



The Other Israel

Newsletter of the Israeli Council
for Israeli-Palestinian Peace

August-September 1988 No 33

Editor: Adam Keller
P.O.B. 956 Tel-Aviv, Israel 61008
Phone: (03) 659474/5565804

Editorial Board: Uri Avnery, Matti Peled, Yaakov
Arnon, Haim Bar'am, Yael Lotan, Yossi Amitai

EMERGENCE OF A STATE

On August 9, 1988, the Intifada entered its ninth month. The day was marked by a general strike in which the entire population participated, bringing life in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to a standstill. There were widespread demonstrations in whose dispersal dozens were wounded and a 16-year old boy was killed. The Israeli Air Force carried out an extensive raid on Lebanon, in an (unsuccessful) attempt to silence the PLO radio station, which broadcasts the communiqués issued by the leadership of the uprising. Altogether, it was quite an ordinary day of the Intifada, not greatly differing from those before or after. Demonstrations, riots and general strikes – they entered the pattern of daily life. The extensive coverage which the Intifada got in the world media in its first months is now greatly reduced. The Israeli army imposes endless restrictions; every area in which serious confrontations occur is immediately declared a “closed military area”. Moreover, newshunters are, by definition, preoccupied with what is still new, and the novelty of Palestinian demonstrators soon wore off. Only “special cases” still arouse media excitement, as when a 9-month old Gazan baby was hit by a rubber bullet and lost an eye (when the same happened to another baby, only a week later, it was not so special anymore).

With or without media coverage, however, the grim struggle continues throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, giving the lie to those who thought it “just a show for the television cameras”. In the middle of August the number of deaths admitted by the army reached 252; Palestinian sources put it at 334, which also includes the victims of shooting by settlers and inhalation of

tear gas “overdoses” (*Ha'olam Hazeh*, 17/8/88). Thousands have been wounded, many of them crippled for life. The number of prisoners has passed the 10,000 mark, and may be as high as 15,000. Many of these were sentenced by military courts in “assembly line” trials; at least 3,000, and possibly as many as 5,000, are held in Administrative Detention without trial, in overcrowded and unsanitary detention centres, such as “Ansar 3” in the Negev desert. Curfews are frequently imposed on whole towns, for days, weeks or months. Houses are demolished and sealed as a form of punishment, or confiscated to be used as army observation posts. All universities have been closed since the beginning of the Intifada, and the schools, opened after several months of closure, were soon closed again “to prevent the pupils from rioting”.

Yet, for all these, the Palestinian population's spirit remains unbroken. A common sight, whenever one arrives at the occupied territories, are electricity wires from which dozens of torn Palestinian flags dangle; no matter how many flags the Israeli army tears down, new ones are always put up again.

The underground leadership of the Intifada remains uncaught by the Israeli secret services, and continues to publish its directives, which are obeyed by the entire population. The military government, after months of futile attempts to open shops by force, completely gave up its attempts to break the merchants' strikes. Demonstrations continue, despite the daily death toll. Even areas which the government considered safely “pacified” burst out anew, after months of deceptive calm.

Of special significance is the situation in the politically and religiously sensitive East Jerusalem, which was one of the first centres of the Intifada. In March, thousands of policemen were permanently assigned to garrison East Jerusalem and clamp down immediately upon the smallest disturbance, in order to maintain the illusion of “Unified Jerusalem”. Yet, in July the East City broke out in a renewed rebellion. The outburst was provoked by Zvulun Hammer, the Minister of Religious Affairs, who initiated the excavation of a tunnel under the mosques on Temple Mount. (The destruction of these mosques is the announced aim of Israeli fanatics.) Moreover, the tunnel was intended to open onto the “Via Dolorosa”, blocking the passage of pilgrims tracing Jesus Christ's last route. Thus, the tunneling attempt succeeded in equally infuriating the Muslims and the Christians of Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem provocation was, apparently, Hammer's way of appeasing the extreme right inside his National Religious Party (NRL), where he was recently defeated in the internal elections by the nationalist-fundamentalist Avner Shakkai.

Originally, most Israelis only heard about events in the occupied territories on the radio or saw them on television, but gradually the Intifada comes nearer to home. The position of Palestinian workers from the occupied territories, who go to work in Israel, has always been precarious – pushed into the most menial, least paying jobs, and denied trade-union protection. From the beginning of the Intifada many of them, on short or long strikes, have been staying away from the jobs – thus damaging the Israeli economy

as well as the private income of many Israelis, in particular farmers and the owners of garages and restaurants.

It is impossible, however, for all workers to stay away all the time; the occupied territories are still too economically dependent on Israel. The workers who are forced to continue working in Israel have to contend with increased hostility from those Israelis who have never been exceedingly friendly with them. To this could be added the effect of the recession in the Israeli economy. Factories close or lay off a great part of their workers, especially in the poverty-stricken "development towns"; organised racists are eager to incite the Jewish unemployed against the Arabs, who are "stealing the jobs". Harassed and attacked by racist thugs, the workers can expect little help from the Israeli police; indeed, policemen – especially from the notorious "border guard" unit – are themselves often known to mistreat and beat up Arabs. The Tel-Aviv based "Red Light" association, founded in 1987 to help all victims of police brutality, found most of its time devoted to the problems of workers from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian workers are, thus, pressured on all sides, angry and frustrated. From time to time there are cases of sabotaging machinery, destroying harvests and setting on fire workshops, fields and forests*. Unlike the rebellion in the occupied territories, which is organised by a mass movement, this sabotage in the Israeli countryside and industrial zones is carried out by individuals or small groups. After each act of sabotage, however, all Arabs in the area are indiscriminately rounded up by the police, and held for a period of hours or days in which they are all too often subjected to humiliation and physical violence. This, in turn, might fuel in them the desire for revenge – and the supposed desire for revenge makes all of them even more suspect...

On August 3, an old Israeli woman was found stabbed to death in her house at the Moshav (cooperative village) Shafir, in the south of Israel. On August 9, the police arrested three 17-year old workers from Gaza, who were accused of committing the murder. On the same night, fire was set to a hut in the development town Or-Yehudah, in which three other Palestinian workers were sleeping. The arsonists had taken care to lock the windowless hut from the

outside, to prevent their victims from escaping. At the sound of the trapped workers' screams, the neighbors woke up, and many tried to help. A young soldier on leave succeeded in breaking open the door and getting the workers out, but it was too late: the three Palestinian workers were too badly burned, and they all died in hospital, a few days later.

To all those who showed solidarity

The knowledge that political friends around the world were sympathising with my act of protest helped me a lot to get through my three months in prison.

The military prison is not an easy place to be. The combination of military discipline and prison conditions makes for a rather exhausting "way of life". It was, however, also a period rich in human warmth and understanding shared with my fellow prisoners. I have lived these three months in the company of several hundred of imprisoned soldiers. A few of them were, like myself, imprisoned for acts of protest against the repression in the occupied territories; the majority were put there for "non-political" infractions of army discipline.

We were a diverse group: young and old, conscripts and reservists (most of whom were picked up from their homes and charged with "desertion" – i.e. not showing up in time for reserve duty). There were people from different social classes and ethnic origins – with an overrepresentation of Oriental Jews from slum neighborhoods. By no means all of the prisoners were in agreement with my views; but there was willingness to listen, and there was the feeling of solidarity. We were all prisoners together, living under the same conditions and, at least for the time being, all on the same side.

I have come out of the prison with a stronger belief that peace and justice are in the interest of everybody; that the struggle – so often frustrating – is not in vain.

Adam Keller

Within a few hours, the news spread throughout the Gaza Strip, where the three came from. As in the very beginning of the Intifada (See *The Other Israel n° 30, p.1*) the entire population poured out into the streets; old and young, men and women in their thousands blocked every road and pelted Israeli soldiers with stones. The army, which had for several months marked off Gaza as a "relatively quiet" area, was again caught by surprise.

