PALESTINE ESSAYS No. 24

TOWARDS A DEMOCRATIC STATE IN PALESTINE

The Palestinian Revolution and the Jews Vis-à-Vis the Democratic, Nonsectarian Society in the Palestine of the Future

By

Dr. MOHAMMAD RASHEED

Palestine Liberation Organization
Research Center
Beirut — Lebanon
November 1970

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

This booklet first appeared as a collection of three essays published in English, in the bimonthly newspaper, *Fateh,* November 20, 1969; January 1, 1970; and January 19, 1970. Subsequently, its subject matter was given considerable thought after the Second International Conference in Support of the Arab Peoples (Cairo, 25-28 January 1969). Since that time, the whole subject has aroused much interest and discussion on the part of numerous Arabs and foreigners alike, including Jews.

One concept of a democratic nonsectarian state, expressed by the Palestinian revolution, represents the only progressive humanitarian solution that has appeared on the Palestinian stage since Zionism started its racist and colonial conquest. This solution seeks to deal with the problem from its inception, permanently, equitably, and progressively.

The concept of a democratic state has been violently controversial during 1970. From the Arab side, dissenters fell under one of the following three categories :

1 — Persons who were ignorant of its implications and who protected against what it does not, in fact, profess. Many of these believed that such would be synonymous with: surrender to Israel, negotiations with its racist government, or a proposed agent state for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, etc.

2 — Those whose minds could not conceive a Palestinian state comprising Jews in its midst. These are a chauvinistic minority remote from the basic principles of the revolution, for a war of liberation cannot be transformed into a vendetta massacre in a world such as ours.

3 — Finally, those who contended that a Palestinian state would consecrate the actual regional separatism in the Arab homeland. (Ironically, most of these protests usually stem from Arab countries or political parties already practicing such separatism in the present situation.)

The truth is that the concept of a democratic state represents a militant standpoint for the Palestinian problem and not an emblem of political surrender. *It can take root only out of liberation and as a consequence of liberation:* hence, it is not a substitute for liberation. It cannot take place on a part of Palestine alone, but on the purlieu of the entire Palestinian soil. Should a tiny Arab village remain under racist Zionist tutelage it would be in direct contradiction with the concept from its inception. Thus, this democratic state cannot be an offshoot of negotiations with the colonialist Zionist *de facto* state which it purports to destroy and uproot.

Furthermore, a Palestinian state as such can be established only by a liberation revolution whose vanguard is Palestinian, and which is Arab in its depth, width, and backbone. Such a democratic state, therefore, cannot but be a part of the larger Arab homeland, not a queer and alien animal or a new Israeli state in disguise. But the logical nature of things dictates that stress be put on the land of Palestine and its future, being that part of the Arab world that was forcibly expropriated. From here on, the emphasis will be laid on the new situation — after liberation — on democratic, progressive, nonsectarian Palestine. The Palestinian revolution now counts in its ranks numerous non-Palestinian Arab guerillas and receives such massive support from the Arab nation as a whole that belongingness to Palestine has become a militant and not a geographic identity.

Finally, we refuse to even argue with the chauvinistic minority convinced by racist Zionism to accept a racist solution to the Palestinian problem. At present, the Palestinian resistance movements hack their way with rifles and fists to a

humanitarian, nonsectarian native land that will encompass the Jewish, Christian and Moslem Palestinians working, living and worshipping freely and securely without discrimination, exploitation or oppression.

In these days, when defeatist emblems appear under the guise of peace plans, we can only state that the acceptance of any such liquidatory solutions as an alternative to liberation, is mere consecration of the expansionist, racist, Zionist being and a postponement of the establishment of a democratic, nonsectarian homeland. This means, therefore, that peace and justice in our homeland can only be offshoots of liberation.

One purpose of the following three essays is to examine the various aspects of the concept of a democratic, nonsectarian Palestinian state, analyze its ramifications and add to it the necessary explanatory notes.

This is not altogether surprising as the concept is revolutionary and its implications serious and pervasive. In fact, its novel outlook reaches such a degree that few hitherto-uncommitted people can believe it, let alone support and work for it.

The first essay propounds the following hypothesis : the creation of a democratic, nonsectarian Palestine is simultaneously, (1) desirable and (2) feasible. Once these two aspects are proven valid, the concept becomes credible. Credibility in this instance is of primary importance if people are to be motivated to support the idea and work and sacrifice for it to achieve lasting peace and justice in Palestine.

The second essay views the Israelis and their standpoint *vis-à-vis* the concept of a democratic state and analyses the factors that can conceivably bring about a volte-face in their attitudes and opinions.

The third and last essay presents an attempt at the establishment of the "New Palesine" leitmotif and points to some of its main features in these early stages of the Palestinian

revolution.

The essays are mere participants in the open discussion concerning the various aspects of the topic. Our revolution is youthful and dynamic. Our young revolutionaries must go on fighting and learning — until victory.

I

THE PALESTINE REVOLUTION AND THE JEWS

It is almost a year since the Palestine National Liberation Movement, Fateh, declared, officially and for the first time, a political program spelling out the ultimate objective of its liberation struggle. The declaration stated: "We are fighting today to create the new Palestine of tomorrow; a progressive, democratic and nonsectarian Palestine in which Christian, Moslem and Jew will worship, work, live peacefully and enjoy equal rights." The statement further added, "Our Palestinian revolution still stretches its welcoming hand to all human beings who want to fight for, and live in, a democratic, tolerant Palestine, irrespective of race, color or religion."[1]

The statement was repeated, explained and amplified by Fateh representatives in every international gathering attended by a Fateh delegation. The official spokesman of Fateh, Abu Ammar, was quoted by several journalists as saying that "once we defeat the enemy and liberate Palestine we will create a home for all of us."[2] Abu Iyad, one of the leaders of Fateh, stated in a long interview with the editor of *Al-Taleea* that the Palestinian revolution condemns persecution of human beings

---

(1) See address by the Al-Fateh Delegation to the Second International Conference in Support of the Arab Peoples, Cairo, January 28, 1969.

