



The Other Israel

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The Day After

This editorial is being written on the morning of July 24th, 1984, a few hours after the results of the general elections were published. These results are completely unlike anything predicted in all the public opinion polls. The political situation is still far from completely clear, and the next few weeks will be full of political manoeuvring.

Several results of the elections are already completely clear, however.

The most obvious result is, undoubtedly, the failure of Labor Party. The elections victory, which Labor took almost for granted, was denied to it. The Likud seems far more likely to find enough coalition partners to form a Knesset majority. Another possibility is a so-called "national unity government", of Labor and Likud together. Even if, by many machinations and manipulations, Labor succeeds in putting together a cabinet, it would be weak and narrow based, unable and unwilling to make any significant decision.

Political analysts inside and outside Israel will probably argue for years about the reasons for Labor's failure. It is already clear, however, that Labor's elections propaganda was conducted along completely mistaken lines. Assuming the "floating vote" to hold hawkish views, Labor tried to present itself in the most hawkish image possible, using such slogans as "no to withdrawal to the '67 borders, no to negotiations with the PLO, no Palestinian state, no dismantling of settlements". The Labor propaganda differentiated between Labor's own settlements, which are "necessary for defense" and those of the Likud, which are "unnecessary."

Concerning the Lebanon War, Labor actually took pride in having supported the war at the start and criticised the Likud government only for "having gone beyond 40 kilometers." The anti-war movement, which had brought hundreds of thousands of demonstrators to the streets, found hardly any electoral expression. Instead, Labor presented itself to the electorate nearly as a carbon copy of the Likud. It is hardly surprising that the "floating vote", disenfranchised with the Likud, did not like the Likud's replica either.

The electorate's desire for clear-cut alternatives was expressed in the success of smaller parties offering such alternatives, on both sides of the political spectrum.

Perhaps the most significant, as well as the most ominous, result of the 1984 elections is the entry into the Knesset, for the first time, of an openly fascist and racist party - Rabbi Kahane's "Kach" movement. Its success was no accident - the last few years have shown an alarming rise in the manifestations of racism in Israel (see issue No 4-5).

Several public opinion polls conducted in recent months, have shown about 25 percent of the electorate supporting the activities of the anti-Arab terrorist underground, and answering "yes" to the question "should the Arabs be treated as second-class citizens?" It was only natural that this large constituency would seek for itself an ever more extreme electoral expression. It is a clear and growing threat, which will have to be combated resolutely.

In the forefront of that battle will stand another newcomer to the Knesset - The Jewish-Arab Progressive List for Peace (PLP). The bulk of this issue will be devoted to the PLP, its program and the struggle it had to wage for the very right to stand for election.

The section "Chronicles of The Peace Struggle" will be omitted, in this issue, as the movements usually mentioned in it almost completely suspended their activities during the election campaign, and even the few demonstrations which did take place, such as those held by "Peace Now" and "Yesh Gvul" at the second anniversary of The Lebanon War, were largely overshadowed by the elections.

It should be made clear that The Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace (ICIPP), a non-party organization which seeks to unite within its ranks all supporters of Israeli-Palestinian peace, regardless of party affiliations, is in no way identical with The Progressive List for Peace (PLP) which is now represented in the Knesset. Nevertheless, it is natural that most members of the ICIPP joined the PLP election campaign, and thus the ICIPP also, in practice, suspended its activities during the election campaign. Now that the elections are over, The Other Israel will continue to bring you news of the activities of both ICIPP and PLP in the troubled times ahead.

The Editor



The progressive list for peace – a Jewish-Arab political partnership

The political history of the state of Israel has known a great number of parties and political formations of all kinds, forms and shades of opinion. Very rarely, if ever, had any of them aroused so much public interest and controversy, so many

hopes and so much hostility, as did the Progressive List for Peace (PLP) in its two months of existence. That is entirely justified, for there had never before been anything like the PLP in Israeli politics. To understand the significance of the PLP, some basic facts about Israeli society must be examined.

The Arab citizens of Israel, who are in theory equal citizens, have been living, since 1948, under a system of discrimination which makes them, in practice, second-class citizens. To name only a few of the most harsh forms of discrimination: all jobs that are connected, even in the most remote way, to

The Progressive List For Peace – MANIFESTO

The following is the text of the statement presented in a press conference in Tel-Aviv, on May 30th.

We hereby announce the formation of The Progressive List For Peace which will run for the 11th Knesset elections.

This list is the fruit of a long dialogue between Jewish and Arab groups in Israel who believe in a just peace and in equality for both peoples of this land.

The candidates are divided equally between Arabs and Jews. The list is headed by Advocate Mohammad Miary; second is General (Res.) Dr. Mattiyahu Peled.

