Palestine Perspectives

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PALESTINE: A COUNTRY BEHIND BARBED WIRE

Editorial Editorial Editorial

"IN SOME DEGREE A SLAVE"

In explaining Israel's role in the Iran-Contra scandal, the Tower Commission reported that one of the reasons the Reagan administration fell into the trap was its failure to distinguish between U.S. and Israeli interests.

U.S. policy toward the Gulf War, reflecting U.S. interests in the Middle East, seeks to bring an end to the war between Iraq and Iran without victor and vanquished. Israel, on the other hand — obsessed by the idea that everyone is an actual or potential enemy of the Jewish state— perceives its interest to be the prolongation of the war and the continuation of the destruction of the human and material resources of its neighbors. An endless war in the Gulf enhances Israel's prospects of emerging as the dominant power in the Middle East, and it serves its contention that the Arab-Israeli conflict —which Israel wants to keep on the back burner while it consolidates its grip on the occupied territories— is not an urgent regional issue.

Zionist leaders in the United States are angry at the Tower Commission for daring to suggest that Israel's interests can conflict with those of the United States. The suggestion would make it necessary to rationalize the U.S.-Israeli relationship, and it would require that U.S. policy makers judge Israeli acts and ideas on their own merits, something which would threaten the instinctive and mindless faith in Israel and the automatic support such faith engenders.

The point is not only that the Tower Commission was right in saying the obvious: that Israel's interests in the arming of Iran to perpetuate the Gulf War conflicted with the U.S. interest in ending it. The point is that this conflict between Israeli and American interests is the main reason for the repeated failures of U.S. policy in the Middle East. It is the assumption that Israeli and American interests are identical —or at least compatible— which has led the Reagan administration to become a protagonist in the Arab-Israeli conflict by abandoning whatever evenhandedness was shown by previous administrations which at least objected to Jewish settlements and to Israel's "iron fist" policy of repression in the occupied territories.

American politicians are not only entitled to pursue policies that are in the American national interest, but they owe it to the American people and are obligated by the trust they bear to do so. But the assumption that "what is good for Israel is good for America" is an affront to reason and a betrayal of the national interest. U.S. policy in the Middle East cannot continue to be made in Israel or to remain hostage to Israel's proxies in America. Those who acquiesce in that absurdity must be "men enough" to bear the consequences.

George Washington knew the dangers of slavish alliances with foreign states. "The nation which indulges toward another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave," he said in his farewell address. "It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest."

President Washington did not leave that message only for school children to recite. He left it for his successors to heed. And there was never a time in the history of the American republic when Washington's message was as relevant as it is today to America's "special relation" to Israel. □

M. Hallaj

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WHEN GOVERNMENT BECOMES GOD

By Gideon Spiro

FORUM

[The following article appeared under the title "Why Israel must change now" in the ***Boston Globe*** of 14 January 1987. The writer is an Israeli peace activist]:

Israel is following an extremely dangerous course today. The policies of refusing to negotiate with the Palestinians, continuing the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, and maintaining the annexation of the Golan Heights will inevitably bring Israel to another war.

What is worse, Israel is, according to official CIA reports, a nuclear power, and today possesses 25 to 30 atom[ic] bombs. We are thus facing the danger of nuclearizing the conflict in the Middle East.

This danger is doubled by the fact that Israel did not sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. There are no international controls whatsoever on Israel's development, proliferation and use of such weapons. Since the present course of the Israeli government means eternal conflict between Israel and its neighbors, it is only a question of time before Israel will make use of its maximum weapons. This has the potential of dragging the world into a nuclear catastrophe.

The Perils of Occupation

It is therefore in the interest of every human being and nation to see to it that the Middle East becomes a nuclear-free zone. This should be of special concern to Americans, since Israel is dependent on U.S. aid for its economic and military well-being. In the past year alone, Israel received more than $4 billion from official and private sources in the United States.

Twenty years of occupation and military rule over approximately 1.5 million Palestinians have left ugly marks on Israeli society. This year the first generation of Israelis has come to maturity knowing occupation as a "natural" way of life. For these young Israelis the oppression of 1.5 million people is a normal state of affairs.

The negative aspect of this situation for Israeli society are enormous. A poll taken among Israeli youth a year ago demonstrated that 50 percent of them hold undemocratic values. These figures are horrifying to anyone concerned about the future of Israeli society.

Twenty years of occupation have made Israel receptive to racist ideology, one manifestation of which is the growing popularity of Rabbi Meir Kahane's ideas. More unfortunate still, Israel's current leadership has the potential of turning the Jewish state into another Middle Eastern dictatorship.

As a Jew whose family barely escaped the horrors of Nazi Germany, as an Israeli who is motivated by democratic and humanistic values, as they are expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I am very much disturbed about the violation of Palestinian human rights in the territories occupied by Israel.

I am especially disturbed about the practice of collective punishment, a type of punishment we Jews suffered from so much in the past. One particular disturbing example is the demolition of houses of innocent families only because a family member has been arrested —before any trial or conviction— on suspicion of a security offense.

I also find it disturbing that so many American Jews who came to the United States as refugees from this kind of discrimination, and who enjoy full civil and human rights, blindly support such Israeli government policies.

Substitute for Religion

I think that for many American Jews Israel has become a substitute for religion and the Israeli government a kind of God. This reminds me of Communist Party members in the 1930s who backed the Soviet Union regardless of its policies.

I want to convey to American Jews, and to non-Jews, that Israel is not beyond criticism. Criticizing the government of Israel has nothing to do with questioning the right of Israel to exist. Jewish racism is no less loathsome than others just because it is Jewish, and the oppression of others by Jews is no more acceptable than the oppression of any other people by another. We ought not to condemn the mistreatment of Jews in the Soviet Union and at the same time support similar practices by the Israeli government against Palestinians.

"I think that for many American Jews Israel has become a substitute for religion and the Israeli government a kind of God."

Israel cannot continue forever with a dual system of a military dictatorship for Palestinians and democracy for Jews. This is a cancer on Israeli society. The totalitarian norms that are practiced by Israel in the West Bank and Gaza are infiltrating into Israeli society. Today Israel is closing Palestinian newspapers through administrative orders; tomorrow it may be the Hebrew press. To avoid this, American Jews and the peace forces in the United States in general must join the peace forces in Israel. We must work together to find a peaceful solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This involves the self-evident proposition of engaging in negotiations with our enemies.

The Israeli argument "We will not negotiate with terrorists" cannot be taken seriously. Many Third World leaders today were once characterized as "terrorists," including [Israeli] Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who, in the days of the underground, fought as a terrorist against British rule in Palestine.

As someone who participated in three wars, and refused to serve in a fourth, the war in Lebanon, I came to the conclusion that there is no military solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. If I want to prevent my children from becoming soldiers, I must begin negotiating today for a peaceful solution based on real compromise and mutual recognition of the national rights of the two people. □

"HONEY, WE ARE THE LAW"

By Anthony Lewis

[Early on the morning of 26 January, 30 agents of the FBI, INS and Los Angeles police raided the homes of Palestinians in southern California and arrested eight Palestinians and the Kenyan wife of one of them. Due to lack of evidence of any criminal activity against those arrested, it appears that efforts were made to intimidate other Palestinians into serving as prosecution witnesses against them. The following report was published in ***The New York Times*** of 10 February under the title "Is This America?"]:

She is 22 years old, a student in San Diego, Calif. She was born in Ramallah, in the West Bank, came to this country at the age of 3 and is an American citizen. On the telephone, she sounds like California. I shall call her Evelyn Bitar: not her real name.

"I was studying, alone in the school library, on the night of Jan. 28. At about 8:30 a large man, 6 feet tall, came up and shoved a paper in front of me. It said 'subpoena' and had my name on it. He flashed what looked like a badge and said, 'Evelyn, we want you to come with us.'