(2) Several quotations from Abu Ammar on the topic appear in *Aims of the Palestinian Resistance Movement with Regard to the Jews,* published by the Palestine Research Center and the Fifth of June Society, Beirut, 1970.

See also Leila Kadi (Editor), *Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement,* Palestine Research Center, Beirut, 1970.

and discrimination based on any form or shape and that Fateh would help Jews anywhere if they faced persecution at the hands of racists. Abu Iyad said that he would be willing to give these Jews arms and fight with them.[3] Such a statement was not just a fantastic propaganda claim; it was put into effect a few weeks later when Fateh students protected Jewish Professor Eli Loebel in Frankfurt, Germany, from molestation and attempted murder at the hands of Zionist German thugs last July. Fateh protected Jewish members of "Matz Pen" in Germany after their lives were threatened in the same incident.

Revolutionary New Idea

If this sounds a little difficult to believe, it is because of the bitterness created by the Palestine tragedy since the Balfour Declaration and the Zionist penetration of Palestine ending in the uprooting and evacuation of Palestinians from their homeland in order to create "an exclusively Jewish State": Israel.

The call for an open, new, tolerant Palestine for Jews and non-Jews is a dramatic change in the Palestinian struggle, but it is hardly a new idea. Palestinians suggested the creation of such a state to the Peel Commission in 1937. As for the idea of Jew, Moslem and Christian living peacefully and harmoniously in one country, it also is a very old one. The Fateh declaration stated: "This is no utopian dream or false promise, for we have always lived in peace, Moslems, Christians and Jews in the Holy Land. The Palestinian Arabs gave refuge, a warm shelter and a helping hand to Jews fleeing persecution in Christian Europe, and to the Christian Armenians fleeing persecution in Moslem Turkey; as well as to Greeks, Caucasian

(3) See *Al-Taleea* (Arabic Egyptian monthly journal), June 1969. For an English translation, see *A Dialogue with Fateh,* Palestine National Liberation Movement. See also Kadi, *op. cit.*

and Maltese among others." One need not go to medieval history to elaborate on the idea.[4]

However, what is new, is the fact that non-Jewish Arab exiles who have been deprived of their homes and displaced by Jews in Palestine, can still — while holding the guns, and fighting for their land and their very existence — call for a new country that combines the ex-aggressor and persecutor.

Credibility

The idea is revolutionary, and its implications serious and pervasive. In fact it is so revolutionary that few uncommitted people can believe it, let alone support and work for it. It is the objective of this article to discuss, analyze and amplify the idea. Our hypothesis is that the creation of a democratic, nonsectarian Palestine is both desirable and feasible, and that once these two aspects are proven valid, the idea becomes credible. Credibility is very important if people are to be motivated to support the idea and work and sacrifice for it to achieve lasting peace and justice in Palestine.

Exiled Palestinians

The exodus of 1948 was a stunning blow to the Palestinians. A whole nation, more than one million inhabitants of a country were deliberately terrorised and uprooted from their homes. They were thrown out of their country into a sea of sand surrounding it, in a period of a few months. The fact that many Palestinians knew the Zionist intentions and suspected the British of preparing for the eventual exile of the Arabs of Palestine to "the transit countries" did not make the blow

(4) See address to the Second International Conference, *op. cit.*

less hard or stunning. One can hardly believe that the forced exile of a whole nation is possible in the twentieth century.

For thirty years under the British Mandate, Palestinians knew who the real enemy was; British imperialism and Zionist imperialism were quite linked in the minds of the people. Six bloody revolutions took place between 1919 and 1939. They were basically directed against the British occupiers. Whatever complicity the British had in the Palestinians' fate — and it was great — the Palestinians were driven out by "Jewish" terrorists, their uprooting through massacres such as that of Deir Yassin. Leaders of their tormentors and oppressors called for the creation of an "exclusively Jewish home" and considered them —the exiles — as fifth columnists who deserve to be excluded from this home, "their home." In their misery, humiliation and despair the Palestinians learned to hate the Jews and everything "Jewish," everything connected with their enemy.

Jews and Zionists

Few sophisticated leaders, and most propagandists took pains to differentiate between Jews and Zionists. We are not anti-Jewish, we are anti-Zionists it was repeated. "We are Semites and Jews are our cousins..." they stated. They sounded so unreal and phony saying, "some of our best friends are Jews..."

We are against the state of Israel, it was claimed. But the distinction was lost on the suffering "refugees" who were told by the Israelis that all Jews were Zionists anyway. Jewish pressure in the United States, Jewish money and Jewish immigrants were making their enemy as entrenched as ever, and their hopes of an honorable return as dim as ever. No wonder, bitterness prevailed and fear dominated.

Reading of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" became fashionable, anti-Semitic literature developed by European racists in a completely different context — i.e. where the Jews were the victims — became quite popular. This wave of bitterness, hate and utter confusion spread to other Arabs. It helped Zionist pressure and propaganda designed to secure the departure of thousands of Arab Jews from their homes to join the ranks of the occupying enemy. Thousands of these Jews would have stayed in their homes under different circumstances, and would have continued to live as they had for hundreds of years in peace and harmony with their neighbors.

The Revolution, A New Era

Fateh launched the Palestinian Revolution on January 1, 1965, after nine years of political preparation. However, the first two years were spent in establishing a military "presence" in the Palestinian arena. It was the 1967 traumatic experience and the second exodus that shook the Palestinians to the core and put them solidly behind the revolution. In the nadir of the new humiliating defeat, a new hope was rekindled. The Palestinian carried a gun and reentered home with it. He shot at his enemy's troops and jailors. A new sense of pride and dignity was emerging and rising. With the hope and the pride, self-confidence reappeared. A nation was reborn. Al-Karameh and similar victories, the sacrifices and the martyrs and the escalating struggle developed a new sense of belonging to Palestine. The revolution brought maturity to the fighters. As paradoxical as it may seem, people who fight can afford to be more tolerant. Mental and verbal violence usually accompany helplessness and despair.

A new attitude was being formed toward the enemy. Distinction between Jew and Zionist started to have meaning. Realization that revenge was not sufficient cause for a liber-

ation war led to further examination of the final objectives of the revolution. The scores of intellectual liberal Jews who came from all over the world to start a dialogue with the revolution caused further rethinking.