On August 14, a Molotov cocktail was thrown south of Gaza on a bus in which settlers were travelling with their families. Several women and children were wounded. Though there were no fatalities, the incident was given far more coverage by the Israeli press than cases in which

Palestinians were killed. The settlers threatened revenge. The army imposed a curfew over the entire Gaza Strip. Army bulldozers completely uprooted the orange grove from which the Molotov cocktail was thrown. A campaign of repression was begun and – within two days – the Gazan hospitals reported 70 persons brought in, with their arms and/or legs broken by the soldiers' clubs. While Army chief-of-staff Shomron declared that the situation was "gradually going back to normal", direct press coverage of the Gaza situation was still prevented by the army, which kept all entries to the Strip closed.

For many a casual observer, the Intifada seems to be no more than an endless, violent cycle of rebellion and repression. In fact, however, the violent incidents are but one manifestation – and not necessarily the most important one – of a far more profound phenomenon: the nucleus of a Palestinian state is being formed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The embryo of a Palestinian governmental structure already exists, in the form of an extensive network of "popular committees". Such committees now exist in practically every town, village and refugee camp. Originally created to coordinate strikes and demonstrations, they have gradually assumed many functions and responsibilities: the boycott of Israeli merchandise; organising the non-payment of Israeli taxes, and the levying of the Intifada's own taxes; encouraging the population to grow food, even in the towns, in order to minimise the effect of collective punishments like curfews and roadblocks; organising equitable distribution of the food grown; providing educational alternatives to the closed schools; creating health services uncontrolled by the Israeli government; establishing the self-policing of the communities – in place of the official police, most of whose members resigned at the call of the Intifada leadership; helping the families of the killed and the wounded, and those whose houses were destroyed.

A striking example of the committees' power was given at the beginning of August 1988, in the West Bank town of Tul-Karm. The local Popular Committee issued a directive to the town's merchants. It contained a detailed list of Israeli products, listed by their brand names: cigarettes, sweets, dairy products, cleaning

materials, detergents, etc. The merchants were given a limited period to dispose of their existing stocks of these products, and were forbidden to acquire new stocks. On the following day, a truck of the Israeli dairy company "Tnuva" arrived at Tul-Karm as usual, but had to go back to Tel-Aviv without any merchandise sold (*Hadashot*, August 17, 1988).

Defence Minister Rabin has declared the destruction of the Popular Committees to be the military government's primary aim. The mere fact of being a member of a committee makes a person liable to ten years' imprisonment. Members of Popular Committees are prominently represented among the prisoners in Israeli prisons; several of them were already deported to Lebanon and, on August 17, deportation orders were issued against 25 others. The committees, however, are already rooted in the communities: new members instantly replace those who were arrested.

More than the demonstrations and riots, the emergence of this parallel governmental structure undermines Israeli control over the occupied territories. The Israeli "civilian administration" is fast becoming an empty shell, and the Israeli government can

only resort to brute force: decrees are obeyed only where they are enforced by large numbers of armed soldiers, and the way in which V.A.T. is collected from Palestinian merchants strongly resembles armed robbery.

Together with the Israeli control over the West Bank, the Intifada undermined the influence which Jordan had maintained there, in silent partnership with Israel, since 1967. At no demonstration were Jordanian flags or pictures of King Hussein carried; the Palestinian supporters of Jordan became completely isolated and discredited; of the 25,000 West Bankers who regularly received salaries from Jordan, many declared their allegiance to the PLO and started to work with the Popular Committees. Jordanian influence on the West Bank was dead months before King Hussein officially renounced his claims over this territory (*see ICIPP statement*). With King Hussein's renunciation, "The Jordanian Option" was laid to rest; all diplomatic schemes which involve Israeli negotiations with "a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation" have become irrelevant; so did all political programs which envision, as a solution, the

restoration of Jordanian rule over the West Bank.

The Israeli Labor Party was caught unprepared. Just as it was warming up to enter the elections campaign, the main plank of its program was knocked out from under it. The party leaders' reaction was nervous and confused. At the drafting of Labor's elections program, hawks and doves clashed and fought over each word. The final result was a vague and self-contradictory document, which stated, for example, that Israel may negotiate about "interim agreements" with separate Jordanian and Palestinian delegations - but that the definite agreement must be made with "one united Jordanian-Palestinian delegation". - Another article in the program favors negotiations with "Palestinian elements which would recognise Israel, oppose terrorism and accept U.N. resolutions 242 and 338", yet a third article categorically opposes negotiations with the PLO, under any circumstances.

The Likud leaders are attempting to capitalise on Labor's difficulties, and are encouraged by favorable opinion polls; yet the Likud, too, is caught in a predicament.

On its first years in power, the

While the Soviet troops are still retreating from Afghanistan, the cease-fire between Iraq and Iran, announced by the UN Secretary General on August 9, marked the end of another of these seemingly never ending bloody tragedies. In the same period South-Africa, the United States, Angola and Cuba came to an agreement which might end the conflict in Southern Angola and give independence to Namibia.

It all happens in the months after Reagan and Gorbashov decide to settle some "regional conflicts". Are the retreat from Afghanistan, the Gulf War cease-fire and the Namibia agreement connected with the Moscow summit? Is there also hope for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

The timing of the retreat of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan is, apparently, directly connected with the Moscow meeting; so is the retreat of Cuban and South African troops from, respectively, Angola and Namibia. Whether the cease-fire of the Gulf-War is directly, or indirectly part of the same connection is not yet clear. It is even more of an open question whether in the last superpower summit the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was touched upon in a significant way.

An end to wars?

However, even when history is not made by two men in a meeting - probably it is the other way round: the summits could take place only because there were enough coinciding interests - still, a process with its own dynamics is now emerging.

The combination of the Intifada on the one hand, and a wave of "common sense solutions" on the other, cannot but pressurize both the PLO and the Israeli government to exhibit an increase in common sense, as well.

The PLO is obviously imbued with the spirit of peace strategics. Basam Abu Sharif's document was not yet old news when already Abu Iyad came with more. The Israeli government will not be able to stay behind. For Israel's leadership it is especially urgent to make peace, since for years it relied on the Gulf War as a component of its strategic safeguards. "Let them kill each other" were words which could be heard not only in the marketplace but also in the government and the army high command. The Israeli government was even eager to sell weapons to Ayatollah Khomeini, in order to keep the Iraqi army occupied. The Gulf War was also

gratefully exploited to divert the attention of world opinion from the Palestinians' fate. Now there is some commotion among the big parties' leaders: "What could be expected from Iraq?" "Its army became more experienced, and the taboo on chemical warfare was broken!"

The only way out is, of course, to settle the conflict with the Palestinians. That would free the way to make peace treaties with the neighboring countries, and the whole region would profit from a détente.

There is in Israel a growing awareness - though not always openly admitted - that peace is impossible without talking to the "unavoidable" PLO. Even those who favor a ruthless repression of the Intifada could from time to time be found simultaneously in favor of negotiations with the PLO ("we should go strong to the negotiations").

From the war front at the Gulf, Iranian and Iraqi soldiers were reported to embrace and hand each other flowers. Could it be imagined that, at some time, the Palestinians who are deported today, will return ... to be welcomed warmly by those who threw them out?

Beate Keizer

Likud succeeded in establishing a network of more than a hundred Israeli settlements over the occupied territories, and in completing the territories' economic integration with Israel. Once this was accomplished, the Likud program consisted, in practice, of little more than "maintaining the existing situation". Nothing would have suited Yitzchak Shamir better than the indefinite continuation of the de-facto annexation, which would become more firmly rooted with each passing year. This status-quo was irretrievably broken by the Intifada, leaving Shamir and his supporters bewildered by the failure of all attempts to quell the uprising by force.

The total collapse of both "The Jordanian Option" and "The Status-Quo Option" makes it necessary to choose between more radical options. In the occupied territories, Israel is not fighting a specific organization or group, but a whole population, an entire society of 1,500,000 persons mobilised in struggle. This society has rendered itself ungovernable. Israel could withdraw its army and leave the Palestinian society to govern itself, in its own way. Such a withdrawal could take place either through negotiations with the Palestinians – which means with the PLO – or through a unilateral Israeli decision (an option favored by several influential journalists).

