? It seems to me that without it, it would be impossible to defeat Zionism. One of the main differences between the Palestinian resistance and other liberation movements in the so-called 'Third World' is that these movements operate politically and militarily from within a sympathetic population and aim either to expell the troops of foreign occupation or to bring about the fall of their own reactionary regimes. Such movements have the support of wide sectors of the masses. The situation in Palestine is completely different. The Palestinian resistance has to operate from outside the borders of Israel and has to fight even for the right to do that. Even in the areas populated by Arabs (the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Galilee etc.) attempts to mobilise the masses have not been successful for a number of reasons. In addition, the Palestinians are not faced with occupation troops. Zionism has succeeded to some extent in creating a new society with its class structure and its own national characteristics.

The PLO is still talking in liberal democratic terms. Its attitude towards the Israeli Jews can be summarised as follows: The Israeli Jews differ from the Palestinian Arabs only in their religion and place of birth or nationality and so forth. It is my opinion that in order to solve the Palestinian problem, which has more than a national aspect, one cannot limit the struggle solely to the Palestinian Arabs and the Israeli Jews. This means that the struggle cannot be limited to the borders of Palestine. The social, cultural as well as the national problems in the Arab East have to be seen within the framework of the Mashreq. The Palestinian national problem cannot be solved in purely national terms because its solution cannot be separated from the other problems in this region. It must be sought within a Socialist framework, by a common struggle of the oppressed classes and strata of the entire region (including Israel). In the last analysis it is these classes which have a real common interest in the success of such a common struggle.

Akivah Orr: Let me start by noting that the views which I express here are my personal views and do not represent those of the organisations of which I am a member. I am speaking as a free agent, relieving all the organisations of which I am a member from any responsibility for what

I say. The first thing I want to say is that the appearance of the Chairman of the PLO at the United Nations has created a political fact. Anyone who deals with the Palestine problem must take that fact into account, namely, that from now on the Palestinian people are a political entity and not just a bunch of refugees, not just expropriated people. Whether we like it, or whether we don't, doesn't matter very much, the Palestinians are now a political entity, and it doesn't matter whether fifty years or a hundred years ago they were not such an entity. However, the 'Palestine Problem' is generated by another political problem in Palestine, namely that posed by the Israeli Jews. The question is, how is the conflict between these two political entities to be resolved. That is the way the problem is posed. It is not a question of hatred between Jew and Arab, Moslem and Jew. There is a conflict between these two peoples as political entities, not as religious entities or as individual human beings. And here we face the fact that for the Zionist establishment in Israel the proposal of creating a multi-national state in Palestine is equated with the destruction of the State of Israel. Most people mean by 'destruction', physical destruction, yet the issue is not physical destruction, but the destruction of the political system which has nothing to do with the physical destruction of property or lives. The problem is one of political entities. The political system that exists in Israel today is based on discrimination. Thus if I am asked: "Are you for the preservation or the destruction of that system?" my answer is that I am for the destruction of that system. The question then, is what alternative political system do we want to put forward. For if we get rid of one political system we are still left with the problem of alternatives. Now my view with respect to this is simple. I want to see a multi-national system. How this has to be created will depend very much on the specific circumstances, on history, on many concrete factors. But the question remains. Do you want two separate political systems or a single state which has overcome national discrimination? I want a single state which has transcended national discrimination. It is not a question of transcending national identity, people can retain their national identity, but rather whether that national identity will be embodied in the political system such that rights granted to one nationality, are denied to the other, that is the problem. I want to see a political system in which national groups, although they maintain their identity, have no rights which are denied to others. How this is going to be achieved is a different question. Once this goal is articulated there will be people opposed to it and there will also be people who support it. Then the question of joint struggle emerges. If there

are people on both sides who support the goal I have described then they struggle together. People talk about 'joint struggle' yet whether the struggle is joint or separate is an issue subordinated to the aim of the struggle itself.

Obviously the question of which political entity will emerge in Palestine is related to other problems. World politics, imperialism, intervention of great powers, what happens in the rest of the Middle East, in the Arab East and so forth. We know that there is the problem of social change; of revolution in the rest of the Arab world; there is the problem of super power intervention; but even in this wider context there will always remain the issue of the nature of the political system in Palestine itself, or, if you prefer, this local appendix of the larger problems. I say larger problems, because in my view social change in the Arab East will determine events in Palestine to a greater extent than internal developments in Palestine itself will do. Granted all this, there will still be the problem of resolving the political conflict in Palestine. Therefore, whether the context is the entire Mashreq or Palestine alone (which may be later integrated into the Mashreq) the basic question remains: a political system based on national identity, or a system which transcends national identities and is a multi-national political system. I am for a multi-national political system. Some people say: "This is all very well, it even makes sense. But it is not practical, because look at what is happening now, look at what is happening in the area, you can't ignore the history of the place and people who feel that their survival is threatened. (By 'survival' they mean survival as a political entity based on national discrimination). It is argued that when you have people dominated so much by this survival complex and by the history of the past few years, then to talk of multi-national political systems is neither practical, nor realistic. I am willing to grant this, I am not a fetishist of existing political realities. In politics, particularly in revolutionary politics, there are two different realms. On the one hand you have to be practical, you have to deal with human beings and with the political problems of human beings as they are here and now, and this is what most political people do. However, in revolutionary politics, there is always the element of a vision of another solution to the political problem. Thus there is a place for those who are not practical, there is a role to be played by such visionaries. Everything that is a practicality and reality today, was once just a vision. You must uphold another vision, another dream if you want another reality. Whether this dream becomes

reality or not is another matter. A lot of dreams never became a reality, but every reality that exists now was once a vision, was once a dream. I belong to this handful of people who say: practicalities granted, let us not ignore them, but let us also have a vision of another reality, which may not be practical today but is not totally divorced from reality, and may itself become a reality tomorrow. My vision is of a multi-national political system. The reality which the other vision - that of political self-determination based on nationality - has created is a sufficient reason for daring to uphold an alternative vision. As for the so-called 'realists' or 'practically minded' politicians, they have either no vision at all, and merely worship accomplished facts, or else, they subconsciously accept the vision of self-determination based on national identity ie on discrimination. It is time people became more aware of their deeper motives in this matter.

Discussion

Members of the panel and most of the audience shared certain common assumptions - namely a broad support for the Palestinian cause, a socialist perspective, opposition to Zionism and a recognition of the right of Israeli Jews to participate equally in a future socialist society in the region. A minority view, articulated by a few socialist Zionists, claimed that a necessary condition for the peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict was the acceptance by Palestinians of the legitimacy of a Zionist state, and the acceptance by Israelis of the legitimacy of a Palestinian state established on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Most participants however, rejected this position.

As a consequence of the broad socialist and anti-Zionist sentiments shared by a majority of participants, discussion tended to concentrate on differences which arise within this common framework. This provided a marked contrast to most public dialogues on this issue where the critical disagreements have been between those who support, and those who oppose, Zionism. In such a context differences between the anti-Zionist Israeli Left and the Palestinian Left do not get articulated for obvious reasons.

Part of the discussion dealt with examples of past co-operation between Jews and Arabs both in Israel and the Arab countries. However in view of the different perceptions of key issues and some mutual suspicion, even among people who shared certain broad assumptions, it was felt that further clarification was necessary with respect to both

the goals of a common struggle and the means to achieving those goals.

In the discussion which followed the second panel devoted to the question of a separate Palestinian West Bank state (which was seen by those advocating it primarily as a tactical aim or 'interim stage' in a broader struggle) both the Israeli Left and the Palestinian Left were divided among themselves. By contrast in the discussion following this panel the division was primarily between Israelis (both Jews and Arabs) on the one hand and the non-Israeli Palestinians on the other.

Not surprisingly perhaps, many anti-Zionist Israeli Jews and Arabs emphasised a socialist supra-nationalist perspective when discussing joint struggle. The Palestinians on the other hand were more concerned with the concrete issue of national liberation from Israeli rule and tended to see joint struggle in terms of that objective. Some of the anti-Zionist Israeli socialists maintained that a similarly socialist ideology on the Palestinian side was a necessary precondition for joint struggle. Others, while emphasising the importance of an internationalist socialist perspective did not see this as a prerequisite for joint struggle. The latter argued that they would always support the oppressed in their struggle for liberation but this did not imply that they could not criticise Palestinian strategy or tactics if these seemed to conflict with socialist values.

Doubts were also expressed by some Israelis that Palestinian nationalism, even if it defined itself as socialist, would lead to anything more than had been achieved by Zionist 'socialism' when the Zionists achieved state power. 'Socialist Zionists' had promised socialism but this did not prevent them from collaborating with Zionist policies of repression of the native Palestinian people. However, if the issue of long term Palestinian goals was contentious, the issue of indiscriminate terrorism was even more so. A number of Israelis condemned indiscriminate terror tactics - the Ma'alot massacre was frequently brought forward as an example - while some Palestinians demanded that Israeli Leftists should concentrate rather on condemning Israeli Air Force terrorist activities against Lebanese refugee camps. The Israelis replied that it was outrageous in a discussion among socialists and revolutionaries examining possibilities for improving and facilitating joint struggle, that Palestinian colleagues should attempt to stifle critical contributions of the anti-Zionist Israeli Left by demanding that condemnation of terrorism be restricted to Israeli military actions against the Palestinians.

The contradiction which some Israeli Leftists had argued existed between the use of indiscriminate terror and socialist objectives, arose because terror tactics increased Israeli-Jewish solidarity with the Zionist state rather than decreasing it. The Zionist state was thus strengthened politically without being significantly weakened militarily.

In contrast to the Israeli emphasis on class, many Palestinians argued that the key factor was Israel's role as an expansionist, colonial, settler state. In the confrontation with the Arabs, class in Israel was of relatively little significance - what counted was the role of Israel as a settler state and of Israelis (with a tiny minority of dissenters) as a settler or 'colon' class. Confronted with such an opponent and with peaceful avenues to change consistently repressed, Palestinian guerrilla tactics were justified on a socialist basis. However, as an Englishman in the audience noted this latter position posed very obvious difficulties for joint struggle. Guerrilla terrorism might have a logic of its own which was consistent and even strategically rational from a particular political viewpoint, but in the context of the current conflict this logic was at odds with the demands of joint political struggle. Indiscriminate terrorism polarised precisely those groups that a strategy of joint struggle should attempt to unite on a class basis.

SECTION TEN:

A WEST BANK STATE ?

Introduction

This section deals with the controversial issue of the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. With the exception of a few Israeli 'doves' who see such a statelet as a device to buy off Palestinian political aspirations, most Israeli Jews oppose the idea of creating a Palestinian state under the authority of the PLO. Internationally the idea has more support - tacit as much as overt - but for essentially the same reasons as those articulated by Israeli doves. However the contributors to this section are concerned to argue the merits or otherwise of a West Bank state from a different perspective - that of revolutionary socialism.

In the first contribution to the panel discussion Hussein Agha outlines the various arguments which have been advanced by different elements of the Palestinian resistance both for and against a West Bank state. He concludes by suggesting that these arguments miss the point unless they are advanced in the context of wider revolutionary socialist objectives.

Uri Davis, from a somewhat different perspective, argues that the issue must be examined in its concrete context. He suggests that the establishment of such a state is impossible without another war in the Middle East. The issue of the desirability of such a state must be considered in the light of the broader consequences such a war will have on the region.

Mustapha Karkuti in contrast, articulates a pro-West Bank state position. He argues that the various criticisms of the proposed state are irrelevant - the territory is Palestinian whether or not some elements consider it politically and economically unviable in the short term. The proposed state, argues Karkuti, is not an end in itself but an interim stage in the broader struggle for the liberation of Palestine. Eli Lobel addresses himself to the question of whether

or not the proposed state should be supported by socialist internationalists. Lobel argues that in terms of the principle of the right of national self-determination, the establishment of the state should be supported even if it does not lead to a broader socialist struggle for the liberation of the whole Arab East. The principle of national self-determination is not an absolute principle. It holds only if the self-determination of one people does not impinge on the rights of self-determination of another. In the context of the proposed West Bank state this is clearly the case.

To conclude this section there is a summary of some of the key points which arose in the discussion following the panel presentations at the conference.

Hussein Agha: It seems to me that much of the discussion about the possibilities of a West Bank state lies more in the realm of metaphysics than reality. However since all the parties to the conflict are discussing these possibilities it would be foolish to attempt to evade the issues which are raised.

Part of the problem lies in the fact that the very concept of a West Bank entity is ambiguous. There is for example a key difference between the establishment of a 'national authority' and the establishment of a state. The former - meaning the exercise of self-rule over liberated areas - does not imply the latter with all its implications of state bureaucracies and so forth. It must be noted here that National Authority in itself is not an adequate translation of Sulta Watania which means the authority of patriots, Watani means patriot in a progressive sense, rather than merely the authority of any members of the Nation. The Palestinian Resistance will not consider the rule of the reactionary West Bank notables over an independent West Bank entity as an exercise of national authority.

While there is unanimity among the Palestinians about the desirability of a Palestinian National Authority being established over any liberated land, questions arise as to the nature of the political entity which is to be created. There is no consensus that it should be a state. But if this entity is to be a state - then one has to consider seriously whether the creation of a West Bank state would be a positive step - an interim stage - towards the goal of a democratic secular state in the whole of Palestine or merely a substitute for this struggle? How is such a goal to be achieved? What relationships would the proposed state have with other states in the area and with the super powers? What would relationships between Palestinians and anti-Zionist Jews be in such a context?

Again if a state is to be established it is not clear whether it will be a Palestinian Nationalist State, or a Secular Democratic State including Jews, which will constitute the larger proposed State. If it is a purely Palestinian State, then it will be accused of Palestinian Zionism. This would make it nonsensical to fight for a secular democratic state in the whole of Palestine.

These are some of the questions which immediately arise when the issue of a West Bank state is brought up. Below are sketched out - as a series of points rather than fully coherent expositions - the arguments both for and against the establishment of a West Bank state. Finally I deal with the question of whether or not these arguments are in fact germane to the key issues which confront the Palestinians at this stage.

Before outlining the pro and anti-state argument it might be useful to point out that in general the proponents of the West Bank State idea address themselves primarily to the type of state the Palestinians would like to achieve as a result of their struggle for self-determination. The arguments against such a state are oriented towards the type of state which, in the opinion of the critics, would in fact result from participation in current negotiations.

Arguments for a West Bank State

The idea of a West Bank state was first seriously discussed in the aftermath of the October War of 1973. In the context of the existing balance of power it was argued that there was no other alternative open to the Palestinians. This belief was influenced by the following arguments:

- (a) after the war the Resistance could no longer claim to be the only fighting force among the Arabs;
- (b) the Arab regimes were stronger than previously and there existed a negative correlation between the strength of these regimes and the ability of the Resistance to manipulate the situation to its advantage;
- (c) the Resistance was afraid of being isolated from the regimes which accepted the peace formula emerging from Geneva and was worried about the possibility of splits emerging within the Resistance;
- (d) if peace came without a West Bank entity as a consequence, then the Resistance risked being eliminated by Arab governments - primarily in the Lebanon;
- (e) the Resistance realised that the strategy of armed struggle as such did not prepare it to deal with the new situation.

However in the period which has followed the October war it seems that the balance of power is now more favourable to the Palestinians. Those who support the idea of a West Bank state now argue that this goal can be achieved as a consequence of the struggle by the Palestinians and not because the only alternative to acceptance would have been the physical elimination of the Resistance.

It is also argued that a Palestinian state under the direction of the Resistance would block any attempt by either the Hashemite regime in Jordan or the West Bank 'notables' and traditional politicians to represent the Palestinians - either separately or in collusion.

The strategic and ideological arguments which have been advanced in favour of the West Bank State idea include the following:

- (a) such a state is the maximum that can be achieved by the Resistance in the current context;
- (b) it provides the Palestinians for the first time with the secure physical base which they have long sought in order to continue the struggle against Israel;
- (c) the state will create a wedge between Israel and Jordan;
- (d) it is the first step towards the overthrow of the Hussein regime and the unification of the two banks of the Jordan.

In addition to these arguments are various tactical considerations:

- (a) if Israel rejects the establishment of a Palestinian state then the demand by the Resistance for such a state will sabotage any attempts at a peace settlement which might exclude the Palestinians;
- (b) if a peace agreement is not likely to be reached then the fact that the Resistance has not opposed the idea of a West Bank state will mean that the Palestinians cannot be blamed by the Arab regimes for sabotaging the negotiations.

In the light of subsequent developments both these tactical considerations have proven to be correct. However, these tactical benefits do not reflect the strategic implications of the establishment of a West Bank state.

Arguments Against a West Bank State

In this section I will not be dealing with the type of state which the Resistance is striving to achieve, but rather the kind of state which the Palestinians are likely to have imposed on them from the outside.

The argument which claims that there is 'no alternative' to a West Bank state has been proven incorrect. Some elements of the Resistance presented a working alternative immediately after the

October War. This involved:

- (a) increasing the intensity and scope of resistance operations inside the occupied territories;
- (b) exposing the defeatist nature of any peace moves in the present context;
- (c) forming a front of all forces and groups which reject the Geneva Conference - this front is to be distinguished from those elements which reject the idea of the State per se;
- (d) preparing the masses in the Arab world to exert pressure on their governments - especially Syria and Egypt - to encourage tendencies which are anti-defeatist;
- (d) intensifying the struggle in Jordan in order to overthrow King Hussein and establish a National Front Government which would be ready to go to war against Israel.

Another set of arguments is directed against the nature of the proposed state that would result from negotiations with the Israelis:

- (a) by accepting the negotiations at this stage the Resistance would concede the legality of the exclusivist state of Israel, without receiving anything in return should the negotiations fail;
- (b) if the proposed state becomes a reality it would most probably be a de-militarised entity satisfying one basic condition - ie that it could never pose itself as a threat either politically or militarily to other states in the area - in particular Israel and Jordan;
- (c) far from being a secure base for the Resistance the existence of a Palestinian state would simplify the military problems which Israel and Jordan currently have to contend with by concentrating the Palestinians geographically;
- (d) politically the Palestinians would become constrained by the need for the new state to abide by International Law - currently the Resistance is not so constrained;
- (e) economically the new state would be dependent on Israel and Jordan and its primary role would be to act as a middle man for Israeli products designed for Arab markets. This in turn would limit the state's political independence - the economy becoming little more than a service economy;
- (f) the primary beneficiaries of the proposed state would be the Palestinian middle classes now living on the West Bank and abroad - in other words what benefits do exist would be cornered by those who need them least;

- (g) the state will have to attempt to survive between what, historically, have been, and are, the two bitterest enemies of the Palestinians - namely Israel and Jordan;
- (h) a state established under such conditions will not be liable to act as a fighting state in the forefront of the Palestinian struggle against Zionism, and will therefore fail to fulfill any of the aspirations of the Resistance fighters who are bound to be alienated by a state machine run by technocrats and merchants;
- (i) the proposed state will not resolve the problem of the refugee camps outside the West Bank but may provide an excuse for the Arab host governments to harass and intimidate the refugees into leaving.

