

The Other Israel

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for Israeli-Palestinian Peace

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INTRODUCTION

Twice, during the Lebanon War, Israel carried out an exchange of prisoners with a Palestinian organization. The political results of the two exchanges were, however, completely different from each other.

In November 1983, Israel released 4,300 Palestinians, in exchange for six Israeli soldiers held by the PLO. Most of those, captured during the Lebanon War, had engaged in regular or guerrilla warfare against the Israeli army, and were not guilty of harming civilians. Consequently, the exchange was generally accepted by the Israeli public. Even several right-wingers* had to admit a grudging respect for the Palestinians' morale and discipline, and recognise them for what they were: the soldiers of a nascent Palestinian army.

The recent exchange, in May 1985, caused a completely different reaction. Israel released 1150 prisoners in exchange for the three Israeli soldiers held by Ahmed Jibril's pro-Syrian organization. Many, perhaps most, of these 1,150 were also captured in the Lebanon fighting; but all public attention in Israel was concentrated on one small section of them. These included men who are responsible for some of the bloodiest attacks on Israeli civilians, such as the 1972 attack on Lod International Airport and the 1978 bus hijacking on the Tel-Aviv-Haifa highway, in which dozens of civilians were killed, as well as the participants in

* These include, for example, Eitan Haber, the military correspondent of *Yediot Aharonot* and Adv. Arieh Marinski, a long-time member of Menachem Begin's "Herut" Party.

some attacks whose victims were children. The release of these prisoners suddenly reopened many old wounds, and even members of the peace movement could, at most, accept it only with very mixed feelings, as an unsavoury necessity for releasing the Israeli POW's.

Thus, the exchange created the public climate for a big, well-organised public campaign mounted by all Israeli right-wing parties and organizations. The major aim of this campaign is to secure the release of 25 "Gush Emunim" members, who are undergoing trial for forming an anti-Arab terrorist underground. This underground was responsible for killing three Arab students at Hebron university, for crippling several West Bank mayors in bomb attacks, and for attempts to blow up the Temple Mount mosques and ten Arab buses.

The prisoner exchange has created a precedent in the release of Arabs who were convicted of murder by the Israeli courts. This precedent has allowed the Likud and other main-stream right-wing and religious parties, who had so far kept their distance from the anti-Arab underground, to change their public position and come out openly in its support. There is a strong possibility that, with the open support of the Likud ministers, led by Shamir and Sharon, and even of some in the Labor party, the underground members will indeed secure a pardon - which will give an enormous boost to all anti-Arab activities in Israel and the occupied territories. (Already, Israeli settlers in the West Bank have started a new wave of intimidation and attacks on Arab towns and villages.)

All of these consequences should serve as a proof, to anybody who needed one, that attacks on civilians are not only morally unacceptable, but also

Naomi Kies

It is with great pain that we have to inform our readers of the loss of one of our most dedicated members. On May 4th, Dr. Naomi Kies died of a malignant disease, against which she had struggled bravely for several years. She was only forty-three years old.

Soon after coming from the U.S., Naomi Kies made a name for herself in Israel. Her membership in the ICIPP, since its foundation, was only a part of her wide-spread activities. She participated in most of the significant political activities and protest actions of the Israeli peace movement. She also took part in feminist activities and in various social protests. In particular, she was known for her close ties with the Israeli Black Panthers, the Jerusalem slum-dwellers' protest movement whose demonstrations shook Israel in the early 1970's. In the academic community, she was also known as a sociology instructor and researcher in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The inhabitants of the occupied territories knew her well from many peace demonstrations and joint struggles. She had developed a strong friendship with Fahd Kawasmeh, the late mayor of Hebron, and his family. Immediately after Kawasmeh's murder, she went to console his family in Hebron. Kawasmeh's brother repaid her by participating in her funeral in Jerusalem.

The memory of Naomi Kies, one of the most dedicated and warm-hearted companions any political activist could wish for, will long survive her untimely death.



extremely harmful to the very cause they purport to serve.

* * *

On June 6th, 1985, the third anniversary of the Lebanon War, the Israeli army is supposed to complete the evacuation of Lebanon, and thus – if Prime Minister Peres is to be believed – all loose ends will be neatly tied up, and the Lebanon War will become part of history. In creating this impression, Peres is aided by the fact that, since the evacuation of Tyre, the Lebanese Shiites have devoted a large part of their energies to consolidating their hold on the evacuated territories.

Such consolidation apparently includes, in the Shiite leaders' view, completing the destruction wrought by the Phalanges in Sabra, Shatila and other Palestinian refugee camps; in which the Shiites enjoy open Syrian support.

