

The Other Israel

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for Israeli-Palestinian Peace
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Byzantinism Reborn

King Hussein's speech of February 19, delivered over the Jordan TV, is a masterpiece of Byzantinism.

Stating that the Jordanian-PLO agreement of February 1985 is still in force, he went on to blame Mr. Arafat for adhering to its terms. A fundamental element of that agreement is the provision that the settlement of the "Middle East issue" would be sought on the basis, *inter alia*, of "The Palestinian People's right to self determination". It further states that the peace conference to be convened for negotiating a settlement should "be attended by the five UN Security Council permanent members and all parties to the conflict, including the PLO... within a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation". As stated in the agreement, the entire undertaking should proceed from "UN resolutions on the Palestinian question".

In the course of the tri-party negotiations in Amman held in Jan.-Feb. 1986 the US representative refused to accept any of these principles. He objected to the participation of the Security Council permanent members, he demanded that the guiding principle of negotiations should be resolution 242 alone, and he objected to inviting the PLO to attend the peace conference as part of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The only concession he was willing to make was that 242 in itself was not sufficient for dealing with the Palestinian question, and this was stated by the State Department on Feb. 11. In a statement made in Cairo, Arafat acknowledged that this American concession was significant, and revealed that he had already offered three additional formulae to the US for discussion when the Amman talks will be resumed.

Considered against this background, King Hussein's sudden condemnation of Arafat as an obstructor of the peace process cannot be understood except as a maneuver, which justifies the suspicions entertained by Arafat all along that the King should not be allowed to remain the sole representative of the Palestinian side at the negotiating table. It is clear now that the King's wrath is directed against Arafat because the PLO leader insists on a faithful observation of the terms of the February agreement. Possibly Hussein is alarmed that the initial concession made by the US (linking 242 with Palestinians' legitimate rights) is

a forerunner of further concessions, especially since President Mubarak has undertaken to help in this direction. It can be assumed that getting rid of the 1974 Rabat resolution recognizing the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people has now become the King's goal. Hussein may also want to harness President Assad's enmity towards Arafat in his scheme to ditch the PLO head. The American Congress' blocking of the arms deal which the King so desires, may be another factor.

Whatever the final explanation of Hussein's unexpected move, it is clear that if left unreversed it will annihilate whatever progress has been made towards a settlement by Arafat's consistent efforts, over an extended period of time, to establish a format of negotiations which would ensure a fair deal for his people.

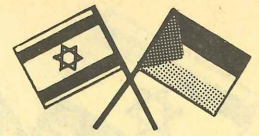
MATTI PELED

ANTI-PEACE LAW

By the time our readers receive this newsletter the Anti-Peace Law, making Israeli-PLO contacts punishable by three years imprisonment, may have already been adopted.

It seems now that the coalition partners have struck a deal the terms of which say that Labor-Likud will vote jointly for the "Anti-Peace Law" and for the "Law against Racism". Both legislations have now been linked like two siamese twins. Labor-Likud are once again "balancing" every move against Nazi Kahane with an attack against the Peace Movement. It has become clear that the sole aim of the farcical anti-racism bill (see below) is to legitimize the government's legislation against Israeli contacts with the PLO.

On Feb. 18, both bills were a hair's breadth from reaching the Knesset floor for their second and (final) third readings. They were withdrawn at the last moment because of objections raised by the religious bloc to the wording of the anti-racism bill. Comprising close to 10 percent of the Knesset MKs (including Kahane), the religious parties have made their support of the law contingent on the addition



of a clause that no one should be prosecuted for reciting passages from the scriptures. Numerous passages in the scriptures—such as those that distinguish Israel from other nations, and the proscription of the Amalek — can easily be perceived as racist.