New Doctrine

Revolutionary leaders engaged in a serious study and discussion around the topic. Relearning old truths emerged. Jews suffered persecution at the hands of racist criminals under Nazism; so did "We" under Zionism. Several revealing parallels were discovered. "How could we hate the Jews qua Jews?" the revolutionaries were saying. How could we fall in the same racist trap?

A study of Jewish history and thought was conducted. Jewish contributions as well as dilemmas were identified. The majority of those who came over to Palestine were fleeing German concentration camps and were told that they are a people without land — going to a land without people. Once they were there, they were told that the Palestinians left Palestine of their own wish, following orders from Arab leaders in a treacherous move to perpetrate a massacre for the remaining Jews.

Further, it was discovered, new Jewish immigrants as well as old settlers were told by the Zionist machine that they had to fight to survive, that the only alernative to a safe "Israel" was a massacre or at best a little sinking boat on the Mediterranean Sea. Even Arab Jews — called oriental by the Zionists — who were discriminated against in "Israel" by the European Zionist oligarchy had to accept the argument and fight for what they considered to be their very survival. Fighting the Zionist revealed the strengths and limitations of the "Jewish" character. Jews were not monsters, supermen or pigmies. A new, human image of the Jews was being formed. Martin Buber, Isaac Deutcher, Elmer Berger and Moshe Menuhin, all spiritual humane Jewish thinkers, were read and reread.

New Image

The Palestinian revolutionary has freed himself from most of his old biases. Foreign vistors are amazed to discover this in the commando bases, and in the "Ashbal" camps in particular. The Palestinian revolutionary is ready to die for the liberation of Palestine and will not accept any substitute to it whatever the cost. But, he is clear about the enemy, and the final goal. When several Jewish students from Europe came to spend part of their summer in a Fateh camp in Jordan, they were embraced as comrades. Fateh looks forward to the day when several thousand Jews will join its fighting ranks for the liberation of Palestine. Given the recent trend of events, this may happen sooner than most people think.

First Step

The first step towards the creation of a democratic, nonsectarian Palestine has been made by the Palestinian revolutionaries. A change of attitude through relearning is taking place. The long exiled and persecuted Palestinians are redefining their objectives and are finding the goal of creating a new Palestine that encompasses them and the present Jewish settlers a very desirable one. For this goal to become feasible one should take a careful look at the other party: the Jews. How do they feel about it and what could change their mind?

II

AN APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF JEWISH ATTITUDES

Any attempt at studying and interpreting the attitudes and perceptions of any group of people must be met with difficulties and be subjected to accusations of bias and distortions. We don't claim immunity from such shortcomings, but we shall try to minimize their effect. Our approach will be to use direct quotations — and documentation — whenever possible. No attempt is made here at using Marxian dialectics or purely sociological models. Political motivation is the basic frame of reference.

A final problem besets our study : Most of the attitudes and "images" studied were basically engineered by the Zionists through their propaganda machinery, and they may not have been accepted by all, or a majority, of the Jews in the world. However, one must concede that the Zionists have succeeded to a great extent in identifying Judaism with Zionism in the eyes of a vast majority of Jews, especially in the Western countries. Nazi horrors and anti-Jewish threats in several countries helped the Zionists maintain their hold over Jewish minds everywhere. Without Jewish money, political influence, votes in certain sensitive places and over-all support, "Israel" would not have survived and the Zionist imperialist occupation would not have lasted. In the final analysis, it is the power and influence of world Jewry under Zionist manipulation that perpetuated the tragedy of the Palestinians, their oppression, subjugation and exile. It is thus quite important to find out how the Jews feel about the Palestinians, how do they view them as people and to what extent was this view essential to

the act that led to the expulsion of the Palestinians? What is even more important, can this view be changed and how ?

How Zionists Viewed the Palestinians

The early attitude of the Zionists towards the Palestinians was simply to ignore their very existence. Israel Zangwill's famous phrase about "a land without people to a people without land" epitomizes this attitude. Chaim Weizmann had a more colorful statement: "There is a country which happens to be called Palestine, a country WITHOUT a people, and on the other hand there exists the Jewish People and it has no country. What else is necessary then, than to fit the gem into the ring, to unite this people with this country?"[5] Uri Avnery notes that Theodore Herzl, in his book *The Jewish State* which launched the modern Zionist movement, dealt with working hours, housing for workers, and even the national flag but had not one word to say about the Arabs of Palestine. For the Zionists, the Arab was the invisible man. Psychologically he was not there.[6] However, this attitude became obviously untenable. Palestine — it was discovered — was a prosperous country measured by the standards of the day. Its population was extensive and carried out its tasks of cultivating the soil in relative peace and made its contribution to the Arab community at large.

Achad Ha-am, the Russian Jew and Hebrew philosopher, tried to draw attention to this fact as early as 1891. He stated

(5) See Ibrahim Abu Lughod, "The Arab-Israeli Confrontation : Some Comments on the Future," *Selected Essays on the Palestine Question,* Palestine Research Center, Beirut, 1969.

(6) See Uri Avnery's article in Jean Paul Sartre (Editor) : "Le Conflit Israelo-Arabe," in the Special Issue of *Les Temps Modernes*, June 1967. The issue is reviewed by I.F. Stone : "For a New Approach to the Israeli-Arab Conflict," The *New York Times* Review of Books, August 3, 1967.

that Palestine was not an empty territory and that this posed problems.[7]

In fact, Ha-am reported after a journey through Palestine in 1891, that it was difficult to find any still uncultivated farmland there.