Meanwhile, Israeli soldiers enjoy a relative respite. However, should the Israeli government go on with its plans for creating a "Security Belt" in South Lebanon, controlled by its mercenaries, this respite may prove very short-lived.

* * *

For many years, successive Israeli governments have claimed to represent the interests and feelings of the survivors of the Holocaust. This claim was, more than once, misused to justify various actions by the Israeli government, particularly during the Lebanon War. However, on the occasion of President Reagan's visit to the Bitburg military cemetery in West Germany, which caused so many protests in the U.S. itself, the Israeli government was conspicuous in its silence. There can be little doubt that this silence was closely connected with Israel's request for emergency economic aid from the United States. Thus, once more, the disastrous effects of Israel's complete dependence of American aid were demonstrated – a dependence that is the direct consequence of the continuing Israeli-Arab conflict.

The Editor

Chronicles of The Peace Struggle

This chronicle covers April and May, 1985.

A most significant development in this period was the political momentum gathered by the demand for a new commission of inquiry on the conduct of the Lebanon War. For more than a year, this struggle was carried out by a small group of parents who lost their sons in Lebanon, and even many in the peace movement regarded it as quixotic and hopeless.

Recently, however, it had been accepted, not only by the whole "dovish" opposition, but by many inside the government as well. Likud leaders declared that the formation of such a commission will mean an immediate break-up of the "National Unity Government", which made the commission all the more attractive to Labor doves who want to get rid of their Likud partners and form a Labor government.

The Likud campaign for the release of the anti-Arab terrorist underground (see *Introduction*) is intended, partially, as a "counterweight." These two issues, which at present occupy the center of the political arena in Israel, naturally take up a considerable part of the peace movement's time and energy.

In the last issue (p. 4, entry for March 6th) we mentioned the case of Udi Adiv, who was sentenced, in 1972, to 17 years imprisonment after seeking to meet with the PLO and being tricked into meeting operatives of Syrian Intelligence. After a long public struggle, the last third of his term was remitted; however, his release is conditional with severe limitations, such as that he will not engage in political activity or even talk about politics with anybody except his family.

Issue No. 13 (p. 4) mentioned Minister Ezer Weitzman's efforts to ameliorate the government's discriminatory policies towards the Arab citizens. Recently, these efforts suffered a serious setback. He met the open opposition of government bureaucracy, which was created to maintain discrimination against the Arabs. Weitzman's plan to return to their Arab owners some lands in the Galilee also met strong opposition from Jewish farmers, who wanted the land for themselves, even though it legally belongs to Arab farmers whose ownership was not affected by the Israeli army's use of the land as training grounds. Clearly, for all of Weitzman's good intentions, no fundamental changes are possible under the present government.

7/4 – In Um-el-Fahm, a volunteer work-camp opened, with the participation of many Arab and Jewish volunteers.

8/4 – After a racist anti-Arab rally held by Rabbi Kahane in Haifa, 200 anti-racist counter-demonstrators broke through the police cordon, chased Kahane and his followers through Haifa's main street, and besieged for half an hour the Haifa offices of Kahane's racist movement.

10/4 – Five thousand Jewish and Arab youth participated in a joint festival at Nve-Shalom. Nve-Shalom ("Oasis of Peace") is a unique joint Jewish-Arab settlement, located on what was no-man's-land until 1967, in the Latrun area on the Tel-Aviv-Jerusalem highway. Its inhabitants devote their time to promoting Jewish-Arab understanding. The youth festival marked the fifth anniversary of the Nve-Shalom "peace school", in which 30 Jewish and 30 Arab children at a time meet each other for five days.

14/4 – "Parents Against Silence" picketed the prime minister's office, demanding complete withdrawal from Lebanon.

15/4 – The Arab students in all the Israeli universities held a strike. They protested against expulsions and arrests of Arab students, who participated in demonstrations in Haifa university (see No. 14, p. 5) as well as against an administrative order confining an Arab student activist to his Galilee village. (The 1945 Emergency Regulations, inherited by Israel from the British Colonial Administration, permit the confining of any citizen



to his town or village, without trial. In practice, this is used only against Arabs.)

- In Jerusalem, the celebration of the "Maymuna" festival, the popular holiday of the Moroccan Jewish community, took place. In recent years, with the growth in political importance of the Moroccan community, these yearly festivals, drawing tens of thousands, have assumed a marked political character and various politicians and activists attend them.

In this year's festival, an Arab delegation was, for the first time, invited to participate. Rabbi Meir Kahane, who came uninvited, tried to create a racist riot by calling upon the crowd to expel the Arabs. He did manage to collect a sizeable following, which was opposed by the Moroccan-born M.K. Charlie Biton (an ally of the Israeli Communist Party), and several others. Finally, Kahane was expelled by police, at the request of the organisers.