The issue of who represents the Palestinians and the issue of the desirability or not of a West Bank state are quite separate and should not be confused since:

- (a) Jordan is going to attend the peace negotiations anyway - all the other Arab states have insisted on Jordanian participation;
- (b) the PLO has already been recognised as a representative of the Palestinians by a majority of states in the international community - including the Arab countries, the Eastern Bloc and the non-allied nations. The PLO is anyway the only Palestinian political organisation;
- (c) should the proposed state become a reality the PLO will have to negotiate with the West Bank notables and traditional politicians if it wishes to avoid a confrontation with them. The notables will then be drawn into the issue of representation eventually;
- (d) to repeat: the issues of who represents the Palestinians and whether or not a West Bank State is desirable are separate and should not be confused.

Paranthetically I would like to add that in context of this discussion it may be the case that continued international recognition of the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians will, in fact, prove to be conditional upon PLO acceptance of the projected state.

The strategic and ideological reasons for rejecting the proposed state are as follows:

- (a) acceptance of the state is a substitute for continuing the struggle to change the nature of the Israeli regime and Zionist ideology. (Again I must repeat that I am not talking about the state that the Palestinians are fighting for and hope to achieve, but rather the type of state which is likely to emerge as part of

- a solution in the context of current diplomatic negotiations;
- (b) the problem of land is not the key problem in the current context. Land fixation is counter-revolutionary and should not be allowed to divert attention from the real issues;
- (c) the Palestinian Resistance is the vanguard of the forces of change in the Arab world. Its objectives and achievements should be evaluated in terms of this vanguard role. To accept a mini-State would mean the effective dissolution of the Resistance and the triumph of conservative trends in the area;
- (d) acceptance of the desirability of mini-state solution arises from a static analysis of the situation - the projection of a static framework into a dynamic future;
- (e) participation in negotiations leading to acceptance of the proposed state as a 'solution' to the Palestinian problem offers the Arab regimes an excuse for making concessions to Israel which otherwise would have been difficult to justify to their own peoples.

Conclusion

As I hope I have already made clear, I do not believe that the issue of the West Bank state is in fact the real issue confronting the Palestinians. The question of the state is misplaced - it creates confusion rather than clarity and diverts attention from the key purpose of the struggle. Rather than fighting for a piece of land our struggle should be directly aimed towards changing the nature of the Israeli state and elaborating the implications of the establishment of a democratic secular state in Palestine. Recent Palestinian victories, culminating with Arafat's address to the United Nations and the uprising on the West Bank should be used to formulate direct demands - demands more precisely oriented towards changing the exclusivist nature of the Zionist State. It is the task of the Palestinian Resistance to attempt to reach the largest number of Israelis with a view to creating a joint struggle against those laws and institutions in Israel which manifest the exclusiveness of the Zionist state. The struggle on the West Bank, coupled with Palestinian armed and political struggle externally, should go beyond the mere articulation of national rights and make specific demands on the Israeli state itself. The importance of the role played by anti-Zionist Jews in Israel and elsewhere is paramount and should be stressed. If the establishment of a West Bank State furthers these objectives then it will be worth struggling for. If on the other hand, the establishment of such a state would simply polarise the two nationalities still further and solidify nationalist sentiments then it should be rejected.

Uri Davis: This paper presupposes that a Palestinian West Bank state solution will not be implemented in the Middle East unless the post-1973 political realities in the area are radically altered by a new Middle East war in very specific ways. I want to emphasise that the outcome of such a war need in no way necessarily facilitate the establishment of a West Bank state however and it is the purpose of the analysis which follows to delineate some of the major features of the current situation.

Given extant political realities - in particular the internal stresses and social contradictions which beset both Israel and the Arab states in confrontation with Israel - it is, in my view, simply absurd to believe that the present status quo can be maintained for five to ten years. However difficult this may be for some people to accept, it is a fact that no meaningful progress towards the implementation of the UN 242 Resolutions can hope to be achieved in the present political context without precipitating another Israeli-initiated war. This is my view of the current situation but it needs qualifying in one sense. I, and a number of my Israeli-Jewish and Arab colleagues, were incorrect in our former conviction that an Israeli-initiated war was certain to be precipitated during 1974. I must leave it to others to judge whether the underlying analysis which led to this prediction was deficient in essence or merely in detail. In retrospect it seems that the reason our predictions have proven wrong lies in our having exaggerated the pressure the US could (or would) bring to bear on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories along the lines of the UN 242 resolution (with modifications intended to accommodate Palestinian national and political demands). This is not to say that no US pressure was applied, rather that insufficient pressure was applied. However despite US diplomatic moves, American military and economic support for Israel has no means declined. Israel finds itself today far better equipped vis a vis the Arab armies than before 1973. (See, for example, Financial Times 23.1.75).

As I have noted, in my view the possibilities for the creation of a West Bank state are contingent on a new Middle East war. Thus it makes little sense to discuss the issue of the West Bank state except in relation to the broader consequences which would arise from the triggering of such a war. This view may not - and perhaps should not - go undisputed, but I intend to focus here on the question of these consequences. In my view the most likely precipitant for a new war would be the response of the Israeli, Labour Zionist, Rabin government (or any other government further to the Right politically which might replace it) to a US ultimatum on Israel to implement any of the

proposed variants of UN Resolution 242 (withdrawal from the post-1967 occupied territories) in order to facilitate the proceedings of the Geneva Peace Conference. Let me add that it is by no means certain that such an ultimatum will be issued.

With respect to the medium and long-term future of Israel two scenarios seem to dominate. Firstly, it is claimed that it is (a) becoming increasingly expensive and politically counterproductive for the US to continue to support its Israeli colonial satellite to the degree which is necessary if Israel's real military supremacy in the area is to be maintained (the current cost to the US being \$2.5 billion per annum) and (b) post-1973, there is now a real option for the US to substitute the long-standing de facto Israel/Iran alliance for a de facto Iran/Saudi-Arabia/Egypt alliance also under US sponsorship. Given these two factors it seems probable that there will be a gradual abandonment of Israel by the US. In terms of this scenario if such a process does not take place then the US may actually welcome - if not precipitate - another Israeli/Arab confrontation which would be so engineered as to result in an unambiguous Israel defeat and the imposition on Israel of a surrender/peace treaty. Such a peace treaty would probably not involve the dissolution of the state of Israel as an internationally recognised sovereign political entity. It would however involve the implementation of UN Resolution 242. This would be strictly interpreted to require Israeli withdrawal from all the post-1967 occupied territories and might involve the internationalisation or bi-nationalisation of Jerusalem, the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and - possibly - the implementation of the right of the 1948 refugees now living in Arab host countries to return to Israel proper.

With respect to the impact such a war would have on those living in the occupied territories there can be few people who doubt that the Israelis will use the war as a pretext to implement their contingency plans for the mass removal of Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This forced exodus will of course have extremely serious short term consequences. But the effort will be undone since under the terms of an Israeli surrender/peace treaty those expelled would be later returned to their lands which would then no longer be under Israeli control.

The first scenario posits a withdrawal of support for Israel by the US. In this context an Israeli defeat in any forthcoming war (whether or not engineered by the US) is highly likely and the future of an autonomous Palestinian entity of some sort in the liberated territories

assured. The second scenario posits that US support for Israel is maintained and even strengthened. The arguments for the Israeli/US alliance continuing are as follows. First, it is claimed that, despite US Administration desires to improve relations with Arab states, the weight of the pro-Israel lobby in Congress (though relatively weakened) is still strong enough to prevent an abandonment of Israel. The countervailing (pro-Arab and pro-oil company) forces are still too weak to effectively offset the weight of the Zionist lobby on this particular issue. Second, and more important, the Administration - urged on by a frustrated military and not a few influential and hawkish academics - is desperately anxious to demonstrate that the US can still 'act from strength' in the international arena despite the debacle in Indo-China.

The recent spate of articles in influential US journals clearly shows that the success of 'OPEC extortionists', 'Arab blackmailers' and 'rapacious oil sheiks' in 'holding the West to ransom' has hit a raw nerve in the world's most powerful nation. From this perspective the 'threat to Israel' provides a pretext for humbling 'backward' Arabs. However this antipathy does not arise merely out of frustration. The key states in the Oil cartel pose a vital threat to the energy supplies of the West and by inference to 'civilisation' itself. For precisely this reason a number of US strategists believe that a strike against these states in order to gain control of those supplies would be supported domestically. The war in Vietnam posed no such direct national threat and thus was bound eventually to lose popular support.

Thus a situation in which Israel appears to be 'pushed too far' by the Arabs provides the immediate pretext for a military intervention in the Gulf to secure oil supplies. This is so for the following reasons. First, in the event of a war in which the US again supports Israel, the 'oil weapon' is likely to be employed against the West in retaliation. This creates the rationale either for a peremptive strike against the oil fields if a war seems imminent, or a strike during a war itself immediately the 'oil weapon' is used or threatened. In any such situation Israel plays a critical role. Since the proposed move against the oil fields requires the massive use of troops to hold the area once the 'surgical strike' has been made, it would be essential to use Israel as a staging post. The Hatzerim air force base in the Negev desert would provide the ideal regional refuelling point. Secondly in a situation of either war or imminent war Israel's military posture would prevent key Arab states (notably Syria) from moving to attempt to repulse

the US strike in the oil fields. In other words the strike in the oil fields would serve both Israeli and US interests. The US interest is noted above - the Israeli interest is that such a scenario implies the consolidation and even increase of US support for Israel and - if the seizure of the oil fields succeeds - the removal of the 'oil weapon' as a source of critically important indirect international pressure on Israel. With the Arabs' strength divided on two widely separated fronts, Israel is presented with the opportunity of concentrating on the isolation and military defeat of Syria, while Egypt fights a half-hearted (because unwanted) phoney war on the Western front. As the scenario unwinds, Israel destroys the military capability of Syria completely and lays siege to Damascus (taking the opportunity to wipe out Palestinian guerilla centres in Lebanon during the armoured sweep up from landing zones on the Lebanese coast). The key political point however would be to force Syria eventually into signing some sort of bilateral agreement for withdrawal with Israel, thus establishing the principle of bilateral deals and enabling Sadat to conclude the peace treaty with the Israelis which Egypt clearly wishes.

Obviously such a scenario is conjectural - as are all scenarios. The point is not that one would necessarily expect events to follow this course but rather that the type of thinking which underlies such scenarios is likely to influence policies - and thus outcomes. However, we can see that if a scenario did follow a course similar to this - the key points being Israeli victory in war and continued US support - then the question of the establishment of a West Bank state - whether it is desirable, what form it should take and so forth - recedes once again into the future. Indeed in this context it would become a political irrelevance.

A crushing Israeli military and political victory in a new war with continuing (or more likely increased) US support could also mean the massive expulsion of Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza strip - the rendering of the whole area 'Arabrein' (cleared of Arabs). Such a course of action - for which contingency plans are known to exist - would continue the transformation of Israel into a Zionist political monster. The Revisionist Zionist dream (or nightmare for others) of a Jewish state stretching from the Nile to the Euphrates could become a reality. It is a vision which has also gained adherents among Labour Zionists since 1967. A strong move in this direction would indicate the rise to power of the most fascist

elements in Israeli politics and encourage the emergence of similarly fascist elements in the World Zionist movement. Such people would not only continue to implement Zionism's colonial and occupation policies but would do so without regard to any semblance - no matter how hypocritical - of moral scruple. The implications for political life in Israel seem to me to need no further elaboration.

The first scenario - which argued that Israel would be defeated but not dismembered as an internationally recognised Jewish state - also implies far-reaching qualitative changes in political life in Israel. Deprived of effective US support Israel would be transformed into that which its Zionist founding elite most feared - an increasingly 'levantised' country whose dominant political culture would come to reflect the fact that a majority of its Jewish population is of Asian and African origin. The end of Israeli military and economic supremacy in the area will hasten the process of 'levantisation', and this in turn will precipitate the departure of the currently dominant political and economic 'haute bourgeoisie' (approximately 20% of the present Israeli-Jewish population). It is the members of this sector, which has most to lose in such a context, who can afford to leave, and whose standards of education and professional and other skills offer them possibilities of attractive employment in the West. The sense of cultural and ethnic superiority which this elite sector feels, is also predicated completely on the continued maintenance of its privileged political and socio-economic position vis a vis Palestinian Arabs and the Oriental (schwartz) Jews. For members of this elite to even contemplate living in a situation of equality in a Levantised country would be literally a contradiction in terms.

Finally a word of warning. Some of those who support the idea of a West Bank state may have been encouraged by the support shown for this idea by certain Israeli Zionist 'doves'. However all who have supported this position in the Zionist camp have assumed that Israeli economic and military supremacy would continue to be maintained. Indeed they consider the establishment of a West Bank state - given current political realities - as a sine qua non for the continued maintenance of Israeli supremacy. It should by now be clear however that I believe that the only circumstance which could possibly result in the establishment of a West Bank state would be that following an Israeli defeat in a new war and the imposition on Israel of a surrender/peace settlement. No Israeli 'dove' would for one moment support the establishment of a West Bank state under such conditions. Indeed support for the idea of a West Bank state would immediately be withdrawn if it was believed that a military defeat of Israel was the only means by which

it could be achieved. Certain key elements in the Palestine resistance clearly entertain hopes to the contrary. In my view such hopes are without foundation and betray ignorance of the dynamics of Zionist thought and motivations.

Mustapha Karkuti: I speak in opposition to the previous two speakers. I support the idea of the National Palestinian entity and I am fighting for its realisation. It is the only political option open to our people at this stage of the struggle. Throughout the history of peoples and of revolutions there are always turning points and how these turning points are confronted makes a critical difference to the future and destiny of those involved. The people can continue the struggle and score further victories. Alternatively defeat and temporary setbacks can dissipate the potential and momentum of popular struggle, threatening, in both the short and the long term, the possibilities for revolution. The leadership, when it establishes itself as the central link of the struggle at every juncture, taking into account the subjective potential of the people as well as local and international conditions, plays an essential role. It loses this role when it fails to identify the correct strategic nexus at every stage in the national struggle. In this case the country, the people and the struggle suffer setbacks, the duration of which is dependent on internal and external developments.

What are the immediate tasks of the Palestinian revolutionary movement at this time? First, the expulsion of the Zionist occupation forces and the reactionary Hashemite presence from the occupied territory. Second, to transform into a reality the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment by our people of a National and Independent Authority over the liberated territories. This is the position of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) and of the vast majority of our people. Before it became the PLO line, it was the position of the Palestinian people who are under occupation. Their struggle has been led by the Palestinian National Front, the mass organisation headed by the Jordanian Communist Party, which was set up in August 1973 and has led the struggle there ever since.

Our people are faced with two choices - a patriot's choice, or a liquidationist reactionary one. The October War has created new realities in the area. For 26 years, up to October 1973, everybody thought that Israel was undefeatable. That belief was itself defeated in the October War. Although both the victory on our side and the defeat on Israel's side were only partial, the October War- the patriotic October War one should say - was not merely the 'fourth

round' as some people like to call it. From our point of view its achievements were enormous.

The argument put forward by one of the previous speakers to the effect that there is still disagreement on the question of a Palestinian state among the various organisations of the PLO, as well as among our people, is false. During the 12th session of the National Palestinian Council (NPC) which was held in Cairo in June 1974, a uniform programme was agreed to by a majority of the 150 members of the NPC (representing all the social segments of the Palestinian people). It was opposed by only four votes which represented the views of those whom we call 'infantile leftists'. The majority agreed to initiate the struggle for the establishment of a Palestinian National Authority over any territory liberated from Israeli occupation, and without any concessions or compromises with respect to our present and historical rights. To those who claim that it is not possible under the present conditions for the Palestinian people to be given such a state we respond that we do not expect this. We are fighting to regain our homeland. Others have argued that the proposed state is not viable economically. To this we respond that such an argument is irrelevant. The occupied territories have been, are and will remain Palestinian territories regardless of their economic viability - one does not choose a homeland. The West Bank remains a Palestinian territory despite its annexation to Jordan in 1951 under Abdulla following the creation of the state of Israel. It is still Palestinian under its occupation by the Israeli military forces.

During the winter of 1974 there was a rumour circulating - which many appeared to believe - that the Kissinger 'shuttle diplomacy' was going to lead to some sort of settlement, and that the decision of the National Palestinian Council in Cairo (to back the idea of an independent Palestinian authority over the occupied territories) was 'a cover which the PLO was using as a sell-out'. Those who argued this line were being contradictory. On the one hand they alleged that the situation was complex and difficult - that nothing could be resolved without a fifth war and so forth. On the other they seemed to say that the situation was rather simple - that a Palestinian state could emerge from underhand negotiations between Kissinger and the PLO. To believe that the PLO would give up its revolutionary demands in exchange for being offered a Palestinian state - any Palestinian state - is both absurd and insulting to our people. It is equally absurd to believe that such a state (of whatever kind) will be granted simply as a result of negotiations. Some critics even believe that Arafat's historic address to the United Nations was some sort of compromise. Such views are ridiculous, and even if

Arafat had said in his speech that the PLO would accept the existence of the Israeli state this would not have made any difference. The Israelis would not shift to a new position; Rabin would never approach Arafat with proposals for negotiations. To believe that such a thing is even possible is to fool oneself.