As to the anti-racism bill, it is a farce — with or without the religious bloc's proposed amendment. In its wording, the law only forbids "incitement to racism", but does not prohibit acts of racist discrimination by individuals businesses or the government. Thus "Koor", largest industrial concern in Israel (owned by the Histadrut, the Federation of Labor dominated by the Labor party) can without fear of punishment openly declare (as it recently has) that it will not hire Palestinians. Under the strict definition of the Law Against Racism it will not be possible to prosecute the company's officials because their policies are not considered incitement to racism.

INTIMIDATION OF PLP

In mid-February Arab members of the Progressive List for Peace (PLP) were harassed by the police, called in for questioning and later released.

Dr. Rashid Salim, former editor of the Progressive List's Arab weekly "Attadamun" (published in Nazareth) is accused of sedition because of an editorial that he published in June 1985 recognizing the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. PLP MK's sharply denounced the police intimidation. Note should be taken, that the editorial in question was written nine months ago. The fact that police harassment against Arab members of the PLP has begun now may indicate that Labor-Likud are preparing for early elections. Nothing is definite of course but similar intimidations occurred before and during the last elections in July 1984.

The Editor

V.A.T. AND THE QUESTION OF ANNEXATION

Under the guise of a proposal to amend Israel's current Value Added Tax (V.A.T), the coalition government is suggesting annexation of the Occupied Territories!

Although a state of creeping annexation has existed for years, the Labor-Likud government is

now taking the unprecedented step of formalizing the incorporation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip by an act of legislation. In the cases of East Jerusalem (1967) and the Golan Heights (1982), the respective Labor and Likud governments had annexed the regions in one "clean" sweep. Today the coalition government is proposing to incorporate the remaining territories through the backdoor — via an amendment to a tax law. A short perusal of its wording can leave no other impression.

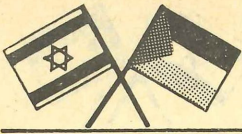
The government's proposed amendment to V.A.T. never mentions the West Bank and Gaza Strip by name. While Labor-Likud and the media have for years referred to the Occupied Territories as "Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District", its strict definition in Israeli Law books (and International Law) has been — at least until now — "Territories held by the Israeli Defense Forces". However, in the proposed tax amendment the government has introduced a new legal term for the Occupied Territories: the "Region".

The tax amendment then goes on to state (paragraph IA(A)2) that "The sale of property to a resident of the region, or anyone travelling to the region will not be considered as a sale to a foreign resident or as if anyone has left Israel". In other words, Palestinians living in the "Region" are no longer to be perceived as foreign residents, and an Israeli travelling to the Occupied Territories is no longer to be viewed as if he has left the territorial boundaries of Israel.

Paragraph 60 clarifies further the status of the Occupied Territories when it states that "Business and activities in the region will not be considered as business and activities undertaken outside of Israel". Products exported and imported between Israel and the "Region" are therefore no longer to be perceived as foreign exchanges. It should be noted that this is in contradistinction to the current phrasing of the law.

This is the first time that any Israeli legislation has declared the West Bank and Gaza Strip not to be foreign territories. The only logical conclusion therefore, is: that they are now to be considered part of Israel. Although the tax amendment deals with fiscal matters — selling and buying of property and products in the Occupied Territories — the law's adoption by the Knesset would set an automatic legal precedent for any future laws relevant to the status of the West Bank-Gaza Strip and its Palestinian inhabitants.

The law also refers to the rights of the Jewish communities abroad in regards to the "Region". Paragraph 40 states that the law affects "anyone who can be covered by The Law of Return". The latter relegates to Jews throughout the world certain privileges once they are in Israel (even as tourists) and automatic Israeli citizenship unless they refuse explicitly. While this immigration law has so far only been relevant to Israel, the government's tax amendment proposes to include the Occupied Territories in the domain of Jewish privileges.



Only 7 MK's (out of 120) were in the Knesset when the law passed its first reading! PLP MKs Mohammed Mi'ari and Matti Peled, and Tufiq Tubi of Rakach sharply criticized the law, but were outvoted. Labor MK Haim Ramon, considered a political dove, spoke out against the law, but ended up voting for it.