- At the Haifa court, five Arab students were sentenced to three months' suspended imprisonment and to fines ranging between 50,000 and 125,000 Israeli Shekels, for participating in demonstrations at Haifa University. Several of them were also expelled from the university. A day later, a Jewish journalist who also participated in one of the demonstrations received a similar sentence.

19-20/4 - At "Beit Berl", ("Berl's House") an academic institute belonging to the Labor party * a meeting and dialogue between Jewish and Arab authors took place. The participants frankly discussed various problems. (At one point, both Jewish and Arab authors accused each other of presenting the other people in a stereotyped way in their works). All participants were, however, united in their opposition to the Israeli occupation on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

21/4 - While the government debated the withdrawal from Lebanon, members of "Parents Against Silence" held a vigil outside.

23/4 - A group of parents who lost their sons in Lebanon declared they will boycott those Memorial Day ceremonies in which the participants include ministers who oppose the formation of a commission of inquiry on the Lebanon War. Such a step is almost unprecedented, as Memorial Day for soldiers killed in Israel's wars has always been considered a symbol of national unity, to be kept apart from political controversy.

24/4 - Ariel Sharon, who attended a Memorial Day ceremony held in Los Angeles by Israelis staying in the U.S., was greeted by shouts of: "Get out!". There was some brawling between supporters and opponents of Sharon.

- As the Israeli army implemented one of the stages of withdrawal from Lebanon, one tank was observed carrying a big sign, reading: "Stop Sharon!" (*Al-Hamishmar*, 26/4).

28/4 - "Twentieth Century Books", a left-wing bookstore in Tel-Aviv, published a poster showing the Israeli and Palestinian flags entwined, similar to

the ICIPP emblem (*shown at the top of this page*). The poster was published on the Israeli Independence Day, to express the idea that Israel cannot be truly free, so long as it is oppressing the Palestinians. Police raided "Twentieth Century" and two other stores displaying the posters, confiscated them and arrested the proprietors. They were soon released, however, due to the precedent created by the ICIPP, which established that showing the two flags together is not illegal. (*No. 4-5, p.6*). Displaying the Palestinian Flag is illegal in Israel, and Arabs are regularly prosecuted and jailed for this offence.

29/4-3/5 - "Peace Now" started collecting signatures on a petition, calling for the formation of a commission of inquiry on the Lebanon War. A group of law students from Jerusalem took a similar initiative. More than 10,000 signatures were collected on the first days, mostly in Jerusalem.

8/5 - A delegation of bereaved parents met with Prime Minister Peres, who refused to accept their demand for a commission of inquiry. (A few days later, Peres met, as a "counterbalance", with a different group of bereaved parents, who oppose a commission of inquiry).

9/5 - In Tel-Aviv, a new organization was formed, called "Atzumah" ("Petition"), devoted to collecting signatures on a petition calling for a commission of inquiry.

12/5 - In Tel-Aviv a police officer prevented "Atzumah" activists from collecting signatures in a public square, claiming (wrongly) that they required a police permit for this activity.

- "Peace Now" members picketed Shimon Peres' Jerusalem residence, calling for the formation of a commission of inquiry.

- Most of the population of the Arab village Ma'ilyah in the Galilee mobilised to prevent the entry of Rabbi Kahane. Police officers convinced Kahane to turn back.

14/5 - The Israeli television presented an interview with the wife of Shlomo Argov, the former Israeli Ambassador to Britain, the attempt on whose life was used as the pretext for starting the Lebanon War. Speaking also for her husband (who remains seriously crippled and unable to be interviewed) she emphasized his strong protest against being used to start a war, and supported the formation of a commission of inquiry.

- A committee of Israeli doctors was formed to oppose the Health Ministry's attempt to close down the "Hospice" Hospital in the Old City of Jerusalem. "Hospice" is the only Arab hospital in Old Jerusalem. Though the ministry claims it should be closed for professional reasons, the Arabs regard this as part of an assault on all Palestinian institutions.

16/5 - Members of the Israeli "Dheisheh Solidarity Committee" demonstrated at the Ramallah military government building, in which there started the trial of 14 residents of Dheisheh Refugee Camp, accused of "participating in disorders and riots."

18/5 - Eight Jewish and eight Arab schools

* It is named for Berl Katzenelson, an important Labor ideologue of the 1940's.



held a "Peace Week" in Um-el-Fahm, during which various educational meetings on Jewish-Arab coexistence were held. The "peace week" was attended by Minister of Education Navon.

21/5 - During the session of the Tel-Aviv University board of trustees, a dinner was held in honor of South-African Jews who gave donations to the Faculty of Arts. Dozens of students from "Campus" (Jewish-Arab student movement), joined by Mapam students and some lecturers, demonstrated against receiving money from the supporters of Apartheid. They were expelled by university security men. Three Senior Members of the Arts Faculty boycotted the dinner in protest.