To those Israelis who oppose withdrawal, only one option remains: to smash the Palestinian society altogether and destroy its basic fabric – if need be, by deporting the entire population. In August, a public opinion poll has shown 49% of Israel's Jewish population ready, under some circumstances, to accept measures which will "cause the Arabs to leave" (Jerusalem Post, August 12). Two other polls, however, (Koteret Rashit, August 17; Yediot Aharonot August 8) indicate an increase of a different kind: A majority of Jewish Israelis (51% in one poll, 57% in the other) accept the idea of negotiating with the PLO. Moreover, according to both polls, more than a third of the Likud voters are agreeable to such negotiations. The same ambiguity is also apparent among organised parties and political groups.

No less than four parties will run for election on platforms advocating "iron fist" policies, up to mass expulsions of Arabs: "Techiyah" ("Revival"), Israel's biggest extreme-right formation; "Tzomet" ("Cross-

roads") and "Moledet" ("Fatherland") headed, respectively, by former generals Rafael Eytan and Rehav'am Ze'evi; and Rabbi Meir Kahane's "Kach" (Thus!). Reflecting them, inside the Likud, Ariel Sharon has come out in an open challenge of Yitzchak Shamir's leadership. Presenting himself as the proponent of a "dynamic" policy, Sharon demands to be put back in charge of the Defence Ministry, from which he was ousted in 1983, and "take care of the Intifada". He has also come up with a new idea: to annex immediately to Israel those parts of the occupied territories in which the Labor Party, in its time in power, established settlements. In this way, Sharon may hope to attract the support of Labor hawks, and establish a new "national block" centered on himself.

So far, Sharon's overtures were rebuffed by the Labor Party; yet the policies of Labor Defence Minister Rabin have a definite Sharon flavour to them. Indeed, the idea of "transfer" is ominously foreshadowed in Rabin's steady increase of the number of Palestinians deported: while 33 were deported in the first eight months of the Intifada, a further 25 deportation orders were issued on one day: August 17, 1988. It is not inconceivable that the dose of deportations will be gradually increased, from dozens to hundreds, to thousands.

NO COPYRIGHT

The Other Israel is not a commercial magazine, but a publication dedicated to the widest possible dissemination of the views contained in it. Therefore, we hereby freely waive our copyright, and invite our readers to copy and distribute The Other Israel, provided only that the copy is faithful to the original, and does not change or distort it in any way.

Uneasily coexisting with Rabin are the Labor Party doves, many of whom, such as Minister Without Portfolio Ezer Weitzman, tend to accept the idea of negotiations with the PLO. Several smaller parties and groups in Labor's periphery are in the process of accepting such negotiations, though still with some reservations: the "Peace Now" movement, and political parties such as "Ratz" (Civil Rights Movement), "Mapam" (United Workers Party) and even the centrist "Shinuy" (Change).

A new recruit to the ranks of Shinuy is Moshe Amirav, who was forced out of the Likud because of

his meetings with Palestinians (The Other Israel, n° 30, p.11). Amirav has also taken a leading part in initiating the formation of "The Council for Peace and Security". Within a month of its establishment, this council attracted more than a hundred reserve generals and colonels of the Israeli army – most of whom never before had shown up in peace activities. In speeches and meetings, these senior officers took the position that Israel should withdraw from the occupied territories – even out of purely military considerations.

Moshe Amirav himself became, since leaving the Likud, a leading proponent of Israeli-Palestinian peace, often stating that there is no partner for peace but the PLO.

In the middle of July, Amirav's name was mentioned during a curious debate at a cabinet meeting. Energy Minister Moshe Shahal, known to be a member of Shimon Peres' "inner circle", charged Prime Minister Shamir with carrying out secret negotiations with the PLO! According to Shahal, the negotiations have been going on for a year, through the mediation of Rumanian President Nicolau Ceausescu; Shamir is supposed to have submitted a document, drafted by Moshe Amirav, in which he offered letting the PLO administer civilian life in the occupied territories; the PLO rejected this offer as being insufficient, but did not break contact. Shamir hotly denied Shahal's claims, calling them "a total fabrication". He refused, however, to disclose to the cabinet the minutes of his talks with President Ceausescu's special envoy, at the beginning of July.

Several days later, on July 22, the French paper *l'Express* came up with a new revelation: it claimed that, on May 29, an envoy sent by Shimon Peres had met in Paris with Yasser Arafat's personal representative. Curiously, though this seemed to offer the Likud leaders a perfect opportunity to take revenge for Shahal's disclosures, they did not use it. In fact, neither Likud nor Labor made any official reference to the *l'Express* article.

Whether or not any secret contacts with the PLO had in fact occurred cannot be established at this time. It is, however, clear that the government is stuck in an increasingly difficult position by its continued public refusal to open negotiations with the PLO. A particular source for its recent discomfort is the idea of a Palestinian declaration of independence and/or the proclamation of a

Palestinian government – an idea which seems to gather more and more political momentum.

The idea first became known to the Israeli public through a document which the Shabak (Israeli secret services) captured when their men raided the Arab Studies Society in East Jerusalem and arrested its director, Feisal Hussein. This document contained a detailed plan for declaring an independent Palestinian state. The Shabak leaked the document to the press and ascribed its authorship to Hussein; later, it was found out that it was a version of a plan originally drafted by the American Jewish peace activist Jerome Segal.

The publication of this so-called "Hussein Document" had caused a great stir in the Israeli public opinion and the political system, and the possibility of a Palestinian Declaration of Independence was widely discussed; but nobody knew whether the ideas expressed in the document, which was written by a non-Palestinian, had any real support among the Palestinians. These doubts were dispelled on August 14, when the French *Journal de Dimanche* published an interview with Salah Halaf ("Abu-Iyad"), Arafat's Deputy. Abu-Iyad proposed the proclamation of a Palestinian state and the formation of a Palestinian government whose program will be different from the Palestinian Covenant – and which will recognise Israel and negotiate with her.

In international law, the Palestinian state would base itself upon U.N. resolution 181 of 1947, the resolution calling for the partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state. (This resolution was cited in Israel's 1948 "Declaration of Independence", as a justification for the creation of the Jewish state.) A strict application of resolution 181 would mean that Israel would have to give up not only the territories occupied in 1967, but even a big part of the territory it had before 1967 – a demand completely unacceptable for the Israeli side. But Abu-Iyad made it quite clear that, once the principle of partition would be accepted, the actual boundaries could be a subject of negotiations. In fact, the boundaries of the future Palestinian state have already been defined, quite clearly, by the Intifada itself: they are the 1967 borders.

The themes expressed by Abu Iyad may become a central issue on the agenda of the Palestine national Council (PNC), due to meet in

September. The idea of forming a Palestinian government-in-exile is not new in itself. For many years, it has been floating around, but never achieved general acceptance, and was always put off for an unspecified future. Now, however, Abu-Iyad used a new concept: "interim government" and not "government-in-exile". The distinction is far from semantic. It is a reflection of the fact that, should a Palestinian government be proclaimed with the Intifada leadership's support, it would exercise a certain amount of real control over the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem – even while the Israeli army is present there. Therefore, the formation of such a government could be of decisive importance for the future of this land's two peoples.

** Forests planted by the Jewish National Fund are often displayed proudly to foreign visitors – such as the German Greens (in 1987). Many of them, however, cover the sites of Palestinian villages, destroyed in 1948. Palestinian workers of refugee families do know the location of the former villages.*

Women for Women Prisoners

Since the beginning of the Intifada more Palestinians are being arrested every day. Their number is supposed to be at least eight thousand, of which three thousand are "administrative" detainees, meaning that they have not been tried or even accused of anything – they are only suspected of being "dangerous to Israel's security", and therefore – according to the British Emergency Regulations of 1945 – they can be imprisoned for half a year, and then the imprisonment can be prolonged.

Nearly all the prisoners are men, but there is also a group of about 60 political women prisoners to whom should be added the two imprisoned Jewish women journalists of Derech Hanitzotz. As their number is relatively small, there was, until now, no special camp or prison for them, and they were kept together with criminal woman prisoners in the prisons of Tel-Aviv, Jerusalem and Ramleh.