"He had a gun in a holster at his waist. He took my left arm and handcuffed me to his right arm. Another man — he also showed a gun— came over and grabbed me roughly by the right arm. They took me out to a dark burgundy car, cuffed my hands in front of me and shoved me into the back seat."

That was the beginning of a nightmare 12 hours for Evelyn Bitar. I take her words from an affidavit she drafted afterward, and from a telephone conversation with her.

Her Palestinian origins underlie what happened to Ms. Bitar. Two days before her experience eight Palestinians (and one's Kenyan wife) had been arrested in the Los Angeles area by agents of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. She was a friend of one of them. But let us continue with her story.

"We drove for some time when they made me face backwards. In a residential area we drove into a garage and I was taken into the house, into a big bare room with a cement floor. There was a big metal desk. The room also had a metal pole set in the cement floor. It had a hook at the top, sort of like a tether ball pole.

"I was thrown into a gray metal chair, still handcuffed. The room was dimly lit, but with a bright fluorescent light coming at my face.

"They threw a picture down on the desk. It was a picture of me, my husband and X [the friend who had been arrested]. They slapped it and said, 'Who is this man, identify him.' I refused and said what they were doing to me was illegal. One said, 'Honey, we are the law.'

"They kept throwing pictures on the desk. They were all pictures from San Diego, some from the old Arabic club....

"It was after midnight by now. They uncuffed my right hand, then cuffed my left hand to the hook on the top of the metal pole. My left arm was stretched up to reach it. Then they left the house and left me hanging there like that for over three hours.

"They came back around 3:30 with a third man. I asked if I could use the bathroom. I was desperate to go. They would not let me.

"They told me that my husband was in custody, that they had just picked him up. [That was false]. They said we could work out a deal, I could be a witness for the prosecution of X. If I would do that, they would let my husband go. They also said that they knew I only had $78 in my bank account, hinting that they could change that.

"A fourth man came into the house. He was black, with very blue eyes. I will never forget his eyes....

"When I still didn't respond, they said, 'At your rally you said Long live Palestine. We'll show you what we think of your Palestine.' They took out a small Palestinian flag, about 3 by 5 inches, and burned it.

"Then they took me out, back into the car. They stopped about two miles from my house. They said, 'Listen, Babe, when you least expect us, expect us. We'll always be around.' I looked at my watch. It was 8:30 A.M."

Could that have happened in America? Readers will no doubt find it hard to believe, as I did. So did Evelyn Bitar. She was too frightened to talk at first. But now she is ready to testify, using her real name, if her lawyers ask her to.

Those eight Palestinians arrested in Los Angeles were taken at gunpoint in their homes at 7 in the morning, then shackled in arm and leg irons. Each of them, too, was shown photographs and offered inducements to testify against someone. And all that was no evidence whatever that they had done or contemplated any act of violence. The charges had to do with reading or distributing Palestinian literature. But that is another story of unconstitutional outrage.

For the moment it is enough to think about what happened to Evelyn Bitar. Is that America? Realism requires us to recognize that it can happen here. It has happened. But it is not too late to find out how, and to punish the Federal agents who behaved like totalitarian thugs.

"When we speak out," Ms. Bitar said, "that's our protection." She still believes in America. □

TAKING AMERICA FOR GRANTED

Israel's Arrogance in Dealing with America

[The following are excerpts from ***Washington Post*** columnist Richard Cohen's article published in the *Post* on 10 March 1987 under the title of "Israeli Arrogance"]:

The Israel-United States alliance, based on mutual admiration, shared values and common strategic interests, is being tested by Israel's contempt for American sensitivities. Israel paid an American to turn spy, staked first claim to Soviet Jews who prefer America over Israel and posted a military attache here whose record is both controversial and repugnant. If the relationship were a marriage, it would be heading toward the rocks.

Jonathan Jay Pollard was an Israeli spy. For that he was sentenced to life in prison. The documents he turned over to Israel were, by his own admission, extremely sensitive. They included reconnaissance photos that reportedly enabled Israel to bomb Yasser Arafat's PLO headquarters in Tunis —a near-assassination for which the Arab world holds the United States accountable.... Rather than punish those implicated in the Pollard case, it [the Israeli

(continued on page 4)

"QUOTE UNQUOTE"

Enlightened Occupation?

"In the wake of [the 4 December] shooting of two young men on the West Bank, one realizes [that] there is no such thing as an enlightened occupation anywhere in the world. We need not go on and on about the gradual South Africanization of the West Bank, starting in the days of the late Golda Meir and continuing through the Begin-Sharon era till today. One cannot find any such animal as 'enlightened occupation' in any of the world's bestiaries....

"For those who really want to know why (as reported this week) South African Jews have, over the past few years, come to constitute one-fifth of the Jewish community in Australia rather than coming to Israel, there's an unpleasant answer. Anyone who packs his bags and flees the proximity of the volcano known as Soweto isn't then going to choose to settle down next to our very own Vesuvius. Anyone who sells his home and belongings and flees the unenlightened occupation in South Africa isn't going to trade that uneasy situation for the unrest here —even if he settles along Israel's coastal strip, on the narrow piece of land between the refugee camps in Gaza and the refugee camps on the West Bank."

Natan Ra'anan
Al Hamishmar (Israel)
12 December 1986

This Baby is Ours

"This baby called the sale of military equipment to Khomeini's Iran is indeed all ours. It was born in our country about six years before Reagan even dreamed of issuing a presidential order for the arms deal with Iran. The rights of paternity belong entirely to then Defense Minister Ariel Sharon. It's all been in the newspapers. The question they haven't answered is: where on earth did Sharon get this strange idea?

"In his first moves as Defense Minister, Sharon had already decided to emphasize military exports, believing that these could be doubled or even tripled within a short period by finding new markets. He then came up with (or adopted) the idea of cultivating a trade link with military personnel in Khomeini's Iran.

"Only after this idea had been dressed up in a political theory —i.e. the encouragement of an anti-Khomeini uprising— was the U.S. brought into the picture. This newspaper's archives show that the skimming off and sale of military equipment to Iran went on intermittently for more than six years.

"Despite all the denials, the arms weren't shipped without tacit U.S. agreement, at least to some of the shipments. But who decided things at this end, when, and why? Were the arms dealers acting at the nation's behest, or was the nation acting at the urging of the arms dealers?"

Yoel Marcus
Ha'aretz (Israel)
25 November 1986

FORUM

TAKING AMERICA *(continued from page 3)*

government] rewarded them. For instance, Col. Aviem Sella, indicted here for allegedly being Pollard's spy-master, was recently named to command Israel's second-largest air base.

To all this, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir offers a nonchalant shrug of the shoulders. At a Washington breakfast last month, he appeared downright bored with both the Pollard case and the fuss stirred up by Israel's role in the Iran-contra affair. Over and over, Shamir had the same refrain: "It's not important."

Of course, it is. Worse, the Pollard case is just one example of Israeli contempt for American good will. Israel recently named Gen. Amos Yaron as military attache here even though, on the recommendation of an investigatory commission, he was relieved of command following the Sabra and Shatila massacres of 1982. His appointment was an affront to Palestinian Americans. Had they been Jews, it would never have been countenanced. Canada, less accommodating, rejected him when he applied for accreditation. His appointment, Ottawa diplomatically explained, was not "appropriate."

More recently, Israel asked the United States to deny Soviet Jews automatic entry into this country, saying that they should go to Israel first. Shamir, who pleaded this cause when last in Washington, noted that Soviet Jews leave Russia ostensibly bound for Israel. Once out of the Soviet Union, though, many of them opt for the United States. They and Shamir obviously differ as to the precise location of the promised land.

Israel's behavior smacks of arrogance. It employed Pollard and now acts as if a weak apology will suffice. It posts a controversial military officer to the United States and almost dares the administration to do something about it. It asserts a right to Soviet Jews, forgetting or ignoring that the United States also considers itself a haven for exiles. We have a historical mission too, and while it is not Biblical, it is deeply felt.