23/5 - Near Hadera (a town on the Tel-Aviv-Haifa highway) a meeting of Jewish and Arab youth took place, organized by "Interns For Peace", an organization active in promoting Jewish-Arab understanding on a social level, without direct involvement in political issues.

24/5 - The Cameri Theatre in Tel-Aviv presented "Six After. . .", a new play on the Lebanon War. It is about three friends who went together to Lebanon, of whom one was killed, one became a cripple, and only one returned whole. Most of the play takes place in the hospital, where the two surviving soldiers talk and relive the war. Their remembered experiences include such dilemmas as whether or not to blow up a house from which, they suspect, hidden guerrillas are prepared to open fire on them, but on whose doorstep stands a young girl. Some critics have criticised "Six After. . ." for taking the war itself for granted, and discussing mainly what is the most humane or moral way to conduct it.

- A group of students from Tel-Aviv university started collecting signatures on a petition opposing the release of the anti-Arab underground members. 2,000 students signed on the first day. This was the first initiative taken to oppose the right-wing offensive, which started immediately after the prisoner exchange on May 21st, and which included several inflammatory demonstrations, a hunger strike by the suspected Israeli terrorists' wives, and various acts of intimidation against the West Bank Arab population.

26-27/5 - For two consecutive nights, the home of Foreign Minister Shamir was picketed in protest of his support for releasing the underground members. The pickets were organised by "Netivot Shalom" (a movement of religious doves), "Peace Now" and the CRM.

26-31/5 - Students collecting signatures against the underground were assaulted by right-wing thugs in Tel-Aviv's main street. Two policemen who were present arrested one of the students "to protect him." However, after the students complained directly to the Tel-Aviv Police's operations officer, different policemen were sent, to protect the continuing collection of signatures.* Despite repeated right-wing assaults, the collecting of signatures continued throughout the whole week.

27/5 - While the Knesset debated on the

prisoners' exchange and its implications (*see Introduction*), two demonstrations took place outside. About 1,000 youth, members of the youth movements affiliated to Labor and Mapam, who were joined by activists of the Progressive List for Peace and the CRM (Civil Rights Movement), firmly stated their opposition to the release of the underground members. Many Knesset Members and one Labor Minister also participated. Nearby, a wild right-wing demonstration in support of the underground was held, and despite police cordons, the two sides came to blows several times.

- At the Labor Party's Tel-Aviv headquarters, the party's Parliamentary Group debated the issue of a commission of inquiry. A vigil in support of the commission took place outside. (The Labor Party decided to abstain when the issue came to the Knesset, thus ensuring its defeat by Likud votes.)

- In a meeting at The Jerusalem Hebrew University's Law School, some of Israel's foremost jurists voiced their concern that a pardon for the underground members, under political pressure, will completely undermine the independence of the Israeli Judiciary. The meeting was attended by several Supreme Court Judges who, though they didn't speak out openly, were clearly in agreement. (By newspaper accounts, several judges have threatened to resign if pardon is granted to the underground members).

28/5 - Most members of Kibbutz Beit-Alfa signed a petition against pardoning the underground members.

- Members of "Peace Now" picketed Shimon Peres' Jerusalem residence, on the same issue.

- In a television interview, former government spokesman Arieh Na'or disclosed that in a war game held at the Israeli general staff on January 1982, the disastrous results of the Lebanon War were predicted. Na'or, who was a trusted aide of Menachem Begin, has been deeply affected by the war. His disclosure clearly adds weight to the demand for a commission of inquiry on Lebanon.

30/5 - All the Arab municipalities in Israel held a two-hour strike, in protest of the massacre of Palestinian refugees in Beirut by Shiite militiamen.

Within three days, two protest meetings took place in Nazareth. One of them was organised by the Communist Party and the other by the Progressive List for Peace (PLP). In both meetings, the Shiites were sharply condemned; the PLP speakers also condemned Syria for its support of the Shiites, while the Communists avoided mentioning the complicity of Syria, the Soviet Union's main Middle Eastern ally. (*See also p. 8*).

- The Communist Party and its allies held a demonstration in Tel-Aviv, to protest attacks by Israeli settlers on the West Bank population.

* *Police attitudes towards peace demonstrations are not uniform. They depend, to a great degree, on the particular officer involved. Some improvement was noted since Haim Bar-Lev was appointed as Minister of Police.*



31/5 - In Tel-Aviv's main street, dozens of activists in various organizations demonstrated under the slogan "Dismantle the Jewish Phalanges on the West Bank!", referring to the Israeli settlers' armed groups which operate openly, without interference from army or police authorities.