The Knesset MKs' striking lack of interest in the government's tax amendment, together with the media's silence (except for the weekly "Ha-olam Hazeh", edited by Uri Avnery) are bewildering. Before reaching the Knesset floor for its second and third (final) reading, reservations about the wording of the law that were raised by the PLP and Rakach will be discussed in the Knesset's Committee for Constitutional, Legal and Juridical affairs. We will post our readers on further developments.

PLP LETTER TO US AMBASSADOR

The question of annexation was raised by the PLP, in a letter which was sent (Feb. 3) by Mohammed Mi'ari to Mr. Thomas Pickering, the American Ambassador to Israel.

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

In the settlers' publication "Nekuda", of 22 November 1985, the Ministry of Trade and Industry is quoted as saying: "The accord (on free trade) does not make the slightest differentiation between the two sides of the green line".

On the strength of this, I submitted a parliamentary question to the Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr. Ariel Sharon, and today I received his reply, as follows: "The exact boundaries of the states which are partners to the accord are not specified".

Does the United States, a party to the free trade accord, agree with Minister Sharon's interpretation, according to which there is no difference between the occupied territories and areas within the State of Israel, for the purposes of this accord?

Minister Sharon's conduct, views and deeds, are well known. If you do not clarify unequivocally your government's stand on this issue, the Minister will be in a position to grant benefits to Israeli corporations in the occupied areas, as if they were situated within the green line, and thus promote his expansionist policies.

Yours sincerely,

Mohammed Mi'ari
Member of Knesset

PLP AGAINST THE CENTER

The International Center for Peace in the Middle East, formed in 1979-1980, calls in its platform for recognition of the Palestinians' right to self determination. Members of the Center include individuals, groups, (such as ICIPP), and Knesset MKs identified with dovish views (including Labor Party). The Center's Forum of MKs published an ad in the daily "Ha-arezt" (10/2/86) entitled "To save the Peace". It was done so without the prior knowledge or consent of PLP MKs Mohammed Mi'ari and Matti Peled, who immediately published the following statement: "As members of this Forum we declare that the wording of the text was not brought to our attention before it was published and it was never discussed in the Forum of MKs. We oppose the positions expressed in the ad. Contrary to what it says, Peres is not the savior of peace; Hussein is not indecisive; and Mubarak does not lack initiative. Furthermore, we denounce the drafters of the ad for ignoring the PLO and Yassir Arafat as if they do not exist and for the draft's denial of the Palestinians' right to self determination.

Mohammed Wattad, Mapam Party MK, also denounced the ad, using similar arguments.

Chronicles

OF THE PEACE STRUGGLE

24/12 - Hundreds of activists in the Committee Against Racism and for Co-existence demonstrated along the Haifa-Akko highway (northern Israel). The demonstrators, stationed at three major intersections of the highway connecting the two northern cities, held placards condemning racism and calling for Arab-Jewish co-existence.

- Kahane and his sympathisers' efforts to enter the premises of two high schools in the southern city of Ashkelon were thwarted. The principal of one of the schools closed the school's gate. When entering a second high school in the vicinity, the school's pupils, left the classrooms on seeing Kahane, surrounded the racist and yelled at him "Nazi". Kahane and his small number of sympathisers left the premises escorted by the police.

27/12 - 200 Activists in the poverty-stricken areas of Israel's largest cities (Tel-Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa) and development towns held a joint meeting in Jerusalem. There is a steep rise of unemployment within Israel's oriental community, especially in the development towns, where as much as 30 percent of the workforce is unemployed.

Peretz Amir, town council head of Sderot (development town) declared at the meeting that as long as there is unemployment, Kahane's popularity will rise. All of the participants at the meeting



agreed to organize a campaign against racism throughout the country.

29/12 - The Civil Rights League protested military officials' practice of sealing Palestinian homes whose residents are suspected of "terrorist" activities.