In this country, Israel enjoys great love and respect — particularly from the Jewish community, which, like a mother, has always been willing to forgive. But there are signs that Israel is taking both the United States and its Jewish community for granted. The Pollard case in particular is a nightmare-come-true for American Jews. In Pollard, the Israelis created an anti-Semitic stereotype —an American Jew of confused loyalties who sold out his country. Indignation and shame are felt in equal measure.

The Israeli government apparently assumes that American Jews will back it no matter what. A good deal of the time that's correct. But the American Jewish community rejected Shamir's plan for Soviet Jews, squirmed at the posting of Yaron (was there no other man?) and hurts from the wounds inflicted by the Pollard affair. □

PLO News and Views

PREC

Arafat at Algiers Conference

PLO UNITY TALKS

Dialogue among Palestinian political factions affiliated with the PLO continued in search of an agreeable formula for the restoration of PLO unity. On 9 March 1987, five Palestinian factions met in Tunisia to explore ways to overcome political differences and to pave the way for the next session of the Palestine National Council, the Palestinian parliament in exile. The last PNC session, boycotted by several groups, convened in Amman, Jordan in November 1984.

The five groups which met in Tunisia were Fateh, the largest PLO group, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Arab Liberation Front, the Palestine Liberation Front and the Communist Party. The groups which were not represented in the Algiers meeting were the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Syrian-sponsored Sa'iqa, and PFLP-General Command.

Palestinian leaders have been under pressure to restore agreement among them, within the framework of the PLO, especially as the Palestinians in Lebanon have been compelled to fight daily for survival. The unity of arms displayed by Palestinian fighters in the camps, where soldiers from the various groups fight side by side, have also increased pressure for political unity among the leadership.

The convening of the General Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists early in February, with representatives from all Palestinian factions, also raised hopes that finally the way may be open for a more successful effort to reunify the PLO and convene the National Council. □

In Brief

IRAN MONEY TO MOSSAD

Some of the money diverted from U.S. arms sales to Iran went to the Mossad, Israel's equivalent of the CIA, according to columnist Jack Anderson. "During the secret discussions with the Israelis over the arms sales," he wrote in *The Washington Post* early in February, "it was understood by all concerned that some of the profits would go to the Mossad for its undercover operations in Europe and the Middle East."

LEAVE OR FACE WAR

Rabbi Meir Kahane, one of the most notorious fascist members of the Israeli parliament, was stripped of his mailing privilege in the Knesset. He had been using that parliamentary privilege to mail letters to Arabs warning them to leave the country or face war.

NEW GROUP OF JEWISH TERRORISTS

The Israeli daily *Al Hamishmar* (21 December 1986) reported the formation of a new "nationalist Jewish underground" in the Jerusalem area. The paper described the new group as being "far more extreme and dangerous than its predecessors." The report said that the members are united by their hatred of Arabs, and their principal aim is the expulsion of Palestinians from "Greater Israel."

POLLARD HELPED ISRAEL RAID TUNIS

The trial of Israeli spy Jonathan Pollard revealed that, among the secret documents he had given to Israel, were U.S. intelligence reports and reconnaissance photos which enabled Israel to attack PLO headquarters in Tunis in October 1985. The air raid killed 65 people, mostly civilian office employees.

ISRAELI DEBT CLIMBS. . .AGAIN

Israel's foreign debt climbed by another $480 million in the last quarter of 1986. The Bank of Israel says that this brings Israel's foreign debt to $24.4 billion, a staggering amount for a country with the population of a medium-sized city.

PALESTINIAN WRITERS AND JOURNALISTS MEET

Algiers Meeting Advances Unity

In a highly significant demonstration of Palestinian national unity, the General Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists (GUPWJ) held a general congress in Algiers, the capital of Algeria, on 8-10 February 1987. About 200 delegates representing all of the important Palestinian groups attended the conference, reversing a four-year-old factional trend within the PLO and its affiliated institutions. The meeting was also attended by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and a number of other Palestinian political leaders. The Algerian government, which hosted the conference, was also represented by several cabinet ministers and other high-ranking political figures. Guest delegations from around the world also attended, in a show of solidarity with the Palestinian people. □

THE INTERNAL REFUGEES

Four Decades of Forced Exile

The Zionist occupation of Palestine in 1948 essentially required that the country be depopulated of its indigenous Palestinian Arab people in order to make room for Zionist settlers brought in ["ingathered" in Zionist jargon] from different parts of the world. Consequently, the Palestinians, since 1948 until the present day, have had to suffer the ordeals of being uprooted, dispersed and dispossessed. This is the experience not only of those who were forced to leave Palestine, but also of the majority of Palestinians who remained behind under Zionist military rule, witnessing the destruction of their homes and villages and their displacement by Zionist settlements and kibbutzes. Iqrit and Kufr Birim in the Safad area are two of the 366 Palestinian villages in Galilee which experienced such a fate.

Survivors Testify

The ordeal of the Christian Maronite villagers of Iqrit and Kufr Birim has been continuous. Their sufferings have been passed on from generation to generation, along with a determination to return to their villages.

Kufr Birim

An eyewitness from Kufr Birim, Shahdan Taan, an elderly man who was forcibly evicted from his home and at present lives in Acre, tells the story:

"I was in the village when the occupation troops entered it on an October day in 1948. They fired arbitrarily, killing a young man and wounding a woman. Fifteen days later, Israeli soldiers ordered us to evacuate the village terrorizing us and threatening to kill anyone who insisted on staying. We were ordered to evacuate our village for the neighboring village of al-Jish and were told that eviction was only temporary —that it would last only two weeks or until, as the military governor claimed, security and order had been restored to the area. Thirty-eight years have passed and we are still forced to live outside our village.

"Then we appealed to the Israeli High Court which ruled (in 1951) that we were entitled to return to our village and exploit our land unless the military governor, and for security reasons, judged otherwise.

"Following the High Court ruling, Israeli planes (December 1953) bombarded the village razing all its buildings to the ground except for the church.

"Before our eviction from Kufr Birim we heard terrifying stories from Palestinians whose villages had been occupied before ours. A large number of the young men from nearby Safsaf were rounded up and shot in cold blood by the Zionist troops. Al-Jish villagers who used to get their water from a well sited between their village and Safsaf told us they had pulled decaying corpses from the well."

Rashraash Fares, also from Kufr Birim, recounts another part of the tragedy:

"Neighboring Kufr Birim were the villages of Saasa, Safsaf, Farah, Meyroun, Taitaba, Qaddita, Salha, ar-Ras al-Ahmar, Alma, al-Hashoum, Neen, al-Jish and al-Udayseh. All of them except al-Jish were destroyed and their lands annexed by Israeli settlements.

"In 1952, we received notices from the military governor informing us that our lands were confiscated under the occupier's 'Absentee Property Law,' according to which the Israelis gave themselves the right to confiscate the land of any Palestinian who was not on his property at a time when the military authorities chose to carry out a land survey.

"When in 1965 the military rule was lifted we demanded the implementation of the High Court ruling of 1951. However, the authorities claimed that 'between 1948 and 1965, settlements and kibbutzes had been established on Kufr Birim lands,' and that it was 'impossible to solve the problem of Kufr Birim villagers by evicting the kibbutzniks and the settlers.' "

Iqrit

The village of Iqrit experienced the same life as that of Kufr Birim. In October 1948, Iqrit was occupied

(continued on page 7)

Life Under Occupation

HARKABI WARNS ISRAELIS

"We're Betraying Our Children"

Israeli Professor Yehoshafat Harkabi warned that the present generation of Israelis is betraying future generations by refusing to negotiate peace with the PLO and to agree to the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. Harkabi, a retired Israeli army general who served in the 1950s as the chief of military intelligence, was speaking at a symposium in Tel Aviv at the beginning of February.

By refusing to settle with the Palestinians, he told his audience, "we will bequeath [to our children] a host of problems which we can barely solve and which they won't be able to solve when most of the population is Arab."