The list will run for the 11th Knesset on the basis of an agreed upon minimum program, as well as detailed platforms relating to both Arab and Jewish sectors.

The core of the program deals with the Palestinian question, an issue which affects all aspects of the State of Israel: its defense and economic policies, and its social, cultural and educational institutions.

The Palestinian question is the crux of the prolonged conflict between the two peoples of this land, and the principles agreed upon outline the means for solving this conflict and paving the way for a just and comprehensive Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab peace.

The following are our principles:

- 1) The ensurance of equal national and civil rights for the Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel within its boundaries of June 4, 1967; the implementation of a determined struggle against all aspects of national discrimination and racism; and the safeguarding of these rights by means of a democratic constitution to be written for the State of Israel. This constitution will ensure the complete equality of all

citizens of Israel, be they Jews or Arabs, Westerners or Orientals, men or women, religious or non-religious.

- 2) A mutual recognition of the right of both peoples – the Jewish-Israeli and the Palestinian-Arab – to national self-determination. The implementation of this principle requires Israeli evacuation from all the territories occupied in the 1967 war, including East Jerusalem, and the abolition of the occupation and all its implications. These territories should be returned to their legitimate owner, the Arab Palestinian people, for the purpose of establishing there an independent Palestinian State alongside the State of Israel. The two states will maintain relations of peaceful neighbourhood.
- 3) The mutual recognition between Israel and the future Palestinian State; the withdrawal of Israeli Forces from the occupied territories; and the peace treaty will be the outcome of negotiations between the government of Israel and the sole legitimate Representative of the Palestinian people, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).
- 4) An immediate and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.

Aware of the enormous obstacles on the road to sincere cooperation between the two peoples, we nevertheless express our hope and belief that the formation of the Progressive List for Peace (PLP) will mark the starting point for a deepening and an extension of the dialogue and cooperation between Jews and Arabs in Israel, as well as between Israelis and Palestinians as national entities, towards the achievement of a just and lasting peace.

We call upon all progressive forces and personalities, Jewish and Arab, to join us.

We call upon all other progressive lists running for election to conduct a decent electoral campaign and to debate the issues on their merits.



defense (which means a large part of the Israeli economy) are practically barred to Arabs; so is most of the government civil service; Arab municipalities receive far less financial support from the central government than do Jewish ones, and the same is true of schools and social services in the Arab sector; government plans for development and industrialisation almost completely ignore the Arab sector; government-owned lands are considered to be, not the common property of all Israeli citizens, but the property of the Jewish people, earmarked for Jewish settlement. (Many of these lands were, in the first place, confiscated from Arabs.)

Though the Arab citizens of Israel have the vote, and theoretically have every right to organize politically, in practice this right is systematically curtailed through the use of anti-democratic laws and regulations, most of which are relics of the British colonial regime. For 35 years, the only party which really represented the Arabs was the Israeli Communist Party, while almost all the other parties (including left-wing ones) were, essentially, Jewish parties.

In the late seventies, a growing number of Arabs have become disillusioned with the Communist Party. Some of them simply didn't like communism (particularly as the Israeli party is super-orthodox in its adherence to the Soviet line); others were repelled by a party which had created its own rigid establishment, and had not changed its leadership in decades. Thus, there began to appear a growing number of independent Arab groups and organizations, usually organized on a local basis. The largest of these was the Nazareth Progressive Movement, which won 20 percent of the seats in the municipal council. (Arab municipal councils have, in many cases, a political significance far beyond the municipal level).

At this point, developments in the Arab sector converged with parallel ones in the Jewish sector. When the "Alternative" party was founded in 1983, its founders gave thought to the failure of previous peace parties, such as Shelli. One of Shelli's failures had been that it was almost a purely Jewish party, with only a few token Arabs. "Alternative" sought to avoid this mistake and find Arab partners from the beginning. It started developing political cooperation with Arab groups and personalities, on such issues as the struggle against racism, protests over political arrests of Arab leaders, political activists, etc. The sudden dissolution of the Knesset, in April 1984, forced both sides to consider closer cooperation. The creation of a common, Jewish-Arab electoral list was not an easy achievement. Many long discussions, negotiations and arguments were necessary until the formation of the Progressive List for Peace (PLP) was announced, on May 30th. The new list was headed by Adv. Muhammad Miari of Haifa and Gen. (res) Matti Peled, was composed of sixty Jewish and sixty Arab members, and its manifesto called for negotiations with the PLO, Israeli withdrawal to the '67 borders, and complete equality for all citizens of Israel (see text).