Other critics of the Palestinian state have claimed that it would never be politically viable. It is true of course that such a state would initially be sandwiched between two extremely hostile enemies - Israel on the one side and Jordan on the other. Thus, say the critics, the state would have no future - except as a pro-American client state. This is simply not the case. True the immediate future would be bound by a number of political constraints but the revolution does not finish with the proclamation of a Palestinian state. On the contrary. Only with a Palestinian state as its base can the Palestinian revolution continue. The Zionist state in Israel could grow and gain strength in large part because the Palestinians were virtually declared to be non-existent. Once the Palestinians begin to reconstruct their national life - socially, culturally, politically and materially - a process of de-Zionisation will necessarily begin. Neither should it be assumed that the reactionary Hashemite regime will be able successfully to withstand the existence of this new force on its doorstep. The downfall of the Jordanian regime will be assisted by the weakening and eventual collapse of the Zionist regime in Israel. Thus the political and economic viability for an independent Palestinian state cannot be written off simply by pointing to existing realities - these would almost certainly change under the impact of the revolutionary forces. Future possibilities could include some sort of federal arrangement with a democratic government in Jordan following the overthrow of Hussein or with Syria.

Critics who argue that the PLO is going to sell-out to some Kissinger 'solution', that a Palestinian state would necessarily be a pro-American client state, or that the threat from Israel and Jordan is too great, are wrong. The PLO strategy is the Palestinian strategy. PLO leadership arises from within the people. Strategy is, and should be, determined by the people and their leaders and not imposed from without. We Palestinians want to reconstruct our national identity taken from us twenty-six years ago. We have a right to do so.

Finally there is the question of the Geneva Conference. The opposition to this forum for negotiations comes from the Americans and the Israelis. They oppose the Geneva talks because of the very real successes achieved by the Palestinians recently; because the PLO has been recognised by the Arab world in the Rabat conference as the sole legitimate

representative of the Palestinian people; because at this meeting Hussein was defeated, and because of Arafat's historic address to the United Nations General Assembly. These victories are in a sense symbolic but they are a reality and they are important. We Palestinians want a Palestinian national liberation revolution in a Palestinian land. We do not want a 'guest' revolution over a non-Palestinian land.

Eli Lobel: I am very well aware that here I am speaking in London, Great Britain, and that the public listening to us is comprised mainly of inhabitants of these islands. You have heard arguments for and against the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and in Gaza. I am worried. How are you going to make up your minds? Well, there are those opposing the creation of this State which, one way or another, is on the agenda. The arguments against such a state differ. Some say that not all the problems concerning the liberation of the Palestinian people will be solved by the creation of such a State and that on the contrary, it will mean an abandonment and even a betrayal of the struggle. What will become of the Palestinians, over a million and a half of them, living outside the occupied territories? Will they all be dumped into this little, ugly, dependent, non-viable state? The word one hears used to describe this project is 'Palestino-stan' - on the same lines as the Bantustans created for black Africans in South Africa. A State without real independence and without real liberation for the population living in it. Others, favouring the creation of a Palestinian State, argue that it will be a very strong independent state in so far as any part of the Mashreq can be independent on its own. They argue that it is not the end of the struggle - the Palestinian liberation struggle - but a phase in that struggle, and that this state will create the possibility of continuing the struggle under better conditions. Now faced with these arguments how are you going to make up your minds? What will be your criteria? That's why I'm worried. Perhaps this evening the arguments of one side will be better than those of the other and you will support the creation of this state. Next week there will be new discussions and the arguments of the other side will be exposed with greater ability and you will have to change your mind.

This situation will continue as long as there is not a minimum consensus on the principles involved. When one speaks about principles then all those concerned with the problem must have some kind of objective yardstick with which to evaluate the problem. It must be valid generally - in the Middle East or let us say in Ireland, nearer and more

familiar to you; or in Pakistan; or wherever else there is a problem of national struggle, of the self-determination of a people or a nation. Therefore I will divide my discussion into two parts. The first will deal with what I consider to be the main principles involved, the second will deal with the tactical considerations which arise.

When talking about the creation of a Palestinian state in whatever part of the territories of Palestine which Israel might be forced to evacuate, the question of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people arises. I consider that this right concerns the whole of the Palestinian population and also every part of it. This means that the Palestinian people living in the West Bank and Gaza have the right to national self-determination as part of the right of the whole of the Palestinian people. We know that this right in fact corresponds to the current desires of one million Palestinians living in these territories who want to create their own political entity, who want to rid themselves of Israeli occupation, and to end the Hashemite annexation of parts of Palestine. I consider that it would be wrong for us to oppose this expression of a fundamental right - even if - and I do not consider that this is the case - but I am ready to say - even if, it runs counter to certain strategic aims that we might envisage. Overall strategic considerations which neglect the popular wish of those immediately concerned and also neglect an universal valid principle - this I call political speculation. I consider it a fundamental and serious error. Political speculation about which side of the barricade - I mean the revolutionary barricade - the future state will be on - or its future leadership - should not influence us when we take a position on a question of principle - in this case the right to self-determination - and the way those most directly concerned wish to exercise their rights. I repeat, our knowledge of the situation leads us to believe that the Palestinians want this state and also that they support the present leadership of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, whatever our criticisms of this leadership may be. As an Israeli, I have to add that it is certainly not the right of the Israeli occupying force to dictate to the population concerned the way in which they should exercise their fundamental political rights or the kind of leadership the Palestinians should have.

The right of self-determination is certainly not an absolute right: we revolutionary socialists fight for a society in which ultimately the State, and State power and boundaries are to be abolished. The right of self-determination is also not an absolute right because it has one powerful limitation. The right of self determination of one people should not, and cannot, imply either the denial of self-determination

or the national repression of another people. Here I refer to the right of self-determination of the other people living in this part of the Eastern shore of the Mediterranean, that is the Israeli people. The situation today is such that the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza does not interfere in any way with the right of self-determination of the Israeli-Jewish people. I would even say that this is perhaps one of the few instances in the long history of Zionist colonisation which offers a real chance for co-existence of the two peoples concerned. Therefore, as an Israeli, I have to fight for the realisation of this right to self-determination of the Palestinian Arab people.

The second principle involved in the struggle for national liberation of the Palestinian people is the right of all the Palestinians who have been expelled from their country to return to it and to live there - wherever they wish. We, as Israelis - and the organisation to which I belong - Matzpen - have always emphasised this fundamental right of the Palestinian people - we Israelis declare that all the Palestinians have the right to live freely in Palestine wherever they wish, whether it be in Jaffa, Haifa, Jerusalem, Beer-Sheba, Nazareth, Nablus, Hebron - throughout what was called Palestine within the boundaries of the British Mandate. We declare that they have as many rights to live there as we do. Those are the two principles involved - the right to self-determination of the two peoples, and the right of all the Palestinians to return to their country - a country they were expelled from by Zionist colonisation. The future political face of this country, or countries, will be determined by the exercise of these two rights - whether it will be one state - whether it will be unitary or more federal, or whether there will be two states. Clearly if the Palestinians exercise their right of return - this is our version of the Law of Return - if they exercise this right in the sense of a physical return to their country, to their place of origin, then sooner or later, there will probably be one bi-national state, because there would be neither sense nor possibility in tracing a frontier between one street of Jaffa and another. If, on the other hand, the Palestinians should choose to regroup in one part of Palestine, leaving a territorial continuity for the Israeli-Jewish people, then there would be two political national entities which would then have to define their form of co-existence, collaboration, federation, political unity. We, the comrades of Matzpen, consider that the full realisation of the national and social aspirations of the two peoples will take place within a framework of the revolutionary struggle of the whole of Mashreq towards a union of socialist countries of the Near East. But our view of the ultimate picture which will emerge in the Middle East does not affect our adherence to the

to the principles I have outlined, nor make us forget our immediate tasks - those raised by the tactical considerations discussed below. By adopting those principles, we distinguish ourselves immediately from nationalists of whatever camp but mainly from those of the Zionist brand. I do not know of any Zionist group however 'socialist' which accepts in their fullest meaning the two principles I have described. (Neither do I believe that Zionist 'socialism' can exist. The phrase is a contradiction in terms. There is no such thing as a socialist colonialist.)

There are also tactical considerations. During this meeting several people have discussed the eventuality of a new war in the Middle East. We do not know whether such a war will break out or when. But the danger of war, and I think on this point all of us agree, exists, and the aggressor, the fundamental aggressor, remains the Zionist state in collusion with US imperialism. The Zionist State is the aggressor because the Zionists do not accept the evacuation of the occupied territories and do not recognise the right to national self-determination of the Palestinian people. The question before us therefore is the following - what are the slogans that we propose to the masses living in the area in order to oppose this long-lasting aggression? And what in particular do we propose to the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation? Again, it is clear that the mere fact that the possibility now exists for the creation of a Palestinian state - I stress the word, 'possibility' - that it is on the agenda - that it is discussed, and very often recognised on the international scene - this mere possibility has given renewed strength to the Palestinians resisting occupation. Every day we witness new facts of resistance unheard of before the war of October 1973. The Palestinian Arabs living within the boundaries of Israel since 1948, have taken courage and proclaimed (to the astonishment of the Zionists) that they are Palestinians - part of the Palestinian Arab people - and they want to live within the framework of a State giving them the full possibility of exercising their political rights. The Prime Minister of Israel has recently encountered these facts which were quite novel to him, since everyone in Israel, on the Zionist side, considered the 'Israeli Arabs' sufficiently subdued to accept the reality of Zionist rule. For the first time the Palestinians have openly and publicly declared their national aspirations. There is new hope among them, but there are also new dangers. Every week, we read in the Israeli press, references to projects of expulsion, of new expulsions of Arabs from territories belong to Israel, or under Israeli occupation. It is advocated - often openly - that the Palestinian

question be disposed of by cleansing the countries of as many Palestinians as possible. There is a real danger that in a new war the Zionists will attempt to realise this atrocious project. And one of our great hopes is precisely the resistance of the Palestinian population. Now, have we anything better to propose to them in order to strengthen their struggle, than the immediate realisation, be it only partial, be it only in a small territory, of an autonomous Palestinian state? Is this the moment for us to divide the ranks and the minds of the Palestinians by our bickerings and speculations about the future, about the degree of independence, about the degree of economic viability of what might be created? I repeat, have we anything else better to propose in order to strengthen their resistance to the reality of Zionist occupation, or worse, to the new projects which are being elaborated? This for us is the crucial issue in the domain of the immediate tactics and thus also in the domain of the slogans which we can propose.

When I, an Israeli socialist, speak about these questions, it is not merely in relation to the principles involved, though they are essential. It is not only in relation to the right tactical line to adopt in the immediate future. When I, an Israeli socialist speak about it, it is also for the defence of our own rights. It is also in relation with our struggle for a different future from that prepared for us by the Zionist nationalists. We Israeli socialists, know with every fibre of our being, as individuals and as part of the Israeli-Jewish people, we know that we cannot escape the ghetto, or the military monastery that Israel has become, that we cannot bear children without giving birth to gun-carriers, that we cannot breath one ounce of fresh air, unless and until the Mashreq is free, free from national oppression, free from social repression. And above all unless, and until, the Palestinian Arab people LIVES IN FREEDOM.

Discussion

In discussing this issue some participants argued that the origin of the conflict - or at least the main cause of its continuation - was rooted in the refusal of Israel to recognise the right of the Palestinian Arab people to have a national state of their own, and the similar refusal of Palestinians to recognise the legitimacy of a Jewish state in Palestine. From this perspective a minimal necessary condition for a peaceful resolution of the conflict would be the establishment of a Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza Strip alongside the Jewish

State of Israel. Arguments justifying the creation of such a state could obviously vary. For Israeli 'doves' it might be an end in itself, designed to buy off wider Palestinian political aspirations. For some Palestinians it might simply be a 'least-worst' solution, for others merely a stage, albeit necessary, in seeking wider political goals. Again it could be argued that once the national aspirations of both peoples are, to a degree at least, satisfied by two nation-states, then possibilities would be created for a gradual peaceful convergence within some sort of federal framework. Though obviously posing enormous problems the refusal to accept such a solution, interim or otherwise, was, it was agreed, simply a recipe for continuous warfare.

Against this it was argued that the origins of the conflict lay in the policies of discrimination and dispossession against the native Palestinian population pursued first by the Zionist movement in Palestine and later by the newly-created State of Israel. The idea of 'mutual recognition' implied a symmetry between the opposing parties which had never existed. A parallel was drawn between the situation in Israel and that in southern Africa where national liberation movements have refused to recognise the legitimacy of the white racist South African and Rhodesian regimes. To argue for the cessation of armed struggle in a situation where this would mean simply the cessation of armed struggle for liberation was a position which should be rejected. Finally the premise that the constitution of a West Bank state would, in fact, lead to a cessation of violence was challenged. On the contrary, it was argued that any move in this political direction would be more likely to precipitate a fifth (Israeli-initiated) war. This argument was supported with reference to political developments within Israel following the 1973 war - notably the stresses within the Israeli cabinet, the substantial gains of right-wing Zionist parties and the general drift to the right throughout the political spectrum in the Jewish community. Given these political developments to argue that a West Bank state was a peaceful alternative to continuous war was both intellectually and politically dishonest.

Much of the debate both for and against the establishment of a West Bank state, was predicated on assumptions about the nature of the political system which such a state would embody. Some participants were prepared to support the idea of such a state if political power lay in the hands of workers and peasant popular councils. Others claimed that given the nature of the PLO and of the present

power relationships which existed within the organisation, such a political system was an unrealistic dream. The PLO as presently constituted would, it was argued, never countenance a socialist takeover of the West Bank and the assumption to power of the PLO over any West Bank state would probably lead to the immediate suppression of all radical leftist political organisations which dared to challenge state policy.

This view was in turn challenged by contributors who argued that any revolutionary effort had to base itself on concrete aspirations and levels of awareness - on the actual struggles which mobilised the populace, and not on struggles which existed only in the minds of leftists not directly involved in the situation. It was pointed out that there was an ongoing struggle currently existing in the West Bank area and that this struggle was directed specifically against Israeli occupation. The West Bank masses could not be mobilised under the slogan of a democratic secular state in all of former Mandatory Palestine. They were in fact being mobilised under the banner of West Bank and Gaza Strip independence from Israeli rule. To constitute a West Bank state would not only be in line with the actual demands of the Palestinians living in the area, it would also undermine the logic of Zionist territorial expansion and the *raison d'être* of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Another part of the discussion also focussed on the issue of the relationship between a future West Bank State and the Post-1948 Palestinian refugees living in various Arab states throughout the Middle East. It was argued that in addition to triggering the expulsion of Palestinians from pre-1967 Israel proper, the creation of a West Bank state would also lead to very strong pressure to expel Palestinian refugees from the so-called 'host' countries. Palestinians are seen not only as threatening the 'Jewish character' of the state of Israel. In Lebanon their presence threatens the constitutional Muslim/Christian balance. Their sheer number in Jordan creates tensions within the Hashemite Kingdom while the socio-economic roles occupied by Palestinians in other Arab states (Kuwait etc.) are also possible sources of conflict within those states. The establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza would thus serve to legitimate the expulsion of Palestinians by any Arab governments which had interests in so doing. The 'refugee problem' would be solved by the creation of a 'national home'. The new state could thus become little more than a self-ruling refugee camp, critically dependent on two hostile neighbours - Israel and Jordan.

While none of these disagreements were in any sense resolved

during the discussion, the arguments had the virtue of clearly delineating the positions taken by different political tendencies both among Israelis and Palestinian Arabs. However one possible area of confusion and ambiguity remained. As Hussein Agha had pointed out in his panel contribution, those who supported the idea of a Palestinian state couched their argument in terms of the type of state that they hoped to achieve while those who opposed the West Bank state tended to refer to the type of state which was likely to be achieved at this stage given the reality of the post-1973 balance of power in the area.

SECTION ELEVEN: AGAINST THE IDEOLOGIES OF THE DAY

Introduction

In this concluding section of the anthology, Noam Chomsky, ranges over many of the issues and arguments which have been touched on in earlier sections. He examines the implications of the current situation in the aftermath of the October War, and considers the short and long term consequences which are likely to follow from the establishment of a so-called 'two state' solution. He also examines the distortions and outright fabrications concerning Israel which form the conventional wisdom in Zionist circles in both the US and Israel with respect to such critical issues as political freedom in Israel and the dispossession of the Palestinian population from their lands by the Israeli state. The Zionist movement, he points out, 'could not help but injure and impinge on the rights of the people who lived in the country'. Finally Chomsky considers some possible alternatives to the continuing pattern of war and Israeli dominance of the occupied territories. Arguing against 'solutions' based on nationalist premises - whether Israeli-Jewish or Palestinian-Arab, Chomsky puts the case for a bi-national solution. To those who claim that such alternatives are 'utopian' and 'unrealistic' Chomsky argues that the 'realistic' alternatives provide no solution at all: "It is unrealistic to dismiss long range proposals as 'utopian'. They may provide the only basis for the simpler and more immediate steps that will reduce tension, permit the growth of mutual trust and the expression of common interests that cross national lines - specifically, class interests - and thus lay the groundwork for an eventual just and peaceful settlement".

ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

by NOAM CHOMSKY

One land - two nations: that is the essence of the problem of Israel and the Palestinians. To be sure, the problem has always had regional and international dimensions. Given the strategic and economic importance of the region, great power intervention has always been a decisive factor in determining the course of events. If the local problem of two claimants to the same territory is not amicably resolved, then a settlement will be imposed by external force, with no regard for the needs and interests of Israeli Jews or Palestinian Arabs. It is not out of the question that the present course will lead to the national destruction of both groups.

Proponents of each of the national movements are quick to dismiss the competing claims. I will not review the familiar debate. It is a simple and pointless exercise to construct an argument to demonstrate the legitimacy of the claims of either side and the insignificance of the demands of its opponent. Each argument is convincing in its own terms. Each claim is, in a sense, absolute: a plea for national survival. Those who urge the demands of one or the other partner in this deadly dance, deaf to conflicting pleas, merely help pave the way to an eventual catastrophe. Such behaviour is pathetic on the part of direct participants; disgraceful, on the part of those partisans from afar who will not have to pay the costs of their fanaticism. One may recall Chaim Weizmann's rebuke to American Zionists for urging 'other people to the barricades to face tanks and guns' - 'the speeches are made in New York,' Weizmann added, 'while the proposed resistance is to be made in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem'.¹ The same might be said - and probably has been - by Palestinians with regard to those who urge them on towards self-destruction.