Responding to the rightist Israeli solution of expelling the Arabs, Harkabi called the idea unrealistic. Israel's real alternatives, he said, are either to accept less favorable borders than it has now [including the occupied West Bank and Gaza], or find itself facing "an internal volcano which will erupt —and there will be no Jewish state."

Harkabi, who supports Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories out of fear that their incorporation in Israel would undermine the Zionist concept of a "Jewish state," said that Israelis cannot count on more Jewish births or immigration to change the demographic picture. Neither American nor Soviet Jews are coming, he said. "Two stabbings scared the tourists away and left hotels empty. Jews will prefer living with their Christian, European neighbors to living in this unstable state with Moslem neighbors."

He strongly rejected the Israeli argument that there was no one on the Palestinian side with whom to negotiate peace. "We have no choice," he said, "but to talk to the PLO." □

"Closed Area: Keep Out!"

REFUGEES

(continued from page 6)

and its inhabitants were forced to leave it "temporarily," as the military authorities then claimed. The Israeli High Court ruled in 1951 that Iqrit villagers were to return to their village. On Christmas eve 1951, however, Israeli troops were sent in to demolish its houses. The church was the only structure spared. The 24,000 dunums of land belonging to Iqrit were annexed to the Zionist settlements Even Menahem, Shomira, and Ghoren.

After the lifting of military rule in 1965, Iqrit villagers thought that the obstacle which prevented the High Court ruling from being implemented was removed, and attempted to move back to their village. However, the Israeli police issued an order sealing off the area and evicted the villagers who had managed to move in.

Injustice Made "Legal"

The story of Iqrit and Kufr Birim reveals part of the ordeal experienced by thousands of Palestinians. Its successive stages shed light on the complicity of the Israeli legal system with the military authorities in dispossessing the Arabs of Palestine.

Although the Israeli High Court admitted the right of the villagers to return to the two villages, it did not order the implementation of its ruling. The military governor thus felt free to issue for the first time written orders commanding the evacuation of Iqrit and Kufr Birim, whose de facto evacuation had actually been forced three years previously. The destruction of the villages' houses which soon followed was another measure on his part to ensure that the villagers could never return to their homes.

The land confiscation of 1951 and 1953 exploited in particular a law by which any land which has not been ploughed and planted for a period of three years is considered wasteland and confiscated. The military governor had denied Iqrit and Kufr Birim farmers permission to enter their lands for the above stated period of time and had consequently created the legal pretext for the confiscation of their property.

When Iqrit villagers resorted again to the Israeli High Court, it declared that although the injustice done to the villagers could not be ignored, the order to evacuate the village was a fact and could not be overturned.

The saga of Iqrit and Kufr Birim continues to this day. In 1973, the Israeli cabinet under the premiership of Golda Meir officially announced that the villagers would not be allowed to return.

During the 1977 Knesset election campaign, Likud leader Menachem Begin promised, purely for electoral reasons, to solve the Iqrit and Kufr Birim issue if he won the election. The promise was never honored. Instead, a special ministerial committee recommended that the villagers should not be allowed to return to their lands.

In 1981, when a fresh appeal was made to the Israeli High Court, it ruled that the issue could only be decided by the Israeli government [meaning, politically]. In September 1986, Shimon Peres, then prime minister, claimed that the villagers of Iqrit and Kufr Birim had been justly compensated for their land and that the issue was closed. Peres' office had to back down from these claims due to the angry response of the villagers who denied receiving any payments for their land and insisted in any case that their cause was not just a matter of material compensation. Government officials promised that the case would be further investigated.

Today, after 38 years, the villagers continue their struggle and are strongly determined to return to their land. They demonstrate this determination by burying their dead in their villages churchyards, by organizing annual marches to their villages every December —the month when they were destroyed, by setting up the Committee of Return to Iqrit and Kufr Birim (established in 1983), and by fighting Israeli proposals aimed at silencing their demand to return. □

[From ***Palestine,*** 16 November 1986]

BZU REPORT ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

A new report on Israeli violations of academic freedom, during the year 1985-86, has been issued by the Public Relations Office of Birzeit University in the occupied West Bank. The 39-page report details various types of harassment experienced by the Palestinian university.

The report gives factual and statistical information on closures, censorship, restrictions on research and publication, and on the freedom of movement. It also gives information, including names and dates, on the imprisonment and shooting of students, forbidding university services to the community, and Israeli army intrusions of college campuses. The report also includes an appendix showing the number of BZU students who have been detained from 1982-1986. □

CALLING THE KETTLE BLACK

The Jerusalem Post, the Israeli English-language newspaper known for its close ties with the establishment, reported in its International Edition (week ending 14 February) that the two-headed Likud-Labor government in Tel Aviv reached "a functional compromise" on the question of an international peace conference.

The "compromise," it turns out, is to allow Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to continue to advocate a conference while Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir continues to oppose it. And they counsel the Arabs to get their act together! □

PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION

Unable to Conquer the Camps, Amal Militias Resort to Siege

[The following are the texts of two cables sent from Burj el-Barajneh Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon, sent from foreign health workers in the camp to the British Refugee Council, a non-governmental humanitarian organization concerned with refugees in the Third World. The first cable was sent on 23 January and the second on 8 February]:

First Cable

"We as foreign health workers in Burj el-Barajneh refugee camp declare that the situation is critical and the condition inhuman. The camp has now been under attack with a complete siege more than 12 weeks, and we —along with the 25,000 residents of the camp— are being subjected to conditions of deprivation and misery. Drinking water is the most basic human need. Most houses do not have running water and it has to be collected daily from taps in the street at great risk for personal safety. Several women have been shot and killed by snipers while collecting water for their families. Food stocks have been completely depleted. There is no baby food or milk and babies have to drink tea and water. There is no flour and therefore no bread. No fresh food and so pregnant women and children particularly are becoming undernourished. People are eating canned food and suffering vomiting and diarrhea. Many families now have no food and daily we see women crying and begging for food for their children. It is winter and the electricity was cut off two and a half months ago. People are cold and many have chest infections. There are huge amounts of garbage which cannot be cleared, and rats are thriving. One old lady who is bed-ridden was unable to get help when her coat was eaten by the rats for three consecutive days before she was rescued. The constant bombardment of the camp forces the people to crowd into poorly-ventilated shelters with no sanitation, or they have to risk being blown up at home. Hundreds of children have scabies and many have severe skin infection. Approximately 35 percent of the houses in the camp have now been destroyed in this war. In the hospital many medicines have run out and we have no more bandages. The hospital building is being rendered unstable by repeated shelling and nurses and patients have been wounded by shrapnel. In the hospital all the windows have been blown out. There is no heating. The water tank was damaged early, so water runs down the walls and mud is going in all the rooms. These conditions are inhuman, and on humanitarian grounds we call for the immediate lifting of the siege and the admission of food and medicines by international relief agents."