Max Nordau, the prominent Zionist leader, hearing for the first time that there was an Arab population in Palestine, ran to Herzl crying : "I didn't know that — but then we are committing an injustice."[8]

Several reports appearing in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century confirmed this fact amply. The Arab Palestinians had a prosperous citrus industry. They grew oranges of exceptional size which attracted attention as early as the eighteenth century.[9]

Zionist image-making subsequently turned to another theme which was to be accepted by a large number of Jews as well as Christians in Europe and America, and thus became a major force in shaping the attitude of Jews toward the Palestinians. The Palestinians were "natives" or "inhabitants" who happened to live in Palestine. There people were subnormal. They lacked any national entity and civilization. Such image was imbedded in the infamous Balfour Declaration which designated the Palestinians as inhabitants who may have religious and civil rights but no political rights. They were not "real" people. Later, however, a further character-assassination of the Arabs was added. These "inhabitants" were really bedouins, i.e. roving nomads, pillaging the fertile soil of Palestine and

(7) See Stone, I.F., *Ibid.*

(8) Stone, *Ibid.*

(9) See Achad Ha-am; *Am Scheidewege,* Berlin, 1923. See also John Hope Simpson: Report on Immigration, Land Settlement and Development *(Command Paper* 3686, 1930), pp. 64, 66 and *Protokoll des XII Zionisten Kongresses* (Berlin, 1922), p. 304. Other sources are quoted by L.M.C. van der Hoever Leonhard, "Het Palestina-Vraagstuk in Zijn ware Gedaante" *Libertas,* (Holland) Lustrum number, 1960.

bringing about increasing devastation of that beautiful land of milk and honey.[10] European Jews coming to Palestine would indeed be a blessing. "For that European Jew was the carrier of a superior civilization, the master of European technology and was in a position to bestow the blessings of that civilization on the nomadic population of Palestine."[11] A typical *mission civilisatrice* would be attempted by the Jews in Palestine.

A vivid picture of this "native" Palestinian and a depiction of the attitude engendered by such an image is revealed by Herzl, the Father of Zionism in his famous *Diaries*. [12] "We must expropriate gently the private property on the estates assigned to us. We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries while denying it any employment in our own country. Such process shall be carried out gently and circumspectly."[13] Herzl goes further: "If we move into a region where there are wild animals to which the Jews are not accustomed — big snakes, etc. — I shall use the natives, prior to giving them employment in the transit countries, for the extermination of these animals. High premiums for snake skins, etc., as well as their spawn."[14]

Herzl goes on in his *Diaries* discussing tasks he would assign to the "natives" before spiriting them away across the borders. He would let them drain the swamps since they are accustomed to the fever.[15] To the modern leader this all seems fantastic coming from a "Jew," a man who knows about the suffering of people because of racist discrimination. But of course, Herzl was as much a European colonialist, a German

(10) See Abu Lughod, *op. cit.*, pp. 63, 64.
(11) Ibid., p. 64, see also *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, Vols. I, II, published by the Theodor Herzl Foundation, Thomas Yoseloff, New York, 1960 (Referred to later as *Diaries*).
(12) *Ibid.*
(13) *Ibid.*, pp. 88, 89-90 for the complete passage.
(14) *Ibid.*, p. 98.
(15) *Ibid.*

imperialist as a Jew. Herzl himself states: "With the Jews, a German cultural element would come to the Orient. Evidence of this: German writers — even though of Jewish descent — are leading the Zionist movement. The language of the Congress is German. The overwhelming majority of the Jews are part of German culture." And further: "If it is God's will that we return to our historic fatherland, we should like to do so as representatives of Western civilization, and the well-distilled customs of the Occident to this plague-ridden, blighted corner of the Orient."[16]

Image of Palestinian Leadership

Palestinians did not fit this Zionist-made image and the world was hearing about Palestinian uprisings and activism. To this turn of events, Zionist image-making had an easy answer: The Palestinians are basically docile natives had it not been for agitators and fanatics. It is dynastic and family or "tribal" struggles among the wealthy that lead to the agitations. Such struggles will cause the ruin of the common folk and make them pay the price. The Palestinian leaders are depicted by Maurice Samuel as "an army of idlers, baksheesh artists and parasite coffee-house gossips who are mainly responsible for the existing jumpy and nervous atmosphere."[17] These leaders agitate the Palestinians by "lying statements." Any political activity in Palestine cannot be initiated by the "inhabitants" who do not

(16) *Ibid.*, Vol II, pp. 719.
See also A. Razzouk, "Zionism and Arab Human Rights," *Zionism and Arab Resistance*, Palestine Research Center, Beirut, 1969. There are several editions of the *Diaries*; the one utilized here is edited by Raphael Patai and is translated from the original German by Harry Zohn.
(17) Maurice Samuel, "Foundations of Peace": "The Solution of the Arab Problem Must be on the Level of Zionist Idealism," p. 273, as quoted by Razzouk, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

understand these things anyway, but by the "agitators."[18]

Attitude Towards the Palestinian "Refugees"

The colonization of Palestine and the uprooting of the Palestinians was partly achieved by 1948, and completed in 1967. All the Zionist dreams and schemes came true. A Jewish homeland was created in Palestine and the "natives" have become refugees, exiles, deprived of their homes and their national rights. This great human tragedy that brought misery, humiliation and despair to a million people and later to a half-million more, was a dark stain, a premeditated crime.

Image-making, however, was ready for the new situation: Palestinians had "sold their lands to the Jews and then have fled the country to prepare the scene for a massacre of all Jews on the hands of the Arab armies." Those treacherous natives were doing it again. They refused to live in peace with the European bearers of civilization. They again had to listen to the agitators who lusted for a Jewish bloodbath. The Palestinians do not even deserve sympathy in their misery and homelessness. They must be cursed and mocked. They do not deserve Palestine. They can be absorbed in the Arab countries. Their yearning for Palestine is pathetic, foolish or misguided. They have nothing to yearn for. Their present refugee camps are probably better than their shabby houses in Palestine. They lived in tents then, and they live in tents now! So why should they complain? After all, they are engaged in a "numbers racket" with the UN, falsifying records to increase their numbers so that they can swindle more UN rations. They are the prey of Arab demagogues and agitators who keep them as a pawn in a political game.

They cannot return to Zionist Palestine. It has been civilized

(18) *Ibid.*

and does not belong to them any more. Even if some of them return, they will be fifth columnists, saboteurs and collaborators with the enemy. Anyway, they have been exchanged, swapped with "oriental" Jews from the Arab countries.

