

The Other Israel

Newsletter of the Israeli Council
for Israeli-Palestinian Peace

February, 1985

No 13

Editor: Adam Keller

Editorial Board: Uri Avnery, Matti Peled, Yaakov

P.O.B. 956 Tel-Aviv, Israel 61008. Arnon, Haim Bar'am, Yael Lotan, Yossi Amitai

INTRODUCTION

The Israeli army has finally evacuated the Sidon area. The situation in Sidon, a few days afterwards, is not clear; though the predicted large-scale fighting and bloodshed have not, so far, erupted.

In the area left under Israeli occupation, from Tyre in the West to Nabatia in the East, the war is intensifying, the guerilla attacks are becoming more daring and the occupation authorities retaliate with more brutal acts of oppression. No specific date has been fixed for withdrawal from this area.

This contradictory situation – withdrawal from part of South Lebanon and continuing occupation and war in the other part – is quite confusing for the Israeli public, and even for some members of the peace movement. There can be little doubt that the withdrawal is popular in Israel. One proof of this was the open joy of the soldiers in Lebanon at leaving, and their zeal in dismantling the army installations (according to Yediot Aharonot one unit, by working in night shifts, managed in eight days a dismantling job which the army planners calculated would require a whole month). Another indication is the response of the inhabitants of Kiriat Shmona, the northern border town for whose sake the whole "Operation Peace for Galilee" was supposed to have been fought. When a demonstration and general strike against the withdrawal were called by the Likud-controlled Kiriat Shmona municipality, the inhabitants, (most of whom are Likud voters) had "voted with their feet" and the right-wing action ended in dismal failure.

The other side of the coin, however, is that many sincere doves were misled into believing that their struggle is won. Even the more radical "Yesh-Gvul" was effected. Prof. Daniel Amit, who was imprisoned for refusing to serve in Lebanon (see No. 12, p. 3), declared after the government decision on withdrawal that he would not refuse again.

Daily events in Lebanon, however, are driving the bitter lesson home to everybody in Israel: the war still goes on, and a lot of Israeli and Arab blood is still doomed to be shed until the Israeli government finally gives up the last vestiges of its imperial designs in Lebanon.

While the partial withdrawal in Lebanon took place, the focus of public attention in Israel shifted to the West Bank, where the situation suddenly flared up.

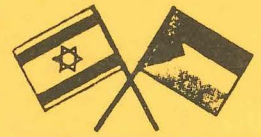
The West Bank is, at all times, a volatile area. In recent months it was made more so by the constant provocations of the "Gush-Emunim" settlers, which particularly focused on Dheisheh Refugee Camp, where the constant presence of Rabbi Moshe Levinger created an intolerable situation.

A new series of Palestinian attacks on the settlers and the army (it should be emphasized that this time, no ordinary Israeli civilians were attacked) was used by the settlers to open a full-scale public campaign and mobilise their many supporters in the Knesset and the cabinet. The slogan "deport inciters and ringleaders!", originating from Levinger and now seriously and openly debated in government circles, is nothing but the thin end of the wedge, as the definition of "inciter" can be stretched to cover practically every nationalist Palestinian. Ultimately, many "Gush-Emunim" and Likud members share Rabbi Kahane's view of deporting all or most of the Arab population, though they do not openly admit it.

Much of the Israeli right-wingers' new fury is caused by their fear of the Lebanese precedent, where, for the first time in its history, Israel has been forced to evacuate a territory because of resistance by the inhabitants. The right-wingers' determination to stem the tide and prevent a repetition of Lebanon in the West Bank might drive them to extreme measures.

The same Lebanese precedent is also, of course, affecting the Palestinians. Some attacks carried out recently were definitely Lebanese-style: such as the killing of an Israeli soldier in Ramallah's main street, in broad daylight, and a few paces from the city's main police station – a kind of act which became all too common in Lebanon, but which is almost unprecedented in the West Bank.

There is, however, a great difference in Israeli attitudes towards Lebanon and the West Bank. None but small fringe groups in Israel ever openly supported the annexation of South Lebanon. Even Ariel Sharon's "grand design" called, not for annexation, but for making Lebanon a puppet state under Bashir Gemayel, and this very plan required at least formal respect for Lebanon's territorial integrity, to make Gemayel's position acceptable even to a minority of the Lebanese. Therefore, the Northern border was not erased from Israeli maps, as happened to Israel's other borders in 1967; no Israeli



was encouraged to regard South Lebanon as "the Land of Our Ancestors"; and Israel even maintained the international border with Lebanon as a border, complete with border crossings and customs inspections (though the border crossings were manned by Israelis on both sides).