Second Cable

"We declare that the situation in Burj el-Barajneh camp has become intolerable. The camp has been under siege for more than 14 weeks. Two weeks ago we sent out a declaration that there soon would be no more food in the camp and that the situation was critical. We are still under siege and now the people are beginning to starve. We have seen children hunting in garbage heaps for scraps of food. Today, one woman was shot while trying to collect grass on the outskirts of the camp to be able to feed her 7 children who no longer have any food at all. Some women and children are taking the risk of leaving the camp and many small children have been taken prisoner. Some of those who have no food now eat dogs and wild cats in order to survive." □

Refugees Resort to Eating Dogs

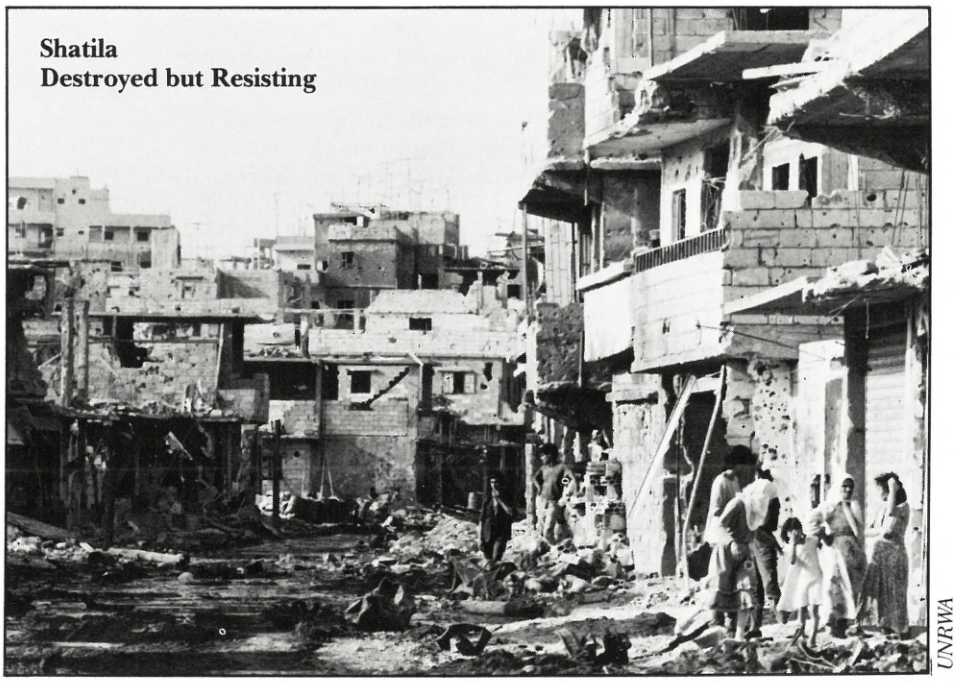
[From ***The Philadelphia Inquirer*** of 11 February 1987]:

Starving Palestinians in a besieged Beirut refugee camp have been forced to eat dogs, cats and even rats to survive, a British surgeon said yesterday.

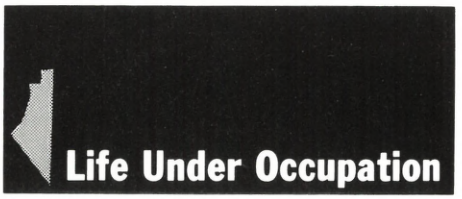
"I have eaten dogs myself... and I have seen many, many others eat cats and dogs," said Pauline Cutting, 35, one of four foreign medical workers who have been at the Burj el-Barajneh camp throughout a 15-week siege.

"A Dutch nurse has seen five children cooking a rat and eating it hungrily."

Shatila
Destroyed but Resisting



UNRWA



PROFILE OF PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

Four Generations of the Homeless

[The following profile of Palestinian refugees is taken, with slight adaptation, from ***Palestine Refugees Today*** (No. 117, January 1987), a publication of UNRWA]:

He or she is 27.6 years old, comes from a family of three children, a muslim. These are characteristics of the "average" Palestinian refugee today. This profile is derived from data compiled by UNRWA in 1986.

"Mr. Average" derives his status as a refugee from the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, when his parents lost their home and livelihood and fled to Lebanon, Syria, Jordan or the part of Palestine which was not occupied by Israel. So he has been a refugee all his life; he was born a refugee. He is one of 2.1 million Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA.

Now there is a third generation of Palestine refugees —over 300,000 of them— representing 15% of the refugee population. And there are already some members of a fourth generation of refugees. Those refugees, born in Palestine before 1948, represent 29% of today's registered refugee population, or 616,000 compared with 1.5 million born after the original exodus.

Today, more than on-third of the refugees —about 724,000— are under 15 years of age, including 218,000 who are five years or younger. And there are over 36,000 refugees who are over 80.

Children

In the five areas where UNRWA operates (Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip), the average number of children per refugee family is 3.4 (2.1 sons and 1.6 daughters) [*sic*]. The lowest number is in the West Bank where the average family has 2.6 children (1.5 boys and 1.1 girls). The highest number of children per family is among the refugees in Jordan with 4.7 children (2.5 boys and 2.2 girls). In Jordan, the average refugee family also offers a home to another child: a nephew, niece, stepson or other relative.

Heads of Family

UNRWA statistics show that there are 395,585 heads of family in the registered refugee population. About a fourth of these are women. The average family has 6.4 members (7.9 in Jordan), but almost half of the registered refugees live in households of eight or more members, including grandparents or other relatives.

Current Residence

It is estimated by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia that there are more than 4.5 million Palestinians scattered around the world. About a sixth live in the Gulf States, the United States and other industrialized countries. About half live within the pre-1948 borders of Palestine, the majority of them in the West Bank and Gaza. Most of the other Palestinians live in the Arab countries bordering Palestine: Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. It is in these areas that most of the UNRWA-registered refugees live, and UNRWA provides services only there and in the West Bank and Gaza.

Original Homes

The refugees originated in the areas which became Israel in 1948. A few examples will show the area of origin and the current location of many Palestinian refugees:

- The largest group, today numbering 329,000, originated in the Ramleh-Lydda area of Palestine. Of these, some 193,000 now live in Jordan, 76,000 in the Gaza Strip, and 55,000 in the West Bank.
- More than 310,000 refugees trace their origins to the Jaffa area. Of these, 148,000 now reside in Jordan, 55,000 in the West Bank, and 73,000 in Gaza.
- A group of about 250,000 refugees originated in the Haifa area. Of these, 63,000 now live in the West Bank, 54,000 in Lebanon, 57,000 in Syria, and 72,000 in Jordan.
- About 100,000 refugees from Safad area now live in Syria, and 76,000 live in Lebanon.
- About 89,000 refugees from Acre area now live in Lebanon, and 18,000 live in Syria. □

BZU SUMMER PROGRAM FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Birzeit University in the West Bank announced the following summer program of courses available to international students. The summer session begins on the first of July and ends on 14 August 1987:

Courses:

- □ *Arabic 001:* Colloquial Arabic for beginners (no credits)
- □ *Arabic 131:* Arabic for Non-Natives, Beginners (3 credits)
- □ *Arabic 132:* Arabic for Non-Natives, Intermediate (3 credits)
- □ *Sociology 234:* Palestinian Society (3 credits)
- □ *Political Science 333:* The Palestine Problem (3 credits)
- □ *Geography 432:* The Physical Geography of Palestine (3 credits)
- □ *Cultural Studies 322:* Palestine in the Context of the Arab World (2 credits)

Application Deadline and Fees:

- □ Application deadline: 20 April 1987
- □ Application fee: $25
- □ Tuition: $70 per credit ($200 for non-credit course)
- □ Housing: $175 for six weeks

For course description and application form, please write to:

Summer Program for International Students
Office of the Registrar
Birzeit University
Birzeit, West Bank
VIA Israel

NAAA: ARAB-AMERICANS TARGETED BY INS

"Ethnic internment is around the corner"

NEW POLICY ASSAILED

The National Association of Arab-Americans (NAAA), in a news release dated 6 February, strongly condemned a plan by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to selectively target certain nationalities who are considered "national security risks," and then detain them without bond, try them in secret and send them to "detention camps."

"Under the guise of an anti-terrorist program, the INS is attempting to turn back the clock to the days of the Japanese internment during World War II," said David J. Sadd, NAAA's Executive Director. "NAAA abhors terrorism and supports the need for proper immigration controls, but there should not be wholesale character assassination and targeting on a religious or ethnic basis against Arab-Americans."

Sadd said that the INS plan is particularly ominous in light of the immigration service's "Gestapo-like" roundup in Los Angeles of Palestinian students and businessmen. [Reference is to the arrest of eight Palestinians and the Kenyan wife of one of them in January]. None of those detained were accused of criminal wrongdoing, but instead were targeted because of their political beliefs. Arab-American, civil liberties and legal rights groups have joined to fight the INS in federal courts. The Arab American Institute said in a news release on 2 March that the arrest of the Palestinians in California "has developed into a major civil liberties test, with much at stake." It announced the formation of a "Committee for Justice" to raise funds for legal defense.