Like it or not, there is little doubt that participants in the local conflict will continue to identify themselves as Jews and Arabs and to demand self-government and national institutions. On this assumption, which surely seems realistic, any thought of a unitary democratic secular state in Mandatory Palestine is an exercise in futility. It is curious that this goal is advocated in some form by the most extreme antagonists: the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and expansionist right-wing elements within Israel.² But the documents of the former indicate that what they have in mind is an Arab state that will grant civil rights to Jews, and the pronouncements of the advocates of a Greater Israel leave little doubt that their thoughts run along parallel lines, interchanging 'Jew' and 'Arab'. These are,

in fact, charitable interpretations, in both cases.

The Current Situation

As I write (November 1974), prospects are gloomy. The conference of Arab States at Rabat has designated the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians. The United Nations has in effect endorsed this position. The Government of Israel refuses adamantly to deal with the PLO. As long as this impasse persists, the probability of war is appreciable. As critics of Israeli government policy have been warning, Israel has now backed itself into a corner, facing almost complete diplomatic isolation, committed to policies that can only be implemented at the grave risk of war, hence the risk of eventual destruction of a state that can lose only once and that can never finally defeat its adversaries.³

What is the likelihood of a change in the Israeli attitude towards the Palestinians and their organisations? The official Israeli government position, as presented in a "Decision of the Government of Israel", July 21, 1974, is the following:

"The Government will work towards negotiations for a peace agreement with Jordan. The peace will be founded on the existence of two independent States only - Israel, with united Jerusalem as its capital, and a Jordanian-Palestinian Arab State, east of Israel, within borders to be determined in negotiations between Israel and Jordan. In this State, the independent identity of the Jordanian and Palestinian Arabs can find expression in peace and good neighbourliness with Israel."⁴

This position was reaffirmed by Foreign Minister Yigal Allon in October 1974 before the UN. "There is", he affirmed, "a problem of 'Palestinian identity'", but it "can and should be solved in the context of the settlement of the dispute" between Israel and Jordan, which is "already the national home of the Palestinians." The PLO, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin asserts, is not the legitimate representative of the Palestinians, "since nobody has elected them".⁵ The Government and American Zionists generally insist that the PLO cannot claim to speak for the Palestinians in the 'administered territories' of the West Bank ('Judea and Samaria', in Israeli parlance) and the Gaza Strip. At the same time, Israel refuses to permit independent political organisation or free political expression in the occupied territories, and the repression of the past years has been sharply intensified under the present Rabin government. The reason for the repression is simple: any relaxation leads to the expression of pro-PLO sentiments.⁶ The contradiction is

complete, and the impasse, total.

These policies have wide support within Israel. Thus, a leading dove, Arie Eliav, publicly opposes a Palestinian state 'in the administered areas separate from the state of Jordan,' and advocates instead some kind of partition of the West Bank and Gaza Strip between Israel and Jordan, optimally, with 'Israeli supervision or joint supervision by the two states' over these territories.⁷

Meanwhile, Israeli settlement in the occupied territories continues, again with substantial popular support. In a recent poll, 71% approved of settlement in "Judea and Samaria" if initiated by the Government, with less than 14% opposed.⁸ Every move in this direction is a step towards war.

Only marginal political groups in Israel have been calling for withdrawal from the occupied territories, which now plainly entails recognition of the PLO. State policy, particularly since 1970, has been moving towards integration of the territories. A programme of virtual annexation was presented by the governing Labor Party in its August 1973 electoral programme. After the October war, the programme was modified, but these plans will be reinstituted if the only alternative is to deal with the Palestinians.

Of course, these policies can be pursued only with US backing. As of mid-1970, American policy was expressed in the Rogers Plan, which called for Israeli withdrawal in the context of a peace settlement. This proposal was abandoned by the US as Henry Kissinger took over control of American policy towards the Middle East in 1970, instituting what should no doubt be called the 'Kissinger Plan': tacit support for de facto Israeli annexation of the territories. Given the widely-held belief that Israel's military and technological predominance was unchallengeable in the foreseeable future, the Kissinger Plan made a certain amount of sense, putting aside its characteristic cynicism and the equally characteristic blindness to longer-term historical tendencies, even though it did maximize the risk of war. The assumptions, however, were proven false by the October 1973 war. With the collapse of Kissinger's policies in October, the US began a slow return towards something like the abandoned Rogers Plan, but this process depends on developments within the Arab world that are presently quite difficult to assess.

The programme of de facto annexation raised with particular urgency what is called in Israel the 'demographic problem', that is, the problem posed by the existence of Arabs in a Jewish state. There are only two ways for a Jewish state to become a functioning democracy:

by restricting the 'Jewishness' of the state to mere symbolism, or by guaranteeing that all citizens are Jews. The prospects for the former seem slight, a matter to which I will return. Those who believe otherwise might well embrace the official PLO slogan of democratic secularism. The alternative policy, namely, guaranteeing that citizens are Jews, can be achieved only by a programme of expulsion. Then, indeed, Israel will be Jewish in that way that England is English, in accordance with a traditional Zionist slogan. Under the US-Israeli programme of de facto annexation, the demographic problem could no longer be swept under the rug, since the 'Jewish state' would soon have a population of Arabs approaching 50%. The Gaza strip alone would double the Arab population of Israel, and Israeli officials have repeatedly insisted that this region will remain part of Israel under any peace settlement, a position that provokes little dispute within the political mainstream. As for the future borders of the Jewish state, it is also agreed with near unanimity in Israel that the Golan Heights will be retained under any settlement, and Rabin has stated that Jewish settlement in the Jordan Valley is based "on the premise that the settlements being established will remain included within our rule."⁹ In the region west of Gaza, "new settlement outposts (are) planned for settling the Rafah approaches between Yamit and Beersheva,"¹⁰ and it is generally agreed that the border with Egypt must be removed from the Gaza strip.¹¹ Hence the "demographic problem" is severe.

Various solutions to the dilemma have been proposed. The current Premier, Yitzhak Rabin, has occasionally been quoted in the press on this issue:

"I would like to create in the course of the next 10 to 20 years conditions which would attract natural and voluntary migration of the refugees from the Gaza strip and the West Bank to East Jordan. To achieve this we have to come to agreement with King Hussein and not with Yassir Arafat."¹²

Elsewhere, Rabin has explained his current views as follows:

"We must solve the problem in a form that will permit the Palestinians, if such is their wish, to have a voice - but only in the framework of a Jordanian-Palestinian state. I do not believe that there is a place for a third state between Israel and Jordan. There is a need for a place to which it will be possible to transfer the quarter-million refugees who live in crowded conditions in the Gaza Strip. This place cannot be other than Jordan, the one state in which Palestinians were absorbed in the society, to

such a degree that they constitute half the government officials in Jordan".¹³

Rabin had expressed similar ideas before he became Prime Minister. In a symposium of Israeli ex-Chiefs of Staff, he proposed "to make such conditions that during the next ten years, there would be a natural shifting of population to the East Bank" of the Jordan. There should be a "minimum of refugees in the West Bank" and "the problem of the refugees of the Gaza Strip should not be solved in Gaza or in El-Arish, but mainly in the East Bank."¹⁴

Rabin is regarded as a dove. When his government was formed, Dayan was quoted as saying that "not in my worst dreams" could he have imagined such a cabinet.¹⁵ Actually, Dayan's view of the matter is not very different. He urges that Israel should not annex the occupied territories but should nevertheless encourage Jewish settlement freely in them and maintain military control over them. In his view, Judea and Samaria are part of the Jewish homeland and Israel should insist on the right of permanent Jewish settlement everywhere on the West Bank and the right to maintain military bases as required throughout this region.¹⁶ In the same Knesset speech in which he outlined this programme, Dayan went on to say that as for the refugees, "the Arab states now have land and water and also funds and Arab nationhood, and with all of this they can solve the refugee problem in their lands." With minor variations, this is in fact the standard position, and is commonly expressed in the United States as well. Though American Zionists are naturally displeased with the analogy, the fact remains that this position is analogous to that of extremist Arab nationalists who urge that European Jews should be resettled in Europe, where there are many European states and ample resources.

The long-range hope that somehow the Arabs will move away is no doubt one factor in the refusal by the government or much of the left-liberal opposition to contemplate a Palestinian state. A West Bank mini-state could not absorb the Arabs of Gaza along with refugees elsewhere. A Jordan-Palestine of the Rabin-Eliav variety might well absorb the Palestinians of most of cis-Jordan and elsewhere, under the guise of settlement in their former homeland of Palestine.

It appears that the Meir government actually made concrete proposals to Jordan in secret meetings, offering to permit Jordanian officials to conduct civil administration in parts of the West Bank under Israeli military occupation. Thus, the West Bank Palestinians would be Jordanian citizens, though the area would remain under Israeli military control and, presumably, Jewish settlement could also proceed. Hussein's

rule could only be imposed by force, as is generally recognised. Commenting on these secret proposals, Reserve-General Mattityahu Peled remarks that "even the worst of the European imperialist powers never reached such a degree of cynicism", namely, to abandon any responsibility for subject populations while maintaining military control over them - and in this case, we may add, guaranteeing the right of settlement by civilians of the dominant military power who claim 'historic rights' to the territory in question.¹⁷ Peled's comments are overly harsh; European imperialism is guilty of far worse. But his dismay over these plans is understandable. He adds, realistically, that Egypt will not accept such an outcome, so that this policy, apart from its moral premises, increases the likelihood of future war.

The idea of inducing Palestinian Arabs to leave has often been expressed, in one or another form, in internal Zionist discussion over the years; it is, indeed, implicit in the concept of a democratic Jewish state. One of the founders of the socialist movement in the Palestinian Yishuv, Berl Katznelson - who elsewhere advocated binationalism¹⁸ and warned that Jews would betray the Zionist ideal if they sought a Jewish state in which they would be the Poles and Arabs would be the Jews - had this to say on one occasion:

"The matter of transfer of population raises a dispute among us: permitted or forbidden. My conscience is completely silent on this matter: a distant neighbour is better than a nearby enemy. They will not lose by their transfer and we will surely not. In the final analysis - this is a political resettlement reform for the benefit of the two sides. For a long time I have thought that this is the best solution, and in the days of the riots I was confirmed in my recognition that this result must come about some day. However, it did not occur to me that the transfer 'outside of the Land of Israel' means to the neighbourhood of Shechem. I believed, and

I still believe that they must ultimately move to Syria and Iraq".¹⁹

Similar thoughts were harboured privately by other Israeli socialists. Joseph Weitz, who was director of the Jewish National Fund and Afforestation Division and one of those responsible for the 'outpost settlements' that helped determine the partition boundaries²⁰, wrote recently in Davar that in his diaries of 1940 he had recognized that "there is no room in this country for both peoples" so that the only solution is complete 'transfer' of all Arabs at least from cis-Jordan.²¹ American Zionists also view this prospect with equanimity, while insisting that the historical injustice resulting from the population transfer undertaken by imperial Rome 2000 years ago must be rectified. Thus, democratic

socialist Michael Walzer observes that "nation building in new states is sure to be rough on groups marginal to the nation", and sometimes "the roughness can only be smoothed ... by helping people to leave who have to leave,"²² even if these groups "marginal to the nation" have been deeply rooted in the country for hundreds of years, and constituted the overwhelming majority not many years ago. Walzer's point must surely be conceded, though he does not formulate it with sufficient clarity. If Israel is to be both a democratic state and a Jewish state, then non-Jews must be expelled, unless there is an evolution towards democratic secularism for which, at the moment, there are no indications and no substantial support.

Similar concepts are implicit, occasionally, even in the writings of Israeli civil libertarians. In an eloquent condemnation of the new tendency in Israel to dismiss "the humanist philosophy of the Gentiles" in favour of an allegedly 'Jewish' commitment to the superior rights of the nation, Knesset member Shulamit Aloni protested against those who settled illegally in "Judea and Samaria", pretending that they will grant equal rights to a million Arabs in Greater Israel. She argues that equal rights cannot be granted "in the framework of a binational state," offering recent events in Cyprus as a proof:

"The failure in Cyprus is not that of the United Nations. It is a failure of the binational state idea. We should remember that the proportion of Turks in Cyprus compared to the Greeks is smaller than that of the Arabs in the Land of Israel compared to the Jews".²³ Accepting, for the sake of argument, Aloni's interpretation of the facts, consider the implications of these remarks. Note first that Cyprus could hardly be called a binational state. It resembled Israel today more than a hypothetical binational state, with a Turkish minority of about the same proportions as the Arabs of pre-1967 Israel. If this idea has failed, as Aloni argues, and the only alternative is the de facto partition and 'population exchange' that took place in Cyprus after the Greek officers' coup and the Turkish invasion, then it would seem to follow that the Arabs of Israel should be expelled (or 'exchanged') after the establishment of an Arab state 'east of Israel,' including 'parts of Judea and Samaria,' as Aloni proposes. While she nowhere advocates such 'population transfer', it would appear to be implicit in her analysis.

Israel will, very likely, now attempt to create a Quisling leadership on the West Bank and to hold on to what territories it can, in the hope that sooner or later the occupation will be accepted or at worst, the failure of other methods for recovering the occupied

territories will impel the Arab states to accept the Israeli-Jordanian solution. At the Rabat conference, Hussein "complained that the United States plan called for the reestablishment of Jordanian administration in certain parts of the West Bank with the area remaining under Israeli military control"²⁴ - the Israeli plan mentioned earlier. While the Rabat conference has undercut such plans for the moment, the longer-term possibility cannot be completely discounted. Again it must be stressed that even if successfully implemented, such a programme could only delay the next major war, and would maintain the situation of economic crisis in an Israel that is forced to devote enormous resources to military preparation against adversaries of limitless wealth.

These are the likely prospects as long as US support for Israeli annexation continues. This support will probably continue, if the Arab oil-producers do not pressure the US to compel Israel to withdraw to its pre-June 1967 borders. Whether they will do so depends on nationalist forces within the Arab world: the threat of "Qaddafist" coups by nationalistic officers, popular unrest, and other obscure factors. The situation is complex, since Saudi Arabia, always the central concern of US policy in the region, has an indirect stake in Israeli power, which stands as a barrier to radical Arab nationalism and Russian influence. A tacit alliance between Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia - overt, between Israel and Iran - with Turkey in the background, is a real possibility, in the framework of a Pax Americana.

Despite this possibility, pressure on the US is likely, and despite much sabre-rattling in the American press, it will probably be effective. At this point, Israel would have two options: to yield, or to go to war in the hope of achieving a quick victory and perhaps provoking a superpower confrontation that would again cement the Israeli-American alliance. The latter option might be chosen, despite the enormous risks, if Israel senses that there is some support for it in the US.

Suppose that the US does impose a settlement by force, compelling Israel to return to the pre-1967 borders with the safeguards, such as they are, outlined in the UN Resolutions and the Rogers Plan. If Israel accepts this outcome, a Palestinian entity of some sort will be established, organised by the PLO. The result will probably be a kind of "Latin Americanization" of the region, with a network of hostile states, dependent on the US, and highly susceptible to reactionary forces within under conditions of tension and resentment.

For Israel, this arrangement is surely far less dangerous than the annexationist programmes advocated by both major political group-

ings and supported virtually without question by American Zionists. Though these groups base their public opposition to a Palestinian entity on grounds of security, this argument can hardly be taken seriously. The problems for Israel lie elsewhere. For one thing, it would be necessary to abandon the hope for integration of substantial parts of the occupied territories within Israel, with the concomitant programme of 'population transfer' discussed earlier. Furthermore, Israel would suffer a severe loss of élan and the situation might revert to the depressed conditions of 1966. A further consequence might well be an increase in emigration, as in 1966, and redirection of the Russian Jewish emigration, if it continues, towards the West,²⁵ which is not likely to be delighted with this possibility. All of this stirs ugly memories from the 1930's and the war years, when the US was pleased to have Jewish refugees from Nazism go to Palestine, but was unwilling to absorb them here, even preventing refugees from landing in the US in one notorious case, though they had post-dated US visas.

A Two-State Solution

Two states in cis-Jordan, one Jewish, one Palestinian: that would be a possible outcome of the conflict of claims to the same territory. The original General Assembly Resolution of 1947 was based on this principle, but much as changed since, including the potential boundaries of the two states. The Palestinian state would be a pale reflection of what was contemplated at Lake Success. It is possible to build a case, as is commonly done in the US, that these changes result solely from Arab intransigence, but the facts are in reality more complex. Putting interpretation of the history aside, it is possible to imagine a stable two-state settlement in cis-Jordan, essentially with the pre-1967 borders.

Such an arrangement would very likely satisfy the Arab oil-producers, since the threat of radical Palestinian nationalism would be contained. It is unlikely that Syria or Egypt would raise problems, once their irredentist demands are satisfied. The arrangement would also satisfy the primary concerns of US foreign policy: to ensure that other industrial societies do not gain independent access to the vast energy resources of the Middle East. The Soviet Union understands very well that the US will not tolerate a challenge to its domination of the region. And the other potential rivals of the US are in no position to undertake a challenge to American hegemony.

A two-state solution, which might be relatively stable, would mean the defeat, at least temporarily, of the hopes and aspirations of the Zion-

ist and Palestinian Left, in particular, the end of the Zionist dream insofar as it meant more than the establishment of a new Ulster in the Levant – and those who are aware of the history know that it did mean something other than that.

For Israel it would be preferable for a settlement of this sort to be achieved through negotiations, but that is impossible as long as Israel refuses to deal with the PLO and regards its primary negotiating partner as the US, and as long as the PLO refuses any arrangement that involves recognition of Israel or conciliation with it (see fn.2). A solution imposed by imperial force is hardly to be welcomed, but it is not easy to conjure up a preferable and feasible alternative. It appears that some segments of the Israeli left privately hope for such an outcome, as the least intolerable, under present circumstances.

A Palestinian state will be subordinated to Israel and Jordan, which will be allied to ensure that it has limited scope for development or independence. It can expect little assistance from the reactionary Arab states. The PLO should be no less able than other national movements to produce a group of leaders who can adapt themselves to this situation. The West Bank and Gaza strip might continue to provide Israel with a reservoir of cheap labour, as has been the case since 1967. It is likely that a Palestinian state will be a mirror-image of Israel: an Arab state, based on discriminatory principles much like those of its counterpart, possibly exaggerated in a state founded on despair and subservience to its neighbours. Both states, one must expect, will be based on the principle of denial of rights to citizens of the wrong category. One can expect nothing else of a Jewish state or an Arab state, just as we would know what to expect of a White state or a Catholic state. The seeds of conflict will remain. This kind of Balkanization might well satisfy American imperial interests as well as the interests of the Arab states, which will be happy to have an end to Palestinian revolutionary rhetoric. The most important consequence of the Rabat decision, from the point of view of the Arab states may be that Palestinian energy will be directed towards a little region contained within the Jordanian-Israeli alliance, posing no further threat to ruling circles elsewhere. The outcome will be a painful one for Jews and Palestinians, but, as noted at the outset, it has always been clear that if they are unable to settle their local conflict, external force will be applied to resolve it for them in a way that has little relation to their needs and interests.