The West Bank situation is quite different. The young soldiers now serving in the Israeli army, born in 1966 or 1967, never saw a map of Israel which does not include "Judea and Samaria", and many of them regard these as integral parts of the State of Israel.

A protracted guerilla campaign in the West Bank may produce one of several different and opposing responses from the Israeli public: a desire to get out of the mess by withdrawing Israeli troops and settlers; a growing public support for more and more repressive policies to "stamp out terrorism"; or a mixture of the two and a greater polarization in Israel.

As all of these outcomes are possible, launching a guerilla campaign in the West Bank would be a big gamble for the Palestinians. So long, however, as the Israeli government refuses to offer them any hope of a peaceful end to the occupation, such a development seems quite likely to occur.

* * *

At the time this article is being written, the exact details of the agreement between Yassir Arafat and King Hussein, signed on February 11th, are not yet known. The broad outlines are clear enough, however: this is a further move in Arafat's political and diplomatic initiative, in close cooperation with Jordan and Egypt, and with the participation of other states, such as Saudi Arabia and Iraq. The support of Algeria, which still enjoys special prestige in the Arab World due to its heroic struggle for independence, may substantially strengthen this initiative.

Another important channel of diplomatic initiative may be opened up by the beginnings of a new detente between the superpowers, which include talks on the Middle East, though at a low level as yet.

Both diplomatic initiatives are doomed to failure, unless either the Israeli or the U.S. government makes substantial changes in its position. The situation in Lebanon and the West Bank should serve as a reminder to both governments that the alternative to peaceful settlement is violence, and that the results of violence are always incalculable.

The Editor

Readers visiting Israel and wishing to meet with ICIPP members are invited to call Adam Keller in Tel-Aviv, phone number (03) 227124 or (03) 659474.

A Palestinian leader deported

Several months ago, we informed our readers of the campaign waged to prevent the deportation of a Palestinian leader, Abu-Ali Shahin (*see issue No. 6-7*). We now must sadly inform you that on February 17th, Shahin was deported, after the Supreme Court had rejected his appeal. Though Egypt was willing to receive him, he was deported, in complete secrecy, to Lebanon. Since then, no news came of his fate. As the official declaration did not specify to which part of Lebanon he was deported, it is quite possible that he is held a prisoner in Israeli-occupied South-Lebanon; though we greatly hope to prove wrong on this.

Note: Adam Keller, the editor of *The Other Israel*, has been again called to military reserve service, in March. It is not yet clear if he will be ordered again to Lebanon, forcing him to refuse and go to prison; but some delay in publishing the next issue may follow.

A new meeting with Arafat

*On February 9th, a PLP delegation met Yassir Arafat, chairman of the PLO executive committee. Out of consideration for the host country, the place where the meeting took place can not be officially disclosed. Beside M. K. Matti Peled, Uri Avneri and Dr. Yaakov Arnon, who had previously met Arafat, there participated three Arab members of the PLP executive: M. K. Muhammad Miari, Adv. Kamel Daher, and the Rev. Riah Abu-el-Asal (who is the head of the Anglican Church in Israel). It should be noted that the Israeli authorities are usually much more severe with Arab citizens who meet PLO members than with Jews. (Miari, the only one of the Arabs who met Arafat previously, had been arrested on his return. That was, of course, before his election to the Knesset.) The symmetrical composition of the delegation was designed to make such a discriminatory attitude impossible, this time.

The first matter discussed with Arafat was the fate of Israeli soldiers missing in the Lebanon War. M. K.'s Peled and Miari had received, on January 4th, a letter from Defense Minister Rabin, in which Rabin promised to permit Fahd Kawasmeh's burial in Hebron, in return "for the missing solidiers or information on their fate". To the delegation's surprise, Arafat agreed to disclose the information freely, as a humanitarian gesture, and without making a linkage between it and the Israeli government's decision on Kawasmeh's body. (Since the delegation's return to Israel, Rabin is indeed trying to back out of his promise.)

The delegation discussed with Arafat and his aides the Middle East and international situation. The PLO leaders expressed hopes that the



rapprochement between the superpowers would lead to a reconsideration by the U. S. government of its attitude towards the idea of an international peace conference on the Middle East. They regard the U.S.A – U.S.S.R. discussions as more likely to bear fruit than the American discussions with pro-American Arab leaders, such as King Fahd of Saudi Arabia or Hosni Mubrak of Egypt.