"This policy," NAAA continued to say of the INS contingency plan, "confirms that the INS recent trampling of the rights of Palestinians in California is part of a larger anti-Arab frenzy, and a broad government assault on constitutional rights. If the INS has its way, ethnic internment is right around the corner." □

INS "CONTINGENCY PLAN"

[The following is a summary of key provisions in the INS plan. It should be noted that although the plan does not in the text make it clear that it is people of Arab origin who are being targeted, a table showing the number of aliens in the U.S. removes any doubt about that point. The table lists eight countries, seven of which are Arab countries: Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Jordan, Syria, Morocco and Lebanon. The eighth country listed is Iran. Most of the seven Arab countries are officially designated as friendly states by the U.S. government. The following summary of the INS "contingency plan" was prepared by NAAA]:

Entitled "Alien Terrorists and Undesirables: A Contingency Plan," the INS document states that its "assumption" is that "the Service will likely be required to concentrate its own counterterrorism efforts against particular nationalities or groups known to be composed primarily of certain nationalities, most probably those citizens of states known to support terrorism."

The plan recommends changing federal regulations so the INS may "routinely hold any alien so charged without bond, as a danger to the national security and public safety (and) vigorously oppose granting of any bond by immigration judges."

"...in all such cases, the government should routinely request the immigration judge to invoke the provisions relating to the exclusion of the general public from the hearings on the basis of national security."

The plan, says the INS, can exploit U.S. law to give itself "broad enforcement latitude over any individual attempting to enter or leave the United States in violation of the regulations which the Service chose to promulgate....

Worst of all, the INS plan talks of expanding its system of internment camps, or "detention facilities," as it likes to call them.

Noting that it will probably have to round up large numbers of aliens, and that its current detention facility capacity is limited to 4,179, the INS plan specifies that a "designated contingency site adjacent to the Oakdale Alien Detention Center, consisting of 100 acres, stands ready for development as a stand-by alternative for a step three emergency."

It goes on to state that "100 acres with a center portion of 40 acres is presently cleared and awaiting development; water, sewer, gas and electricity are already on site for hookup (and) fence materials have been obtained and are stored nearby."

The site is sized to house up to "5,000 aliens in temporary (tents) quarters, suitable in that southern climate," and can be fully activated in two to four weeks."

"Current plans...would provide a somewhat Spartan contingency site with quick start up capability, but will require approximately $2,000,000 in construction funds and 10 months for development to that stage."

The INS plan also envisions a new "Big Brother" type of data bank on people of certain nationalities.

"This, of course, is replete with problems in that it indiscriminately lumps together individuals of widely differing political opinions solely on the basis of nationality," the INS plan admits. "There are, however, some advantages to initiation of a registry, if all operational units of the Service are involved."

[It should be noted that a "Fact Sheet" prepared for a January 1987 conference on "Terrorism in a Technological World," sponsored by *Discover* magazine, showed that only 5.7 per cent of all terrorist acts committed in 1985 happened in the Middle East. 64.2% took place in Latin America, 15.7% in Europe and 10.8% in Asia. The Middle East was followed by Africa (3.3%) and North America (0.3%)]. □

THEY DON'T DARE TO SPEAK OUT

Mother Jones Magazine: American Press Soft on Israel

In the February/March issue of *Mother Jones* magazine, journalist Robert I. Friedman asserts that negative stories about Israel that are routinely covered in Israel's own press are often buried or overlooked by the U.S. mainstream media. In his article, entitled "Selling Israel to America," Friedman writes: "Americans have very little idea about how severely troubled Israel is, or how critical many Israelis are of their own government's policies." The press's kid-gloved approach, he continues, "has resulted in a distorted media image of Israel...and a skewed view of the Arab-Israeli conflict."

Menachem Shalev, who left his position as press officer for the Israeli consulate in New York early in 1986, told Friedman that sympathetic individuals can be found at every network and nearly every important newspaper in the country. "Their names are passed from one press attache to another," said Shalev.

An Israeli official who would not let his name be used told Friedman that he knows of at least three instances in which Israel was able to get "negative" network news segments killed. "Getting a story killed is rare," said the official. "What's much less rare is modifying a story or getting in our [Israeli] point of view." The same source said that there are a number of American Jews in the television industry, "from network executives to bookers," who are "more loyal" to Israel than to their employer.

The U.S. media's "love affair" with Israel did sour temporarily during the 1982 Israeli occupation of Beirut, says Friedman, and fol- Congress helped establish the Hasbara (Hebrew for propaganda) Project, an internship program that places Israeli officials in Madison Avenue advertising agencies to learn how the experts handle public relations. "Before they return to Israel," writes Friedman, "they have been invited to meet top editors and executives at *The New York Times, The Washington Post,* and all three network evening news shows." At ABC television, Hasbara interns were allowed to sit in on morning editorial meetings, where bureau chiefs from around the world link up on a conference call to hash out what will make the air that evening on "World News Tonight."

According to the *Mother Jones* article, support for Israel comes from Christian reporters as well as Jews. *Washington Post* editor Ben Bradlee told Friedman that, if polled privately, the reporters in his newsroom "would say they are pro-Israel. Not pro-Syria. Not pro-Palestinian. I think that's probably a fact of life."

Friedman argues that the intense pressure focused on media outlets that are critical of Israel is another important factor in the press's failure to report negative stories. The groups most active in pressuring the media, he says, are the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. "Founded at the turn of the century

(continued on page 13)

COMMENTARY...
HANDS OFF ARAB-AMERICANS

Arab-Americans are highly distressed and rightfully indignant about the ongoing attempt to exclude them from the equal protection of the law. As Arabs they are fearful for their civil rights, and as Americans they are apprehensive about the future of constitutionalism and the rule of law in the country.

During the past two years, ominous signs accumulated that the Arab-American community can be targeted with impunity and can be made to suffer iniquities that are no longer tolerated in America. They have been victimized by racist slurs, terrorist attacks, and surveillance which mocks due process of law.

The danger has now reached serious proportions, because disrespect for the law and the legally-protected rights of persons has apparently gone beyond the outbursts of certain Zionist hate groups and contaminated some of those who are entrusted with the preservation of the rule of law. The recent revelation of a scheme to herd Arabs in detention camps alarms Arab-Americans and ought to outrage everyone. We repeat what we said many times before, that bigotry —like justice— is blind, and the violation of the civil rights of Arabs in America threatens everyone, because it erodes everyone's safeguards against capricious government.

The recent arrest of Palestinians in southern California —people who have committed no crimes and contemplated no such deeds— and the harassment of their friends are feared by many Arab-Americans to be pilot projects to test the feasibility of a massive assault on the civil rights of Arab-Americans. And their fears are not the product of their imaginations. The leaked text of a contingency plan in the Immigration and Naturalization Service for dealing with "alien terrorists and undesirables" suggests a "test case" before the more general application of the plan. The detention and harassment of Palestinians in southern California is believed by many Arab-Americans to be such a test case.

Watergate and the Iran-Contra scandal revealed the American people's alertness to the imperative of the rule of law. It should be understood, however, that most people are affected by the actions of lower-level law enforcement people, rather than the National Security Council, and their respect for the law is even more essential to the survival of liberty in America. □

"Americans have very little idea about how severely troubled Israel is, or how critical many Israelis are of their own government's policies, such as arming the contras, Khomeini's Iran, and South Africa. And some prominent U.S. editors and publishers who have dropped all pretense of objectivity to become public-relations advisors for the Israeli government hope to keep it that way." Robert I. Friedman

THE POLLARD CASE

Finally someone got punished for breaking the law on behalf of Israel. Jonathan Pollard was sentenced to life in prison for spying for Israel.