This image-making, built on the *mission-civilisatrice* assumption and on character assassination of the Palestinians, continues up to the present time. Palestinian revolutionaries are "terrorists." After all, the Palestinians are not capable of brave, gallant, patriotic feelings and acts. They are only fit for treachery and intrigue.

This is not the place to refute these "views" of the Palestinians, for scientific research has shown that the Palestinians did not sell their country. By 1948 the Jews had owned less than 6% of the land, less than 1% acquired from Palestinians.[19] The Palestinians did not leave their country on orders from Arab leaders but after being terrorized and forcibly uprooted by the Zionists. However, the issue at hand is how did the Jews come to accept these images and to form these attitudes?

A Jewish Dilemma

The fact that Zionist propaganda was accepted by world Jewry and was allowed to shape the attitude of Jews towards the Palestinians is quite puzzling, in fact astonishing. There were always Jewish dissenters — and we will present their views — but they were in the minority. Jews contributed men, money and influence to make Israel a reality and to perpetuate the crimes committed against the Palestinians. The people of the Book, the men of light, the victims of Russian pogroms, of Nazi genocide, of Dachau and other Polish concentration camps shut their eyes and ears in Palestine and changed roles from oppres-

(19) See Sayigh, Yousef, *The Israeli Economy* (Arabic), Beirut, 1966, p. 77.

sed to oppressor. This is THE Jewish dilemma of modern times.

Achad Ha-am wrote at the turn of the century that Jewish behavior shows that Jews evidently learned nothing from their history. He further states: "And what are our brothers in Palestine doing? The very opposite! They were servants in the country of their exile, and they suddenly find themselves in a state of unbounded liberty, of unbridled liberty such as can only be found in Turkey. This sudden change has brought about within them a tendency towards despotism as is always the case when a servant becomes a master and they treat the Arabs with hostility and cruelty, curtail their rights in an unreasonable manner, insult them without any sufficient reason and actually pride themselves upon such acts; and nobody takes any action against this despicable and dangerous tendency.[20] In 1919, another Jew, W. Brunn, wrote: "We who are suffering persecutions throughout the world and who claim all human rights for ourselves, are going to Palestine reversing the roles."[21]

In 1923, the Jewish-American anthropologist, Goldenweiser, noted with dismay that Jews in Palestine were prejudiced against the Palestinians and considered them inferior. He reports on his visits to Jewish schools where teachers were telling him of Arab congenital stupidity and inferiority. When Goldenweiser asked a Jewish educator whether they teach this to their students, the teacher answered: but they know this by themselves![22] Arthur Koestler reports that "Each Jew, Marxist or not, regarded himself as a member of the chosen race, and the Arab as his inferior."[23]

(20) Achad Ha-am, "Die Wahrheit aus Palestina," *Am Scheidewege, op. cit.,* Bd. I.
(21) See van der Hoever Leonhard, *op. cit.*
(22) Goldenweiser, *Jewish-Arab Prejudice,* 1923.
(23) Arthur Koestler, *Promise and Fulfillment,* London, 1949, p. 34.

This moral dilemma besetting the Jews in our time is called "moral schizophrenia," "moral myopia" by the noted American Jewish journalist, I.F. Stone. Mr. Stone, who was decorated in 1948 by the Irgun, wrote a very perceptive article in 1967, from which we shall quote presently. He makes the subtle comparisons of Zionist-Nazi behavior and draws soul searching conclusions. In refuting the Israeli argument against the reasons for the Palestinian exodus, Mr. Stone states: "The argument that the refugees ran away 'voluntarily' or because their leaders urged them to do so until after the fighting was over, not only rests on a myth but is irrelevant. Have refugees no right to return? Have German Jews no right to recover their properties because they too fled?"[24]

Mr. Stone continues: "Jewish terrorism, not only by the Irgun in such savage massacres as Deir Yassin, but in milder form by the Haganah itself 'encouraged' Arabs to leave areas the Jews wished to take over for strategic or demographic reasons. They tried to make as much of Israel as free of Arabs as possible."[25]

As to the "swap" of Palestinian for "Jewish refugees" from the Arab world, Mr. Stone states: "The Palestinian Arabs feel about this 'swap' as German Jews would if denied restitution on the grounds that they had been 'swapped' for German refugees from the Sudetenland."

"The Jewish moral myopia makes it possible for Zionists to dwell on the 1900 years of exile in which the Jews have longed for Palestine but dismiss as migratory the nineteen years

(24) Stone, *op. cit.,* Mr. Stone's article was reprinted in Ibrahim Al-Abid (Editor), *Selected Essays on the Palestine Question,* Palestine Research Center, Beirut, 1969. The two sources are identical. The quotations hereunder are taken from them.
(25) *Ibid.*

in which Arab refugees have also longed for it."

Homelessness, Stone states further, "is the major theme of Zionism but this pathetic passion is denied to Arab refugees."

Those who have known the effects of racism and discrimination in their own flesh and human dignity are less excusably racist than those who can only imagine the negative effects of prejudice. Mr. Stone relates a conversation with Moshe Dayan on American television on June 11, 1967, where Dayan stated then even though Israel can absorb the Palestinians in the "conquered territories" it will not do it because it would turn Israel into either a bi-national or poly-Arab-Jewish state instead of the Jewish state. "We want to have a Jewish state, a Jewish state like the French have a French state." Mr. Stone comments: "This must deeply disturb the thoughful Jewish reader. Ferdinand and Isabella, in expelling the Jews and Moors from Spain, were in the same way saying they wanted Spain as Spanish i.e. Christian as France was French."[26]

In conclusion, Stone states: "Israel is creating a kind of moral schizophrenia in World Jewry. In the outside world the welfare of Jewry depends on the maintenance of secular, non-racial pluralistic societies. In Israel, Jewry finds itself defending a society in which mixed marriages cannot be legalized, in which non-Jews have a lesser status than Jews, and in which the ideal is racial and exclusionist. Jews must fight elsewhere for their very security and existence — against principles and practices they find themselves defending in Israel. Those from the outside world, even in their moments of greatest enthusiasm amid Israeli accomplishments, feel twinges of claustrophobia, not just geographical but spiritual. Those caught up in prophetic fervor soon begin to feel that the light they hoped to see out of Zion is only that of another narrow nationalism.