The PLP delegation proposed that the PLO will declare its willingness for a mutual cessation of hostilities between itself and Israel, in preparation for an international peace conference. In view of the explosive situation on the West Bank, such a cease-fire might provide the necessary machinery for passing from an atmosphere of conflict and confrontation to one of fruitful peace negotiations. Though Arafat could not make such a far-reaching decision on the spot, he promised to put it on the agenda of the PLO organs.

Much of the discussion turned on the issue of widening the range of Israeli peace forces who participate in dialogue with the PLO. Arafat clearly expressed his desire for such a widening. The PLO's former limitation – that the Israeli participants be anti-Zionists – had been completely discarded.

* * *

The meeting with Arafat, as soon as it became known, became front page news and the center of a hot controversy, into which the delegation members plunged literally on setting foot in Israel. The delegation was due to hold a press conference in the Ben Gurion Airport V.I.P. room, which has been reserved beforehand by the PLP secretary for a sizeable sum of money. In an unprecedented move, the airport police prevented the many waiting journalists from entering the room, forcing the delegation members to hold an improvised press conference outside, on the airport ramp. There they were assaulted by violent supporters of Rabbi Meir Kahane, whom the airport police – usually alert to the smallest disturbance – did nothing to disperse. The press conference was, thus, held under extremely difficult conditions. Only the racist thugs' consciousness that they were being protographed by dozens of television cameras, and could easily be identified afterwards, prevented them from completely disrupting the press conference.

A similar mob behaviour could be discerned among M. K.'s of the Likud and the extreme right-wing, who were joined by the right-wing M. K. Simha Dinitz of Labor. All of these vied with each other in piling abuse upon the delegation members (Foreign Minister Shamir called them "Enemies of The State"). Likud M. K.'s even started proceedings to remove Peled and Miari's parliamentary immunity.

Existing Israeli law does not, however, make meetings with the PLO illegal, as Prof. Yitzhak Zamir, the Attorney-General, had made clear in previous cases (for which some Likud M. K.'s called him "a leftist"). The only effective move the

right-wingers could make is to change the law and expressly forbid meetings with the PLO, even if the purpose is clearly to discuss peace. The Labor Party, including its outspoken hawks, opposes such a law, which, therefore, is not likely to gain a majority; though in Israeli politics one should be always be vigilant.

Communique on the meeting with Arafat

Following is the official text of the communique read by the PLP delegation at Ben Gurion Airport, on February 10th, 1985, upon its return from the meeting with Chairman Arafat.

1. A delegation of the Progressive List for Peace (PLP) met with Yassir Arafat, chairman of the executive committee of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). The delegation included Knesset Members Muhammad Miari and Mattityahu Peled, and the Rev. Riah Abu-el-Asal, Mr. Uri Avnery, Dr. Ya'akov Arnon and Adv.Kamel Daher, members of the PLP executive.

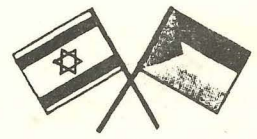
2) In the meeting there took place a frank and open exchange of views on recent developments in the region, and both sides presented their views and positions.

3) The delegation presented a request to obtain the names and other information concerning Israeli soldiers missing in the Lebanon War. Chairman Arafat promised to transmit that information to the PLP within a few days.

4) Chairman Arafat expressed his appreciation for the Israeli peace forces, who support the principle of self-determination for the Palestinian people, and emphasized the interest of the PLO in an ever-widening dialogue with all these forces, in order to further the endeavors for a just peace.

5) Both sides expressed their view that the best way to achieve a just peace is through an international peace conference, under U.N. auspices, with the participation of all parties concerned, and principally Israel and the PLO – as proposed by the U.N. secretary-general, on the basis of U.N. resolutions. The willingness of the PLO to participate in such a conference is based on the resolutions of 17th session of the Palestinian National Council (PNC), held in Amman. The opposition by the Israeli and U. S. governments to the convening of this conference is the cause of the present deadlock in the peace process, and of the deteriorating situation in the occupied territories.

6) The PLP delegation submitted proposals for a mutual cessation of violence, in the context of such an international peace conference.



On the other side of the political spectrum, some positive change could be discerned in the positions of many moderate doves, who previously refrained from recognising the PLO. In an article published in *Yediot Aharonot* on February 17th, M. K. Shulamit Aloni for the first time admitted that Arafat wants peace.

Reactions among the general public and the Israeli press were surprisingly good, and it seems that the idea of negotiations with the PLO is gaining grudging acceptance among wider circles in Israel.

Various plans for widening the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue are now being considered.