About three months ago, a group of Tel-Aviv women decided to organize in order to help the political women prisoners, "administrative" or otherwise. There are several ways in which it is possible to help. Of first importance is to find out whether the prisoner has a lawyer to take care

of her case, and if not, to find her one. There is also the need to keep steadily in touch with the lawyer. There are, all of a sudden, very many Palestinian prisoners and the number of lawyers taking care of them is relatively small. Therefore, the lawyers are overworked and tend to neglect the women whose conditions are, in comparison, not so bad. Because of this, the group has to remind the lawyers to visit, to appeal and to react every time anything unusual happens in the jail. In order to know what happens, the organisation keeps in touch with the families of the prisoners. Each visiting day, some of us wait to meet the families, who come all the way from the occupied territories; we hear from them, after the visit, what happened inside and if there is anything the prisoners need that we can bring (clothes, sheets, shoes and so on). We also provide money for those whose families are in financial troubles, in order to let them buy for themselves what they need from the "prison shop".

Whenever any of the woman prisoners suffers from some special mistreatment we inform the press, try to bring sympathetic Knesset Members into the prison and demonstrate outside its walls. All in all: we try to attract the maximum public attention.

Specially problematic in "Neve Tirza" (the women's department of the Ramleh prison) are the relations between the (Jewish) criminal prisoners and the political ones. In one case, nineteen-year old Mona Sarsara was severely beaten by fifteen criminal prisoners with the help of a warden. Contrary to the rules the warden, when he took Mona out of her cell for a meal, gave the criminal prisoners access to her, while preventing Mona from protecting herself. We organised a demonstration and sent notices to all the newspapers. None of them published it (due to military censorship?), but after a week Mona was suddenly pardoned and released from prison!

In order to stop the troubles in Neve Tirza (and the steady flow of news about the troubles) the political prisoners were moved to another prison, "Hasharon". It is too early to know for sure, but it seems to be a change for the better.

An "administrative" detainee from the Gaza Strip, Tahani Abu Daka, was arrested in the second month of her pregnancy. We demanded medical supervision for her, and our demand was seconded by The Association

for Civil Rights in Israel and by Ratz Knesset Member Shulamit Aloni, but it did not help. The prison authorities did not arrange medical attention for her, and she lost her baby. Again we demonstrated and published the story, and Tahani was released.

Aisha Al Qurd is another woman from the Gaza Strip. To be able to believe her story, you must have seen it with your own eyes. A mother of four, she was arrested together with her husband. Their house was demolished, and the children, the eldest six years old, remained homeless together with their – yes – paralysed grandmother, Aisha's mother. The Red Cross gave them a tent, which did not solve the problem of the grandmother who could not take care of the children. Then Aisha, who also was arrested while pregnant – she was actually near the end of her pregnancy – gave birth in prison. We demanded her release, and the authorities agreed to release her on a bail of \$3500. We succeeded in raising the money, and Aisha went with her two-days old son to join her family in the tent. But the end of evils had not yet come: the army destroyed the tent.

Now we are trying to get her a licence to put up another tent – and we shall get the tent, too. It is our part in the struggle against the occupation.

Chava Cohen

Women for Political Prisoners
P.O.B. 6069, Tel-Aviv, Israel

The peace movement – a survey –

While the Intifada is unfolding in the occupied territories, inside Israel the protest movement against the occupation and the oppression is developing.

This time, the movement is assuming forms far different from those known in the past (for example, during the Lebanon War). In the past, the "Peace Now" movement was dominant. The more radical parts of the peace movement were relatively small. At present, Peace Now's activity has gone down. The number of participants in its meetings has decreased. Its first remarkable activity for a long time, was the invitation of Feisal Husseini to its meeting in Jerusalem, in which he spoke clearly in favor of peace and of the two-state solution. In contrast

with Peace Now's crisis, dozens of movements are active, each one in a certain field or for a specific goal, within the overall framework of the struggle against the occupation.

A prominent phenomenon is the activity of women's peace movements. The Women in Black group maintains a high level of activity: Each Friday noon, the women, wearing black clothes and holding placards with slogans against the occupation, hold vigils at central squares in Israel's three big cities: Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv and Haifa.

The Hala ha-Kibush ("Stop the Occupation") group, too, has its regular weekly vigil.

There are circles who meet for discussion, and also go into the streets. These circles sometimes have names. There is one Dabru Shalom ("lets talk about peace"), another Eitan ("steadfast"). Through this approach they hope to reach new people – as many as possible – to make them aware of the disaster into which the right-wing parties may lead Israel.

The strongest movements are The Twenty-First Year, Yesh Gvul and Dai le-Kibush.

The Twenty-First Year emphasizes the need to express, in daily life, the opposition to the occupation. It is distributing a list of factories located in the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, and calls upon the public to boycott their products. Schools who try to send pupils to school outings in the occupied territories encounter the refusal of the movement's members and supporters.

The Yesh Gvul ("There is a limit") movement concentrates on activity connected with the refusal of soldiers to perform military service in the occupied territories (see 'Ongoing struggle')

Dai le-Kibush ("Down with the Occupation") is unique among the grassroots' movements in clearly pointing out the direction of the solution: a Palestinian state, side by side with Israel, and negotiations with the PLO within the framework of an International Peace Conference. The movement holds a great number of demonstrations and publishes many leaflets and brochures. While most of its activity takes place inside Israeli society, each week it holds solidarity visits in towns, villages and refugee camps in the occupied territories. Such visits serve the

double purpose of giving, at least, moral support to victims of the occupation and of giving Israelis direct experience of what is going on in the occupied territories.

Despite the differences between them, the protest movements maintain good contact and to some extent succeed in coordinating their activities. (Many activists are, simultaneously, members of two or three groups.) Towards June 5 the main groups participated in a joint demonstration: 18 movements participated in the march, each one with its own banners and slogans, with three central slogans, common to all of them:*

End the occupation!

For Israeli-Palestinian peace!

Return the soldiers home!

In this year – the year of the Intifada – more than 10,000 people participated in the demonstration – the biggest June 5 demonstration ever held.

Udi Arnon

** June 5 is the date on which war broke out in 1967. This day became marked as a specific day of protest against the occupation.*

Tours abroad

Between May and July 1988, Uri Avneri was invited to three short lecture-tours in Europe.

In the beginning of 1988 he was invited by the Social-Democratic Friedrich Ebert Stiftung to a lecture tour in Bonn and Hamburg, on the occasion of the publishing of the German edition of his book *My Friend, The Enemy*, which recounts the history of contacts between Israelis and the PLO leadership from 1974 on, in which he took part*.

During this visit Avneri met with former Chancellor Willy Brandt for an extensive private discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian problem.

Avneri gave several public lectures, held press conferences and met with the editorial staffs of several newspapers and magazines, including *Der Spiegel* and *Die Zeit*.

In the beginning of June, Avneri was again invited to Germany. He gave a lecture in Münster and took part in an Israeli-Palestinian Seminar held under the auspices of the Greens-affiliated Bildungswerk für Demokratie und Umweltschutz and the International League for Human Rights.

Between June 28 and July 2,

Avnery took part in a series of public debates and press conferences in Basel, Zürich, St. Gallen and Bern in Switzerland, held under the auspices of the group "Dialog Israel-Palästina" and more than 40 Swiss organisations, including the Social-Democratic party. To all these events, representatives of the PLO were also invited. In the Zürich debate appeared Mr. Abdalla Frangi, PLO representative in Bonn; Mr. Nabil Koullailat, former PLO representative in the DDR, in all the others. The events were extensively covered by the Swiss press.

In all these debates, lectures and press-conferences, the Intifada and its meaning were the main subject. The main conclusion of Avnery was that events will lead inevitably to Israel-PLO negotiations and the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. The PLO representatives publicly agreed with these conclusions.

*Uri Avnery: Mein Freund, der Feind; Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nacht, In der Raste 20-22, D-5300, Bonn. The book has appeared until now in Great Britain, the United States, France, Italy and Germany.