In both its program and its composition, the PLP was a living challenge to the forces of chauvinism and annexationism, who were prompt in

responding: one day after the list was formally presented to the central elections committee, its leaders received a letter from the defence ministry, informing them of the defence minister's intention to outlaw the PLP, using the anti-democratic "Emergency Regulations" left over from the British colonial regime (see text). In the past, several Arab organizations were outlawed, using these regulations. This time, however, the government encountered a new phenomenon: a list composed of Jews and Arabs who regard each other as completely equal partners, who insist on being treated in precisely the same way, and who absolutely refuse to recognise any double standard. A large part of both Israeli and world public opinion came out in a strong protest against this anti-democratic intention. The PLP, almost completely unknown two days before, became front-page news in all Israel's newspapers, and many new supporters joined its struggle. At the same time, the PLP legal team, headed by lawyers Amnon Zichroni and Avigdor Feldman prepared an answering document refuting the racist accusations of the defence ministry. The PLP leaders demanded a chance to meet with Defense Minister Arens and present their case directly to him.

This meeting, which took place on June 8th, at the defence ministry in Tel-Aviv, was held in a tense atmosphere, bursting out into heated arguments, with the defence minister's aides trying their best to turn it into a sort of police investigation of the Arab members of the PLP. The PLP delegates strongly protested this racist attempt to separate them, again and again reiterating their Jewish-Arab solidarity. The meeting lasted two hours, in which no breach was made in the PLP defenses. Afterwards, three of the Attorney General's senior aides, who were present, advised the defence minister that he has no case against the PLP, and that any decision to outlaw it will be overturned by the Supreme Court.

Arens, thus, had no choice but to back down from his intention of outlawing the PLP. Not completely, however—as a parting shot, Arens published a communique, in which the PLP leaders were charged with "subversive intentions" and "identification with enemies of the state". This was clearly an attempt to influence the decision of the central elections committee, which must approve every new list of candidates. This committee is composed of party representatives, reflecting the composition of the Knesset, except for its chairman, who is a Supreme Court judge. The right-wing delegates in this committee were not slow in using the ammunition given them by Arens, and started agitation for the disqualification of the PLP. At the central elections committee meeting, held on June 18th, they raised the most absurd kind of accusations against the PLP. An especially dishonourable part was played by the Labor Party, three of whose delegates abstained from voting and two more completely absented themselves from the proceedings, thus creating a 17:12 majority for disqualifying the PLP from running for election. To create an appearance of "impartiality", the central elections committee also disqualified Rabbi Kahane's racist list, which advocates the expulsion



of all Arabs from Israel and the imposition of a five-years' imprisonment for the "crime" of sexual intercourse between Jews and non-Jews. Banning both the PLP and Kahane was presented as "curbing the extremists on both sides".

The banning of the PLP, and the linkage made between it and Kahane's racist list, have aroused strong protests, both in Israel and abroad. Petitions were printed in the newspapers, and a large number of well-known personalities appeared in two protest rallies, which were held in Tel-Aviv and in Nazareth. The large crowds attending both rallies were composed of both Jews and Arabs, travelling to each other's town and participating in common political action to publicly demonstrate their complete opposition to any kind of segregation. Outside Israel such newspapers as the London Times and Le Mond devoted their editorials to the banning of the PLP, and solidarity telegrams poured in from all over the world. *

The struggle of the PLP was vindicated when a special five-member bench of the Supreme Court needed only 20 minutes to overturn the central elections committee's decision. However, the Supreme Court also maintained the linkage between the PLP and Kahane, allowing the racist list to run in the elections as well.

It is already clear that the attempts to destroy the PLP have acted as a boomerang, increased public sympathy and support for it, and greatly contributed to its electoral success.

* *We would like to note especially the solidarity expressed by the Green Party of West-Germany. (A Green delegation also came to Israel and participated in a PLP rally). The number of solidarity telegrams was far too great to list them all here. The PLP would like to express here its deep gratitude for all of them.*

Racist Accusations by the Defence Ministry and their refutation

The following is the text of the letter sent (by special courier) to Uri Avnery, on June 1st, 1984, the day after the PLP list of candidates was formally presented to the central elections committee.

To The Progressive List for Peace

1. I hereby notify you that the Minister of Defence is considering the declaration of your organization – The Progressive List for Peace – an illegal association; based on his authority according to Regulation 84 (1) (b) of the 1945 Defence (Emergency) regulation.

2. The following are the major arguments based on which the Minister is considering taking the above action:

- a. In April 1984, the representatives of the "Alternative" party, and Arab representatives of the "Progressive Movement", ** have convened and discussed the establishment of a common Arab-Jewish List, "The Progressive List for Peace" (hereinafter – "The list").
- b. In the contacts between the Arab representatives involved in the preparations for the list's establishment, a platform draft has been decided upon, which made no mention of the intended

Palestinian State's border lines. In fear that such a platform shall not stand the scrutiny of the Central Elections Committee, the Arab representatives have decided to change the phrasings, for tactical purposes only.