The most remarkable, though not surprising, consequence of Pollard's conviction is the storm raised by Israel's friends in America. Although people who are familiar with how much damage Pollard's spying had caused to America's national interest say that it was the most serious case of betrayal of America's secrets to a foreign power in the nation's history, Israel's friends protested that the sentence was too harsh. After all, they claimed, Pollard spied for an "ally" of the United States.

This view ignores a few important facts about the case. One, the enormity of the betrayal. Pollard did not pass on to his Israeli masters occasional secrets; he delivered to them more than 360 cubic feet of secret documents and when he was caught he was still going strong. Two, although Pollard got paid for his services, he himself made it clear that —as a good Zionist— he felt it was his duty to help Israel. Many Americans in sensitive government positions can claim emotional or other ties to foreign states. If such an excuse is accepted as "extenuating circumstances," America might as well publish all of its secrets in annual yearbooks.

The point still remains that Pollard, and his wife who got away with a nominal sentence, allowed agents of a foreign power to recruit him, and to betray his country which trusted him with its secrets. He violated that trust and broke explicit laws, and he did it in an insolent manner, insisting that he had the right to do so.

Pollard's insolence was matched by Israel's own. Israel has rewarded its own officials who were instrumental in turning an American against his country. But that is Israel's way of demonstrating its friendship to the United States, and there is nothing new about it. But what is the excuse of those Americans who —contrary to repeated evidence to the contrary— continue to counsel the U.S. government to assume that Israel's interests are identical to and indistinguishable from America's interests? For, after all, that is the premise behind the idea that spying for Israel should constitute mitigating circumstances.

The Tower Commission's recently-released report about the Iran-Contra scandal and Israel's role in it reminded us of the fact that ally or not, friend or not a friend, Israel is still a foreign power whose interests and policies can and do conflict with those of the United States. The argument that Pollard's crime should be understandable because it was committed in the service of Israel is a view that does not derive from concern for the national interests of the United States. □

Books . . .

U.S. DEMONOLOGY

Chomsky on Terrorism

Pirates and Emperors: International Terrorism in the Real World, by Noam Chomsky. New York: Claremont Research & Publications, 1986, 174 pages. $17.95 hardcover, $8.95 paperback.

[Excerpted from a review by Ines Tewfik, published by ***Arab World Review*** (Canada), February 1987, p. 13]:

A considerable portion of the book is dedicated to the profound hypocrisy of the U.S. in denouncing Soviet repression in the eastern bloc and atrocities in Afghanistan, while its own sphere of influence is a virtual chamber of horrors, particularly Guatemala and El Salvador, which are ruled by American proxies. This, however, is overshadowed by the cynicism of a media and administration which suppress news of atrocities committed in Lebanon by Israel, an American client state, while solemnly pledging to "rid the world" of the "cancer" of terrorism.

Chomsky repeatedly invokes images and terms taken from George Orwell's nightmarish novel *1984*. In Orwell's book, people's thoughts were controlled by ridding their language of undesirable or potentially subversive meanings. Chomsky makes a well-argued, and equally nightmarish case, that a similar process is taking place in the American media.

One of the clearest examples of this is the term "terrorism" and the way it is used. The term originally referred to violence or the threat of violence by a state against its own people, to induce fear in order to fulfill a political purpose. This meaning, according to Chomsky, has become obsolete. It was replaced by a definition which described terrorism as violence or the threat of violence by a group or foreign state against civilians for political purposes.

This latter definition has been applied exclusively to designated enemies of the U.S., and to those who oppose its foreign policy. In fact, this has become the only intelligible application of the term "terrorist." Thus, Shi'ite resistance to the Israeli invasion and occupation of their country was labelled "terrorist," and attacks against the soldiers of occupation were ascribed to a Shi'ite "penchant" for martyrdom. In any discussion of hijackings, abductions, hostage-takings and murders, despite the greater number committed by Israel, it is only those committed by Arabs, or more generally, Muslims, which are included under the label of "terrorist" acts.

The truly frightening aspect of all this, according to Chomsky, is the effective neutralization of any intelligent opposition or debate on the subject inside the U.S. This is not done through brute force within the domestic sphere, but through the equally, or perhaps more effective means of making ludicrous and even unthinkable any opposition. The PLO, Libya, Iran, Syria, and to a lesser extent Nicaragua, have been made synonymous with terrorism. So automatic is this designation, in fact, that it is not necessary to ever provide evidence or information to support it.

On the other hand, states which may equally, in some cases more accurately, deserve the label "terrorist" (such as Israel, South Africa, Guatemala and El Salvador, on the basis of sheer numbers of dead and maimed civilians alone), are never so described. In fact, Israel's "high moral purpose" as a "country that

(continued on page 13)

APOLOGY REFUSED

The U.S. Department of Defense has rejected an Israeli apology for offensive remarks made by an Israeli official about U.S. Deputy Undersecretary of Defense Dov Zakheim, who is himself Jewish. The offensive remarks were made on 26 February, when the head of Israel's controversial Lavi fighter project publicly stated that Mr. Zakheim was a "kipa-wearing [religious skullcap] religious Jew who claims to be motivated by love of Israel [when he] is in fact causing tremendous damage to Israel."

The Pentagon objects to the Israeli Lavi project to build a very expensive fighter plane largely with U.S. money and technology. The U.S. has already shelled out $1.3 billion for the Israeli project. □

UHLF APPEAL

The United Holy Land Fund, a Chicago-based humanitarian organization, has issued an urgent appeal for assistance to the civilian victims of the fighting in Lebanon. The 20-year-old organization supports needy families with children, as well as medical and educational institutions in the Middle East.

UHLF also administers "Project Loving Care," which arranges for donors to sponsor children by making monthly or annual contributions to them while they continue to live with their families. It also administers a scholarship program which benefits about 250 students annually.

The present appeal for contributions is geared to the urgent need to provide food, clothing, and medical care to the victims of the refugee camps in Lebanon. Contributions to UHLF are tax deductible, and they should be sent to the following address:

UHLF
P. O. Box 1981
Chicago, IL 60690

MOTHER JONES

(continued from page 11)

to defend Jews against anti-Semitism and to promote Jewish cultural and political interests," writes Friedman, "the organizations have turned rightward in recent years, ferreting out critics of Israel and stifling legitimate debate inside the Jewish community and the U.S. media."

The American Jewish Committee brought out the heavy guns last March when it tried to suppress "Flashpoint," a three-part public television documentary on the Middle East that included a segment portraying Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza through Palestinian eyes. Thirty-six stations dropped the broadcast, including those in Washington, DC, and New York City.

Stephen Rosenfeld of *The Washington Post* suggests that there may be a downside to the Israeli pressure tactics. "They don't want fairness," he told Friedman. "They want unfairness on their side, and when they don't get it they accuse the press of being unfair. Most journalists get so much uninformed, unfair whining from the organized Jews that Jewish organizations —and ultimately Israel— may lose their credibility."

Yielding to those who would "silence the media and stifle debate is ultimately the real threat to Israel and to the prospects for Middle East peace," concludes Friedman. "Objective reporting can only strengthen those democratic forces that are struggling to solve the fundamental problems that threaten the country's very existence." □

[Press release by ***Mother Jones,*** dated 20 January 1987]

AID TO ISRAEL

The Executive Director of the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA) told Congress that the Reagan administration's foreign aid proposals do not reflect the Arab world's importance to the United States and labeled aid to Israel disproportionately large.

In a prepared testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, David J. Sadd said that the 21 countries of the Arab world span two continents and include 187 million people, and have tremendous strategic importance to the United States. "On the economic level," he said, "the Arab world has proven to be invaluable to our country. At a time when U.S. trade deficits with the world as a whole keep breaking record levels, the United States has had a trade surplus with the Arab world countries for each of the last four years."