At the end of June and the beginning of July, M.K. Matti Peled was invited to participate in a great number of events within a few days, requiring him to shuttle back and forth between Europe and America. On June 27-8 The North America Seminar on the Palestinian Question was held at the UN Headquarters in New York.

Matti Peled participated as a panelist. Other panelists included professor Abu Lughod, member of the Palestinian National Council and active participating in the efforts to establish contact between the PLO and the U.S. government; William Barton, former Canadian ambassador to the U.N.; Paul McCloskey, former American Congressman, known for his involvement with Middle-East issues; and V.P. Vorobyov, head of The Institute for Oriental Studies in the Soviet Academy of Science. Among the Soviet participants in the seminar were many new faces, who had not previously participated in such meetings. They clearly showed their interest in talking with MK Peled, and discussed with him the implications for the Middle East of Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms. From New York, Matti Peled travelled to Lund, Sweden, where the Annual Convention of END (European Nuclear Disarme-

ment) was held between June 29 and July 3. MK Matti Peled, who was invited to participate in the Middle East Workshop on July 1, used the opportunity to establish contacts with representatives of many European peace movements. Several other Middle Eastern guests participated in the Workshop. From Israel there were Toma Shik and Amos Gvirtz, representing the Israeli branch of WRI (War Resisters International) and Meir Vanunu - brother and active supporter of the imprisoned nuclear technician, Mordechai Vanunu, whose revelations continue to hold the interest of peace activists the world over.

The Palestinian side was represented by Mary Khass of Gaza and Ilan Halevi of the PLO. For several European participants it was a surprise to see these diverse speakers achieve a substantial amount of agreement on the main topics. The problems raised in the proceedings of the Workshop were: the effects of the Intifada on the political situation in the Middle East; the nuclearization of the Middle East and the introduction of other means of mass destruction and their consequences, such as the chemical weapons used in the Iran-Iraq war; the Middle East arms race and the chances of limiting it.

From Sweden, K.M. Peled returned to the U.S., where he participated in the rededication of the Gettysburg Eternal Light Peace Memorial. The rededication, held on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of its original dedication on July 3, 1983 by President Roosevelt, was part of the 125th anniversary of the battle of Gettysburg. M.K. Matti Peled was invited to participate and deliver the Keynote Address in the Luncheon given by the President of the Gettysburg College in honor of the special guests, so as to add to the ceremony the dimension of the concerns for peace by the international community. M.K. Peled took the opportunity to urge the United States to give its support to the U.N. General Assembly Resolution calling for an International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

Another one of the speakers was the well-known scientist and writer Carl Sagan, with whom K.M. Peled had a long discussion on the Middle East situation.

Between July 4-14, M.K. Matti Peled toured California, giving lectures and making public appearances. The meetings in the Bay Area were

The PLP under attack

On June 28, in Nazareth, seven leading Arab members of the Progressive List for Peace (PLP) were put on trial. Among them are Kamel Daher, Rashid Salim, Muhammad Na'amne, Falah Safiyye and Badr Yunis.

They are charged with "supporting a terrorist organization". This offence was allegedly committed in June 1985, through the publication, in the PLP Arab weekly *Al-Tadamun*, of an article expressing support for the desire of the Palestinian people to achieve self-determination under P.L.O. leadership. The article was unsigned, but these seven men are held responsible for its publication, being members of the PLP executive committee. After the charges were read, the continuation of the trial was put off until October, very near before the November 1 general elections. The timing of the trial is clear. This is the first step in an attempt to delegitimize the Progressive List for Peace. A conviction will make it easier to bar the PLP from participating in the elections.

At the end of July, several right-wing MK's again attempted to remove the parliamentary immunity of MK Muhammad Miari. Their pretext, this time, was a press conference in Athens, in which Miari participated together with PLO spokesman Basam Abu-Sharif, in connection with the Palestinian deportees' ship. However, when the matter came before the Knesset House Committee, Attorney-General Yosef Sharish warned the committee members that a decision to remove MK Miari's immunity may be overturned by the Supreme Court, as had happened before.

The debate at the House Committee was, however, never concluded: a parliamentary coup took place, due to a debate between the Labor Party and the Likud, unconnected with the Miari case; the committee's chairman, MK Micha Reiser of the Likud, was deposed and replaced by Laborite MK Rafi Edri; the new chairman used his authority to suspend indefinitely the proceedings against Miari.

In the meantime, however, the Shabak (security services) suddenly started to summon dozens of PLP activists in various Arab villages for interrogation. They questioned them about their views and political activities and some of them got the "advise" of the Shabak to seek another party in which to be active.

Khaled Asadi, an Arab teacher, who represents the PLP in the teachers' union, was picked up by police while walking in the marketplace of Jerusalem. He was released on the same day, but only after MK Peled lodged a complaint with the Minister of Police. The explanation for the arrest was: "Policemen on patrol noticed a man carrying a brochure in the Arabic language, and detained him in order to check whether the brochure contained subversive or inflammatory material. When nothing suspicious was found, the man was released."

The attacks on PLP members are expected to culminate in an attempt to prevent the Jewish-Arab party from running in the November elections.

arranged with the help of Paul McCloskey and Allan Solomonow; in the Los Angeles area, similar help was given by Joel Gayman. Badr Younis, from the village of Ara in Israel, one of the PLP's Arab parliamentary candidates, also participated in the Los Angeles part of the tour. In San Francisco, M.K.Peled met with a group of Jackson delegates to the Democratic Party Convention and discussed with them the possible contribution which a Democratic administration could make to Middle East peace. The delegates showed M.K.Peled the Middle East section of the Democratic Party Platform, and the amendment to it which was afterwards presented by Jesse Jackson at the Democratic Convention.

On the West Coast, M.K.Peled encountered the many Jewish-Arab dialogue groups active there, already familiar from a previous visit*. In the last year the number of members in these dialogue groups increased substantially, as did the trust among the Jewish and Arab Americans who participate. This willingness of members of both communities to meet and discuss the issues in a spirit of understanding and cooperation is one of the more significant developments in the American society.

* In September 1986 (see *The Other Israel* nr 23, p.7).

The Jordanian option evaporates

On August 3, 1988, the ICIPP executive held a thorough discussion of King Hussein's decision to cut off Jordan's ties with the West Bank. The following is the text of the resolution adopted at the end of the discussion. It was published in Ha'aretz on August 9.

The severing of administrative and financial ties between the Kingdom of Jordan and the West Bank does not abolish the "Jordanian Option", since such an option never really existed. The Jordanian step intended to punish both the Palestinian people and Israel; the Palestinians – because they never agreed to give up their independence for the sake of this imaginary option; Israel – for never giving King Hussein a chance to make it real. King Hussein's move does not change the fundamental political conditions; rather, Hussein has finally admitted that he is unable to make himself the Palestinian people's representative, and that his repeated attempts to obtain such a

The following is excerpted from M.K.Peled's lecture at the New York seminar on June 27.

(...) The demonstrators chant daily in the streets of Nablus, Ramallah, Gaza and everywhere: "Jerusalem, the Bank and Gaza are our Palestinian state." But this is not only a slogan chanted in demonstrations, this is the reality of today. The West Bank and Gaza, as well as East Jerusalem, have become Palestinian. They are no longer open for the Israeli occupation to manifest itself as it used to for almost 21 years. (...) Gone are the days when Israel could consider the occupied territories as its largest market (providing two billion dollars worth of business). Gone are the days when Jewish settlers could go picknicking in the pastoral scenery of the West Bank.

status have completely failed. These attempts were conducted by King Hussein in partnership with Israel.

Both of Israel's co-ruling parties – Labor and Likud – regarded King Hussein as the partner with whom they wanted to achieve a political settlement. The small difference between Peres and Shamir concerned the question whether or not an "international opening" should precede the official start of negotiations with Hussein. This is inconsequential in comparison with the unwillingness of both to promise to King Hussein the return of all the territories conquered from him – as Menachem Begin promised Sinai to Anwar Sadat, before Sadat set foot in Jerusalem.