- c. The main Arab partners in the List's establishment are members of the "Progressive Movement" who have already in the past agreed with the nationalistic position of their movement, which regards the Arabs of Israel an integral part of the Arab Palestinian People, supports it and its "heroic" struggle under PLO leadership, and its right for self-determination and the founding of its independent State on "homeland soil".
- d. Some of the Arab representatives in the above mentioned organization regard the founding of such a list as a service to the Palestinian People and a recognition of its right to self-determination and the founding of a state on this peoples' soil, headed by the PLO.
- e. The Movement's Arab partners regard the Jewish partners as a cover-up, which will enable them to get into the Knesset a representative of the nationalist Arab organizations, who see the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestine Arabst.
- f. In the said organization, the Arab representatives intend to build a long-range national Palestinian infrastructure, which will incorporate most of the radical political currents among Israeli Arabs, who deny the State's existence.
- g. The common Arab-Jewish list regards the PLO as the representative of the Arab Palestinian People.

** *"The Progressive Movement" mentioned here is a local Nazareth movement, which made its debut in the 1979 municipal elections, where it got about 20 per cent of the votes. It is the largest of the many Arab movements and groups who joined the PLP.*



- h. The Arab partners in the Arab-Jewish movement have defined it as their objective to work towards the founding of a Palestinian State headed by the PLO on a territory to be decided by the PLO.
- i. The PLO has been declared a terrorist organization according to the 1948 Anti-Terrorism Act.

3. I have been requested by the Minister of Defence to bring the above to your attention, so that you can voice your arguments and remarks before the minister takes his final decision, whether or not to use his authority according to the above mentioned Regulation 84.

Sincerely,

Moshe Kochanowski
Defence Authorities' Legal Counsel

The following are excerpts from the letter sent by Amnon Zichrony, the PLP lawyer, to the Defence Minister, on June 3rd. Considerations of space prevent us from publishing the full, 10-page document.

To Prof. Moshe Arens, The Defence Minister
The Defence Ministry
Tel-Aviv

(. . .) 3) My client strongly protests against your seeing it fit to consider declaring it an "illegal association" under regulation 84 (1)(b) of the 1945 Defence (Emergency) regulations. Even the thought of preventing a body of Israeli citizens from standing for election to the Knesset, with a platform outlining a way to deliver the state from infinite wars and ensuring its peace and welfare, through the use of British mandatory regulations which were designed to prevent the Jewish community from struggling for their national independence, is abhorring, and it is hard for us to understand what manner of thinking could have led you to it.

a. Judging from the contents of your legal counsel's letter, the reason for bringing up this possibility is a report from a certain meeting held in April of this year, which, according to my client, has obviously been submitted by an informant lacking intelligence (hereinafter - "The Informant"), who therefore did not understand the nature of the discussion, which has been one of several, aimed at examining the possibility of establishing a political framework for Jewish-Arab cooperation in Israel.

b. Since one of these meetings is mentioned in the above letter, I hereby clarify that discussions were indeed held in these meetings, regarding the manner in which the intended body's - if such body is established - common position is to be presented; but never has it been suggested by any one of the participants, not even by implication, that this common position will ignore or deny Israel's existence, or disavow the June 4th 1967 border lines' validity. During the meeting there were debates, as is usual when phrasing platforms. The question raised was whether to mention the exact border lines of the intended Palestinian State, or to

suggest that these shall be decided upon in direct negotiations between the government of Israel and the representative body of the Palestinian People. As you know, there exist large circles in Israel who maintain that the final border between Israel and its Eastern neighbour, whether a Jordanian or a Palestinian State, must be decided in negotiations and not unilaterally fixed by Israel before that. At the end of that discussion, it was agreed that the common position is to demand from the State of Israel to regard the June 4th, 1967 borders as her border line; otherwise, in the absence of such clarification, we may end up inadvertently accepting the assumption that the State of Israel has no borders, and this may be interpreted as if the List has, accepted the assumption that until the border is fixed Israel is allowed to expand its border in various methods of annexing the occupied territories. (. . .)

d. The List's political program was made public at a press conference held on May 30th, and publicly distributed in the form of the enclosed document,* which incorporates its political program, the one which the list offers to the Israeli voter in the 11th Knesset Elections. The argument that "the Movement's Arab partners regard the Jewish partners as a cover-up" lowers the debate to a level which is humiliating to all parties concerned. The assumption of those who argue this is that those cunning Arabs have found themselves some half-witted Jews, who unwittingly serve as cover-up for the Arab's devices. Does my client really have to relate to this type of argumentation, instead of rejecting it with revulsion, as a sheer expression of shameful racism?! (. . .)