"It must also be recognized, despite Zionist ideology, that

(26) *Ibid.*

the periods of greatest Jewish creative accomplishment have been associated with pluralistic civilization in their time of expansion and tolerance: in the Hellenistic period, in the Arab civilization of North Africa and Spain, and in Western Europe and America. Universal values can only be the fruit of a universal vision; the greatness of the prophets lay in their overcoming of ethnocentricity. A lilliputian nationalism cannot distill truths for all mankind. Here lie the roots of a growing divergence between Jew and Israeli, the former with a sense of mission as a Witness in the human wilderness, the latter concerned only with his own tribes' welfare."[27]

Will the Jews Change Their Attitudes ?

It was shown, through direct quotations, that there always was a group of Jewish moral dissenters to Zionism. There was never a truly monolithic Jewish opinion. The success of Zionist propaganda in galvanizing the majority of Jews to its side is attributed not to deceit and manipulation alone. Jews must get credit for sufficient intelligence to make manipulation insufficient to sway them. Anti-Semitism in the West and the hypocrisy prevailing in Western societies in dealing with racial and religious issues have helped push the Jews gradually to the moral schizophrenia discussed above.

In all frankness, one must add to these factors Arab attitudes and shortcomings. Before the Palestinian revolution, anti-Jewish attitudes were prevalent in the Arab world — even though it was instigated by Jewish anti-Arab attitudes. The Palestinians could not present a reasonable humane alternative to Zionist Israel. Jews were finding it hard to live in the Arab countries, and minority problems in several Arab countries were shedding doubt on the possibility of Jews finding security in

(27) *Ibid.*

the Arab midst without a militarist Israel. In the 1948-1967 period, Jews enjoyed security when the Palestinians and eventually all other Arabs with them were deprived of security.

The Palestinian revolution has provided a new set of alternatives, no security in the racist state but all the security in the new democratic Palestine.

A dialogue is developing between the Palestinian revolutionaries and the Jews, liberals, progressives, socialists and even religious conservatives. More and more Jewish friends are opening their arms to embrace the Palestinian revolution, and are being embraced by it.

The Zionists are really worrying about the new phenomenon. In an article published by the *Jerusalem Post* on July 2, 1969, the editors accused those Jews of being traitors to their own people, and considered their alliance with the revolution as most serious and threatening. It is important that the issue of Jewish moral schizophrenia be stressed, that Jewry's conscience be shocked into realization of the consequences of Zionism. It is, however, more reasonable to expect non-Israeli Jews to come to terms with the Palestinian revolution before the Israeli Jews do. After all, Frenchmen in Paris found it easier to accept the Algerian revolution than French colons did. But, the efforts should continue in Palestine to win over Jews to the revolution. Escalation of the revolution will have its consequences. Obviously, it is going to harden some Zionist Jews against the Palestinians especially the oligarchy that stands to lose in a democratic, open Palestine. But escalation will have its shock effect. It will bring the realization that an exclusionist Israel can be a very insecure place indeed, and that it cannot last.

The Palestinian revolution assumes a great share of the responsibility in winning Jews to the side of the revolution by deeds, not words alone. The revolution should not — and in fact will not — pass any opportunity to prove to world Jewry and to Palestinian Jews that it will stand by them if persecuted

and is determined to live and create with them a new Palestine not based on bias, racism, or discrimination, but on cooperation and tolerance.

If this campaign succeeds, both in winning battles and hearts, the democratic Palestine will become credible, and both desirable and feasible. What will this new country look like? What does the Palestinian revolution really mean by democratic, progressive and nonsectarian? These are serious questions that warrant individual attention and therefore will be taken up in the following essay.

III

TOWARDS A DEMOCRATIC PALESTINE

Difficulties and Limitations

It is quite difficult and risky at this early stage of the revolution to make a clear and definitive statement about the new liberated Palestine. Realism rather than romantic day-dreaming should be the basic revolutionary approach. We do not believe that victory is around the corner. The revolution does not underestimate the enemy or its imperialist allies. What will happen during the years of hard struggle for liberation cannot be easily predicted. Will the attitude of Palestinian Jews harden or become more receptive and flexible? A further drift to the right, stepping up anti-Arab terrorism — in the Algerian O.A.S. tradition — followed by a voluntary mass exodus on the eve of liberation will pose a completely different problem and will be quite regrettable.

On the other hand, joining the revolution and working with it will lay firmer growth for the new Palestine. The revolution is striving hard to achieve the second alternative. Guerilla operations are basically directed at the military and economic foundations of the Zionist settler-state. Whenever a civilian target is chosen, every effort is made to minimize loss of civilian life — though one would find it hard to distinguish civilians and non-civilians in this modern Spartan militaristic society where every adult is mobilized for the war. Hitting quasi-civilian areas aims at the psychological effect of shocking the Israelis into realization that the racist-militaristic state cannot provide them with security when it is conducting genocide against the

exiled and oppressed Palestinian masses. In the Dizengoff street bomb (Tel Aviv), Fateh guerillas delayed the operation three times to choose a place (in front of a building under construction) and a time (12:30 after midnight) to maximize noise but minimize casualties. The result: few were injured, but thousands were shocked and made to engage in serious rethinking.

In conclusion, despite all uncertainties, there is the hope, the vision and the behavior of the Palestinian revolutionaries designed to achieve a better future for their oppressed country. Answers must be thought out and found for myriad questions relating to this future. Even if the answers are tentative, they will start a dialogue which provides the road towards maturity and fulfillment.

Profile of the Democratic Palestine

1. The Country

Pre-1948 Palestine, as defined during the British mandate, is the territory to be liberated and where the democratic, progressive state is to be created. The liberated Palestine will be part of the Arab homeland and will not be another alien state within it. The eventual unity of Palestine with other Arab states will make boundary problems less relevant and will end the artificiality of the present status of Israel, and possibly that of Jordan as well. The new country will be anti-imperialist and will join the ranks of progressive revolutionary countries. Therefore, it will have to cut the present lifeline links with and total dependence on the United States. Therefore, integration within the area will be a foremost prerequisite.