Other activities

Other than the meeting with Arafat, the most significant of our recent initiatives was a rally in memory of Fahd Kawasmeh, held in Nazareth on February 9th., the 40th. day after his death (as required by Muslim custom). The rally was sponsored by a committee numbering 360 personalities, from both Israel and the occupied territories. The signatories from the occupied territories, who included all the mayors and most prominent persons, representing a very wide spectrum of Palestinian political opinion, were prevented by the military government from attending the rally. Nevertheless, it was most successful and drew a large audience.

Another activity centered on the village of Sakhnin in the Galilee, where thousands of young olive trees were uprooted, apparently by the notorious anti-Arab semi-police unit known as "the Green Patrol", in an attempt to expel the Arab owners. (The area, known as "Zone Number 9", has been a bone of contention since 1948, and the "Land Day" riots in 1976 were caused by an earlier attempt to expropriate it).

PLP members, along with those of other parties, took part in protest activities, conducted both on the parliamentary level and in the village itself. On Tu-Bi'shvat, the Jewish holiday traditionally connected with planting trees, new olive trees were planted in place of those uprooted. Finally, Minister Ezer Weitzman, whom Shimon Peres has put in charge of government relations with the Arab citizens of Israel, issued an official apology and promised that the olive trees' owners will be compensated.

In general, Ezer Weitzman shows a liberal and open-minded attitude towards the Arabs. He dismissed Binyamin Gur-Arieh, the "Prime Minister's Adviser on Arab Affairs", a post which symbolised discriminatory and patronising policies towards the Arabs. Weitzman also closed down *Al-Anba*, an Arabic-language government mouthpiece, held in justified contempt by the Arab public for its subservient attitude and its support for governmental anti-Arab policies. It is not yet clear, however, how far Weitzman is willing to go, or how

far he can go within the confines of the "National Unity Government".

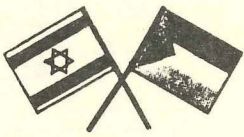
M. K. Muhammad Miari took part in the most difficult struggle facing the peace movement in Israel – the struggle to win over the Oriental Jews who were misled into channeling their justified social grievances into anti-Arab chauvinism and racism. "New Direction", a group of radical Oriental intellectuals active in Ha'tikva quarter (an Oriental slum neighborhood of Tel-Aviv, which is traditionally a right-wing stronghold) invited Miari to lecture in their club. The furious followers of Rabbi Kahane, who regard Ha'tikva quarter as their preserve, mobilised their supporters to disrupt the lecture. Large police forces evicted most of the racists who entered the club, though they were not prevented from holding a noisy racist rally outside, or from smashing the windows. The fact that Miari's lecture did take place, despite all, can be considered a significant achievement.

Since Kahane's election to the Knesset, and the big support shown for his views among the young, deep concern was voiced in many quarters for the state of Israeli education, and a strong demand was raised for education programs emphasizing democracy and Jewish-Arab coexistence. Under public pressure, in which the PLP and other M. K.'s played a big part, the education ministry ostensibly adopted three such programs, worked out by education experts. They were, however, given only the status of "optional" programs, which a principal could, at his discretion, decide whether or not to introduce in his school. So far, no principal has adopted these programs. Much further pressure, both on the parliamentary level and through organising parents and teachers, is needed before these programs are adopted as compulsory material in all Israeli schools.

Matti Peled had been rendered a signal honor by the Israeli radio's parliamentary reporter, who rated the Knesset members according to the degree of their participation in the House proceedings. Matti Peled was found to be the most industrious and hard-working of all the 120 Knesset Members.

Finally, it should be mentioned that in January, Uri Avnery addressed the convention of "Euskadiko Ezkerra", the left-wing Basque party, held at Bilbao, in the Basque autonomous region in Spain. He described the struggle for Israeli-Palestinian peace and met with the representatives of several Latin American liberation movements and those of the Iranian "Mujahidin el-Halq", as well as the PLO representative in Spain.

During the convention news came of the release of the Nazi mass murderer Reder from imprisonment in Italy. Avnery and Luciano Neri of the Italian "Democrazia Proletaria" party immediately drew up a joint statement strongly condemning the release of Reder and his reception by the Austrian defence minister. It was published in the Italian independent left-wing publication, *Il Manifesto*.



Chronicles of the Peace Struggle

The following chronicles cover January and part of February, 1985.

9/1 – In Eilat, a 59-year old woman, who is a survivor of the Holocaust, was detained by the police for spitting in Meir Kahane's face, during a rally he held in this southern port town.