5) a. In the above mentioned meeting, there have also participated, in addition to members of the Progressive Movement, representatives of other movements working among the Arab population, including representatives of bodies who opposed this initiative and who have decided not to join in. It should be noted that many of the Arab participants are persons who take part in the country's public life, in various sectors such as local authorities, public committees, etc., and whose views are no secret which must be revealed through an informant sent to submit a report on what they say. There is no doubt that they are all people of high political awareness, they all wish to serve the public of which they are members, they all have severe complaints against the discrimination regime in practice in Israel against the Arab public, and they all identify themselves as members of the Palestinian People, living in Israel as law-abiding citizens. In addition to those, Israelis who are currently organized in the "Alternative" party have also taken part; among them are persons who have done a great deal in the State's service, in the Knesset, government, army, kibbutz movement, and more. What characterizes the past of all these people is their devotion to public affairs, where they advance their views and their belief that the State of Israel's future and peace are dependent on her ability to find a way for peaceful co-existence with her

* The document mentioned is the PLP manifesto.



neighbours and with the Arab Palestinian People. None of the participants has ever acted in secrecy, and their actions have always been open to public scrutiny.

It is worth noting in this context, that your Ministry's legal counsel stressed in his letter that you regard as the major disqualification the joining in the list of the Progressive Movement's members. This movement has been in existence for several years, its representatives have been elected to the local authorities, its actions investigated and scrutinized, and yet you did not see it fit to declare it "an illegal association". Does the joining of the "Progressive Movement" in the above mentioned list make that list an illegal association, whereas, as said, the Progressive Movement has never been outlawed?! (. . .)

b. There is no doubt that all of the Arab participants in the meetings and in "The Progressive List for Peace", regard themselves as an integral part of the Palestinian People, and that is because the Arab population in Israel is indeed a part of the Palestinian People. Like many others among Israeli Arabs, they support the Palestinian People outside Israel in their struggle for the right of self-determination, as do the Jewish participants in the meetings and in the List. But the implication hidden in the phrase, that they support its "heroic struggle", which is apparently intended to say that they support the PLO's, and its various organizations' methods of struggle, is a collective, baseless accusation. This has lately been proved in those cases where the Security Services have requested the arrest of Adv. Muhamad Miari, and other Israeli Palestinians, without being able to produce at court any pretext for the arrests. It goes without saying, that all of the list's elements are against violent struggle and the use of terrorism by all parties.

c. The argument that "some" of the Arab representatives regard the establishing of the List as "a service to the Palestinian People" is also completely misleading. All the List's participants, Arabs and Jews alike, maintain that their list, after it has established a faction in the Knesset, is destined to serve the State of Israel by striving towards peace between Israel and the Palestinian People on the basis of mutual recognition of their right to sovereign existence at each other's side in peace and brotherhood. This will be a valuable service to both peoples, to the Middle East, and to the whole world. (. . .)

e. As said, the List's founders state that they have indeed chosen as their objective to act in order to achieve peace between Israel and a Palestinian State which will be founded under PLO leadership at Israel's side. After the founding of the Palestinian State, the PLO leadership shall be, naturally, replaced by a Palestinian Government; but on no account does my client agree to the libel, that the List maintains that the Palestinian State's borders are to be decided by the PLO, as charged in the legal counsel's letter. According to the interpretation widely accepted in the world today, the PLO has accepted, in a number of major decisions the principle of international legitimacy and the June

4th, 1967 borders: but in any case, my client's position is that the international border between Israel and the Palestinian State must be the June 4th, 1967 border line - the border within which the State of Israel has been formed and developed during the first twenty years of her existence, a border within which she has known security and growth, and a border which is today accepted by most countries in the world as the border of Israel, in which a glorious future is awaiting her. (. . .)

6) B. My client's claim is that it is clearly obvious that as head of a list, the (acting) Minister of Defence (the Prime Minister),* has wished to make use of his powers in order to disqualify a competing list; in fact, the list which presents most vigorously a political conception which is the absolute opposite of his own. This is an unprecedented step in the history of the state, which constitutes a severe and harsh blow to the democratic process. (. . .)

Based on the above arguments, you have absolutely no authority to declare my client's organization an "illegal association." (. . .)

g. We have entered in the cardinal field of basic rights; elections, the right to be elected, freedom of expression, political rights, freedom of association, etc. It is inconceivable that in a proper state it would be possible to deny these basic rights by an arbitrary decision, made by a representative of the Executive. (. . .)

It is hard to conceive, that the Defence Authorities could be empowered to be the arbiters of the Parliament's composition. In this, the Defence Authorities are marching into the political field, trampling upon the most basic rights.

7. My client strongly rejects the attempt to outlaw the list which, as explained above, is not based on any consideration pertaining to security, and is nothing but the fruit of insipid tale-bearing, designed to create the impression that the Security Services have managed to unveil evil devices among conscientious persons, who have always performed their public duty in the open, with full obedience to the State Law.