- The "Parents Against Silence" movement declared its intention to disband, considering that with the impending final withdrawal from Lebanon, its mission will have been completed.

"Parents Against Silence", was one of the most significant protest movements against the Lebanon War. (The name signified its founders' feeling that in the beginning of the war, parents kept silent and allowed the government to send their sons to an unjustified war—a silence which the movement very effectively broke.) It is greatly to be hoped that this decision to disband will not turn out to have been premature, as Israeli involvement in Lebanon is far from over, despite the withdrawal. (See *Introduction*.)

1/6 - Several thousand people took part in a "Peace Now" march in Jerusalem. The demonstration was preceded by a legal struggle. Originally, "Peace Now" intended to end the march at Foreign Minister Shamir's home and hold a rally there; however, this was forbidden by the police, acting on Attorney-General Zamir's ruling that "speeches near ministers' private homes might disturb their rest". Finally, the demonstrators halted for ten minutes at Shamir's home, shouting slogans such as: "No pardon for terrorists!" "Trial-yes! Pardon-no!" and "Dismantle Kiryat-Arba!" (the largest "Gush-Emunim" settlement on the West Bank). Afterwards, they held a rally in a nearby park.



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The 1985 Sartawi Prize winners

On April 16th, the annual Sartawi Prize was awarded, in a ceremony held in Tel-Aviv. The Sartawi Fund was founded by the ICIPP for the purpose of granting an annual monetary prize (500,000 Israeli Shekels, this year) to works of art, literature or research on issues fundamental to the Palestinian people and to Israeli-Palestinian dialogue. The following was read by Dr. Shimon Balas on behalf of the jury.

The Sartawi Fund Jury held its final session on March 26th, 1985. After seriously discussing the works presented for its judgement, including both research and literature, it decided to divide the prize among three candidates. This decision was motivated by a desire to show the jury's appreciation for two researchers and one author, who were chosen from among a considerable number of deserving candidates. Granting the prize to three candidates is permissible under the Sartawi Fund statutes, and the sum will be divided equally among them.

The winners are: Mr. Zaki Darwish; Prof. Yohanan Hofman; Dr. Razi Falah.

Mr. Zaki Darwish receives the prize for his book *Al-Khuruj Min Marj Ibn-Amer* ("Leaving The Izrael Vally"), a short novel published in 1983. Zaki Darwish is known to Arabic readers in Israel as a talented storyteller, whose short stories combine reality and fantasy. His new work centers around two friends from the village of El-Birweh (where the author himself was born.), and dramatically tells the story of how the 1948 war tore them from their childhood home and forced them across the border. The book relates their struggle to return home, one stormy night, and the many agonies and arrests they suffer on their way. Sensitively written in the "stream of consciousness" technique, Darwish's book penetrates the torn world of his protagonists, so that their personal story takes on a universal meaning. This work, in concentrating on the agony of the individual in wartime, contributes to understanding and peaceful coexistence between Jews and Arabs in Israel, and therefore was chosen by the jury.

For several years, Prof. Yohanan Hofman has been researching the relations between Jewish and Arab youth in Israel. So far, he has published about 20 papers, in Hebrew and English, which analyze on a wide scale the various problems deriving from the state of war between Israel and her Arab neighbors, and the implications for the perceptions of both Jewish and Arab youth. Prof. Hofman points out that the conflict between the two groups is rooted in the question of identity. By closely following changes in the youths' perception of "Myself" and "The Other", he points out the dangers to Israeli society inherent in a continuation and deepening of the conflict. The jury regards Prof. Hofman's research as a commendable effort towards mutual understanding and respect between the two peoples of this land.

Dr. Razi Falah, whose copious research in

A McCarthist campaign against M.K. Miari

Several months ago, the Knesset House Committee limited the parliamentary immunity of M.K. Rabbi Kahane, and stripped him of the unlimited freedom of movement, after Kahane had attempted to use this part of his immunity for entering Arab villages and provoking riots by his demands for deporting their inhabitants. Ever since, the right-wing M.K.'s have attempted to "counterbalance" this by taking a similar measure against the PLP (Progressive List for Peace).

The pretext used by the right-wingers was the participation of the PLP M.K. Muhamad Miari in a memorial meeting to Fahd Kawasmeh, held at Al-Ibrahimia College in East Jerusalem. In his speech, Miari said: "I identify with the way of Kawasmeh, who strove for peace and paid for it with his life"; as Kawasmeh was a member of the PLO executive Committee, the right-wingers twisted this statement and presented it as "identification with PLO terrorism". When challenged in the Knesset House Committee, Miari reiterated his opposition to any act of violence against innocents, whether committed by Palestinians or by Israelis.