10/1 – In Jerusalem, a new work by Oded Zehavi, a 23 years old Israeli composer, was performed for the first time. The work, called "Prophet", reflects Zehavi's experiences as a tank commander in the Lebanon War. A critic described it in the following words: "The shocking piano accords. . . make one think of metallic birds of prey. The flute sounds like the cry of a boy who wants to live. . ." (Yitzhak Shor in *Al Ha'mishmar*, January 11th).

10-18/1 – In three art galleries in Tel-Aviv, a common exhibition of Israeli and Palestinian painters was held, entitled "Israeli and Palestinian artists against occupation – for freedom of expression". There is no precedent for artistic cooperation on this scale, comprising about a dozen Palestinian painters and nearly forty Israelis. It should be noted that the Palestinian painters in the occupied territories work under extremely difficult conditions. Not only are they pioneers, in a society in which this form of art was not previously developed, but the Israeli military authorities place many obstacles in their path: the only art gallery in the occupied territories was closed down by military order, paintings of a political nature are in constant danger of being confiscated and the artists – in danger of being arrested (*See issue No. 10, p.3, entry for August 12th, 1984*). The solidarity of Israeli artists can do a lot to ameliorate their situation.

17/1 – In a Tel-Aviv court, there continued the trial of a member of the Communist Party, accused of "participating in a violent brawl" for taking part in resisting Kahane's thugs when they attempted to break up an Arab press conference.

18/1 – In Haifa University, Arab and Jewish students protested a lecture by the former Chief-of-Staff, the extreme right-wing M. K. Rafael Eitan. Several of them were wounded in a clash with right-wing students, and one girl student, an Arab, was hospitalised.

19/1 – Members of "Yesh Gvul" held a vigil at Prime Minister Peres' residence, in Jerusalem.

24/1 – Members of Mapam's and Labor's youth movements held a rally against racism in the main street of Petah-Tikva (north of Tel-Aviv).

29/1 – Rafael Kashtan, a reserve soldier, was jailed for 28 days for refusing to serve in Lebanon. This is his third term of imprisonment on this charge.

30/1 – At the Haifa Technion, dozens of Arab students held a sit-in strike at the office of the dean of students, in protest of his discriminatory policies.

– Members of two bereaved families, who lost their sons in Lebanon, demonstrated at Ben Gurion

Airport against Ariel Sharon, upon his return from New York where he had conducted his libel suit against *Time Magazine*. They carried signs reading: "Sharon is 610 times guilty" (the number –then – of Israeli soldiers killed in Lebanon). The airport police harassed the demonstrators and tried to prevent their peaceful demonstration. Two weeks later, the same police did nothing to prevent Kahane's thugs from assaulting the PLP delegation in the same place, (*See separate article*).

31/1 – In Ramleh * the racist Rabbi Meir Kahane and some dozens of his followers attempted to hold a provocative rally in the Arab quarter. A large number of Arab residents, joined by members of Kibbutz Gezer and of the Committee Against Racism, foiled this attempt. An Arab inhabitant of Ramleh was beaten by the police and detained for several hours.

1/2 – Forty Jewish and Arab women demonstrated at the Nve-Tirza Women's prison, against new measures taken by the prison authorities, which restricted the Arab "security" prisoners' right to such basic needs as bathing in warm water, reading and listening to the radio.

2-3/2 – Jews, Arabs and volunteers from abroad participated in a "Working Weekend", repairing two Arab nurseries in Jaffa. This was done in protest against the Tel-Aviv-Jaffa municipality, which is neglecting the social needs of the Arab community in Jaffa.

6/2 – Six Arab students in the Haifa Technion were expelled from the student dormitories, for holding elections to the Arab Students' Committee in their apartment. The Technion administration refuses to recognise the elected Arab Students' Committee, and even returns unopened mail sent by it.

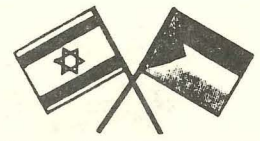
9/2 – Members of a new Israeli ad-hoc committee, "The Dheisheh Prisoners Defence Committee" held a vigil at Far'ah Detention Center on the West Bank, where many residents of Dheisheh were brought, after the latest wave of arrests.

12/2 – Members of the Bir-Zeit Solidarity committee picketed the defence ministry in Tel-Aviv to protest against plans for demolishing houses in the Jabaliyah Refugee Camp, near Gaza.

14-18/2 – Mapam youth held a sit-in strike outside Dheisheh, to counter Rabbi Levinger's provocative activity there. It should be noted that there are enormous logistical problems involved in maintaining a continuous presence, day and night, on a mountain road in mid-winter. Only Mapam, with its kibbutz movement, could match "Gush-Emunim", dozens of whose activists get full-time salary from government funds, funneled to the "municipalities" in their settlements.