In most cases the homes are sealed or demolished even before a military trial.

30/12 - Haifa's mayor, Arieh Gurel, telegraphed racist Kahane requesting him not to "visit" the Arab Christian quarters of Haifa. Kahane had earlier informed the mayor that he and his supporters intended to "create law and order" in the Christian quarters, whose inhabitants, according to Kahane, create disturbances on New Years Eve, break drinking bottles on the streets and thus "endanger Jewish passersby".

31/12 - Activists of Mapam's youth movement and the Movement Against Racism filled the Arab Christian quarters in the city of Haifa, waiting for Kahane, but the racist never showed up.

1/1 - A Jerusalem Police Department's request to search the house of Peace Movement activist Gidon Spiro was refused by the city's judge, Uzi Sivan.

The affair began when the Military Advocate General lodged an official complaint with the police, following Mr. Spiro's letters sent to top military chiefs and soldiers outlining the reasons for his refusing to do reserve duty in the Occupied Territories.

6/1 - No Silence Now!

This was the headline of a small ad which appeared in one of Israel's dailies. The ad called on women to raise their voices while there is still time against the government's intentions to embark on a war against Syria. "We do not want", says the ad, "Widows and bereavement. We want to prevent the tragedy before it happens. We want to prevent the necessity of demonstrating after the fact like 'Parents Against Silence.' (The latter were one of the groups active during the war of Lebanon.) . . .

We call on the public; we will tie the hands of those responsible for another adventurous war, that might bring a catastrophe upon Israel. We are warning all and are calling on everyone to join us: NO SILENCE NOW! "

Yehudit Dvir

Derech Hashalom 24 Tel-Aviv.

7/1 - The "Marcus Fund", affiliated with the Harry S. Truman Research Center at the University of Jerusalem, will grant scholarships to high school pupils writing research papers dealing with Arab-Jewish relations.

- "Campus" an umbrella organization of students affiliated with groups and parties to the left of the Labor party, demonstrated at the entrance of the University of Tel-Aviv against the anti-Syria campaign conducted by Labor and Likud leaders. The students held placards which read: "WE DO NOT WANT WAR, WE WANT PEACE", "RABIN, NO TO WAR WITH SYRIA", "NO TO DEPORTATIONS", "NO TO IRON FIRST POLICY", "YES TO PEACE".

The Housing and Construction Ministry, headed by right-wing Likud leader David Levy, is sponsoring the one minute "public service" message, which shows a large group of happy-go-lucky children and their youthful-looking parents in the foreground of a beautiful landscape, saying that there is no better place to live than Ariel. The latter, named after its patron saint Ariel Sharon, is one of the largest of more than 130 settlements established in the Occupied Territories since 1967.

Labor party representatives in the Broadcasting Authority seem unconcerned about the affair, even after the Attorney General had declared several years earlier that television must avoid broadcasting public service messages which are controversial. We will inform our readers of further developments.

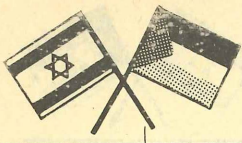
12/1 - The Supreme Court issued an interim injunction against the Board of Censors, ordering them to present within 30 days their reasons for censoring the play "Ephraim Returns Home".

The Board of Censors had banned the play claiming that it distorts the image of Israel's military rule in the Occupied Territories. (*See Other Israel No. 17,19*). The plaintiffs Yitzhak Laor (author of the play), Israel's Writers Association and The Civil Rights League took the issue to the Supreme Court on Jan. 7.

16/1 - Members of the Faculty of Law at the University of Tel-Aviv recently signed a petition protesting against the religious establishment and right-wing groups' attempts to prevent the construction of Brigham Young University campus (Mormon University) in Jerusalem. The petition declared that from the day of its birth Israel recognized freedom of religion, conscience and speech. The current campaign against the construction of the Mormon campus, said the petition, undermines these principles.