It should be quite obvious at this stage that the new Palestine discussed here is not the occupied West Bank or the Gaza Strip or both. These are areas occupied by the Israelis since June 1967. The homeland of the Palestinians usurped and colo-

nized in 1948 is no less dear or important than the part occupied in 1967. Besides, the very existence of the racist oppressor state of Israel based on the vacation and forced exile of part of its citizens is unacceptable by the revolution even on one tiny Palestinian village. Any arrangement accommodating the aggressor settler-state is unacceptable and temporary. Only the people of Palestine: its Jews, Christians and Moslems in a country that combines them all is permanent.

2 The Constituents

All the Jews, Moslems and Christians living in Palestine or forcibly exiled from it will have the right to Palestinian citizenship. This guarantees the right of all exiled Palestinians to return to their land whether they have been born in Palestine or in exile and regardless of their present nationality.

Equally, this means that all Jewish Palestinians — at the present time, Israelis — have the same right provided, of course, that they reject Zionist racist chauvinism and fully accept to live as Palestinians in the new Palestine. The revolution, therefore, rejects the supposition that only Jews who lived in Palestine prior to 1948 or prior to 1914 and their descendents are acceptable. After all, Dayan and Allon were born in Palestine before 1948 and they — with many of their colleagues — are die-hard racist Zionists who obviously do not qualify for a Palestinian status. Whereas newcomers may be anti-Zionists and work ardently for the creation of the new Palestine.

In the interview referred to earlier, Abu Iyad, one of the officials of Fateh, reasserted that not only progressive anti-Zionist Jews but even present Zionists who will be willing to abandon their racist ideology will be welcome as Palestinian citizens. It is the belief of the revolution that the majority of the present Israeli Jews will change their attitudes and will subscribe to the new Palestine, especially after the oligarchic

state machinery, economy and military establishment is destroyed.

3. The Ideology

The Palestinians in the process of, and at the time of liberation, will decide on the system of government and on the political-economic-social organization of their liberated country. (One repeats at this juncture that the term Palestinians includes those in exile, under occupation and Jewish settlers.)

A democratic and progressive Palestine, however, rejects by elimination a theocratic, a feudalist, an aristocratic, an authoritarian or a racist-chauvinistic form of government. It will be a country that does not allow oppression or exploitation of any group of people by any other group or individuals; a state that provides equal opportunities for its people in work, worship, education, political decision-making, cultural and artistic expression.

This is no utopian dream. For the very process of achieving the new Palestine inherently produces the requisite climate for its future system of government, i.e. a people's war of liberation brings out new values and attitudes that serve as guarantees for democracy after liberation. Witness changing attitudes towards collective work in refugee and guerilla camps in Jordan and Lebanon, Palestinians and other brothers joining them in volunteer work and livelihoods. They are not exploited or enslaved labor. The values of human life changes. Unlike Israeli Napalm raids and indiscriminate killing, Palestinian guerillas kill sparingly and selectively. New forms of human relations emerge. No master-slave relation can be attained among fighters for freedom. Increasing awareness of the international dimensions of their problem and discovery of who backs the oppressor and who supports the oppressed create new responsibilities to the international community especially to the supporters of liberation and democracy.

Therefore, Palestinians after liberation will not accept subjugation from anybody and will not reintroduce oppression against any group for this will be a negation of their *raison d'être* and abdication of their revolutionary existence. This is quite obvious in Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan. After twenty-two years of oppression, humiliation and manipulation by secret police and local exploiters, the camps have awakened to the revolution. In the process, the exiles have broken their bonds, have thrown out the secret police and its spies and allied exploiters and have instituted democratic self-management. Medical, educational and social services are being provided locally through the revolutionary organizations in a self-help fashion that have brought back dignity and self-respect. Crime rates in these camps have drastically gone down to ten percent of their pre-revolutionary magnitude. Self-discipline has replaced the police. The new militia is providing the link between the revolutionary *avant-garde* and the base of the masses. Democratic checks are built in. These Palestinians will not accept oppression and subjugation from anyone and will not enforce it on anyone.

Newsmen and other foreign visitors have discovered that nowhere in the Arab world can they find equally mature and tolerant people *vis à vis* the Jews, than in the camps in Jordan and Lebanon and especially among the Ashbal: the fighting lion cubs. These young Palestinians (8-16 years) are almost totally free of any anti-Jewish biases. They have a clearer vision of the new democratic Palestine than that held by bourgeois city dwellers. These young people are the liberators of tomorrow. They will complete the destruction of Israeli oppression and the rebuilding of the new Palestine.

If the democratic and progressive new Palestine is utopia, then the Palestinian guerillas and camp dwellers are starting to practice it.

Two Misconceptions

Several interpretations of the democratic Palestine have sprung up in different quarters that require clarification and some corrections. An attempt will be made presently to discuss two of them that seem to be quite vital:

1. The call for a nonsectarian Palestine should not be confused with a multi-religious, a poly-religious or a bi-national state. The new Palestine is not to be built around three state religions or two nationalities. Rather, it will simply provide freedom from religious oppression of any group by another and freedom to practice religion without discrimination. No rigidification of religious lines is desired by the revolution. No hard and fast religious distribution of political offices and other important jobs is envisioned. The Lebanese model (where the reactionary, quasi-feudalist or commercial-capitalist hierarchy divides jobs and offices on the basis of sectarian lines to perpetuate its domination of the masses) is completely alien to the revolution.

Abu Ammar reiterated several times that the president of liberated Palestine could be a Jew, a Moslem or a Christian, not because of his religion or sect but on the basis of his merit as an outstanding Palestinian. Furthermore, religious and ethnic lines clearly cross in Palestine so as to make the term bi-national and the Arab-Jewish dichotomy meaningless, or at best quite dubious.

The majority of Jews in Palestine today are Arab Jews — euphemistically called oriental Jews by the Zionists. Therefore, Palestine combines Jewish, Christian and Moslem Arabs as well as non-Arab Jews (Western Jews).