Myths and Reality

Conceivably, if tensions reduce in the region, the Jewish and Palestinian

states might begin to dismantle discriminatory structures. Moves in this direction would require changes in popular attitudes and aspirations, not to speak of institutional structures, that would be virtually revolutionary. This may seem a harsh and unfair judgement, but I think that recent history tends to support it. The PLO exercises sovereignty nowhere. Thus one can only speculate about the meaning of its programmes and their likely realization. But the state of Israel has existed for more than 25 years. From its experience, we can learn a good deal about the problems of a multinational society striving for democracy. At least this is so, if we are willing to attend to the facts.

One fact is that for Israeli Jews, standards of freedom and democratic rights are easily on a par with those realized elsewhere. At the same time, Israel is a Jewish state with non-Jewish residents, some of them citizens, others stateless. Israel regards itself and is generally described as a Western-style democracy, but this characterization is misleading. In fact, the state is based on a fundamental and so far irresolvable contradiction. There is a commitment to democracy, but it is unrealizable, because the 'Jewishness' of the Jewish state is no mere matter of symbolism, but is built into the institutional structure and ideology in a fundamental manner, and is subject to little internal challenge or debate. Only confusion can result from failure to perceive that Israel is not based on the model (however imperfectly realised) of the Western democracies.

Illusions about this question are most striking in the writings of left-liberal American Zionists. Michael Walzer, a Harvard University historian and political scientist, is one of the few to have tried to deal with the issue. He writes that a democratic secular state "already exists in substance" in the former Palestine, namely the State of Israel. Hence there is no merit in the propaganda of the Palestinian organisations that demand the establishment of a democratic secular state. True, the "power of Orthodox Jews" is greater than it should be. But apart from this, Walzer perceives no departure from democratic principle in the State of Israel.²⁶ No problems of principle arise, in his view, as a result of the fact that the state is a Jewish state.

Walzer's efforts to evade the obvious give a certain insight into the intellectual level of left-liberal American Zionism. Evidently, if Israel is a Jewish state with non-Jewish citizens, then the respects in which the state is 'Jewish' will be respects in which non-Jews are denied equal rights. Thus, democratic principle is violated when a

state discriminates between two categories of citizens, the severity of the violation depending on the nature of the discrimination (insignificant in this case, if the "Jewishness" of the state is a matter of symbolism, and correspondingly important if it is not). Walzer claims to find these truisms "unintelligible". He counters with the following analogy. Suppose that Indonesia discriminates against Chinese. Then, he asks, would it be proper to say that Indonesia "is Indonesian in that respect, and therefore undemocratic"? Obviously, this would be an absurd conclusion; we would say that Indonesia is undemocratic in these respects, but not by virtue of its being an "Indonesian State". Therefore, Walzer concludes, my observations on the discriminatory character of a Jewish State must reflect an opposition to "the nationhood of the Jews (but of no one else)".²⁷

Walzer's reasoning is quite astonishing. Evidently, the appropriate analogy would pair Israel-Indonesia, Jewish-Malay, Arab-Chinese. Correcting for Walzer's gross error in reasoning, suppose that Indonesia were to define itself as a "Malay State", and were then to subject non-Malays to repression or otherwise discriminate between Malay and Chinese to the advantage of the former. Would we then say that Indonesia is Malay in these respects and therefore undemocratic, by virtue of its being a "Malay State" (the italicized phrase being the corrected version of Walzer's analogy)? The answer is obviously: Yes, we would, and we would sharply criticize the notion of a "Malay State" with non-Malay residents as violating fundamental principles of democracy. These points are so elementary that it is quite remarkable that it is necessary to spell them out in such detail. Plainly, however, these truisms are intolerable to left-liberal American Zionists such as Walzer. Therefore, they must seek to create a complex web of error and falsification in an effort to obscure the obvious.

To take another case, consider the discussion of Israeli democracy by Carl Cohen, a philosopher who has dealt extensively with problems of democracy. He arrives at conclusions quite similar to Walzer's.²⁸ He sees the Israeli record as "remarkably good", despite the trying circumstances. In his view, in Israel all citizens are full participants with equal rights regardless of national affiliation:

"Ugly terrorism, in the very bosom of daily life, has not resulted in the deprivation of rights to non-Jewish minorities. Indeed the continuing participation of Arab and other minorities in the life of the Israeli community - in local and national government, in economic and cultural activities - is a tribute not only to the self-control of the Israeli Jews but to the evident loyalty of

Israelis of all religions and backgrounds. That loyalty has rendered suppression unthinkable."

There have been certain abuses of due process, Cohen notes, and instances of discrimination "in some social circles, in some fields of employment, in some housing developments." And "handling of suspected or known terrorists, infiltrators" has sometimes not been above reproach. But the "pluralistic ideal" is remarkably close to achievement. As for the Israeli Arabs, the largest ethnic minority:

"Full civil rights - personal, political and economic - are theirs. . . With respect to rights, in theory and in practice, the Arab minority is well protected."

The ideal of democracy, with equal rights for all, "is an ideal seriously pursued, and it is, in fact, realised to a degree of which we Americans, who befriend and support Israel, may be proud".

Such observations can easily be multiplied. Like many other commentators, Walzer and Cohen never ask how it is possible for a state founded on the principle of Jewish dominance to be a democracy with equal rights for all regardless of national affiliation. They merely avoid the contradiction, following the traditional pattern of self-deception of those Zionists who spoke of a state that would be as Jewish as England is English. That sounds fair enough, until we realise that citizens of England and their offspring are English, whereas citizens of the Jewish state (or children born there) are not Jewish, unless the orthodox Rabbinate determines that they, their mothers, and their grandmothers are proper Jews in accordance with Jewish (Halakhic) law.

Israeli liberals also tend to ignore the dilemma. The Dean of Tel Aviv University Law School, Amnon Rubinstein²⁹, describing the programme of his new political grouping Shinui (Change), states that apart from the territorial concessions:

"Our two main claims are simple. We want to bridge the gap between the two communities in Israel - the Ashkenazim (European Jews) and the Eastern Jews. We are also calling for a more democratic political system, a modified electoral system and the nomination of candidates by elections within the parties."³⁰

There is, however, a third community in Israel: non-Jews, approximately 15% of the population apart from the occupied territories. It is striking, and characteristic, that their status is simply ignored.

Walzer and Cohen present no serious supporting evidence; thus it is impossible to know how they arrive at their conclusions. To test these conclusions, it would be useful to consider factual analysis or to hear what the Arabs have to say - their testimony on the matter

of Arab rights is likely to be more illuminating than the unsupported opinions of American Zionists. Neither course is very easy to pursue. As one liberal American Zionist points out in a study of Israeli society, "unhappily, social scientists have devoted little attention to the Arabs in Israel." He goes on to point out, correctly, that this is a symptom of a more general problem, that there is really no place for Arabs in the Jewish state: "the very powerful ethic of equal opportunity and full political equality must compete against the equally powerful ethic of a Jewish State."³¹ And the fact is that the latter wins, hands down. Critical Zionist analysts of Israeli society who are not social scientists also tend to ignore the Arab minority. It is, again, characteristic, that a highly regarded study entitled The Israelis should have nothing to say about those Israelis who belong to the 1/7 of the population that is not Jewish.³² There are a few studies of the Israeli Arabs by Zionist scholars, but they are, unfortunately, of little value, and largely ignore the serious issues that dominate the reports and studies produced by Israeli Arabs themselves.

As for writings by Israeli Arabs or expressions of popular opinion, these too are scanty. Contrary to the claims of American Zionists, these voices have been effectively stilled. Arab intellectuals have been heavily censored, repressed, subject to "administrative detention" or house arrest, or compelled to leave the country. It is remarkable that American civil libertarians have defended these practices, or denied the facts.³³ The most extensive discussion of the status of Arabs in Israel is in the work of Sabri Jiryis, an Israeli Arab lawyer who was confined under detention and house arrest for over a year without charge and now lives in Beirut. The picture he presents differs radically from the commentaries by left-liberal American Zionists. He gives a detailed analysis of the suppression of civil rights of Arabs, their dispossession through expropriation in the 1950's, the blocking of efforts at independent political expression, the tight controls exercised over the Israeli Arab intelligentsia, the continued application of the British Mandatory laws,³⁴ and so on. Jiryis relies primarily on Israeli sources, including Court records. As far as I can determine, his account is quite accurate. Similarly, Fouzi el-Asmar, the 'terrorist commander' of Dershowitz's inflamed imagination, now residing in the United States, has given a detailed account of the means used to expropriate Arabs, again relying on Israeli sources.³⁵ But one would have some difficulty in locating his work or the sources on which it is based, or in fact any serious

treatment of the issue in the extensive English language literature on this subject.³⁶

Reports by Israeli Arab intellectuals who are basically loyal to Israel are not entirely lacking. After a visit to Arab villages and towns in 1966, Elias Tuma, an Arab citizen of Israel until 1969, wrote that the Arabs live "in a state of disorganisation, distrust, and despair," particularly the younger generation. Arabs have given up farming and taken up wage-labour in Jewish enterprises, not from choice, but because of government land policies. "The grievances I heard against the land policy had no end". The general feel was "that the government was pursuing policies that would ultimately lead to their destruction as farmers." Charges included expropriation, refusal to grant building permits on land reserved for future Jewish settlement, state-imposed price differentials for agricultural products that support Jewish production while barely covering production costs for Arabs, and so on. "The people are convinced that the government had bad intentions toward their land and was doing all it could to expropriate them by what might seem like legal procedures." "Teachers, social workers, and white-collar employees refrained from talking unless I managed to see each one separately." They sympathised with the complaints, but were afraid to talk for fear that the numerous government informers would report what they say to the military authorities. "Those who held salaried jobs thought it wiser to be silent if they wanted to keep their jobs."

Jewish friends, Tuma reports, have little reaction to these facts. He quotes one 'highranking official':

"This is the way things are. We are in a democracy, and the minority must obey the majority. They are living better than do the Arabs under Nasser. If they do not like us, let them get out."

Since assimilation is ruled out - intermarriage is illegal and reportedly Arabs are not even permitted to take Jewish names - Tuma expects either demoralisation of the Arab community, or, conceivably, a violent insurrection. I stress again that these are the views of an Arab intellectual who is by no means hostile towards Israel.³⁷

Recall again Cohen's report of the intense loyalty of Israeli Arabs to the state, which "has rendered suppression unthinkable", and which results from the fact that "full civil rights ... are theirs."

There are a few relevant studies in Israeli sources. In one recent analysis, based on actual research, not mere impression or

belief, Ian Lustick argues that "the widening socio-economic gaps between Arabs and Jews" result from the "separation of Arabs from the institutions of power in Israeli society"; since the roots of the problem "lie in the parochial character of Israel's most basic institutions and the differential consequences of their operation for the Jewish and Arab sectors," the problem will not be resolved and may only be aggravated by a peace settlement. In his factual analysis of the issue, he describes "the anger which flows from these perceptions" of the lack of the "full rights that should accrue to (Arabs) as law abiding Israeli citizens." These rights are defined "in terms of land expropriated for use by Jewish settlements, electricity, roads, and water supplied free to Jews and at enormous expense to Arabs, the failure of the government to establish industry in the Arab sector, and the inability of Arab university graduates to secure employment outside of the teaching profession,"³⁸

While Cohen's description is far closer to the norm, such facts as are available indicate that Lustick's is far closer to the truth. It is because they comprehend very well the fundamental discriminatory institutions and practices of the Jewish State, Lustick argues plausibly, that Arabs have flocked to the Communist Party (Rakah) - a phenomenon that would be difficult to explain, if Cohen's account had any relation to the facts.³⁹

Lustick's study is particularly valuable in that it exhibits some of the means by which Jewish dominance is maintained. He studied one device that has proven very effective, namely, reliance on the Jewish Agency for agricultural development. This quasi-official body supplies electricity, paves roads, and "assumes responsibility for the supply of all basic services and housing as well as the capital base for whatever industry or agricultural development is to take place." More than \$1.2 billion has been spent by the Jewish Agency on the development of Jewish agricultural settlements since 1948. Through this device, a "tremendous gap in capital inflow" exists between the Arab and Jewish sectors, which "helps explain not only the gap in living standards between Jews and Arabs..., but also the gap in means of production." While all Jewish villages have electricity, only about half of the Arab villages do. Economic development in the Arab sector is so low that "nearly 90% of Arab village working men must travel each day to and from Jewish towns and cities in order to find employment." Furthermore, "Arabs are concentrated in low-paying, low skilled jobs, whereas Jews occupy the higher status and higher paid administrative and white collar positions," and it seems that "these

developmental gaps, in terms of job distribution, are widening rather than closing." What is important, in the present connection, is "the role which Israel's major political, economic, and governmental institutions play in maintaining this fundamental inequality" - exactly as a rational observer would expect in a Jewish State with non-Jewish citizens. No doubt this lies behind the anger of Israeli Arabs described by objective Zionist observers, and the demoralisation reported by Arab intellectuals.

Official statistics naturally require interpretation, but prima facie, they appear to reflect the policy of fostering inequality. Thus in 1973, of 1815 thousand dunams of cultivated area under irrigation, 1753 were 'Jewish farms' and 62 'non-Jewish farms'. The Arab population doubled from 1960 to 1972, but cultivated area of 'non-Jewish farms' dropped by about 12% from the near-peak year 1960-1 to 1972-3, as Arab farmers moved - hardly by choice, it appears - to other occupations, primarily construction labour.⁴⁰

The grievances against the land policies noted by Tuma and others are easy to understand. In the first decade after the establishment of the state, about 1 million dunams of land were expropriated for Jewish use, through a complicated series of legal and extra-legal manoeuvres.⁴¹ The process continued in the early 1960's under such programmes as the 'Judaization of the Galilee', the most notorious example being the expropriation of lands of Arab villages for establishment of the all-Jewish city of Karmiel; the land was originally set aside for a military reservation and local Arabs, who sensed what was coming, were officially assured at that time that there was "no basis" for their fears that this was a preliminary step towards confiscation.⁴² After the 1967 war, similar operations were conducted in the occupied territories. They continue now. According to a document submitted to the Government by the Mapam party, written largely by members of Kibbutzim in the Western Negev, in the region Southwest of the Gaza Strip about 30,000 dunams were expropriated in 1969 from "Bedouins" (who, incidentally, describe themselves as peasants), and another 120,000 in January 1972, with 6000 Bedouins evacuated. So far there has been no new land or housing provided for those evacuated, and the document reports a plan to extend the programme to an area of a million to a million and a half dunams entailing the deportation of the population of about 20,000 from all the agricultural land.⁴³ Again, the alleged grounds are "security".

In the absence of comprehensive studies utilising official documents and interviews with those directly involved, only parts of the

story can be pieced together from reports that have appeared randomly and accidentally, as in the case just mentioned, where neighbouring Kibbutzim protested. The legal basis for the various programmes is often obscure. The example that Lustick discusses - namely, reliance on a quasi-official body that carries out development and settlement programmes only for Jews - is perhaps typical.

An interesting case is the system of land laws of the state. Prior to the establishment of the State of Israel, land was purchased on behalf of the Jewish people by the Keren Kayemeth Leisrael (Jewish National Fund: henceforth, JNF). The JNF was established "for the purpose of settling Jews on such lands" as were acquired, "to make any donations ... likely to promote the interests of Jews", "to make advances to any Jews in the prescribed region," to use funds in ways which "shall in the opinion of the Association be directly or indirectly beneficial to persons of Jewish religion, race or origin".⁴⁵ The JNF is now "a public institution recognised by the Government of Israel and the World Zionist organisation as the exclusive instrument for the development of Israel lands".⁴⁶ Its earlier principles remain in force, under this new official status. The JNF is "a Company under Jewish control...engaged...in the settlement of Jews..." and promoting such settlement. Lands owned by the JNF are exclusively for Jewish use, in perpetuity. These lands "shall not be transferred either by sale or in any other manner".⁴⁷ Furthermore, non-Jewish labour cannot be employed on these lands.

Prior to 1948, the JNF was a private self-help organisation of a national group. It is now an official agency of the state. Its exclusivist principles have simply been absorbed as one element of the official policy of Jewish dominance in a Jewish state.

Under a Covenant signed between the State of Israel and the JNF in 1961, the JNF undertook to establish a Land Development Administration and to appoint its Director, "who shall be subordinate" to the JNF. This Development Administration is responsible for the "scheme for the development and afforestation of Israel lands," and "shall engage in operations of reclamation, development, and afforestation of Israel lands as the agent of the registered owners." Furthermore, "The Board for Land Reclamation and Development attached to the Keren Kayemeth Leisrael (JNF) shall lay down the development policy in accordance with the agricultural development scheme of the Minister of Agriculture", and "shall supervise the activities of the Development Administration and the manner in which it carries the Covenant into effect." This Board is headed by the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the JNF or "a person appointed in that behalf" by the JNF. The JNF itself

"shall continue to operate, as an independent agency of the World Zionist Organisation, among the Jewish public in Israel and the Diaspora...", while continuing to function as the exclusive instrument for the development of Israel lands, and with no change in the discriminatory principles cited earlier, which are natural enough in an agency of the World Zionist Organisation.

The phrase "Israel lands" refers to State-owned lands. Official figures give these as over 75% of the land within the pre-June 1967 borders, with another 14% owned by the JNF. The law permits state land to be transferred to the JNF; otherwise, it is inalienable, with minor exceptions. For over 90% of the land of the Israeli state (pre-June 1967), the Development Authority is under the control of a Company that represents not the citizens of Israel, but the Jewish people, in Israel and the Diaspora, and that is committed to the principle that it shall act in such ways as are "beneficial to persons of Jewish religion, race or origin".