The municipality of Jerusalem and several government ministries (Ministries of Religion and the Interior), headed by the religious parties (Mafdal - 4 MKs in Knesset; Shas - 4 MKs) had given all the necessary permits for the construction of the campus during the Likud's second government (1981-1984). However, when construction of the campus commenced, the religious establishment had second thoughts and for the past several months it has spearheaded a wide-scale campaign to put an end to the building project. Religious fanatics demonstrate daily on the construction site. Representatives of the Mormon University presently living in Jerusalem have been receiving threatening telephone calls. The religious establishment accuses the Mormons of doing missionary work, and it further claims that a Brigham Young University campus in Jerusalem would become a base for Mormon proselytization of Jews.

The Mormons, and for that matter anyone whatever his beliefs, should have the unquestioned right to practice their religion wherever and in



whatever manner they please. Even if the Mormons were to proselytize, as the religious establishment in Israel claims, (the Mormons deny it), they should have the right to do so. This is the position of the PLP and other opposition groups in Israel. However, Brigham Young University should not have agreed to the site chosen for the construction of their campus. The campus is being erected on Palestinian lands in the West Bank which have since 1967 been annexed by Israel and added to the Jerusalem municipality.

The Mormons, whether consciously or not, have thus helped to legitimise Israel's annexation, and for that fact Brigham Young University authorities should be criticized.

19/1 – Half a million residents of Israel have so far signed a petition calling on the Knesset to legislate a law against racism.

Approximately 5000 volunteers affiliated with "Response" have been sitting for the past several months at tables scattered throughout the country, collecting signatures of passersby. During the weekend (Jan. 17-18), "Response" organizers made a special effort and ended up collecting 300,000 signatures. In Tel-Aviv alone, there were 35 signature collection centers during the weekend.

20/1 – A group of city council members of Jerusalem headed by its Mayor Teddy Kollek denounced Deputy Mayor Ze-ev Nissim's racist remarks against Arab residents living in the Jewish-Arab Jerusalem suburb of Neve-Yaakov.

The Deputy Mayor claimed in a public interview published in the Jerusalem local newspaper "Voice of the City" that the local Arab residents are of questionable character, involved in prostitution and drugs. The Deputy Mayor, a member of the religious political party Shas (4 MKs in Knesset, controlling the Ministry of Interior) advised the local Jewish residents of the neighborhood not to rent or sell homes to Arabs.

21/1 – The question of Jewish-Arab co-existence in Israel between its 3,430,000 Jewish citizens and its 712,000 Palestinian Arab citizens occupied the symposium held recently at the University of Haifa. During his talk, Professor Sami Samocha, a well known Israeli sociologist, presented the results of a poll on this subject conducted by Haifa University; 1,200 Arabs and Jews were interviewed. 57 percent of the Jews questioned declared that anyone supporting the establishment of a Palestinian State alongside Israel should not be given the right to vote. A significant minority of Israelis Jewish population – 30 percent according to a recent public opinion poll (*See Other Israel No. 19*) – would thus be denied this elementary right.

The vast majority of Israel's Palestinian community would also thus be affected. 82 percent of the Arabs who were interviewed declared Professor Samocha at the Symposium, recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Territories. Thus on the question of the establishment of a Palestinian State and the PLO, a minority of Jews and a vast majority

Legitimate Rights and Self Determination

At the time of writing, the PLO proposal to accept UN resolution 242 (recognizing Israel) in return for US and/or Israeli recognition of the Palestinians' right to self determination has been rebuffed.

The US State Department's recent official statement recognizing the "legitimate rights of the Palestinian people" beyond the refugee status contained in UN resolution 242 only reaffirms, in different wording, the past US position outlined in the now defunct Reagan Plan (1982).