2. The new democratic Palestine is NOT a substitute for liberation. Rather, it is the ultimate objective of liberation. A client state in the West Bank and Gaza, an Avneri-style de-Zionized or pasteurised Israel or a Semitic confederation are all

categorically rejected by the revolution. They are all racist blueprints to delude the Palestinians and other Arabs and continue Israeli hegemony and Palestinian subjugation. They all assume the maintenance of the basic aggression that led to the forced exile of Palestinians and the oppression of the masses. The *sine qua non* of the new Palestine is the destruction of the political, economic and militarist foundations of the chauvinist, racist settler-state. The maintenance of a technologically-advanced military machine through a continuous Western capital flow and exchange of population have led the expansionist Zionist machinery to perpetuate one aggression after another. Therefore, liquidation of such a machinery is an irreplaceable condition for the creation of the new Palestine. When the machinery of the Nazi state was liquidated, the German people were liberated together with other nations that were oppressed by Nazi-Germany such as Poland, Hungary, and France. The Germans were not liquidated.

The Transition, and After

It is quite logical to expect specific transitional collective accommodations immediately after liberation, and even few remaining in the normalized permanent state, i.e. some collective or group privileges besides the pure individual privileges. Jews or non-Jews, for that matter, would have the right to practice their religion and develop culturally and linguistically as a group, beside their individual political and cultural participation. It is quite logical, for example, to have both Arabic and Hebrew as official languages taught in governmental schools to all Palestinians, Jews or non-Jews.

The right of free movement within the country and outside it would be guaranteed. Palestinians desirous of voluntarily leaving the country would be allowed to do so. Immigration would be restricted in a transitional period to the return of all

exiled Palestinians desirous of return. In a normal permanent state, however, subject to the agreed upon regulation and the absorptive capacity of the country, immigration would be open without discrimination. Freedom of access, visits and extended pilgrimage and tourism would be guaranteed — subject, of course, to the normal regulation — to all Jews, Moslems or Christians of the world who consider Palestine a holy place worthy of pilgrimage and meditation.

Is the New Palestine Viable ?

Several well-intentioned critics maintain that even if the creation of the democratic Palestine is possible, it will not survive for long. Their basic contention is that the population and cultural balance will be heavily favoring the Jews in the new Palestine. This — in their argument — will lead either to an explosive situation, or to the domination of the new Palestine by the Jews and a possible reversion to a neo-Zionist state in disguise.

The argument is serious and looks quite plausible given the present set up, and the European dichotomy of the "Arabs" as a backward group and the "Jews" as a modern one.

As for population, the Jews in Palestine today number 2.5 million which is compared to 2.6 million Palestinian Arabs (Christians and Moslems) in the occupied territories before 1967 and after it, and in exile.

Birth rates and net natural growth rates are higher among Arab Palestinians compared to those for the Jews in Palestine.

Imigration, however, has been the major cause of growth in the Jewish ranks. Nevertheless, one must consider the fact that 250,000 Jews have permanently left Palestine (emigrated) since 1949 in a period where relative security prevailed. Most of the emigrants were European Jews. Whereas most of the new immigrants were Arab Jews who found it very difficult to

stay in their countries after the creation and survival of the aggressor settler-state of Israel.

The process of the revolution will inevitably increase the tempo of emigration, especially of those beneficiaries of a racist state who will find it very difficult to adapt to an open plural society. Parallel to that development will be the increasing modernization of the Arab countries and toleration of all minorities including the Jewish citizens. Fateh is already engaged in serious negotiations with several Arab countries to allow Jewish emigrants back, to return their property, and to guarantee them full and equal rights.

These factors are expected on the whole to maintain relative population balance in Palestine.

The pace of social and educational development is rising rapidly among the Arab Palestinians as well. It is estimated that the number of university graduates among the Palestinians in exile exceed 50,000.

Palestinians have successfully played the role of educators, professionals and technicians in several Arab countries especially those in the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa. Arab Palestinians faced this cultural challenge in pre-1948 Palestine and managed in the relatively short period of thirty years to compete effectively with the Jews in agriculture, industry, education and even in the field of finance and banking. Armed with the spirit of a victorious revolution, hopefully in comradeship of a significant number of Jews, the Arabs of Palestine will become effective and equal partners, in the building of the new country.

Integration of Palestine within the Arab region will add to its economic and political viability. Present Arab-boycott will obviously be replaced by economic aid and trade, a goal which the settler-state of Israel completely failed to achieve, remaining thus an American ward and protege during its entire existence.

CONCLUSION

The democratic, nonsectarian Palestine still lacks full clarity and elaboration, but this is the best that can be done at this stage of the arduous liberation struggle. The Palestinians have outgrown their bitterness and prejudice in a relatively short time through armed struggle. A few years ago, discussing this proposal would have been considered as a complete sell-out or high treason. Even today, some Arabs still find it very difficult to accept the proposed goal and secretly — or publicly — hope that it is nothing more than a tactical propaganda move. *Well, it is definitely not so.* The Palestinian revolution is determined to fight for the creation of the new democratic and nonsectarian Palestine as the long-term ultimate goal of liberation. Annihilation of the Jews or of the Palestinian exiles and the creation of an exclusive racist or theocratic state in Palestine, be it Jewish, Christian or Moslem, is totally unacceptable, unworkable and cannot last. The oppressed Palestinian masses will fight and make all needed sacrifices to demolish the oppressor exclusive state.

The Israeli racists are greatly irritated by the idea of a democratic Palestine. It reveals the contradictions of Zionism and bares the moral schizophrenia that besets world Jewry since the creation of Israel. The adoption of several significant progressive Jews of the new goal scares world Zionism. Israeli Jewish Professor Loebel and French Jewish writer, Ania Francos, were threatened and molested by Zionists for their sponsorship of the democratic Palestine as the ultimate goal of liberation. The Zionists are stepping up their campaign to discredit the idea especially among the Jews. Their effort has

been in vain. The force of logic and the effect of years of persecution in exclusive societies at the hands of racists are opening the eyes of Jews and others in the world to the only permanent solution that will bring lasting peace and justice to our Palestine: building a progressive, open, tolerant country for all of us.

Ghorayeb Press — Beirut — Lebanon