The Mapam youth were prepared for a long stay, but on February 18th, Levinger called off his sit-in strike.

* Ramleh, a mixed Jewish-Arab town within Israel's pre-'67 border, is not to be confused with Ramallah on the West Bank.



15/2 – In soaking rain, another demonstration of women took place at the Nve-Tirza Women's Prison, where the inmates were on hunger strike. It was organised by "Women Against Occupation" who were joined by the Communist Party's women's organization.

16/2 – A demonstration by "Campus" and the Bir-Zeit Solidarity Committee was violently dispersed at Dheisheh. About thirty Israeli demonstrators were arrested and detained at Bethlehem Police Station. Some of them were beaten during the dispersal of the demonstration.

– About a thousand people participated in a "Peace Now" rally to mark the second anniversary of Emil Grunzweig's murder, held on the spot where he died. "Peace Now" strove to make the occasion as official as possible by inviting government ministers and establishment figures to speak.

Communications Minister Amnon Rubinstein delivered a speech on the importance of "National Unity" which, he claimed, was achieved by the "National Unity Government". In contrast, Uzi Bar'am, the Secretary General of the Labor Party, delivered an outspokenly dovish speech, and implicitly criticized Shimon Peres for his conciliatory attitude towards "Gush-Emunim".

18/2 – Twenty students demonstrated in Tel-Aviv University, to protest a lecture by a representative of the Lebanese right-wing "Phalange".

A Palestinian debate on dialogue

The following article appeared in the January, 1985, issue of *An-Najah Newsletter*, published by An-Najah University in Nablus. It is reprinted by the kind permission of Dr. Sa'eb Erakat, the director of An-Najah's public relations department.

Palestinian-Jewish dialogue: Where to? A round-table was held on this subject on Saturday, December 22nd, 1984 in the An-Najah University, with the participation of Professors Hisham Awartani, Sa'eb Erakat and Abdel Sattar Qasem, and was attended by hundreds of students.

Dr. Awartani introduced the concept of dialogue and asked the rhetorical question: what is the use of dialoguing only with those who agree with or support one?

Dr. Qasem opposed the concept in principle, stressing the fact that a dialogue presupposes equality between partners, in the absence of which the weaker member – here, the Palestinians – can only lose.

Dr. Erakat stated that while the Palestinians are engaged in many types of dialogue, that between them and the Israelis is one of the most important; but it can only be fruitful if held with those who believe in Palestinian national rights.

As an organization founded for the purpose of encouraging Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, the ICIPP has a great interest in this debate. To Dr. Qasem's cogent argument we can only reply that we perceive

the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue to be the means by which the inequality between the Israeli occupier and the Palestinian occupied may be abolished and replaced by equality between two free peoples, each having its own sovereign state.

Dura – life under a quisling municipality

An inhabitant of the West Bank town of Dura asked us to publish the following account of the situation in his town. The original text was written in Arabic, and was translated into Hebrew and then retranslated into English, during which process numerous changes and additions were made. For obvious reasons, we do not publish the name of the original writer.

Unlike other places in the West Bank, such as Dheisheh or Bir-Zeit, the town of Dura is almost never mentioned by the Israeli or world media. Dura is a town of about 30,000 people, located 11 kilometres South-West of Hebron. It is the center for many small villages surrounding it, and many inhabitants of Dura itself are also farmers, who cultivate wheat, olives and vines.

Dura, a severely underdeveloped town, has only seven telephones. Electricity is supplied by two generators, which operate only six hours each night. A girls' school is located in the former vegetable market, and the classrooms, built as warehouses, are bitterly cold in the winter and stifling hot in the summer. As regards medical services, this town of 30,000 has only a small, one-room clinic, manned by a male nurse, with a doctor coming to visit for two hours every week.

Beside all these, Dura had the misfortune of being selected by the Israeli military government as the site for an experiment in quisling government: the so-called "Village Leagues", which the military government hoped to build up into a substitute for the PLO. The first "Village League" was founded in Dura, headed by Mustafa Dudin, an inhabitant of the town. During Prof. Menahem Milson's tenure as governor of the West Bank, in 1982, a large-scale attempt was made to create a network of "Village Leagues", arm their members (mostly thugs and criminal elements) with Israeli weapons, and impose their rule on the entire West Bank. This attempt failed dismally, as the "Leagues" were completely rejected by the population and were unable to muster even the minimal support required of quislings. They have been mostly disbanded by the military government that had created them. Almost only in Dura, where the experiment started, is it still being maintained.