Given its status as "the exclusive instrument for the development of Israel lands", it is important to determine how the JNF interprets the state's land laws in its official publications. In the 1973 Report, we read:

"Following an agreement between the Government of Israel and Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael (JNF), the Knesset in 1960 enacted the Basic Law: Israel Lands which gives legal effect to the ancient tradition of ownership of the land in perpetuity by the Jewish people - the principle on which the Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael was founded. The same law extended that principle to the bulk of Israel's State domains."⁴⁸

These laws "extended the Keren Kayemeth principles of inalienability of the soil and its use in terms of hereditary leaseholdship to all public holdings in Israel, ie, to 92% of the State's surface prior to June 1967".⁴⁹

There appears to be no basis in law for the conclusion in the official JNF Report that the JNF principle of ownership of land by the Jewish people was extended to State lands by the 1960 law. Nevertheless, one will not, of course, lightly disregard the interpretation of the law by the authority of that has exclusive responsibility for land development. We see here another example of the tendency noted earlier to shift, virtually unconsciously, from the notion "Israeli" to the notion "Jewish" - again, as one would expect in a Jewish State.

If indeed, the principle on which the JNF was founded is now interpreted by the Development Authority as applying to all state lands as well

as JNF lands, it follows that non-Jewish citizens are excluded from 9/10 of the land area of the country (pre-1967).

Efraim Orni's interpretation of the impact of the laws is rather similar to that of the JNF Report. He writes that "In 1960, the State of Israel adopted the JNF guidelines for all publicly-owned lands, ie, for over 90% of the State's area at that date", by these laws "over 90% of the country's surface had by then become public property to which the JNF's agrarian principles could be applied".

Examples of application of the laws and discriminatory practices are occasionally reported. In one recent incident, a Druze mason, a 20 year veteran of the Israeli Border Patrol, was not allowed to open a business in the all-Jewish town of Karmiel. In 1971, the Agricultural Ministry brought legal action against Jewish settlements that had leased land to non-members, mostly Arabs, "in violation of the law which prohibits the lease of national land". The practice was stopped. The incident was regarded as particularly serious because "in certain cases it was even revealed that the (Jewish) settlers leased lands to Arabs who had lived there prior to the war of independence (1948) and a situation began to develop in which Arabs were returning in an indirect way to their lands".⁵⁰ The experience of several Arab villages is reported by David Caploe.⁵¹ Lands were taken from villages "for security reasons", and later turned over to the JNF. Villagers who refuse to sell land to the JNF are harrassed until they find it difficult to refuse. In one case, villagers report that a neighbouring Mapam Kibbutz erected barbed wire fences to separate the village from its grazing lands so as to contribute to the JNF pressures on the villagers. Compensation, they allege, is far below land values. Caploe's figures indicate that the villages in question were deprived of much of their land by such measures, and that as a result most villagers must seek wage labour elsewhere. Comprehensive documentation is lacking, but the sporadic reports available give ample basis for understanding the grievances of the Arab citizens of Israel.

Two facts are particularly worth of notice with regard to the system of discrimination that has just been briefly reviewed. The first is that one has no inkling of any of this in the encomiums to Israeli democracy that appear regularly in left-liberal publications. The second and more important fact is that this system of principles is presented to "progressive opinion" in the West with considerable pride. Thus, Orni's monograph is directed to "Alert opinion in the free world, with collegiate youth in the forefront", which "is in a turmoil of soul-searching" and critical examination of "social, economic and political

relationships". "What is hoped... is that people abroad who wish to form an opinion on Israel - be it on the political, social or cultural plane - will see need to include in their study also the subject of its achievements in the agrarian sphere" - in particular, the achievements under settlement and development programs conducted by agencies that represent the Jewish people and that are based on the "ancient tradition of ownership of the land in perpetuity by the Jewish people".

The achievements in the agrarian sphere, Orni explains, are based ultimately on Biblical precept, with its "deeply-rooted sense of social justice and a consciousness of the duty to protect the community's poorer and weaker strata" - though it might be more accurate, in this case, to restrict the reference to those "of Jewish race, religion or origin". Orni notes, with some justice, that "To a surprising degree, it is possible to deduce the form and spirit of a government or a society ... from the laws, customs and arrangements it applies to immovable property". But looking at these laws, customs and arrangements we discover that they embody a remarkable and perhaps unconscious system of severe discrimination.

Orni's point is that the system governing immovable property in effect socialises such property, a testimony to the egalitarian and just character of the Israeli state. The conclusion is legitimate, insofar as we restrict attention to the Jewish majority. But there is a typical oversight: there are non-Jews in the Jewish state. Correcting for the oversight, we reach rather different conclusions.

State ownership in itself guarantees no human rights. Thus King Leopold of Belgium made the State owner of 90% of the Congo territory, so that "Native rights in nine-tenths of the Congo territory being thus declared non-existent, it followed that the native population had no proprietary right in the plants and trees growing upon that territory..."⁵² More generally, White settlement was established in Africa by

"the adopting of a white ruling race of legal measures designed expressly to compel the individual natives to whom they apply to quit land, which they occupy and by which they can live, in order to work in white service for the private gain of the white man".⁵³

To be sure, Israel is not White Africa. Far from it. But the principle of exclusive rights for the settlers who displaced the native population, and now form a majority, is deeply embedded in the institutional structures of the State, almost to the point of lack of awareness. This is a serious matter. The actual record, and the failure to comprehend it, indicates that far-reaching and quite radical changes will be necessary

if the system of discrimination is to be dismantled.

In his study, Orni points out that the 1948 war "brought in its wake a revolutionary reversal in land ownership"⁵⁵ and that "the situation created by the Six Day War (June 1967) made land redemption through purchase again a vital task". It is quite true that after 1948, substantial territories were expropriated from Arabs, including those who remained in Israel. JNF holdings increased from 936,000 dunams in May 1948 to almost 3,400,000 in 1950.⁵⁶ And after the 1967 war, the JNF began to work in the occupied territories as well. Orni alleges that: "Today, as in the past, transfers are entirely voluntary..."⁵⁷ That is far from true. In the occupied territories, the villagers of Aqraba were forced to evacuate their fields after defoliation by the Israeli Air Force; the Rafiah were expelled, their wells closed and their lands fenced in, then converted to Jewish use. Reports from within Israel, some cited earlier, indicate that all sorts of pressures have been applied to coerce (or, if one prefers, "induce") Arabs to sell land, and that in some cases, lands were simply expropriated by the state and turned over to Jewish settlement.

As for the "voluntary transfers" in the pre-state years, it may be true that the absentee landlords and feudal proprietors were willing to sell their land, but there is no lack of evidence that peasants were forcibly displaced. This was always understood by the Zionist leadership. Arthur Ruppin, who was in charge of land purchase and who played a major role in founding the binationalist Brit Shalom, wrote in 1930 that it was illusory to believe that Jewish settlement could be carried out without damaging Arab interests, if only because "there is hardly any land which is worth cultivating which is not already being cultivated, (so that) it is found that wherever we purchase land and settle it, by necessity its present cultivators are turned away, whether they are owners or tenants... The advice we tend to give the Arabs - to work their land more intensively, in order to manage with a smaller allotment of land - may appear to the Arabs as a joke at the expense of the poor" since the peasants have neither the requisite capital nor agricultural knowledge.⁵⁸ Ruppin wrote that until that time, most purchases had been of sparsely settled land, though this would no longer be possible. That is not the whole story, however. According to a Zionist pacifist who was one of the early settlers of Nahallal:

"When the land of Nahallal was purchased there was an Arab village on the hill, Mahllul. The Jewish National Fund left the Arabs some of the land so that they could subsist under the stipulation that if within six years they could refund the Jewish

National Fund they could hold the land. They could not raise the money and were forcefully removed from the land".⁵⁹

Thousands of tenants were evicted in the land purchases of the early 1920's, and in fact, years before, Zionist commentators had objected to the forceful displacement of local inhabitants.

Perhaps this is enough to underscore the obvious: the Zionist movement, from the start, could not help but injure and impinge on the rights of the people who lived in the country. Furthermore, the belief that a Jewish state with non-Jewish citizens can be a democracy guaranteeing equal rights to all is not tenable, and the practice of a quarter-century simply demonstrates that what was to be expected did in fact occur.

In the light of the factual record, the reports and analyses by American Zionist intellectuals are depressing. One can perhaps offer a rationale for the historical development on grounds of conflict of rights and greater need, and in terms of the perceived need to create a Jewish proletariat rather than a Jewish planter-aristocracy ruling the native Arab population. The problems that arose were not trivial, and granting the right of Jewish settlement, the policies of the JNF and the Yishuv in general until the establishment of the state can perhaps be justified as the least unjust option under unfortunate circumstances - though it is worthy of note that the system of discrimination against Arab labour and boycott of Arab produce was criticised from the left at the time, within the Palestinian Yishuv.⁶¹ Since the establishment of the state, no such justification is possible. It is presumably for this reason that the facts are simply ignored or denied. Thus we read that Israel is already a democratic secular state with full equality of rights for all, or that "major victories" have been won on matters of civil liberties which "still leave the Arabs cut off from whatever sense of Jewishness is fostered by the Israeli state", but nothing more; thus their situation is no different from that of minorities throughout the world, for example, Arab citizens of France who may have little interest in Bastille Day.⁶² As so often in the past, many left-liberal intellectuals are quick to deny injustice and repression in societies that claim their loyalty. Until these illusions are recognised and dispelled, there can be no serious discussion of the dangerous and explosive problems of the Middle East.

Israeli Jews also suffer from the commitment to Jewish dominance. The severe religious controls over personal life, deplored by liberal American Zionists as well as Israeli civil libertarians, are in part a result of the need to enforce a second-class status for non-Jews,

and are therefore likely to persist irrespective of the problems of coalition politics. Some basis must be established to distinguish the privileged majority from the remainder of the population. Thus, even if the majority of Jews have little interest in Judaism as a religion, it is natural that the Rabbinate is given a major role in the affairs of state and that theocratic patterns that are foreign to traditional Judaism develop. It will not be an easy matter for the Jewish majority in a Jewish state to free itself from religious intrusion into personal life.

A further concomitant of life in a society based on discrimination is the rise of all kinds of radical mythology. In the long run, this will prove damaging to a society that survives by virtue of its technical rationality, just as it is harmful to cultural and intellectual life. Such mysticism seems to have been on the rise since 1967. The issue of "historic rights" is a case in point. The first official commitment to the principle that the "historic right of the Jewish people to the land of Israel is beyond question" was in 1972, in a parliamentary motion responding to Hussein's plan for a Jordanian federation.⁶³ Although Israel will surely not impress many people by founding its case on Biblical authority, it is remarkable that a belief to the contrary is often expressed. Thus, in a mass circulation daily, Michael Deshe explains that the root problem in the Arab-Jewish conflict is that the Arabs have made a "terrible error", and "if only we can succeed in convincing our enemy-neighbours that their point of view is based on a false premise, lacking foundation," then perhaps a settlement is in sight. Their error is their failure to understand that "the original people of this land, its legal owners", have now returned to it, and that "no temporary inhabitant, even if he lives here for 1000 years," can claim superseding rights. Just as the Arab conquerors in Spain were finally driven out by its native inhabitants, so the land of Israel, which "was never an Arab land", must return to "the legal owners of the land". The Arabs must be persuaded to understand this "historical and legal fact". Even in 1967, the territories they lost were "Jewish territories," which "had been conquered in Arab hands for generations". The Arabs have "no national rights in this land", but its "true and legal owner, the Jewish people", should nevertheless graciously arrive at some compromise with the temporary Arab residents. We must explain these facts to the Arabs, thus laying the basis for a peaceful settlement, he argues, with apparent seriousness.⁶⁴

The Ministry of Education and Culture is not far behind on the matter of "historic rights". A new textbook distinguishes between "the

State of Israel", which has defined geographical borders, and "the historic land of Israel, to which the (Jewish) people was bound in all generations by prayer, customs, attempts to immigrate, and the struggles of the Messianic movements". The latter concept, which is "a significant concept from the geo-historical point of view" refers to a region that extended to parts of Syria, most of Transjordan, and parts of what are now Iraq, during the period of the First Temple, so the new texts explain. In the same report, we find that the Minister of Education explained that:

"it is important that the youth should know that when we returned to this country we did not find here any other nation, and certainly no nation that lived here for hundreds of years. Such Arab inhabitants as we found here arrived only some tens of years before us, in the thirties and the forties of the nineteenth century, as refugees from the oppression of Muhammad Ali in Egypt."

This new page of history is designed to contribute to

"the effort to reestablish Zionism, both with regard to the moral and humane character of the return to Zion, and also in the matter of the foundation of our rights to the Land of Israel. It is important that the young Israeli will be ready to debate with an educated young Arab or with the New Left that calls him an imperialist mercenary."⁶⁵

Israel can ill afford to sink into a system of mystical beliefs. In its present precarious position, a loss of the capacity for clear-headed and objective analysis can be extremely dangerous. But since 1967, there has been a dangerous drift in this direction. One example is the "vision of our own omnipotence and of total Arab ineptitude",⁶⁶ that was surely a factor leading to the "earthquake" of October 1973. I think it is not surprising that these striking changes in the mentality of the Israeli public should have come about during a period when a policy of creeping annexation raised to the fore the problem of how a Jewish state, with a serious commitment to democracy and equality of rights, would deal with a substantial population that cannot be granted these rights, consistent with the founding principle of the state.

Some Possible Alternatives

It is difficult to see how Israel and the Palestinians can extricate themselves from the dynamics outlined earlier, leading either to war, or to continued Israeli domination of most of the occupied territories with war always threatening, or to a two-state solution in cis-Jordan imposed by imperial force. But that is not to say that the Israeli or Palestinian left,

or those who sympathise with their aspirations, should adopt any such programme. The prospects for libertarian socialism in the United States, at the moment, are perhaps no greater than the apparent prospects for capitalist democracy in the 18th century. But that is plainly no reason to abandon hope. Correspondingly, in the Middle East there have always been, and remain, alternatives that are much to be preferred to the system that is evolving. In the face of current tendencies, the left may still try to work towards a very different resolution of the complex problems of Israel and Palestine.

Of course, the initiative lies elsewhere. In situations of national conflict, the initiative lies generally in the hands of chauvinistic, violent, criminal elements whose task is to embitter relations among people who must some day live in harmony if they are to survive in any decent manner at all, with such tactics as shooting up apartments with submachine guns or bombarding refugee camps with planes and gunboats. The goal may be to vanquish the enemy by force, but neither party will achieve that end, though either may succeed in creating a situation in which both national groups will be demolished, each firm in its own rectitude, marching towards destruction to the applause of blind and fanatic partisans a safe distance removed.

One possibility that might be imagined is the one already noted: dismantling of the discriminatory structure of the Jewish and (it is safe to assume) Palestinian states, if tensions reduce. For reasons explained above, such moves will require radical changes within Israel and, presumably, the new Palestinian state as well. But it is possible to work for such changes. A second possibility, which might be pursued along with the first, is to move towards integration of the two states, first through some federal structure (perhaps sooner or later including Jordan as well), and later, with the growth of trust and mutual interest, towards a binational arrangement of the sort that was advocated by much of the Zionist movement until the Second World War, based on the principle that "whatever the number of the two peoples may be, no people shall dominate the other or be subject to the government of the other".⁶⁷

It is useful to recall, in this connection, that in the period before the Second World War, Zionist leaders, particularly those associated with the labour movement that dominated the Palestinian Yishuv, forcefully opposed the idea of a Jewish state, "which would eventually mean Jewish domination of Arabs in Palestine", on grounds that "the rule of one national group over the other" is illegitimate and that the Arabs

of Palestine "have the right not to be at the mercy of the Jews".⁶⁸ It has been argued that opposition to a Jewish state within the Zionist movement was merely a cynical tactic.⁶⁹ Thus, some Arab initiatives towards binationalism were in fact rebuffed by Zionist leaders who, a few years earlier, had advocated similar positions themselves in a period of complete Arab rejection of such attempts. Some Zionist leaders have argued quite explicitly that official denial of the goal of a Jewish state was merely a tactic, a matter of waiting for the "propitious moment". In his autobiography, Nahum Goldmann condemns the chauvinist spokesman Ze'ev Jabotinsky for expressing "his political ideas at the wrong moment":

"The rightness of a political idea is never absolute; it always has a lot to do with the propitious moment. When Jabotinsky demanded, at the exciting Seventeenth Zionist Congress in 1931, that the official Zionist programme include the establishment of a Jewish state, this demand, which was rejected by the vast majority, was at that time politically absurd. If the congress had accepted this plank, continued resettlement and the peaceful conquest of Palestine would have been impossible. All of us who voted against it desired a Jewish state just as fervently as Jabotinsky did, but we knew that the time was not ripe. Not until the time seemed to have come, at the Biltmore Conference during the Second World War, did we proclaim the establishment of the Jewish State as a political demand."⁷⁰

If Goldmann and Eliav are correct, then it was pure hypocrisy for Ben-Gurion, Katznelson, and other labour Zionist leaders to expound on the injustice of the concept of a Jewish State, to "declare before world opinion, before the workers' movement, and before the Arab world, that we shall not agree, either now or in the future, to the rule of one national group over the other"⁷¹; or for Chaim Weizmann to state, in his opening speech at the 1931 Congress, that "we, on our part, contemplate no political domination" but rather "would welcome an agreement between the two kindred races on the basis of political parity."⁷²

I very much doubt the accuracy of Goldmann's interpretation, many years after the event and after a Jewish State had in fact been established. Views such as those just cited were commonly expressed in internal memoranda and discussions, and in a context that suggests that the commitment to non-domination was undertaken with extreme seriousness. It should be recalled that this was a period of intense class struggle as well as national conflict in Palestine, a period when a

labour leader like Ben-Gurion could not only oppose Jabotinsky's call for a Jewish State, but also his advocacy of fascist-style organisation and strike-breaking, and could in fact write an article entitled "Jabotinsky in the footsteps of Hitler". Socialist and humanist forces within the Zionist movement, particularly in the Yishuv, were very powerful. Given the historical circumstances and the social context, one must, I think, reject Goldmann's cynical assessment, and accept rather the conclusion of Susan Lee Hattis in her recent study⁷³ that "There is no doubt that during this phase (1931) Mapai was advocating a binational state in Palestine", as were workers groups to its left, and also liberal currents within the World Zionist Organisation, Katznelson defined the general concept, rather vaguely to be sure, in the following way at the time:

"What then constitutes a bi-national state? It is a state whose two nationalities enjoy an equal measure of freedom, independence, participation in government, and rights of representation. Neither nationality encroaches upon the other. The term 'bi-nationalism' as a whole is of import only if it is expressed in political-judicial norms securing the principle of the political parity of the nationalities. This it is that converts the state into a State of nationalities, differing fundamentally from the national State...What it signifies is that a bi-national political order does not recognise the population at large but takes cognisance of its national segments to both of which the right to share in shaping the country's regime is secured in equal measure and both of which are equally entitled to guide its destinies".⁷⁴

This is not to deny that socialist Zionists would no doubt have preferred a situation in which there were no Arabs to concern themselves about. But they also recognised that in the real world, the Arabs did exist and lived on the land, and constituted a large majority of the population. Similarly non-socialist groups such as Brit Shalom observed that bi-nationalism "is not the ideal but the reality, and if this reality is not grasped Zionism will fail"⁷⁵ - at least, 'Zionism as understood generally by left and liberal Zionists would fail.