Yours
A. Zichrony
Advocate

* At the time this letter was sent, Defence Minister Arens was in Washington, and Prime Minister Shamir was acting Defence Minister.

The Emergency Regulation referred to had given the British High Commissioner of Palestine the power to declare, without giving reasons, any group to be "an unpermitted association" and impose a penalty of ten-years' imprisonment for membership in it; membership being defined as including, among other things, being part of the crowd at a rally. This regulation was used against two Jewish underground organizations, one of which was headed by Menachem Begin and the other by Itzhak Shamir (who was also imprisoned under this regulation). After 1948, this power was inherited by the Israeli defence minister.



The central elections committee – Israeli McCarthyism in action

The following is the text of the communique published by Defense Minister Arens on June 8th.

“The Minister of Defense has decided today not to declare the list named ‘The Progressive List for Peace’ an illegal association. Following a thorough examination of all the well-tested information presented to him, including hearing the declarations and claims made by representatives of the list, the minister of defense is convinced that there are indeed subversive elements and trends among groups belonging to the list, and central personages in the list are acting in a manner as to identify themselves with the state’s enemies. However, the minister has decided that under the present circumstances, and at this stage, in the midst of the process of examining the list running for the Knesset, it would be preferable not to employ Regulation 14 (1)(b) of the Emergency Defense Regulations, whose implementation is at his discretion” (. . .)

The following are excerpts from the minutes of the June 18th meeting of the Central Elections Committee.

Member of Knesset Mrs. Geula Cohen:

Our claim is that the representatives of the list named ‘Progressive for Peace’ are representatives, if not formally than in essence, of the PLO, and if today they yet act under cover, tomorrow they will come out in the open. It’s not important now whether the PLO has actually sent them or not, we have the records of such a conversation, and there were also rumors to the effect that the PLO has in fact encouraged them to run for the Knesset (. . .)

I am referring to Section 97 (of the Israeli criminal code) which deals with treason, defined as an action which may bring about a situation in which a territory is taken out of the State’s sovereignty (. . .) In its platform it (the PLP) demands that the state of Israel retreat to the border lines of June 4th, 1967, an assault on the territory of Eastern Jerusalem and the Golan Heights to which Israeli Law was applied. This is an assault, they want to take out parts of the country and the state for the disposal of another state (. . .)

Whoever takes upon himself the responsibility to qualify this list for the Knesset, must know it represents a much graver danger than if they were just an outside organization. When the members of an organization not represented in the Knesset pass through Lod (international airport) to here and there, they can still be checked, and some of them are checked and searched. This is a fact. As members of Knesset – no more. They will enjoy the protection of parliamentary immunity, which will enable them to go through without any searches (. . .) I would like to know whether anyone can promise me that in the office of the Progressive List for Peace faction in the Knesset, the picture of

Arafat will not be hanged on the wall, and that on cars entering the Knesset, there won’t be stickers saying ‘PLO now’ or ‘PLO the legitimate representative’.

(. . .) Mr. Chairman, since January this year 160 Arabs in the Galilee villages Sachnin, Arabe and others were arrested by the police for security offences. Seven of the candidates in this list are from the villages Arabe and Sachnin. I say we already see the radicalization. It (the list) has not yet entered the Knesset, and already there is a radicalization felt in the Arab streets. And one last implication, we shall not be able to demand from the world not to open PLO offices, when a PLO office, in my opinion, will be opened in this Knesset. What shall we say to the United States or other countries? (. . .) Right here inside the Knesset there will be a PLO office! (. . .)

After Geula Cohen’s speech, M. K. Roni Milo of the Likud block delivered a similar one. Cohen’s speech suffices, and Milo’s was omitted here.

Mr. Avnery:

We have heard here a very long speech by Member of the Knesset Geula Cohen, and I dare say it reminds me a bit of Senator Joe McCarthy, in that it contained not one single fact. Not one, except for the platform of the Progressive List for Peace, which is a fact. Nothing concrete besides that was brought to the committee. (. . .) regarding the “confidential material”, I must say there is a far-reaching innovation here, waving at us with the Shabac’s (General Security Service) “confidential material”, which nobody has ever seen, and claiming that it is that or the other (. . .) They want to come here, to this political committee, which is composed of representatives of political parties, and to say, in the democratic State of Israel, in its 36th year of existence, that based on confidential material a group of citizens cannot stand for election. (. . .) But the thing that in my eyes is the most scandalous is that after he (the minister of defense) has decided not to outlaw the list, he has added, via his spokesman, baseless defamations, without any support, based on illegal confidential material, which nobody has ever laid eyes upon, which we could not refute since it was never presented to us. And what is being said in this strange and puzzling announcement? It is said that in this list there are subversive elements. Who are these subversive elements? General Peled, N^o 2 on the list? Uri Avnery? Mr. Miari?