When most of the West Bank mayors were deposed, in 1982, the elected mayor of Dura, Muhammad Musa Amer, was among them. Unlike the other towns, however, his place was taken over not by an Israeli officer – as in Nablus or Hebron – but by a member of the "Village League", Abd-el-Fatah Isa Dudin (Mustafa Dudin's brother). This imposition of a quisling municipality was, and



is, resented by most of the inhabitants, including even some of the Dudin family. (One Dudin, a teacher, spent one and a half year in an Israeli prison.) Demonstrations against the imposed municipality are frequent, particularly by the town youth. To retaliate against these demonstrations, the municipality is using its control of the municipal generators. After each demonstration, electricity for parts of the town is cut off for hours at a time. In the houses of families, one of whose sons was seen participating in such a demonstration, electricity and water are cut off for long periods.

Recently, the deposed municipal council appealed to the Israeli Supreme Court for an order to hold new municipal elections; but the Supreme Court rejected the appeal, accepting the military government's claim that "new municipal elections will be used by the PLO" (meaning that in any free elections, a PLO supporter is certain to be elected).

Thus, the people of Dura are doomed to remain, for an undetermined period, under an unelected quisling municipality which does not represent them, and which controls and abuses a large part of their town's meager resources.

Our readers are asked to send protest letters, defending the right of the Dura inhabitants to freely elect their own municipality, to: Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, Defense Minister, Ha'kriya, Tel-Aviv, Israel. Copies of such letters should be sent to *The Other Israel*, P.O.B. 956, Tel-Aviv, Israel. We will pass these copies on to the inhabitants of Dura, through our own channels.

Peace organizations in France

The following account was sent to us, at our request, by a member of the *Comite Palestine et Israel Vivront*.

The participation of French NGOs (Non Governmental Organizations), concerned with the Middle East, in the European Regional Conference and the International Conference on the Question of Palestine (Geneva, 1983) has had an important result. In a meeting, called by the COMITE D'INITIATIVE POUR UNE PAIX JUSTE AU PROCHE ORIENT to hear briefings on the UN Conference, with the participation of members of other organizations (FRANCE-PALESTINE, PALESTINE ET ISRAEL VIVRONT, etc.), the decision was taken to call for a round-table conference of French NGOs to exchange information on the different fields of activity covered.

The first gathering (December 1983) was followed by regular monthly meetings, coordinated, in turn, by a different NGO, and evolving rapidly into working meetings for common actions. The most important one of these was "Six hours for human rights in the Palestinian occupied territories", organized on November 29th, 1984, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian

To our readers:

At the beginning of February, the airmail postage rates were drastically raised by the Israeli Ministry of Communications. Sending you this issue had cost us almost twice as much as sending the previous one. Your help is essential to the continued publication and distribution of *The Other Israel*. We expect those readers who have not yet subscribed to do so.

The Editorial Board

The Other Israel
P.O.B. 956
Tel-Aviv 61008
Israel

Please send a subscription to:

Name
Address
.

I enclose

\$ 30 for six months

\$ 50 for 1 year

I can't afford the above sums, therefore I send
\$.

Our new account number is 751-005282/86,
Bank Le'umi, Agripas Branch,
111 Agripas St., Jerusalem

Readers preferring to transfer money directly to our account, are asked to inform our subscriptions section, at the above address. (The old account, whose number was published in previous issues, was not closed down; but for administrative reasons, it would be more convenient if you use the new one).

Readers in the U.S. and Canada can receive *The Other Israel* through:

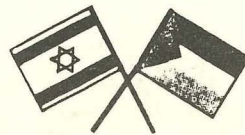
America - Israel Council
for Israeli-Palestinian Peace (AICIPP)
4816 Cornell Avenue
Downers Grove, Illinois 60515, U.S.A.

Contributions to AICIPP are tax-deductible, and in addition North American subscribers will receive the AICIPP newsletter, *Voices For Peace*.

Readers in France, Britain and Italy can subscribe through:

Jacqueline Grobety
B. P. 345-16
75767 Paris Cedex 16
France

(Cheques should be made out to the order of Jacqueline Grobety).



People. This gathering was attended by Palestinian and Israeli intellectuals, such as Rita Giacaman (Bir Zeit University), Daoud Kuttab (Al Fajr), Joseph Algazy (historian, Tel-Aviv University) and Amnon Zichroni (an Israeli lawyer).