For many years, King Hussein made great efforts to obtain such a promise from the Israeli government. With the promise in his hands, Hussein could have presented himself to the Palestinians as the only one able to liberate them from Israeli occupation. For that purpose, Hussein made great efforts, throughout the years, to establish his influence in the occupied territories. He was greatly helped by the Israeli Military Government, which – for its part – endeavored to increase the King's influence.

This Israelo-Husseinite policy was totally opposed to the wishes of the Palestinian people; it also run counter to the repeated demand of the Arab States that the PLO, and only the PLO, should represent the Palestinian people in its liberation struggle. In 1985, the agreement between King Hussein and Yassir Arafat, regarding

the coordination of their efforts to liberate the occupied territories, came to naught. The basic stumbling block was the issue of the Palestinian people's independence. Hussein took the position that the occupied territories should be initially restored to his rule, and only then would the Palestinian people be able to implement their right of self-determination. (Had this plan become a reality, the Jordanian army, restored to control over the West Bank, would probably have left little for the Palestinians to determine for themselves.) The PLO, on the contrary, insisted that the first step must be the implementation of the Palestinian people's self-determination, and only then would a federation be formed between independent Palestine and Jordan. Because of this basic dispute King Hussein decided, after a year, to annul the agreement.

Since that time, Hussein tried to buy the Palestinian people's support through a "development plan", by means of which huge sums of money were to be invested in the West Bank – as well as through the mysterious "London agreement" that Hussein signed in April 1987 with Shimon Peres, and from which the Palestinians were supposed to draw hope for an eventual end to the occupation. Both moves failed: a few "Jordanian Development Offices" were opened in West Bank towns, but their small and poorly-paid staff had nothing to do, since the capital promised for investment never appeared. As for the "London agreement", its only concrete result was to provide the Israeli Labor Party with a convenient excuse to oppose negotiations with the PLO – for which King Hussein came under scathing criticism in the Arab summit at Algiers. The summit then proceeded to reaffirm that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

King Hussein was faced with the Arab world's criticism, with the inability of Shimon Peres to secure the ratification of the London agreement by the Israeli government, and – above all – by the Palestinian people's desire for independence, clearly expressed through the Intifada. He had no choice but to bow to the inevitable, accept the will of the Palestinian people and the Arab summit's resolutions, and to cease maintaining the illusion of "The Jordanian Option".

Hussein's fury and frustration may be measured by the extent of his retaliatory acts against the Palestinian

population, including the cutting off of the payment of salaries to the West Bankers who used to receive them, and who failed to fulfill Hussein's expectations. Hussein's acts merely confirm that the whole "Jordanian Option" was, from the start, an illusion; but they cannot weaken the Palestinian people's struggle to be free of the occupation. This struggle, manifested for the last eight months in the Intifada, reveals the Palestinian people's determination; this determination would, no doubt, be reinforced by King Hussein's admission of his failure.

The State of Israel now faces with the true situation: there is no option for peace except for direct negotiations with the Palestinian people – which means negotiations with the PLO, since there exists no other representative of the Palestinians. There is plenty of evidence for the PLO's willingness to participate in such negotiations; also, a lot of evidence exists concerning the Israeli government's complete refusal to enter into such negotiations*. Faced with this crucial test, will Israel be able to abandon her illusions? Will she take the road to peace with the Palestinian people?

* *The latest – and not least – piece of evidence is the cruel and useless detention of Feisal Hussein.*

Abu Sharif's document a turning point?

During the recent Arab summit in Algiers, an outstanding paper could be found amidst a package of Palestinian documents which were distributed to the journalists present. This paper was later published in the London *Middle East Mirror* (on June 2nd this year) but didn't reach the general public until its republication in the *Washington Times* on the 15th of the same month. Since then it had been published by major papers throughout the world, including in Israel.

What does this article by Bassem Abu Sharif, spokesman of the PLO and senior adviser to Yasser Arafat, include? In addition to many historical appraisals and warm conciliatory words towards the Israeli people, one can find in Abu Sharif's article the following operational suggestions: The PLO is ready to engage in direct talks with representatives of the Israeli government, irrespective of who they might be, either Peres or Shamir, under the auspices of an International Conference convened by the UN in which the

five permanent members of the UN Security Council would participate.

The PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinian people, chosen by the only means it has at this moment. However, if there are any doubts about the PLO mandate, it is ready to accept the verdict of a referendum, to be held in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip under international supervision. In case such a referendum gave a mandate to some other organization the PLO would be ready to transfer the representation of the Palestinian people to that alternative body.

The PLO is not interested in a coercive solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as it understands that a solution not accepted by the free will of a nation would not be a lasting one.

Any solution achieved has to lead to political and economical cooperation, because only such cooperation can ensure the security and prosperity of the two nations.

The Palestinians will not only agree to, but in fact demand, international guarantees for both the Israeli and the Palestinian states, and would be ready to agree to the presence of a UN buffer force on the Palestinian side of the border.

The PLO accepts the 242 and 338 UN Security Council resolutions; if it refrained from saying so clearly, it is not because of what these resolutions contain but because of what is lacking in them: recognition of the Palestinian people's right for self-determination.

The PLO is ready to accept a short intermediate period in which the Palestinian territories would be governed by an international authority.

The Abu Sharif document was praised and welcomed by many West European countries. So far, however, it has been largely ignored by the U.S. government and completely dismissed by the Israeli authorities.

The State Department spokesman reacted very briefly, stating that though Bassem Abu Sharif's article does contain "some positive ingredients" it still is "an unauthorised proposal". This formulation seems to hold out the promise that similar positions, officially authorised by the PLO leadership, would be acceptable to the Americans; but the U.S. government has a decade-long record of always finding a pretext to reject any new PLO proposal or document simply because of its author's identity. It remains to be seen whether in the course of the US-USSR dialogue and of secret American contacts with the PLO the US will develop its position into a more significant one.

The Israeli reaction was remarkable. The Foreign Ministry – in its directives

to Israeli representatives throughout the world – gave evidence of an unexpected good memory. After an introductory complaint about Abu Sharif's document not being binding on the PLO, they state that "there is nothing new in Abu Sharif's document"; to prove this they even went so far as to admit, for the first time, that in the past the PLO already made moderate and conciliatory moves. At the time – the Foreign Ministry failed to recognise anything positive in the PLO's proposals.

The Foreign Ministry – ignoring Abu Sharif's explicit statement to the contrary – also claimed that the PLO acceptance of resolutions 242 and 338 is still linked to other UN resolutions, such as the 1947 partition resolution (which gives Israel borders far narrower than those of 1967) or the 1948 resolution, giving the Palestinian refugees the choice between returning to their lands and accepting compensations for them. Finally, in line with Foreign Minister Peres' pet concept of "the Jordanian option", the Foreign Ministry berates Abu Sharif for not mentioning a Palestinian-Jordanian delegation, which – in the opinion of Peres and his Laborites – is the only partner eligible for peace talks. Indeed the Labor Party's total commitment to the "Hussein option", (and especially Shimon Peres' personal identification with this idea) is becoming more and more unbelievable and ludicrous: the Palestinian uprising continues and the Arab world endorses, again and again, the PLO representation of the Palestinian case – forcing King Hussein himself to renounce publicly any claims to represent the occupied territories and their population.

Another Israeli objection to Abu Sharif's paper is his repetition of the Palestinian demand to the right of return. True, this is a major component of the PLO political program. Also true: it is hard to envisage how any Israeli government would agree to the repatriation of all Palestinian refugees into the State of Israel within its pre-'67 borders, taking into account the major changes that have taken place since 1948. It is significant that at least a part of the Palestinian leadership does understand that this is an unrealistic demand. During a recent meeting, called by the "Peace Now" on July 27th in Jerusalem, Feisal Hussein – one of the most important and authoritative Palestinian spokesmen in the occupied territories – made

a clear distinction, with regard to the demand for return of the refugees, between the "right" and its "realization".*

Certainly, many problems still remain unresolved, even after the publication of Abu Sharif's document. For the time being, it is still an unofficial document opposed by some PLO leaders, either because of fundamental or for tactical reasons. One thing is sure: Abu Sharif's position represents a basis for fruitful negotiations between the PLO and the Israeli government. It is supported widely by the Palestinian population within the occupied territories. Should peace negotiations lead to realization of the justified Palestinian political aspirations, the dynamics of the process can be expected to lead to a further shift in the Palestinian attitude and to a general acceptance of the idea of peaceful coexistence between the two independent neighboring states.