Sadd criticized the very high level of American aid, given in the form of non-repayable grants, to Israel. Recent Israeli actions, he said, including its role in the Iran-Contra scandal, its ongoing program to steal U.S. military technology, the Jonathan J. Pollard [spying for Israel] case, its policies in the West Bank and Gaza and its military presence in Lebanon, "call into question the wisdom of bestowing such generous amounts of aid on Israel." □

DEMONOLOGY

(continued from page 12)

cares for human life" are regularly lauded in the media and in government statements, while El Salvador and Guatemala are hailed as "fledgling democracies."

Since the designation of these three countries as "terrorist" would actually make no sense within the framework of intellectual debate in the U.S., Chomsky argues, this automatically renders the scholar who attempts to describe them as such either a lunatic or a proponent of terrorism....

The central theme of *Pirates and Emperors* is reflected in its title, which is taken from a story by St. Augustine. According to Chomsky, "St. Augustine tells the story of a pirate captured by Alexander the Great, who asked him 'how he dares molest the sea.' 'How dare you molest the whole world?' the pirate replied. 'Because I do it with a little ship only, I am called a thief; you, doing it with a great navy, are called an Emperor.' "

[***Pirates & Emperors*** is available from Claremont Research & Publications, Inc., 160 Claremont Avenue, New York, NY 10027]

EUROPEANS SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

EEC Declaration Cites Ties To Mideast

In a clear departure from the usually equivocal Israel-U.S. position on the issue of convening an international peace conference on the Middle East, the European Community — consisting of twelve West European countries— issued a declaration on 23 February 1987 clearly supporting a peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all parties "able to make a direct and positive contribution to the restoration and maintenance of peace" in the Middle East. The Arab states and the PLO have consistently supported such a conference, first called for by the United Nations in 1983.

The Foreign Ministers of the twelve-member Community, meeting in Brussels, Belgium, expressed their concern at the absence of progress toward the achievement of peace in the Middle East and pledged to play an active role in the conference if it is convened.

The Palestine Liberation Organization, which has been actively engaged in promoting the notion of an international peace conference to deal with the Arab-Israeli conflict, welcomed the European initiative. Although the Brussels declaration did not mention the PLO (or other parties) by name, it specifically reiterated the adherence of the European Community to the principles of the 1980 Venice Declaration which included recognition of Palestinian self-determination and insisted on PLO participation in the peace process.

PLO official spokesman and Executive Committee member, Ahmad Abd el-Rahman, told reporters in Tunis that the PLO supports the European statement and hopes that it would be followed by serious efforts to convene a preparatory committee to set the stage for an international peace conference. Rahman reiterated PLO policy that such a conference is the only way to achieve peace in the Middle East.

Brussels Declaration

"The member states of the European Community have particularly important political, historical, geographical, economic, religious, cultural and human links with the countries and peoples of the Middle East. They cannot therefore adopt a passive attitude towards a region which is so close to them nor remain indifferent to the grave problems besetting it. The repercussions of these problems affect the Twelve in many ways.

"At the present time, tension and conflict in the Near and Middle East are continuing and worsening. The civilian population is suffering more and more without any prospect of peace. The Twelve would like to reiterate their profound conviction that the search for peace in the Near and Middle East remains a fundamental objective. They are profoundly concerned at the absence of progress in finding a solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict.

"Consequently, they have a direct interest in the search for negotiated solutions to bring just, global and lasting peace to the region and good relations between neighbors, and to allow the economic, social and cultural development which has been too long neglected. They have stated the principles on which solutions would be based on several occasions, in particular in their Venice Declaration.

"Accordingly, the Twelve would like to state that they are in favor of an international peace conference to be held under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of the parties concerned and of any party able to make a direct and positive contribution to the restoration and maintenance of peace and to the region's economic and social development. The Twelve believe this conference should provide a suitable framework for the necessary negotiations between the parties directly concerned.

"For their part, the Twelve are prepared to play their role with respect to such a conference and will endeavor to make an active contribution, both through the President-in-Office and individually, to bringing the positions of the parties concerned closer to one another with a view to such a conference being convened. In the meantime, the Twelve would request the parties concerned to avoid any action likely to worsen the situation or complicate and delay the search for peace.

"Without prejudging future political solutions, the Twelve wish to see an improvement in the living conditions of the inhabitants of the Occupied Territories, particularly regarding their economic, social, cultural and administrative affairs. The Community has already decided to grant aid to the Palestinian population of the Occupied Territories and to allow certain products from those territories preferential access to the Community market." □

CANADA REFUSES TO ACCREDIT YARON

The government of Canada has refused to grant diplomatic accreditation to Israeli Maj. Gen. Amos Yaron as his country's defense attache in Ottawa. The Canadian decision is apparently based on Yaron's role in Lebanon during the massacre of Palestinian refugees in Sabra and Shatila camps during the Israeli occupation of Beirut in September 1982.

In 1983, Yaron was made Chief of the Manpower Branch of the Israeli Army, and he was promoted to the rank of major general. In 1986, he was chosen by the government of Israel as military attache in the Israeli embassy in Washington. Efforts by the Arab-American community at the time to dissuade the U.S. government from accepting the diplomatic credentials of someone who was judged in his own country to bear responsibility in a massacre described by a U.N. resolution as a crime against humanity failed. Yaron became Israel's military attache in Washington in August 1986.

Canadian External Affairs Minister, Joe Clark, told *The New York Times* (6 March 1987) that Canada did not consider it "appropriate" to accept Maj. Gen. Yaron as Israel's military attache in Ottawa, but refused to give specific reasons for that decision. However, officials of the External Affairs Ministry indicated privately that Canada based its decision on the findings of the Kahan Commission. □

ISRAEL TO KEEP LINKS WITH SOUTH AFRICA

Israel has decided to maintain "for the time being" the strong and varied relations it has with the apartheid regime in South Africa. Using the excuse that Israeli-South African relations "are a very complex issue," as Israel's Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin recently put it, Israel decided to maintain the status quo.

Pressure on Israel to reconsider its close military and economic ties with Pretoria mounted as the world community moved to tighten sanctions against the racist state. Also, Israel's supporters in America fear the consequences of recent U.S. legislation imposing economic sanctions. The law authorizes Congress to penalize states which continue to deal with South Africa. Last September, the U.S. Congress approved a resolution which required the President to report to Congress by April 1987 on arms sales relationships between South Africa and states receiving U.S. aid. Israel tops the list of aid recipients and at the same time tops the list of military collaborators with South Africa.

The importance of Israel's arms trade with South Africa to the Israeli economy was pointed out in a recent article by the Israeli historian Benny Morris. Writing in *The Jerusalem Post* International Edition (Week ending 7 February) he said: "Israel reportedly earns a great deal of money from these arms and technology exports, and the livelihood of thousands of Israeli workers to some degree depends on this ongoing relationship with Pretoria." □

THE NUCLEARIZATION OF ISRAEL

The Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control, a Washington-based organization, issued a report called "Israel's Nuclear Shadow," by Professor Gary Millhollin of the University of Wisconsin School of Law. The report describes Israel's nuclear weapons program as "one of the most discouraging and cynical examples of nuclear arms proliferation on record."

Referring to the widely known Israeli practice of stealing nuclear materials and technology, the author of the report says that the nuclearization of Israel "shows an Israel willing to violate just about any law imposed by its trading partners" including the United States. He believes that such "trading partners" possibly have the legal right "to require Israel to dismantle its nuclear arsenal, and restrict its nuclear material to peaceful use." Israel has refused to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Professor Millhollin says that the U.S. and Norway, the two countries which supplied Israel with the heavy water it is using to produce nuclear materials, should insist on their right to inspect Israel's Dimona nuclear reactor. If the U.S. does not do so, he said, then it is guilty of "selective proliferation," meaning "of winking at proliferation by its friends, or even aiding it, and denouncing it when done by others."

He cites French sources to make the point that Israeli atomic bombs are intended to blackmail the United States to keep on supporting Israel. "What was so clear to the French," the author writes, "seems to have escaped notice in the United States: that the true effect of Israel's bomb is to compel enough U.S. support [for Israel] to keep the 'deterrent' in check." □

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