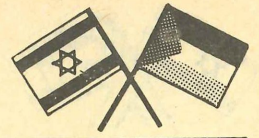
As a political term "legitimate rights of the Palestinians" says everything and nothing at the same time. Even former right-wing Prime Minister Begin – who is not suspected of Palestinophilism – put his signature to a document (Camp David Accords, 1977) guaranteeing the "legitimate rights of the Palestinians". That was almost nine years ago, and all there is to show for it is a state of creeping Israeli annexation of the Occupied Territories (*see this issue*).

It is therefore unrealistic to expect the PLO to accept the current version of 242, which refers to the Palestinians solely as refugees. Furthermore, even a revised 242, one that would provide in general terms for the "legitimate rights of the Palestinians", although an improvement, would fall short of the mark. In return for recognition of 242 (i.e. recognition of Israel) the PLO justifiably demands reciprocity – recognition by Israel and/or the US of the Palestinians' right "to self determination". This is the official PLO position at the time of writing in the third week of February. The ball is now clearly in Israel's and America's field. A move by either or both of them towards the PLO is the sine qua non for breaking the political impasse.

of Israel's Arab citizens do not fall within the national consensus. The fact that 57 percent of the Jews interviewed supported the denial of the democratic right to vote of Israel's Jewish-Arab population who are diametrically opposed to the national consensus, attests, according to Professor Samocha, to the degree of the lack of political tolerance in the country.

4/2 – PLP MK Matti Peled denounced as an act of piracy Israel's forced landing of a Libyan civil airliner bound for Syria. "Viewing itself in the front line struggle against terror, the Israeli government has from time to time given examples of acts of state terror, which ridicules all its anti-terrorist rhetoric".

12/2 Approximately 5000 people, sympathizers of "Peace Now", "Response" and



other groups, demonstrated against the Kahane party convention in Jerusalem. The crowd yelled, blew whistles and held placards reading "Nazi go to Nuremberg", "No to racism". Hundreds of demonstrators tried to break through the police barricade and scores of them were arrested, but later released.

THE WHINING FASCIST

It takes some intelligence to be a successful conqueror.

Being a conqueror requires a modicum of statesmanship – not merely a delight in showing off your power.

The common fascist believes in power, believes that might makes right. He does not play the victim, nor does he pretend to be motivated by the noblest moral values.

The Jewish fascist is both arrogant and pathetic. He provokes the people he has conquered, who are subject to this rule, and then he whines: "Pogrom! Cossacks!"

As if the State of Israel, with all its military might, were nothing more than a frightened little ghetto.

The extremely delicate arrangements which prevailed and helped maintain a relative calm on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem – one of the most sensitive sites in the world – were dramatically exploded by the spokesmen of Jewish national pride. It's hard to tell whether it was stupidity or viciousness which won the day. What is certain is that the principal loser was the State of Israel.

"Whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make mad".

Yael Lotan

RISING TENSIONS IN THE REGION!

When the ICIPP convened its symposium on Jan. 4 (details below) tensions between Israel and Syria were at a high pitch. In late December, the Abu Nidal group, in a bloody terrorist rampage, had murdered and wounded scores of innocent civilians (including Israelis) at Rome and Vienna airports.

Although the PLO had unequivocally denounced the terrorist attack, Labor-Likud leaders were unconvinced and accused the PLO of responsibility. Refusing for political reasons to differentiate between the PLO and the Abu Nidal organization, the coalition government threatened military reprisals against PLO centers in the Arab world.

These events were in the foreground when members and guests of the ICIPP opened their Symposium in early January. A month later to the day (February 4), Israeli fighter planes forced down a Libyan civil airplane, claiming that it carried leaders of the Palestinian Rejectionist Front (aligned with Syria – see PLP response in chronicle).

With the political process at an impasse (early February) "incidences" such as these could escalate into war. Were it to erupt, Israel's and America's refusal to deal realistically with the Palestinian problem will surely be the major contributing factor.