On the Israeli side, the Abu-Sharif document has had its effect, despite the Israeli government's intransigent attitude. It has encouraged moderate doves to edge closer to public advocacy of negotiations with the PLO; this is exemplified in the position taken by the "Peace Now" movement, which welcomed the Abu-Sharif document, and called upon the Israeli government to accept it, and upon the PLO leadership – to adopt it officially.**

In the coming period, Israel's two ruling parties may find it harder and harder to cling to their worn-out policies. The Labor Party is faced with the collapse of its "Jordanian option"; and even Likud hardliners, faced with the continuing Intifada can eventually become disillusioned with the efficacy of strong-arm methods. Through a reassessment of traditional policies in the Israeli establishment (either before or after the November elections) the peace line manifested in the Abu Sharif document may after all bear fruit.

Israel Loeff

*Less than a week after his participation in this meeting Feisal Hussein was – again – placed under Administrative Detention.

** For years, Peace Now leaders stated in private their belief that Israel should negotiate with the PLO – but refrained from repeating the same statements in public, out of fear that this would antagonise their constituency and diminish the number of participants in Peace Now demonstrations. It seems that the Abu-Sharif document has helped them to take a bolder position.

Ongoing struggle

Our staff-member charged with the compilation of the "chronicles" was not available for three months. The following is a rough survey of the most relevant struggles and protests.

■ In different parts of the country, the weekly vigils have been encountering growing interference from members of the "Tehiyah" and "Kach" parties, who are trying to establish counter-vigils, waving hangman's nooses and loudly announcing their murderous plans with respect to peace demonstrators. The police – while claiming "neutrality" and "trying to establish a buffer between the opposing groups" – at no time took action to stop and punish those making the threats; from time to time they did, on the contrary, show themselves openly sympathising with these right-wing youngsters.

■ Beita village had for weeks and weeks been cut off from the world after receiving the provocative visit by "hiking" settler youths on April 6. What happened during this visit did get a worldwide press coverage: after a confrontation in which stones were thrown, the hikers' escort opened fire, killing two of the villagers and one of his own charges. Other villagers then took care of the settler youths, taking them home in order to protect them. Nevertheless, the death of (settler girl) Tirtza Porat was the signal for a hate campaign against Beita village; demands for its total destruction were voiced not only by the Alon Moreh settlers but also by Minister of ... Justice Avraham Sharir and Religious Affairs Minister Zvulun Hammer; to appease them a little bit, Defence Minister Rabin had six Beita villagers deported (without trial), dozens of others arrested, 14 houses destroyed and whole orchards uprooted.

A group of Israelis established "The Beita Committee" aiming at the return of the deportees, and at helping the families which were left homeless. A work camp was organised which started rebuilding the houses and replanting the trees – only to be destroyed again by the army. Representatives of the committee were present during the trials of Beita villagers. Especial attention was given to the trial of Munira Daud, who had thrown a stone at the shooting escort – and hit his head severely – after he killed her brother and wounded her husband. The prosecution was originally going to

charge her with "causing the death of the settler girl" (the escort was said to have shot in the wrong direction after being hit); due to the outcry of the peace movement, the settler noise was partially neutralised; tried on a lower charge, Munira Daud was sentenced to eight months in prison.

Contact: "The Beita Committee", P.O.B. 24099, Jerusalem 91240; phone: 02 342267.

■ Beit-Sahur, a usually quiet West Bank town, subsisting mainly on tourism, became one of the centres of the Intifada. Its stubborn resistance caused savage repression, mass arrests, curfews and punitive raids by the army. Demonstrators, organised by the "Down with the Occupation" movement, reached the town; though an army roadblock prevented their entry, the demonstration succeeded in publicising the town's plight in the Israeli press.

■ Thousands of Palestinian prisoners are held in a military prison at Ketziot in the Negev, known by the name the prisoners gave it – "Ansar 3". Rumors about the shameful conditions started to leak out right from the start. The first reports were published by Israeli lawyers, such as Tamar Peleg (of the Association for Civil Rights). Later, more detailed eye-witness reports were published by Knesset Members Matti Peled and Muhammad Miari, who visited the camp for a whole day and talked with prisoners and guards. They were followed by K.M.Dedi Zucker of Ratz. Meanwhile, extra-parliamentary groups also became involved with the prison camp.

After the mutiny of August 16 – in the course of which two prisoners were shot to death "while throwing stones" – a peace caravan headed from Tel-Aviv to "Ansar 3" with the participation of Knesset Members of Ratz and the Communist party. Army sources, quoted in *Yediot Aharonot* (24/8/88) expressed dissatisfaction with the publicity around the camp which, they claimed, is "demoralising the guards and harming the army in general". Several Palestinian poets, imprisoned in "Ansar 3", have sent a letter through one of their lawyers, in which they asked to add their signatures to those of the Israeli and Palestinian writers who prepared a draft Israeli-Palestinian peace treaty (see *The Other Israel* n°31, p. 6). They wrote: "The desert heat has dried our inkpots, but we will write our names in the sand..."

■ In June, reserve soldiers brought K.M. Matti Peled information on an event which happened in their unit on April 4. During a raid on the West Bank village Bani-Na'im, a villager was seen escaping into the mountains; the colonel in charge organised a helicopter manhunt, and personally shot from the air and killed the fleeing Palestinian. Former General Matti Peled succeeded in revealing the affair, with the help of *Koteret Rashit*, which was willing to defy the military censorship and publish the minutes of a secret army meeting, in which the covering-up of this affair was discussed. After the revelation, pressures from within the army high command prevented the colonel from being court-martialled; he was, however, forced to resign and end his military career.

■ Pinhas Wallerstein – one of the senior leaders of the Israeli settlers of the West Bank – conducted a private “police action” on January 11, together with another settler, in the area of Ein-Yabrud village. He shot to death a Palestinian youth who was not even threatening him. Wallerstein was arrested by the police, but released after the settlers’ parliamentary lobby obtained the personal support of Prime Minister Shamir. There the matter might have rested, but for a persistent campaign waged in *Ha'aretz* – and afterwards also in other papers – by publishing detailed reports of Wallerstein’s case. This pressure, as well as that of prominent jurists, forced the attorney-general to open criminal proceedings against Wallerstein, though he was charged with manslaughter – not murder.

■ On July 29, a hundred Israeli architects published a petition in which they declared that, out of opposition to the occupation, they will not undertake building activity in the occupied territories. Even when – after long debate – the signatories decided to make an exception for East Jerusalem, the fact that so many architects – and among them also a constructor who did refuse already several projects – united against the occupation is of special significance. The building sector is a segment of Israeli economy heavily-stricken by the Intifada. The petition is an indication of an emerging awareness in this sector where in the long run its interest lies.

■ At the beginning of June the government-controlled “Amanut

La'am” (“Culture for the People”) had scheduled a performance by several Israeli singers in a settlement on the West Bank. However, when the singers heard about it from their impresarios all of them refused to go. The frustrated settlers called upon Education Minister Navon to exclude these singers from further “Amanut La'am” contracts. Minister Navon rejected the appeal since “nobody can prescribe to artists where to perform”.

■ Since the beginning of the Intifada, individual Israeli lawyers have devoted themselves to defending Palestinian prisoners. But, meanwhile, the President of the Israeli Bar Association travelled abroad in order to justify government policies to foreign jurists. On August 23, about 50 lawyers held a meeting in Tel-Aviv, and demanded that the Bar Association take a firm stand against Administrative Detentions, deportations and destruction of houses. Adv. Ornan Yekutieli was quoted in *Hadashot* of August 24 as follows: “The Bar Association’s attitude is a shame. Our profession is based upon the upholding of honesty and justice. We cannot allow our Association to keep silent when the very principles of justice are turned into dust.”