The outcome of the vote, taken on June 11th, hinged on the stand of the Labor M.K.'s. When the Labor parliamentary group decided to "grant the freedom of decision" to its representatives in the House Committee, the result was foregone - most of the Labor representatives, who are hawks, supported the right-wing motion and only two opposed it - producing a right-wing majority of 14 against 6, with one abstention. A lot of the responsibility for this outcome falls on a man from whom better could have been expected: M.K. Yossi Sarid, of the CRM (Civil Rights Movement). During the preliminary hearing, on June 5th, Sarid strongly attacked Miari and claimed that Miari "had not disassociated himself from terrorism." Later on, after being censured by other CRM members, Sarid retracted his words and voted against the right-wing motion - but the harm had already been done; given this unexpected support from a man considered a prominent "dove", the Labor hawks felt emboldened to line up with the extreme right.

In practice, the limitation means that police would be able to stop M.K. Miari from entering places and claim that his presence there might "disturb the peace". Before, they would have been compelled to let him pass. The police would also be able to search Miari's person or apartment. More important, however, is the overall political significance - a step was taken towards delegitimising and then outlawing the PLP, which is the right-wingers' ultimate objective.

The PLP intends to appeal to the Supreme Court against the Committee's decision. Whatever the Court's ultimate verdict, however, the support given by the Labor Party to a McCarthist, racist campaign is a source of grave concern. Our readers are asked to send telegrams and/or letters, expressing protest at the Labor Party's conduct, to:

Uzi Bar'am
Secretary General
The Labor Party
110 Ha'yarkon St.
Tel-Aviv
Israel

Copies should be sent to "The Other Israel".

This appeal is directed to all our readers, but most especially to members of parties belonging to the Socialist International, of which the Labor Party is also a member.



Arabic and English was presented to the jury, throughfully analyzes the process of permanent settlement of the Beduin tribes in the Galilee and other places. He discusses the effect of urban planning on the structure of Beduin society and the integration of Beduin into the life of urban society. Dr. Falah is himself of Beduin origin, and acquired his academic qualifications both in Israel and abroad. He concentrates on studying the life of his people, its dilemmas and ambitions in this land of the challenges of modernization; by this, he significantly contributes to clarifying the relations between the Beduin and the general Israeli society. By giving the prize to Dr. Falah, the jury wishes to express its appreciation of his industrious work.

The jury hopes that the three winners will go on making further achievements that will increase understanding between Jews and Arabs in this land.

The jury also wishes to mark its appreciation of the other works presented to its judgement. The jury members hope that others will also be encouraged to send their work and help in further disseminating the great ideal on which the Sartawi Prize is based.

Dr. Shimon Balas	Badr Yunis
Ya'el Lotan	Dr. George Qanaz'i
Prof. Henry Rosenfeld	Jamal Qa'war

Members of the 1985 Sartawi Prize Jury.

Beside the granting of the prize, the ceremony included a performance by a young singer, who, after serving in the Lebanon War, had written several anti-war songs. There was also a long discussion on the situation of the Arab citizens in Israel. The speakers, both Jews and Arabs, discussed the overall aspects of the problem, from its historical roots to long-term future possibilities; such semi-academic discussions are rare, since most political meetings in Israel are held under pressure of some immediate event, and naturally concentrate on it.

The Histadrut elections and other activities

In April and May, most of the Israeli political parties, including the PLP (Progressive List for Peace), were engaged in elections to the Histadrut convention.

The term "Histadrut" is usually translated as "trade union federation". This is not quite accurate; actually, the Histadrut is a strange and unique institution, without parallel elsewhere in the world.

As well as being Israel's only trade union federation, the Histadrut owns about a quarter of the Israeli economy, hundreds of industrial and commercial enterprises including Israel's second largest bank. It also controls the main health insurance network, in which 80 percent of Israel's citizens are insured, as well as hundreds of other economic, social, and cultural organizations. All of

these make the Histadrut practically a state within a state.

In theory, all these assets are supposed to be owned and controlled by all Histadrut members, more than a million in number; in practice, they are controlled by a self-perpetuating bureaucracy, and the conditions of workers employed by the Histadrut are no better than in private business.

All of this explains both why elections to the Histadrut convention are second in political significance only to parliamentary elections, and why the Histadrut needs a very thorough reform—which is what the PLP program advocates.

Though the PLP got 1,25 percent of the votes, it was barred from representation in the Histadrut convention by a new, anti-democratic by-law, enacted just before the elections, which creates a minimum vote requirement of 2 percent, disqualifying parties who get less than that.