Following are details on these NGOs. Arranged in the chronological order of their foundation dates, they give a picture of developments over four decades: CIMADE, founded in 1940 to help displaced persons from Alsace and Lorraine, has since evolved into an Oecumenic service to help refugees and immigrants in France and to collaborate in Third World regional projects. It publishes a monthly bulletin, *Cimade Informations*.

MOUVEMENT CONTRE LE RACISME ET POUR L'AMITIE ENTRE LES PEUPLES, founded in 1949 to help Jewish children, victims of anti-Semitism, it now struggles against all forms of racism and promotes friendship between peoples. The movement has two monthly publications, *Droit et Liberte* and *Differences*.

CONFERENCE DES CATHOLIQUES EUROPEENS, founded in 1964 to establish peaceful relations between Roman Catholics in Western and Eastern European countries, it is also taking interest in problems confronted by Catholics in Asia, Africa, Central America and the Middle-East. A permanent International Committee meets every three years and information is published on an international level.

ASSOCIATION DE SOLIDARITE FRANCO-ARABE, founded after the 1967 war to make known problems encountered by Arab countries and the Palestinian people. It publishes the magazine *France - Pays Arabes* and establishes contacts at high levels.

CONFERENCE MONDIALE DES CHRETIENS POUR LA PALESTINE, founded in 1970 to conscientise Christian circles on the question of Palestine. Important meetings were held during the seventies in Beyrut and Canterbury, for this purpose. Groups are active in England, the U.S., France, Italy, and Spain.

PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION FOR EURO-ARAB COOPERATION, founded in 1974, comprises 650 members of widely different political parties in the national parliaments of the twenty-one Council of Europe countries, and in the European Parliament. As a political pressure group, it defends the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to the creation of a national state in Palestine.

ASSOCIATION MEDICALE FRANCO-PALESTINIENNE, founded in 1974 mainly to extend medical help, in collaboration with the Palestinian Red Crescent, and to initiate fostering of Palestinian children in the occupied territories.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR PALESTINIAN HUMAN RIGHTS, founded in 1975 to defend the human rights of Palestinians and Israelis, in particular those affected by the occupation of Arab lands and the Israeli conscientious objectors. Groups are active in France, Belgium, Germany, Australia, Italy and Canada.

FRANCE-PALESTINE, founded in 1979 "to maintain, demonstrate and develop friendship and solidarity between the French and Palestinian peoples", publishes a magazine *Pour la Palestine*, often on specific subjects (occupied territories, Palestinian women, etc), establishes contacts at high levels with representatives of the French Government and, since the war in Lebanon, invites groups of Palestinian children for the summer holidays.

COMITE FRANCE-JERUSALEM/AL QODS founded in 1980, an outgrowth of the CONFERENCE MONDIAL, to "maintain alive Jerusalem as a city of Three Religious Communities", in which there are holy places deriving their holiness from the liveliness of their communities. Special files are published and work is being considered on the urbanization of Jerusalem.

INTERNATIONAL JEWISH PEACE UNION, founded in 1982 to favour a two-states solution in Palestine/Israel. Groups exist in the U.S., England, Denmark, France, Sweden, and Zimbabwe. *Israel & Palestine Political Report*, published in Paris, reflects its positions.

PERSPECTIVES JUDEO-ARABES, founded in 1982 to promote understanding between Oriental Jews and Arabs.

COMITE PALESTINE ET ISRAEL VIVRONT founded during the war in Lebanon to help dialogue between Palestinian and Israeli peace forces, without exceptions. The Committee has published pamphlets reproducing positive declarations of both camps, has sent a delegation to Israel, has made special efforts to help members of Israeli peace forces attend the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and is distributing "The Other Israel" in France.

CENTRE DE COOPERATION AVEC L'UNIVERSITE DE BIR-ZEIT, founded in 1983 to help defend academic freedom in the Palestinian universities and reinforce links between them and French universities. Reports of missions have been published in the press (e.g. *Le Monde Diplomatique*, July 1984). Many of the founders and activists, such as Prof. Paul Kessler, are also active on behalf of Soviet Jewry, believing that human rights should be defended wherever they are violated, regardless of the violator's or the victim's national identity.

COMITE FRANCAIS POUR LE PATRIMOINE PALESTINIEN, founded in 1984, an outgrowth of the INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE SAFEGUARD AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PALESTINIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE (in Tunis), aiming, in particular, to promote exchanges between French and Palestinian intellectuals and universities.

The fact that so many organizations, of such diverse backgrounds and nature, have managed to cooperate in common activities, is greatly encouraging to us. This is certainly an example to be followed elsewhere. We invite any organization, anywhere, which is active in support of Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab peace, to send us a similar account of its activity.