Member of Knesset Roni Milo:

Yes, yes, Mr. Miari.

Mr. Avnery:

You do not have authority to interpret the minister of defense – none whatsoever. I demand, that if the minister of defense issues an announcement, whose sole aim is to influence this committee, and it says so explicitly in the announcement itself, than let him at least spell out what he is talking about, let him identify the persons, the groups. This is McCarthyism of the worst possible kind. (. . .) I want to respond to this. Can I



respond? Do I even know what it's all about? Anonymous accusations, against anonymous persons, based on anonymous material? Is this something that the minister of defense in the State of Israel can afford to have done? (. . .)

Something has been said by one of the speakers here, something grave that I would like to urge you to think about: In Arabe – there is a place called Arabe – in this village such and such people were arrested for security offences. I don't know how many of them were convicted, I don't know. In Arabe there are also six candidates of this list. My God, what kind of an accusation is that?

(. . .) I would like to conclude, I am proud that we appear here as an integral Jewish-Arab List. Among our 120 candidates there are 60 Jews and 60 Arabs. We know our Arab comrades for a long time, this is not a last-moment marriage – although the elections did come up suddenly. We have known them from ideological discussions for a very long time, we have appeared together at the U.N. Geneva Conference on the Question of Palestine. When we came back General Peled was not arrested, Uri Avinery was not arrested, but Mr. Miari was arrested and he was detained for several days. He was interrogated by the Shabac, and was released without bail. Simply because he attended that same conference which we have attended, and he did there exactly the same things, except for one thing: we had an official meeting (with Arafat) and he did not. We know these people, we are proud to appear together with them. Our political views are identical, despite the fact that they are Arabs, proud and nationalistic. We are Israelis, proud Jews, and whoever mistakes us for non-Zionists, I would like to inform you that there is a judgement passed by the Supreme Court. This is something that no one in this room has. It confirms that we are Zionists. Because someone has libeled us as being anti-Zionists – we sued, and it reached the Supreme Court, and we have the Supreme Court Great Seal, confirming that Mr. Ya'akov Arnon, General Matti Peled, myself and three others, we are "Kosher" Zionists, with the stamp of the Supreme Court. No one else in this room has such a certificate . . .

Mr. Miari:

Let's start with the issue of part of the Arab Palestinian People, and the matter of PLO representation. The Arabs in Israel are, from a historical, cultural point of view and by family ties, hundred percent Palestinians. Until the year 1948, I would like to remind those who may have forgotten a bit, there was a people here, which was called the Arab Palestinian People. There were riots, there was a war, some of them went into exile, were deported, to territories outside Palestine, Eretz-Israel. Some of them stayed here. I gave the minister an example: I have two uncles in Syria.

(side remarks): They ran away . . . No, they were deported . . .

Miari: I myself, from the aspect of the Arab Palestinian connection, I have two uncles, my father's brothers, who are in Syria, I have one uncle in Tyre, and another aunt in a refugee camp near

Nablus, in Ein-Alma. My father and my brothers, we stayed here. The attachment between the Arabs in Israel and the Arab Palestinian People is not merely emotional, ideological or theoretical, but is a part of daily life, of family relations and of brotherhood. This is the situation. Whoever does not know the situation, let him know (. . .)

I say we, the Arabs, are in a certain situation, a certain status. We are citizens of the State of Israel, for all concerns. We shall insist that all our rights and all our duties as Israeli citizens are realized, we shall get our rights and give our dues, within the existing laws and the valid regulations, and we shall insist on it. (. . .)

(. . .) In the State of Israel the Arabs are citizens. Their representative for international and formal purposes is the Government of Israel, although I myself and many others oppose its actions, its platform and its policy, and we shall demand the correction of this policy, its complete overall change. We, as Arabs, feel that we have no representation in the Knesset, not the one we deserve and want. That is why we founded the Progressive List for Peace, so that it will represent us in the Knesset. I have said that we are part of the Palestinian People and that the PLO represents the Palestinian People, but it does not represent the Arabs in Israel, who have the status of citizens in Israel, it represents the Arab Palestinian People who are outside Israel. This has been recognized by the United Nations – and at least by a hundred countries (. . .)