Nevertheless, the PLP list, headed by the Beduin activist Nuri-al-Ukby and by Dr. Ya'akov Arnon, made its mark in the elections, in a campaign against the discrimination of Arabs in the "Agricultural Center". This, the agricultural organ of the Histadrut, has enormous powers affecting every farmer in Israel. In the planned, centralized Israeli agriculture, no farmer may grow anything, except under a "production quota" intended to ensure that no unmarketable surpluses remain; also, water is divided between farmers in carefully measured quotas. All of these quotas are controlled by the Histadrut's "Agricultural Center" which is supposed to be elected by all Histadrut members who are engaged in agriculture; in practice it is elected only by Jewish farmers, while Arabs are denied the franchise in these elections — but are bound, nevertheless, by its system of quotas! This discrimination was little known to the Israeli public, until the PLP started a public campaign against it, as well as appealing to the courts. By the court's ruling, in the next Histadrut elections this discrimination will be abolished and Arab farmers will be able to send their representatives to the "Agricultural Center".

In an important parallel struggle, Arab and Jewish women from the PLP ran for election to Na'amat, the women's arm of the Histadrut. The women developed, printed, and widely distributed a serious programme of recommendations and demands for Na'amat. They were invited to speak at several gatherings of women in both communities, where they raised these issues. Some of their central demands were: 1) That the home be recognized as a workplace and that house work be recognized as a profession so that those working in this profession can receive social benefits (health, accident, and unemployment insurance; pension; etc). 2) Wider social services, such as child care, in the Arab sector. 3) Job-training programmes in Arabic for women in the villages (a thing widely offered to Jewish women by Na'amat.) 4) Greater light industrial development in the Arab sector so that more women can work close to their homes. 5) Birth vacation for the family, to be divided by the parents as they need.



In the Knesset, the PLP faced a renewed attack. Taking advantage of the great public demand for an anti-racist law, Justice Minister Nissim presented to the Knesset a bill that would empower the Central Elections Committee to disqualify, not only an electoral list which is inciting to racism, but also "one which, explicitly or implicitly, denies the existence of the State of Israel", or one about which "there is reasonable cause for suspicion that it will be used as a cover for illegal activities". Either of these vague definitions could be used, by the kind of politicians who sit on the Central Elections Committee, to disqualify the PLP and other peace parties. (See No. 9, p. 7)

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court at last published its verdict, setting out the reasons why, in 1984, it overturned the Central Elections Committee's decision to disqualify both the PLP and Rabbi Kahane's racist movement (See No. 9, p. 4). The verdict takes up 132 pages and will undoubtedly become an important precedent. In it, the five judges make clear the distinction between the two lists with which they had to deal. They say that Kahane's list deserved to be disqualified for its openly racist program, but that present Israeli laws do not give the Central Elections Committee the power to do so; on the other hand, the Supreme Court judges completely exonerate the PLP from all the charges made against it, and condemn the committee members for disqualifying the PLP on the basis of evidence that was not presented to them. Though the judges do not explicitly mention Nissim's proposed law, their verdict constitutes a strong condemnation of it, particularly in the sections written by two of the judges, Prof. Aharon Barak and the President of the Supreme Court, Meir Shamgar, both of whom are former Attorneys-General.

Space is sufficient to mention only a few of the other initiatives taken by the PLP. These include calling upon all mayors in Israel to mark August 6th, the 40th anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing, by naming streets in their towns for Hiroshima; a call to stop reported sales of Israeli arms to the Indonesian regime, which is conducting a genocidal campaign in East-Timor*; and a protest against the Israeli police which, under pressure from the foreign ministry, had forbidden Armenians from demonstrating at the Turkish consulate in Tel-Aviv on the anniversary of the massacre of the Armenians by the Turks. (While denouncing neo-Nazi attempts to claim that the Jewish Holocaust never happened, the Israeli foreign ministry actively cooperates with the Turkish government in its efforts to deny the Armenian Genocide of 1915).

The PLP was also involved in the affair of three Ethiopian (non-Jewish) boys, stowaways on a ship that reached Israel, who asked for asylum. Although they faced death sentences in their homeland, an interior ministry official intended to send them

* We would like to thank the Canadian "Indonesia / East Timor Project" (IETP), whose material on East Timor was most useful.

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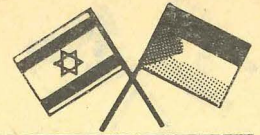
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PLO, and the informal Israeli-PLO talks have had no noticeable affect on official government policy. However, Israeli public opinion has changed. A recent opinion poll (*See Other Israel, No. 19*) showed that 40 percent of the Jewish population in Israel agree to a Palestinian state. "Any government" remarked Avnery, "willing to negotiate with the PLO would gain the support of a majority of the Jews and Arabs in the country".