A great deal happened in subsequent years to undermine these convictions and reverse the direction of the Zionist movement. The bitter conflict in Palestine in 1936-39 was one such factor, but dominating everything, was the rise of Nazism and the growing awareness that it implied the destruction of European Jewry. Particularly after the British White Paper of 1939, limiting Jewish immigration to Palestine, other and more urgent demands displaced the ideals of left and liberal Zionism, and in

1942 the demand for a Jewish state was adopted as official policy. To use Goldmann's phrase, "the time was not ripe" for advocacy of binationalism, or so it might be argued. But history moves on, and it may be that the time is now ripe to resurrect the basic principles of the Zionism of a different era. The general principle that neither of the two national groups should dominate or be subservient to the other was a valid one when it was enunciated, and it might once again be adopted by the left, within Israel and among the Palestinians. It can, of course, only serve now as a general principle under which left-wing movements might conceivably unite. As a recent editorial statement in a socialist Israeli journal puts it, "binationalism could... be a banner or a long-range programme on which Jews and Arabs could unite and which could make them readier to yield the short-range concessions that more immediate agreements will demand".⁷⁶

If each of the national movements presents to the other a face of stony intransigence, short-term accommodation is not very likely. Within the framework of a broader long-term programme that might, if it can eventually be realised, satisfy the just demands of both groups for national institutions, equal rights, social justice, and access in principle to all of the territory of the former Palestine, short-range accommodation may well be facilitated. While it is natural to suppose that one's ends can only be attained by "constructing facts" through the use of force and armed struggle, the conclusion is not necessarily correct. I think, in fact, that it is far from correct, and that it is, furthermore, suicidal as a guide to policy, both for Israeli Jews and Palestinians.

Assuming that two states will be established - under present circumstances, probably by imperial force - moves towards internal democratisation and towards federal arrangements might well be contemplated. Such programmes are not without support within Israel. The President of the Council of the Sephardic Community in Israel, Elie Eliachar, has sharply criticised the refusal of the Europe-oriented Israeli leadership to recognise Palestinian nationalism, to seek good relations with the local Arab population, or to bring authentic voices of the Oriental Jewish community into the "establishment", for fear of "levantinisation" and "Arabisation" of the society. He expresses his hope that if these policies change, there will eventually be "some form of federal arrangement" between Israel and a "future Palestinian entity," with Jerusalem as the shared capital.⁷⁷ Other proposals along similar lines have also occasionally appeared. In the 1967-73 period, Israel had a real opportunity to move in this direction. Such moves

might have made a good deal of sense, had they been based on the traditional Zionist principle of equality and non-domination. The barrier was never security; on the contrary, such programmes would have substantially reduced the security risk by offering an acceptable long-term political solution to the Palestinians. Again, it must be stressed that security for Israel lies in political accommodation and creation of bonds of unity and solidarity with the Palestinian population, not in military dominance, which will at best only delay an eventual catastrophe, given the historical political, and economic realities. The problem was not security, but rather the commitment to Jewish - in fact, European Jewish - dominance in the Jewish State. While the opportunities of the 1967-73 period have now been lost, nevertheless, under the changed circumstances, certain possibilities still exist.

Either of the possibilities mentioned - democratisation or moves towards further integration - require substantial, if not revolutionary changes in popular attitudes and aspirations. It seems to me reasonable to suppose that such changes could only come about as part of a broader movement of the left seeking social justice, and ultimately, radical reform or social revolution. Within such a context, the common needs of Jews and Palestinians could find expression, even granting the stability of national ties. I emphasise again that within the framework of a long-term programme of reconciliation, it is possible to imagine short-term steps that would otherwise be difficult to initiate. It is unrealistic to dismiss long-range proposals as "utopian". They may provide the only basis for the simpler and more immediate steps that will reduce tension, permit the growth of mutual trust and the expression of common interests that cross national lines - specifically, class interests - and thus lay the groundwork for an eventual just and peaceful settlement.

By their very nature, programmes of democratisation, federation or socialist binationalism cannot be advanced by armed struggle, military force, or outside intervention. They must arise from forces within each of the national movements that are now engaged in a bitter and suicidal struggle, forces that will never be able to crystallise or progress under conditions of conflict. Taking at face value the PLO programme of democratic secularism, one must surely conclude that the commitment in principle to armed struggle aimed at the destruction of Israeli social and political institutions is a hopelessly irrational strategy, which can only make the alleged end even more impossible of attainment that it presently seems to be.

With the collapse of the pre-October 1973 policy of annexation, it

is to be expected that the Israeli government will also put forth some version of a federal solution, as the only means for maintaining control of the occupied territories in coordination with an imposed Quisling leadership. According to a recent report, Israeli Defence Minister Shimon Peres announced in a talk in Tel Aviv "that he favours a federation between Israel and the Arabs of the west bank, excluding the PLO".⁷⁸ Such proposals are entirely meaningless. The condition that the PLO must be excluded means that the State of Israel will determine what is "acceptable political expression" within the West Bank, which will therefore remain nothing but a colony of a Greater Israel. Peres's proposal fails on three counts: (1) it does not arise from each of the two communities that are to enter into federation, but is to be imposed on one by the other; (2) it is not based on the principle of equality and non-domination; (3) it is too late. That is, a proposal of this sort, despite its defects of principle, might have had some meaning prior to October 1973 when it could have been interpreted as a gesture by Israel, perhaps ultimately meaningful, towards political accommodation. Now its meaning is all too plain. The fact that the proposal is made at all signifies a belated recognition that the policy of force was a grave error. Unfortunately, the error cannot be rectified by the means proposed.

Let us suppose, as a point of departure, that a two-state solution is imposed by the great powers in cis-Jordan. Add further the reasonable supposition that the Palestinian state will mimic the Jewish state in its discriminatory institutions and in the ties of the dominant majority to an external "nation". Socialist elements within the two states, should they survive an imperial settlement, ought then to turn their attention to combatting discriminatory institutions and practices as well as the structures of exploitation and oppression within each state. Right-wing elements will have their own reasons for maintaining tensions and hostility, if only to suppress the class struggle. Correspondingly, socialist movements will seek to reduce inter-state tension and will search for allies across national and state lines. They should, I believe, place on the agenda, within each society, a programme for federalism worked out by cooperating socialist forces within the two states and coupled with a programme for social change. The inevitable tendency towards discrimination against the national minority might be alleviated somewhat within a federal structure. Furthermore, the very existence of such a joint programme, even if its realisation is only a future possibility, should facilitate moves towards relaxing hostilities.

A federal system would involve a sharing of political power between a centralised authority and two regions. It is then possible to envision further steps, natural for libertarian socialists at least, towards distribution of political power among municipalities or cantons with a varied mixture of Jews and Arabs. Socialists will work for democratisation of the economy through worker's councils, with higher economic integration of production and regional units through federation. Two parliaments might be established, one Jewish, one Arab, each with veto power over decisions affecting international relations or state policy. National institutions might exist, side by side, for the organisation of cultural and social life. Options should also exist for individuals who choose to identify themselves not as Jews or as Arabs, but in different terms. Thus, there should be a possibility to live one's life simply as a citizen. Workers' organisations will develop joint interests, along class rather than national lines, and might in the course of time discover that their fundamental interests will be realised only through common programmes to create a socialist society that might well preserve parallel national institutions, either throughout the common territory, or through a cantonal federal arrangement. Immigration should give priority to Jews and Palestinians. Depending on events elsewhere, there might be moves towards a broader Middle East federation, or closer relations with socialist movements in Europe and elsewhere.

In earlier periods, some detailed programmes were developed for a binational state.⁷⁹ In many parts of the world, socialist movements must seek a way to combine a commitment to socialist revolution with a recognition of national and ethnic bonds within complex multinational societies. In the advanced industrial societies as well, ethnic and racial conflicts stand in the way of movements for social change, and are often manipulated and exacerbated for the purpose of preserving privilege and oppression. Ultimately, socialist movements must be internationalist in their orientation, but "internationalism" does not imply opposition in principle to national ties or to other forms of voluntary association among individuals.

Developments within the industrial societies will naturally set certain bounds on what can be achieved elsewhere. Socialist internationalism is the only force that can prevent imperialist intervention in the long run, or that can solve the critical problems of the global economy. While these principals - truisms, I believe - must be kept in mind, still there are significant steps that can be taken by the left in particular regions such as the Middle

East, with the support of sympathetic groups outside. Such steps might, perhaps, lead towards a peaceful and just resolution of local conflicts, and even contribute to the growth of an international movement that may be able to face and overcome the problems that arise in a world of authoritarian states and oppressive institutions and practices.

Footnotes

1. Cf. Christopher Sykes, Crossroads to Israel, World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1965, pp 305-6
2. I will return below to the American scene and the claim by left-liberal American Zionists that Israel already is a democratic secular state. On the tendency in left-liberal American circles to identify, if only tacitly, with the Israeli right, see my Peace in the Middle East?, Pantheon, 1974, chapter 5. It has been suggested to me that the comparison in the text is unfair to the PLO in that I give no reason to doubt their commitment to a true democratic secularism. A careful look at the documents will show, however, that the PLO speaks only of a democratic secular state within the framework of "comprehensive Arab unity," offer- to Israeli Jews no prospect other than that of a tolerated minority within an "Arab nation". While the PLO is willing to administer territories released from Israeli occupation, it remains opposed to any plan that involves recognition of Israel, conciliation with it, renunciation of national rights of Palestinians (as part of the Arab nation) anywhere in the former Palestine (Political Programme, Palestinian National Council, June 1974). Officially, "the aim of the Palestinian revolution is to liquidate (the Zionist) entity in all its aspects, political, military, social, trade unions and cultural, and to liberate Palestine completely", so that all its citizens may "coexist with equal rights and obligations within the framework of the aspirations of the Arab nation to unity and progress" (Unified Command of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, May 6, 1970; still in force). Jews, in contrast, are denied any national rights within this scheme; only Arabs constitute a "nation". In what Fatah has described as "transitional collective accommodations immediately after liberation," Jews "would have the right to practice their religion and develop culturally and linguistically as a group, besides their individual political and cultural

participation" ("Towards a Democratic State in Palestine," Second World Congress on Palestine, Sept. 1970). Thus even the rights taken for granted under any system that pretends to democracy are regarded only as "transitional", as regards Jews in the future Arab state. Evidently, this programme entails that all segments of Israeli society will be united to resist the liquidation of all their political, social and cultural institutions, and the abrogation of any national rights within an Arab state, part of the Arab nation. Thus the only programme offered is suicidal, as well as objectionable.

3. For more extensive discussion of this and other issues touched on here, see my Peace in the Middle East
4. "Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians," Consulate General of Israel, Philadelphia, Sept. 1974
5. Interview, July 1974. This and Allon's statement, and other expressions of Israeli government policy, can be found in the Background Memorandum, "The Palestine Question and its Implications", American Jewish Committee, October 1974. On the recent evolution of Israeli attitudes towards the Palestinians, and the matter of the "historic rights" of the Jewish people and their scope, see Yeshaayahu Ben-Porat, Yediot Ahronot, July 19, 1974
6. For some discussion of Palestinian opinion in these territories, based on extensive interviews, see Ian Lustick, "What do the Palestinians Want?" New Outlook, Tel Aviv, February, 1974
7. Arie Lova Eliav, Land of the Hart, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1974, pp. 144-5. This post-October 1973 revision of a Hebrew original appears with the comment that it expresses an "extraordinary anti-Establishment position". Eliav has been regarded in the West as a leading voice of protest against the annexationist policies of the recent past.
8. Jerusalem Post, Oct. 17, 1974; cited in SWASIA, vol. 1, no. 40, Nov. 1, 1974, National Council of Churches. The most recent example is the plan for a new industrial centre between Jerusalem and Jericho. Cf. Terence Smith, NY Times, Nov. 25, 1974
9. Ha'aretz, July 24, 1974
10. Davar, Aug. 21, 1974. Cited in Israleft News Service, no. 46, POB 9013, Jerusalem, Sept. 15, 1974. Yamit is a new deep water port to be developed west of Gaza.

11. Cf. Eliav, op.cit, p. 238. "The Americans agree with us... that the Gaza Strip should not be returned to Egypt or have a common border with Egypt".
12. Francis Ofner, "Sketching Rabin's Plan for Peace," Christian Science Monitor, June 3, 1974, dispatch from Tel Aviv
13. Yediot Ahronot, July 23, 1974. Emphasis added.
14. Ma'ariv, Feb. 16, 1973.
15. Ofner, op. cit.
16. Ha'aretz, July 24, 1974
17. Mattityahu Peled, "The Imagination is Dwarfed by the Reality", Ma'ariv, Aug. 9, 1974
18. Cf. Susan Lee Hattis, The Bi-National Idea in Palestine During Mandatory Times, Shikmona, Haifa, 1970, and Aharon Cohen, Israel and the Arab World, Funk and Wagnalls, New York, 1970 for some of his views. For some quotes, see my Peace in the Middle East?, pp. 33-4
19. Cited by the Israeli novelist Moshe Shamir, a spokesman for the maximalist Greater Israel Movement, in Ma'ariv, August 9, 1974 from Katznelson's Writings, vol. 12, p. 361, on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of his death.
20. Cf. Efraim Orni, Agrarian Reform and Social Progress in Israel, Keren Kayemeth Leisrael (Jewish National Fund), Jerusalem 1972
21. For fuller quotes and references, see my Peace in the Middle East?, pp. 109, 130-1; and Walter Lehn, "The Palestinians: Refugees to guerillas," Middle East Forum, Spring 1972
22. Michael Walzer, "Nationalism, internationalism, and the Jews: the chimera of a binational state", in Irving Howe and Carl Gershman, eds., Israel, the Arabs and the Middle East, Bantam, 1972
23. Shulamit Aloni, Yediot Ahronot, August 9, 1974; translated in SWASIA, vol. 1, no. 33, Sept. 13, 1974. By the "Land of Israel" she must be referring to all of cis-Jordan.
24. NY Times, Oct. 31, 1974.
25. According to the American Jewish press, 5% of the 90,000 Jews who had immigrated to Israel from the USSR since the inception of large-scale emigration have left for other countries. "The figures are not that reassuring, however, when it is considered that a larger and larger percentage of Jews who leave Russia and reach the staging area at Vienna opt not for Israel but for the United States, Canada and other western havens. This figure has been put at as large as 22 percent. The Russian emigrants

from Israel are provided no help by the JDC, "the arm of world Jewry that is entrusted with the task of providing assistance for Jews leaving countries where they are in distress." They are cared for by Catholic charities, a fact "which raises a number of questions". Jewish Post and Opinion, New York, Oct. 18, 1974

26. Op. cit. cf. note 22
27. Correspondence, NY Times Book Review, Dec. 1, 1974
28. Carl Cohen, "Democracy in Israel", The Nation, July 20, 1974
29. Rubenstein is regarded in the US as a civil libertarian, but his writings in Israel show that this reputation is undeserved. See his slanderous attack on Professor Israel Shahak, chairman of the Israel League for Civil and Human Rights (Ha'aretz, Oct. 10, 1974): Ha'aretz refused to grant Shahak any opportunity to reply. Rubinstein's attack appears in translation, with several responses from the Israeli press exposing Rubenstein's lies and deploring his repressive principles in SWASIA, vol. 1, no. 42, Nov. 15, 1974, and Israleft news service, no. 49, Nov. 1, 1974. Shahak, an outspoken opponent of all terrorism and violence and a courageous defender of civil rights, has also been the target of much abuse and outright falsification by American Zionists; for one example, see my Peace in the Middle East?, p. 197, discussing false accusations by Professor Alan Dershowitz of the Harvard Law School. Though Shahak's colleagues at the Hebrew University have been forthright in defence of his right to express himself on political issues, the attacks in the Israeli press continue. The most scandalous of these is an article by Lea Ben Dor, Jerusalem Post, Nov. 8, 1974, which ends by asking: "What shall we do about the poor professor? The hospital? Or a bit of the terrorism he approves? A booby-trap over the laboratory door?"
30. Jean-Claude Guillebaud, Le Monde, April 20, 1974; translated in the Guardian Weekly (London-Manchester) April 27, 1974.
31. Leonard J. Fein, Israel: Politics and People, Little, Brown and Co., 1967, pp. 77-80
32. Amos Elon, The Israelis: Founders and Sons, Holt Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1971. Elon, who is generally skeptical and sophisticated, does devote a few pages to the Arab mind, uncritically repeating some fatuous remarks about Arab society as a "shame society". For discussion, in the context of a general analysis of racism and Orientalism, see Edward Said, "The War and Arab Society: the shattered myths", unpublished manuscript, 1974.
33. See, eg, Alan Dershowitz, "Civil liberties in Israel", in Howe and

Gershman, eds., op. cit. Dershowitz asserts that the Israeli Arab poet Fouzi el-Asmar was the "commander" of a group engaged in "terrorist activities". While no credible evidence was ever presented to justify his preventive detention for 15 months in an Israeli prison, or his confinement to Lydda afterwards, Dershowitz states that it is his "personal conviction", on the basis of evidence presented to him by Israeli counter-intelligence, that the charges are true. Dershowitz's casual attitude towards the facts in this regard is a matter of record. See the reference of note 29. It would seem appropriate, in the absence of any credible evidence, for him to desist from such slanders. See the responses to Dershowitz's article, which originally appeared in Commentary, in June 1971.