Yes, yes, gentlemen, I am a man of law, I happen to be a lawyer. We play according to the rules of political games in democratic countries. We obey the law and we shall not break it. It is a fact that until this day, despite several injunctions, to which I shall shortly refer, no charges have ever been laid against me, and I was treated on the strength of (British) colonial Emergency Regulations, whose status we all know. We also know how many people here have suffered from these regulations and have protested against them, and have described them in a manner which I shall not repeat here. (. . .) *

The following speech by General (res) Matti Peled is a refutation of the affidavit written by Major General Avigdor Ben-Gal, then commander of the Army Northern Command, on September 24th, 1980. In this affidavit, presented to the central elections committee by the Likud delegates, Ben-Gal claimed that Muhamed Miari is "a grave security risk" because "he is inciting the Arab population to hold a general strike". (Gen. Ben-Gal achieved notoriety when he described the Arab citizens of Israel as "a cancer in the flesh of our country". He did try, later, to retract this racist statement and claimed he was "misunderstood").

* When the emergency regulations were promulgated, in 1945, by the British colonial authorities, leaders of the Jewish community sharply condemned them as "Nazi laws".



Mr. Peled:

When Jews hold a demonstration, it is a demonstration. When Arabs have such a demonstration, it is called "riots". I know this terminology. When the government decides to use military force against a demonstration, which is an elementary civil right, those who have called for the demonstration are blamed for the opening of fire by the army. We see here a phenomenon, of treating the Arab population as basically an enemy. We've seen it today too. A large part of the Israeli population, and certainly the Shabac, have not accepted that we have here a population of law-abiding citizens. (. . .) Any action which is accepted as natural and self-explanatory when it is taken by Jews, is immediately considered subversive and riotous when it comes to Arabs. And it is a fact, that with all these tremendous accusations, Miar was never charged with anything. The only thing which could be done against him, since he is an independent human being, since he could never be bought or bribed, and since he is doing things which according to that hysterical imagination are considered dangerous, was to employ the Emergency Defense Regulations and to put him in jail from time to time, or impose all sorts of limitations upon his movement and then to avoid bringing the case to the test before a court of law.

The letter which we have received from the Defense Authorities' legal counsel is ridiculous. I said then (at the meeting with Arens) that if we knew that the Shabac was so interested in our meetings, we would have invited them. Those were open meetings. We did not even know who the

Arafat on the PLP

On July 3ed, 1984, Yassir Arafat was interviewd in the Village Voice, of New York. The following is part of that interview.

Q.: Do you see any positive changes inside Israeli society?

Arafat: Yes. It's very important that for the first time there is an Arab-Israeli list running (for the Knesset) which advocates an independent Palestinian state. I know that the war in Lebanon has caused very big changes inside Israel. We are closely watching that.

Arafat later reiterated the same position several times, although the Israeli Communist Party, which regarded the PLP as an electoral rival and bitterly opposed it tried very hard to make him change his mind.



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participants were. I never asked for their identity. Apparently some informant has sat there, one who was not very bright, and he reported terrible things. And we have seen the outcome of those reports in the phrasing of that letter.(. .)

Bengal's whole document is one big defamation. Instead of saying that Israeli citizens have demonstrated and instead of saying that the army was sent against them and that demonstrators were shot at and killed, it tells about sabotage, agitators and riots, and that they are held responsible for the fact that they were shot at.

I would advise the gentlemen sitting here to try and understand the basic problem here: are you ready to accept that citizens of the State of Israel, the Palestinian Arabs, are citizens just like all other citizens? We accept that. And since we do accept it, there is a lot of significance in it. There are a lot of conclusions to be reached. And I think that one of the reasons that our list has worried so many in Israel, is because we seriously mean what we say. We shall act towards full equality between the citizens of Israel because the basic premise which stands in the way of that equality, i.e. that the Arab citizens of Israel constitute a danger, is absolutely unacceptable to us.

The following is the official text of the statement conveyed to the representative of the Progressive List for Peace by the chairman of the central elections committee on Monday, June 18th.

I hereby inform you that at its meeting of 18.6.84, the central elections committee for the Eleventh Knesset refused, by majority vote, to approve your list, the "Progressive List for Peace", on the grounds that in this list there do indeed exist subversive principles and intentions, and central figures in the list identify themselves with enemies of the state.

The majority of the committee lent its agreement to the thorough examination of all the confirmed data that was submitted to the defense minister, and that was contained in the affidavit of Major General Avigdor Ben-Gal of 24.9.80. Similarly, the majority's opinion was reinforced by the comments made by the list's representatives before the committee and before the defense minister, as listed in the protocol of 8.6.84.

The majority of the committee's members were convinced that this list advocates principles which endanger the integrity and existence of the State of Israel, as well as the preservation of its uniqueness as a Jewish state in accordance with the basic foundations of the State as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Law of Return.

(Signed)
 Justice Gabriel Bach

The above resolution was adopted by a vote of 17-12, with 4 abstentions. Chairman Justice Bach was among those abstaining, and the other three were from the Labor Party.

As mentioned earlier, this decision was later overturned by the Supreme Court.