Dr. Sari Nusseibeh (Lecturer, Bir Zeit University, West Bank) giving a short review of the history of Palestinian nationalism, said that it had developed in reaction to Zionism. "The attitude of the Palestinian people had been", said Dr. Nusseibeh, "that the Jews had no right to a state of their own".

Palestinians wanted to return to the period before 1948 (birth of Israel) and as such the Palestinian community rejected all contacts with Israelis. A change in Palestinian consciousness occurred in the late 60s and early 70s, when for the first time elements in the Palestinian nationalist movement began to perceive Israel as an existing fact in the region. This realization brought in its wake PLO contacts with Israelis. "Palestinian national consciousness", said Dr. Nusseibeh, "has therefore undergone a revision, but unfortunately this cannot be said of the Israeli governments". In case Israeli leaders' attitudes and policies towards the Palestinians and the PLO does not change, Dr. Nusseibeh warned that "Palestinian consciousness will return to its first phase: refusal to recognize Jewish rights to a state".

Hanna Siniora, the slated PLO representative (Occupied Territories) to the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, opened his talk by saying that we are today at a dangerous crossroad, and that the refusal of Israeli leaders to differentiate between the Abu Nidal group and the PLO may lead to yet another Israeli attack on the PLO as in Tunis. Peres may thus bury the Palestinian-Jordanian peace initiative.

By 1968, continued Mr. Siniora, the PLO had become the focus for Palestinian national aspirations and in 1974 the PLO was officially recognized as such by the Arab world, including King Hussein. From that period onwards, said Hanna Siniora, the PLO led by Yassir Arafat, perceived the political efforts to resolve the conflict as not being in contradiction to the armed struggle against the occupation. Palestinian rejectionists have for that reason opposed Yassir Arafat. Israel, for its part, continued the speaker, has never made a serious political response to the PLO.

Unfortunately, the U.S. does not perceive the situation to be urgent, and American Middle East mediator Richard Murphy has refused to meet the joint PLO-Jordanian delegation because of its PLO members. Israel and the US place three conditions before the PLO: recognition of 242, direct talks, and PLO denunciation of acts of terror.

Taking point by point, Hanna Siniora said that PLO had informed Mr. Murphy and Israel that PLO

recognition of UN resolution 242 would be forthcoming on condition that US or/and Israel recognize the Palestinians' right to national self-determination. (UN resolutions 242 and 338 do not mention this principle. The US and Israel's refusal to accept this PLO proposal for mutual and simultaneous recognition has caused political deadlock at the time of writing in mid February-Editor).

Concerning Israel-America's second demand for direct talks, Mr. Siniora remarked that an International Peace Conference could create the mechanism allowing for face to face negotiations.

Yassir Arafat and the PLO, continued the speaker, have already responded to US and Israel's third demand - denunciation of acts of terror. In the Cairo declaration (Nov. 7, 1985), Yassir Arafat differentiated between armed struggle against the occupation and attacks perpetrated against civilians. Whereas armed struggle against the occupation and its military objectives remains a legitimate right, said Mr. Siniora, the Cairo Declarations denounced acts of terror against civilians.

Mr. Matti Peled, the Symposium's final speaker, opened his talk by saying that, "Israel and the US have so far shown no desire for a true peace process to begin, because recognition of Palestinian national rights would inevitably lead to an Israeli withdrawal". Israel and the US, continued Peled, are therefore placing obstacles on such critical points as UN resolution 242, 338 and the International Peace Conference.

US and Israel's demand that the PLO one-sidedly accept UN resolution 242 is unrealistic. Both UN resolutions 242 and 338 ignore the political nature of the Palestinian problem. The PLO and Jordan propose - Arafat-Hussein agreement Feb 1985; Hussein's speech in UN, Aug. 1985 - that all pertinent UN resolutions dealing with the Palestinian question should be placed on the negotiating table. When taken together said Mr. Peled, the four main UN resolutions touching on the conflict - partition (1947); Palestinian refugee problem (1948); recognition of Israel, 242 (1967); recognition of Israel, 338 (1973) - balance each other.

In reply to Mr. Hanna Siniora's question - if a unilateral PLO call for moratorium of the armed struggle might influence the Israeli government - Mr. Peled advised against it, saying that such a move by the PLO might receive no official response. However, Mr. Peled noted that the PLO might clarify what it envisages to be the outcome of the International Peace Conference.

Another obstacle raised by Labor-Likud is their demand that the Soviet Union renew diplomatic relations with Israel as the condition for its participation in the International Peace Conference. "This is a new policy", said Mr. Peled. Previous Israeli governments (since 1974), including Begin (1977) had accepted without reservation Soviet and of course US participation in the International Peace Conference".