34. These laws were described by the first Knesset as "incompatible with the principles of a democratic state". They are still in effect, apart from provisions relating specifically to Zionist institutions and activities, which were rescinded immediately upon the establishment of the State of Israel. It is noteworthy that in 1946, Y.S. Shapira, later to be Attorney-General of Israel and Minister of Justice, described these laws as "unparalleled in any civilised country; there were no such laws even in Nazi Germany..." For Jiryis's investigations, see his monographs The Arabs in Israel, 1968, translation from the Hebrew edition, and Democratic Freedoms in Israel, 1972; Institute for Palestine Studies, Beirut.
35. Fouzi el-Asmar, "I will Remember the Land", undated (1973-4), American Jewish Alternatives to Zionism, Inc., Suite 404, 133 E. 73rd St., New York.
36. The Journal of Palestine Studies, Beirut, has had several articles dealing with some facets of these matters. Cf. also Nathan Weinstock, Le sionisme contre Israel, Maspero, Paris, 1969; Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, The Transformation of Palestine, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1971; and other publications of the Institute of Palestine Studies. These are all anti-Zionist sources.
37. Elias H. Tuma, "The Arabs in Israel: an impasse", New Outlook, Tel Aviv, March-April, 1966. Parts are reprinted in his Peace-making and the Immoral War, Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1972, pp. 63ff., from which these quotes are taken.
38. Or in this profession, if they appear too independent or critical of official ideology. Cf. Tuma's report (note 37) which is borne

out by observations of others who have had contact with Israeli Arabs. Cf. also the reference of note 39.

39. Ian Lustick, "Israeli Arabs: Built-in inequality", New Outlook, July 1974. The publications of the Jewish-Arab Communist Party Rakah give some indication of how many Israeli Arabs really feel about their status in Israel. One might usefully compare this record with Cohen's impressions about the matter. See, for example, the discussion of educational policy by Knesset member Tawfiq Zayyad, reported in the Information Bulletin: Communist Party of Israel, September, 1974.
40. Figures from Statistical Abstract of Israel, Central Bureau of Statistics, Israeli Government, Jerusalem, Cf. also Yechiel Harari, ed., The Arabs in Israel: Statistics and Facts, Centre for Arab and Afro-Asian Studies, Givat Haviva, 1970. It is asserted here that the disparity in cultivated land under irrigation results from "the geographical position of most of the Arab lands" (p. 27). The statistical tables in the Abstracts are subdivided into Jewish, non-Jewish, and "mixed settlements" in which both Jews and Arabs live (Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Yafo - a bit misleading, since few if any Arabs live in Tel Aviv - Haifa, Akko, Lod and Ramla); but there are no "mixed farms" since Jewish farms are generally on land reserved by law for Jews. We thus have the additional irony that the Kibbutzim, the purest model of socialist democracy in existence, are subject to discriminatory land laws, to which I return. The Statistical Abstracts give other disturbing figures. Thus, the death rate for non-Jewish infants in the "mixed settlements" is almost three times as high as for Jewish infants (and considerably higher than in Arab towns and villages); Abstract, 1971, p. 64
41. For analysis, see the works by Jiryis, cited earlier. Also, Weinstock, op. cit. I have found no discussion in Zionist sources.
42. For an informative account of these events and the protests against them, see Uri Davis's contribution to Martin Blatt, Uri Davis, and Paul Kleinbaum, eds., Resistance to the Draft in Israel, 1948-72, Ithaca Press, London, 1975. Davis was sentenced to 8 months in prison for entering a military zone without a permit, as part of the protests against expropriation of land of Arab villages for the establishment of Karmiel. Some relevant documents are collected in "Din re-Cheshbon Karmiel", Uri Davis and Shimon Shereshevsky.

43. Daniel Degan, Ma'ariv, August 29, 1974.
44. The fraudulence of these grounds has repeatedly been exposed in the Israeli press. Cf. Peace in the Middle East?, p. 47, also pp. 41, 125. See also Lea Ben Dor, Jerusalem Post, Nov. 8, 1974, reporting (with much disdain) the Knesset debate in which Meir Pail, former Commander-in-Chief of the Central Officers' School of the Israeli Army, points out that no question of security was involved in the displacement of the Bedouins (he gives the figure of 300,000 dunams of land from which they had been expelled). In fact, "the army had moved out to take Beersheba in 1948, from the house of a sheikh of one of the dozen or more tribes involved" (Ben Dor). Although the security arguments are ridiculed by knowledgeable Israelis, in the press and elsewhere, they are accepted as gospel by American Zionists. To take an extreme case, Walzer claims that "There is no 'systematic pattern' of expulsions of Arabs from Arab lands except in militarily sensitive areas", (Correspondence, NY Times Book Review, Dec. 1, 1974). It would be interesting to know which areas Walzer regards as not "militarily sensitive".
45. Report on the Legal Structure, Activities, Assets, Income and Liabilities of the Keren Kayemeth Leisrael, Keren Kayemeth Leisrael Head Office, Jerusalem, 1973; pp 17, 19, 21, 56-8
46. Ibid., p. 5; the heading of the section entitled "Legal Structure".
47. Ibid., pp. 18, 86.
48. Ibid., p. 6. The 1961 Covenant, cited earlier, appears as Appendix D.
49. Seventy Years in Facts and Figures, Keren Kayemeth Leisrael, Jerusalem, 1971. Taking the official Report to be reliable, I wrote in Peace in the Middle East?, p. 14. that "In 1960, the Knesset...enacted the Basic Law: Israel Lands, extending to state lands the principles of the Jewish National Fund", noting that official figures give the territory covered as 92% of the state's surface (pre-1967); this would entail that non-Jews are excluded from living or working on 9/10 of the state's surface. As we shall see directly, however, the JNF Report is not accurate in its account of the wording of the law. I have found only one serious study of the JNF, namely, Walter Lehn, "Zionist Land: the Jewish National Fund" J. of Palestine Studies, Summer, 1974. Lehn concludes that under the Basic Land Law and the Covenant, "JNF restrictive policies regarding the sale and leasing of land were applied to all state lands, which together

with JNF lands constitute 90% of the land in Israel." In a footnote he cites additional laws which, according to his analysis, lead in practice to restriction of these lands to Jews. I have found very little discussion of this topic in Israeli or Zionist sources. Professor Uzzi Ornan of the Hebrew University has discussed the matter. He concludes that by virtue of the laws and Covenant cited, "the principles of the JNF apply to all the lands for which the State Land Authority is responsible", thus restricting these lands (he gives the figure of 95% within the pre-1967 borders) to Jewish use (Ma'ariv, Jan. 30, 1974). Elsewhere, he writes that a Jew can obtain a residence on state land, but that a non-Jew requires an official "agreement" that is given only with several "residence limits" (Ha'aretz, March 18, 1971).

50. Ha'aretz, Nov. 5, 1971.
51. David Caploe, "Discrimination by law", Middle East International, July 1974.
52. E. D. Morel, The Black Man's Burden, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1969, p. 116, cited in Chinweizu, The West and the Rest of Us, Random House, 1975
53. J.A. Hobson, Imperialism, Ann Arbor, U. Michigan, 1965, p. 265; cited in Chinweizu, op. cit.
54. Left-liberal Israeli commentators have pointed out, however, that the comparison is far from absurd. Thus, Michael Bruno, a Hebrew University economist who is director of research at the Bank of Israel, points out that if the occupied territories are retained, Israel will become "either a binational state or another Rhodesia". Cf. Michael Bruno, "Israeli policy in the 'administered territories'," in Howe and Gershman, eds., op. cit. On parallels to White Africa, see Segal, op. cit.
55. Op. cit., p. 64
56. Figures from Lehn, "Zionist land", from JNF sources
57. Cf. Orni, op. cit., p. 64. Orni gives the figure for lands owned by the JNF in 1970 as 2586 sq. km., with another 500 sq. km. placed at its disposal by the Government. The territory within the pre-1967 borders is 20,700 sq. km., of which 445 sq. km. is water. He says that over 15,000 sq. km. additional is State land. The various figures cited are not precisely consistent, but are rather close.
58. Cited in Hattis, op. cit., pp. 48-9
59. Nathan Khofshi, in Blatt, Davis and Kleinbaum, op. cit.

60. Cf. Sykes, op. cit., pp. 89-93
61. Cf. Y. Ts. Kolton, Lesheelat Hayehudim Ufitrona (On the Jewish Question and its Solution), Tel Aviv, 1932. He also shows how the policy of land acquisition gave the Zionist movement a stake in the feudal system and led to opposition to land reform and economic development. Similarly, the policy of "conquest of labour" and open immigration led even the labour movement to oppose such measures as employment relief for Arabs, and stood in the way of efforts by Arab workers to organise and fight for higher wages.
62. Cf. Michael Walzer, review of Peace in the Middle East?, New York Times Book Review, Oct. 6, 1974.
63. Cf. Walter Schwarz, "Israel's new horizons", Guardian Weekly (Manchester-London), April 8, 1972. Also Ben-Porat, op. cit. On the rise of religious mythology in Israel since 1967, even among socialists, see Benjamin Beit-hallahmi, "Religion and nationalism in the Arab-Israeli conflict", Il Politico, University of Pavia, vol. 38, no. 2
64. Michael Deshe, "The source of the conflict - the terrible mistake of the Arabs", Ma'ariv, Sept. 3, 1974
65. Amos Ben-Vered, "An undefined right", Ha'aretz, Sept. 9, 1974
66. Abba Eban, Interview, New Republic, March 23, 1974
67. Nahum Sokolov, as he was elected President of the World Zionist Organisation in 1931. Cf. Aharon Cohen, op. cit.
68. David Ben-Gurion. For discussion of this period and changes of attitude later, see my Peace in the Middle East?, foreword, introduction, chapter 1, and literature cited there.
69. Cf. Sykes, op. cit. Similarly, Eliav argues that at no time could there have been any doubt that the purpose of Zionism was the establishment of a Jewish state (op. cit., p. 27). On attitudes of Palestinians during this period, see Yehoshua Porat, The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement: 1918-1929. He demonstrates that Palestinian opinion was at all times strongly anti-Zionist, for perfectly understandable reasons. Palestinian nationalism emerged at about the time of World War I. After a brief period of interest in union with Syria, largely motivated by the hopes that an independent Syria incorporating Palestine could block Zionist initiatives, Palestinian opinion, insofar as it received overt expression, was generally committed to the independence of Palestine as an Arab State.
70. The Autobiography of Nahum Goldmann, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969, pp. 101-2

71. Ben-Gurion, 1931, before the World Zionist Congress. See my Peace in the Middle East?, p. 36, and references cited there.
72. Hattis, op. cit., p. 91
73. Ibid., p. 97
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid., p. 46
76. Shmuel B'ari, New Outlook, Nov-Dec., 1969, in a critical commentary on an article of mine that appears in the same issue.
77. Elie Eliachar, "The road to peace: Israel is an integral part of the Middle East", New Outlook, Feb. 1974. Cf. also Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, editorial, Jewish Spectator, Fall, 1974 (New York)
It is worth noting that after the 1967 war, the military commander of the West Bank, General Haim Herzog, proposed that some Palestinian formation be encouraged on the West Bank "to work against the PLO", and that he was approached by West Bank notables with a request that such political organisation be permitted on the West Bank. Even this was not allowed by the allegedly "enlightened" Israeli military occupation, and in fact, Herzog states, government censorship prevented the Israeli press from reporting his proposal. See Emda, no. 3, December 1974, Tel Aviv. Plainly the objective to political organisation by West Bank conservatives was not based on considerations of security. Rather, it indicates that even at that stage, the government of Israel was contemplating some long-range plan of incorporation of the occupied territories.
78. AP, Boston Globe, Nov. 19, 1974. Information Minister Aharon Yariv followed with some remarks suggesting that local autonomy on the West Bank, excluding the PLO, might eventually "lead to a federated status for the area". Terence Smith, NY Times, Nov. 24, 1974.
79. For discussion, see the works by Aharon Cohen and Hattis cited in note 20. Also, references of note 78. See also Don Peretz, "A binational approach to the Palestine conflict", Law and Contemporary Problems, Duke University School of Law, Winter, 1968 (reprinted by the Jewish Peace Fellowship, Box 271, Nyack, New York); Norman Bentwich, "The bi-nationalist solution", New Outlook, March-April, 1970. Outside of the United States it is possible to discuss the issue in a rational way. Thus, even such a relatively orthodox British Zionist as T.R. Fyvel can criticise American Jewish academics because they have not "turned out studies in bi-nationalism designed to help solve this Middle East conflict". Letter, New Middle East, February, 1970.

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and E. Lobel (eds.) The Arab World and Israel (New York and London, 1970).

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ANDREW MACK, lectures in International Politics at Flinders University in Australia. A former Research Administrator and Research Fellow at the Richardson Institute, he has written a number of articles on guerrilla warfare, counter-insurgency and imperialism. He is also co-author of War Without Weapons (New York, 1975) and is currently researching a book on the domestic impact of imperialist wars.

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TEODOR SHANIN, is Professor of Sociology at the University of Manchester. His main fields of interest include the sociology of peasant societies, political sociology and the sociology of knowledge. His publications include The Awkward Class, Peasants and Peasant Societies and The Rules of the Game. Professor Shanin is also co-editor of the Journal of Contemporary Asia.

KOKHAVI SHEMESH is a former Leftist leader of the Israeli Black Panther Organisation.

PAMELA ANN SMITH is a political scientist, journalist and former member of the May 15th Coalition (Boston). She is currently writing a book on class and kinship in Palestinian society.

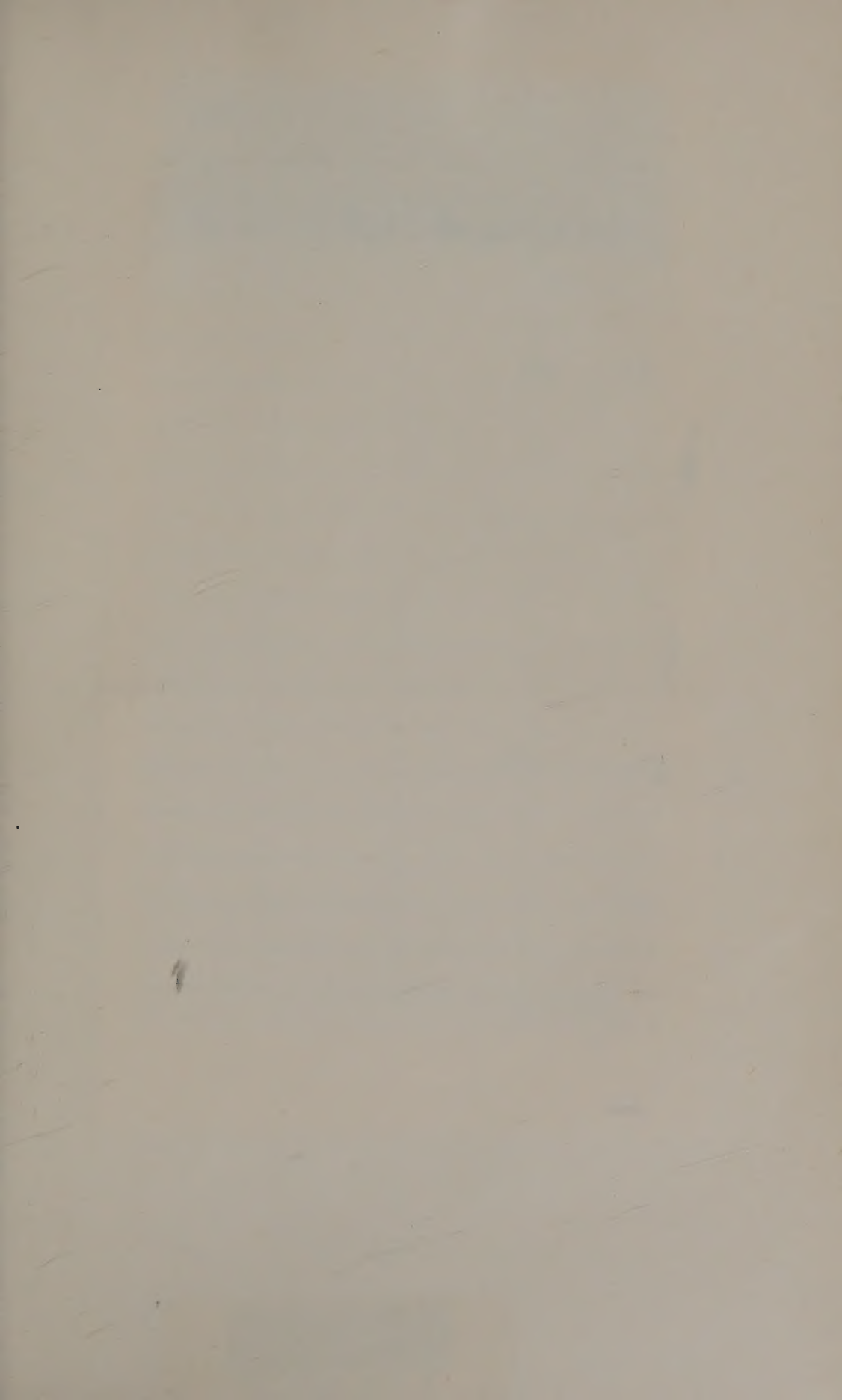
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STEVE VINES is a founder member of the London based Israel/Palestine Socialist Action Group (IPSAG), and was Editor of the group's magazine 'Flash-point'. He is the author of a thesis on the Socialist Zionist movements,

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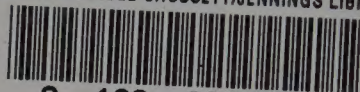
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Israel & the Palestinians

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ISRAEL & THE PALESTINIANS

This two part anthology presents a series of studies examining some of the current issues and key contradictions which underlie the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Part I includes historical and theoretical analyses of Zionism, Arab nationalism, the Palestinian Resistance, and the super-power policies in the area.

Part II is more immediately political and closer to contemporary events in orientation. Taking a number of radical perspectives as a starting point, the first four sections examine the major issues facing the Palestinian-Arabs (in Israel and in exile), Western Jews in the Diaspora, and Oriental and Western Leftist Jews in Israel. The penultimate sections deal with two of the dilemmas which confront the Left in the Israel/Palestine conflict: the problems of a common Palestinian-Arab/Israel-Jewish struggle and, secondly the contentious issue of a Palestinian West Bank state.

Noam Chomsky's long concluding essay, 'Israel and the Palestinians', embraces many of these issues and lends its name to the anthology as a whole.

Ithaca Press 13 Southwark Street London SE 1