ICIPP's Tenth Anniversary Symposium:

THE ROLE OF INFORMAL ISRAELI-PLO CONTACTS AND CURRENT STATE OF ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

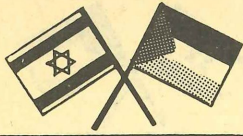
That was the title of the ICIPP's 10th anniversary symposium in Tel-Aviv on Jan. 4. Historian Yossi Amitai directed the public discussion. Amitai opened the discussion by defining three categories of Israeli-PLO contacts: contacts in the battlefield; diplomatic contacts, which have never existed; and contacts of the third kind – between individuals and groups not affiliated with the government such as the ICIPP talks with the PLO.

Although these Israeli-PLO talks have had no affect on the Israeli governments, said Mr. Amitai,

"The Israeli public now unquestionably perceives the Palestinian question to be the heart and core of the Israeli-Arab conflict".

Dr. Yaakov Arnon, (founding member of the ICIPP), spoke of the reasons for its foundation: "We wanted to pierce through the wall of the Labor-Likud national consensus, which among other things has said that there is no one to talk to on the other (Palestinian) side". This objective, remarked Dr. Arnon, was the principle reason for forming the ICIPP in 1976.

Udi Carmi, (political science student), delivering the conclusions of his research paper,



stated that in the late sixties the official policy of both Israel and the PLO were similar. Both parties rejected political dialogue as an option to resolve the conflict. But whereas the Israeli governments' official political positions have remained unchanged since then, by 1977 the PLO had already opened the door for talks with Israel.

"One thing is certain", declared Dr. Sami Mari (lecturer, Haifa University), "whether direct or through the media, Israeli-PLO contacts have unquestionably influenced PLO attitudes towards Israel and Zionism. The PLO ceased to perceive Israeli society as constituting an undifferentiated and homogeneous group" This has been, according to Dr. Mari, the Israeli Peace Movement's most striking achievement.

Israeli governments have not reciprocated, and they continue to refuse to differentiate between the Palestinian groups. A good indication of this, as Dr. Mari pointed out, was when Prime Minister Peres accused the PLO of responsibility for Abu Nidal's terrorist attack at Vienna and Rome airports in December.

Following Dr. Mari, Uri Avnery said that "contacts of the third kind have taken place in the background of many conflicts, such as the Algerian and Vietnamese Liberation struggles. In both cases French and American groups and individuals held informal talks with the FLN and the Vietcong respectively. The current phase of informal Israeli-PLO talks may also eventually lead to official negotiations between an Israeli government and the PLO".

Three political tendencies, declared Mr. Avnery, can be discerned in PLO attitudes towards contacts with Israelis. The first tendency rejects outright any form of dialogue; the second tendency - the PLO's mainstream as represented by Yassir Arafat - acknowledges the importance of the Israeli Peace Movement, but does not consider it the most important factor; the third tendency views the Israeli Peace Movement in particular, and the Israeli public in general, as the ultimate factor which the PLO must consider. According to Avnery, Issam Sartawi, Yassir Arafat's personal representative who was assassinated by the Abu Nidal group in 1983, was the principle spokesman in the PLO for this view.

Labor and Likud have never responded to the



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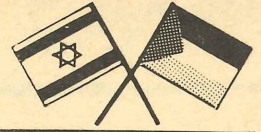
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back, claiming that "Israel is not the world's sewer" (sic). Only after a wave of protests, in which the PLP took part, were the boys permitted to stay in Israel.

In an earlier issue (*No. 14, p. 4*) we mentioned the plans of the Tel-Aviv - Jaffa municipality to destroy an Arab slum neighborhood in Jaffa, evict its inhabitants and build expensive apartments on the site. PLP architects and town-planners, along with members of the CRM and other parties, are now taking part in forming an architects' group that will formulate an alternative plan for developing and rebuilding that same neighborhood without uprooting its inhabitants.