■ A group of Israeli and Palestinian painters, who had held political expositions before, agreed to paint portraits, based on photographs, of Palestinians killed during the Intifada. The portraits were exhibited for one week at the Al-Hakawati Theatre in East Jerusalem. Afterwards the portraits were given, each to the family of the person portrayed.

■ On August 11, eight bereaved parents – three Israelis and five Palestinians – held a joint press conference in Jerusalem. Their initiative got wide press attention, many a daily printing their photographs on a quarter page. Chaim Shor, of kibbutz Shoval, whose son was killed in an Israeli army raid on Beirut in 1973, was quoted saying: “It was not easy for me to come here. But, since I decided that I am willing to go anywhere in the world if it will help to end this conflict, I did come.” Haya Husan, of Dheishe refugee camp, told how one of her sons was killed when soldiers shot into her house, and how another son was arrested. She called upon the leaders of both sides to end the killing and find a way to peace.

■ Much attention continued to

center on the case of *Derech Hanitzotz* magazine, which was closed and five of its journalists imprisoned; first (the Arab) Ribhi Aruri, in Administrative Detention; subsequently four Jewish editors/journalists were detained one by one, and charged with “membership of a terrorist organization”. Immediately upon arrival at the Neve-Tirtza prison, Michal Schwartz and Roni ben-Efrat were assaulted by Jewish criminal prisoners; later the daily press published the testimony of one of these criminals according to whom one guard had told them “to give these traitors what they deserve”. The two women journalists were placed, “for their own safety”, in the isolation ward – in the company of drug addicts and mentally-disturbed prisoners. When they were attacked again, the prison authorities showed, suddenly, far less concern about their safety; Michal Schwartz was wounded.

For several weeks a public campaign was waged for improvement of their imprisonment conditions; vigils were held outside the prison, while the prisoners were on hunger strike inside. The press coverage was extensive, and a large part of it sympathetic, despite the government’s attempts to present the prisoners as “traitors”. Finally, an improvement of the conditions for the women was achieved.

Contact: *Derech Hanitzotz*: P.O.B. 1575, Jerusalem; or: *Freedom of the Press Fund*, P.O.B. 4362, Tel-Aviv 61043

■ On June 30, the long drawn-out “Anti-Peace Trial” came to an end. Latif Dori, Yael Lotan, Re’uven Kamir and Eliezer Feiler were tried for meeting a PLO delegation in Rumania (see *The Other Israel* n°24, p.3). They were sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment, one year of which suspended. This extra year is very real since it is making it very inconvenient for them in the coming three years, to continue to promote and participate in political dialogue with Palestinians. They also have to pay 4,000 shekels (about \$2,500) each.

Judge Avraham Beizer stated in the verdict, that the “Anti-Terrorist Act” should be interpreted as “to prevent unauthorized contacts with the PLO, also when they are aimed not at supporting terrorism but at promoting peace”. The four appealed against the verdict, their imprisonment has been postponed; not so the payment of the fine. The newly-founded



"Committee to Save the Peace Dialogue" (CSPD) has undertaken to organize the protest - through regular meetings, which already started - as well as to help the four financially.

The committee is also preparing for the possibility that new trials will be opened. Aside from seventeen participants in the Rumania meeting who were not yet put on trial, more than a hundred Israelis participated in various meetings with PLO representatives which took place, in 1987 and 1988, at Budapest, Geneva, Paris, Moscow, Athens, Tunis and other places. The number is constantly increasing as new meetings take place. At the end of July Abie Nathan - owner of "The Peace Ship", a pirate radio station broadcasting from off the Tel-Aviv shore - visited Tunis and met with PLO officials. David Kraus, head of the Israeli police, indicated to a Knesset committee that fifteen persons may soon be prosecuted for offences against "The Anti-Terrorist Act"; he declined, however, to give their names or the date when the procedures against them will start.

Contact: CSPD, P.O.B. 17489, Tel-Aviv 61171, Israel.

■ The Yesh Gvul movement has collected, approximately 600 signatures of reserve soldiers who declare their refusal to serve in the occupied territories; 35 of them have, so far, actually refused and served prison terms. In June, Attorney-General Harish instructed the police and the Shabak (security service) to open an investigation against the Yesh Gvul movement for its publication of the *Service Notebook* - a booklet containing practical information about military procedures and prison conditions - very useful for soldiers who are considering refusal, since it is not a propagandistic pamphlet, but a realistic exposé of what a refuser has to face. On different levels, Yesh Gvul members were suddenly treated as outlaws: letters were no longer delivered by the post office; at Ben Gurion Airport, members of the movement were subjected to long and humiliating searches, sometimes causing them to miss their flights - a treatment previously reserved to Arabs only.

In the middle of June, Yehoshua Ophir, a Likud member and veteran of the anti-British underground

was interviewed on television about his son Adi, who was at that time in prison. The father said: "I don't agree with my son, but I am proud of his willingness to go to prison for his principles"; the Likud members on the Israeli Broadcasting Agency then passed a resolution forbidding any further television coverage of "Yesh Gvul".

Actually, the attacks on Yesh Gvul worked as a boomerang. Many personalities who do not themselves support the stand of Yesh Gvul spoke out for its right to be heard on television; among them was Education Minister Yitzchak Navon.

Yesh Gvul is preparing an appeal to the Supreme Court. The police announced that they dropped the investigation for "incitement to mutiny" against Yesh Gvul sympathiser Lieutenant-colonel (res) Dov Yrmiyah, who had publicly called upon soldiers to refuse service in the occupied territories. A trial of the old and much respected Yrmiyah, a veteran of all Israeli wars, could have turned out to be rather embarrassing to the authorities.

Contact: *Yesh Gvul*, P.O.B. 6953, Jerusalem; or: P.O.B. 4172, Tel-Aviv; or: *American Friends of Yesh Gvul*, 1678 Shattuk Ave., P.O.B. 6, Berkeley, CA 94709, U.S.A.

■ On July 18, the birthday of imprisoned Black South African leader Nelson Mandela, dozens of demonstrators picketed the South African embassy in Tel-Aviv. At the Knesset, K.M.Matti Peled of the PLP proposed that the Knesset would send birthday greetings to Mandela, but the motion was rejected. A telegram was, after all, sent by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, in which was expressed "admiration for Mandela's struggle against racism". On the same day Foreign Ministry representatives greeted at Ben-Gurion Airport the new South African ambassador. At the airport gate demonstrators, organised by Ratz, were forcibly dispersed by the police.

A few days later, when the ambassador came to present his credentials to President Herzog, he was greeted by a large number of demonstrators. Members of Yesh Gvul came to express their special solidarity with South African soldiers imprisoned for refusal to serve in the Apartheid army.

The Other Israel
P.O.B.956
Tel-Aviv 61008
Israel
Phone: (03) 5565804

Please send a subscription to:

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

I enclose

six months/one year

Institutions \$30
Individuals \$20
Students/unemp. \$10

I can't afford above sums, therefore I send \$ or equivalent in other currency.

Subscription fees could also be transferred directly to:
Account number 751-005282/86,
Bank Le'umi, Agripas Branch,
111 Agripas St., Jerusalem
In several countries, it is possible to subscribe through the following addresses:

The U.S. and Canada:
America-Israel Council
for Israeli-Palestinian Peace (AICIPP)
4816 Cornell Avenue
Downers Grove, Illinois 60515,
U.S.A.
Phone (312) 9697584

(Contributions to AICIPP are tax-deductible.)

France, Britain and Italy:
Jacqueline Grobety
B.P. 345-16
75767 Paris Cedex 16
France

Austria and West Germany:
Israel-Palästina Komitee
John Bunzl
Biberstr.8/20
1010 Wien/Austria

The Netherlands and Belgium:
Uitgeverij Cypres
Heemraadschapslaan 33
1181 TZ Amstelveen
Holland
Phone (020) 410388