Chronologically last but, of course, not at all least, it should be mentioned that the PLP strongly voiced its horror and outrage at the murderous Shiite attacks on the Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut. The PLP statement was read on Israeli television, and a speech by Uri Avnery, recorded by telephone, was voiced at a protest rally held in Rome by Italian left-wing parties. The PLP also held a large protest meeting in Nazareth, to which were invited speakers from the occupied territories, including Adv. Ibrahim Saka, head of the Gaza Strip Bar Association, and Raduan Abu-Ayash, editor of the East-Jerusalem *Al-Audah*. Other occupied territories leaders such as Mustafa Abd-el-Nabi Natsheh, deposed mayor of Hebron, and Rev. Udeh Rantisi, the deposed deputy mayor of Ramallah, were forbidden to participate by the military government.

P.S. As this issue goes into print, the Knesset House Committee is about to vote on a right-wing motion to limit M. K. Muhammad Miari's parliamentary immunity. In typical racist fashion, the right-wingers have singled out the PLP's Arab representative as their target. The vote, due to take place on June 11th, will be decided by the stand of the Labor M. K.'s.

The key to the renewal of the peace process

The Jordanian-Palestinian agreement of February, formulating the terms of a joint delegation to peace talks with Israel, to be held in the context of an international peace conference, provides now the only feasible basis for renewing the peace process. The recent discussions between King Hussein and President Reagan may, perhaps, indicate some willingness on the part of the U.S. to give the proposition a more serious consideration, although at this point it is too early to draw any conclusions. The U.S. certainly does not like the idea of Soviet participation in the search for peace in the ME, an attitude which had, in 1975, killed the first attempts to work towards peace within the framework provided by Security Council Resolution 338. The conditions spelled out by the U.S. for Soviet participation may be either an excuse for rejecting the idea in practice, or a first

step towards a gradual change in the American traditional position.

Leaving American considerations aside, there is no doubt that the Israeli government's opposition to the idea of an international conference is just as strong now as it has ever been. Indeed, the latest news from Washington, following King Hussein's visit to the White House, have already caused serious misgivings in Israeli official circles. For some time the government's tactics have been to oppose Soviet participation, believing that on this point American sympathy would be easier to secure; but its basic objection is not to Soviet, but to PLO participation, even as part of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

The element feared most by the Israeli government is the acceptance by the U.S. of PLO participation, under any guise. Both Murphy and Schultz have carried out an intensive search for Palestinians close to the PLO, but supposedly not actual members of the organization. This has certainly caused much concern in Jerusalem. Such a formula may indeed lead to PNC members being termed "non PLO members", which is clearly no more than a game in semantics.* This is what is worrying the Israeli government at this point. In the final analysis it must be realized that the government's objection is to Palestinian participation in the peace process under any guise, and it would be best to recognize the nature of the difficulty.

The PLO is now, and has been for the last three years, engaged in continuous struggle, against varying opponents, for its right to speak for the Palestinian people and take independent positions in every phase of the political process. Israel, like Syria and most recently the Shiite Amal militia, are trying to write off the PLO and clear the way for dealing with the Palestinian problem in accordance with their own interests (which are certainly not congenial to each other). The problem which this strange anti-Palestinian coalition raises is whether the peace process has any chance at all without active and independent Palestinian participation. Evidently, King Hussein has come to accept such participation as inevitable and is trying to get others to accept it, but the results of his efforts are still unclear. What is at stake now is not a technical or organizational problem, but a principle: can the peace process be revived without the PLO. To us the answer is clear: peace will come only after the PLO is admitted as a legitimate party to the peace process, just as it is recognized as an unavoidable party to the conflict.

Matti Peled
Jerusalem, 30.5.85

* *The PNC (Palestinian National Council) is the Palestinian Parliament-in-Exile. To claim that it is not part of the PLO is like claiming that the U.S. Congress is not part of the U.S. system of government. Clearly, such a claim is a diplomatic game aimed at talking with the PLO while officially denying doing so.*