

was palestine

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Zionists kill PLO envoy to protest European initiative on Palestine

IN THE most violent expression of Israel's implacable opposition to the closer relations between the European Community and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Dr Naim Khader, the PLO's Representative in Brussels was shot down in the streets of the Belgian capital on 1st June. The incident marks the latest in a series of assassinations of PLO spokesmen in Europe, which Israeli intelligence began in the early 1970s involving the deaths of PLO envoys in Paris, Rome, and Nicosia, and well as Beirut. Opponents of the Palestinian movement have also aided the Zionists by killing PLO Representatives in London and Paris, writes Louis Eaks.

Naim Khader, aged 41, had been in charge of the PLO Brussels office since its opening in 1973. He was born in Zababdeh in Palestine, and had studied in Belgium and had a Belgian-born wife.

Dr Khader was a key figure in liaising between the PLO and the various Common Market institutions based in Brussels, a task which became more important after the opening of the Euro-Arab dialogue and the EEC initiative towards a Middle East peace settlement. He was a close acquaintance of M Claude Cheysson, the French Common Market Commissioner who François Mitterand has appointed as his Foreign Minister. Dr Khader recently told the London magazine *8 Days* that M Cheysson and others in the French Socialist party had a lucid and balanced position on Palestine, and the courage with which to defend it.

Dr Khader's murder was greeted with shock in Brussels political and diplomatic circles, where he was well known. His killing was condemned by EEC President Gaston Thorn.

Commenting on the assassination the London Representative of the PLO, Mr Nabil Ramlawi, said: 'Menachem Beigin and the Israeli government today stand guilty of the murder of Dr Naim Khader, the PLO Representative in Brussels and a member of the Palestinian Committee for the Euro-Arab dialogue. I hope that the people of Britain and the whole world will realise, as a result of this dirty crime in the heart of Europe, that this attack is not simply against the Palestinian people but a brutal protest by the Zionist regime against the dialogue between Europe and the Palestinians. Naim Khader's assassination is a violent statement of the Zionists' rejection of any just solution to the Palestine question, even one which might come through diplomatic means rather than bloodshed and conflict. Nevertheless, in



The new French Foreign Minister, Claude Cheysson (above), has condemned the assassination of Naim Khader, the PLO's Representative in Brussels. The Foreign Office in London also sent condolences to the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

the memory of Naim Khader we shall remain committed to seeking a positive and independent European initiative, and we refuse to be provoked by Zionist terrorism into bringing the Palestinian liberation war into the streets of European capitals.'

'We hope that the people of

Europe will remember Naim Khader as a Palestinian dedicated to a peaceful solution of the Palestine question. Despite the terrorist war waged against the Palestinian people for more than 30 years, Naim Khader was in the front line of those Palestinians representing the PLO's effort to find a solution to the

Palestine question through the governments of the European community. This was his 'crime' for which he has been killed by the Israelis,' Mr Ramlawi said.

He continued: 'The victims of Menachem Beigin's terrorist actions over the decades have included both Britons and Palestinians. We await with interest the response of the United States President to this use of terrorism as part of the Israeli Prime Minister's election campaign, which has included the deaths of hundreds of civilian Palestinians and Lebanese.'

'The incident in Brussels marks a resumption of the Israeli terrorism campaign in Europe. We know that a decision to resume this campaign was taken by the Israeli government two years ago, and we are not surprised that it should become part of an election campaign by a terrorist of long standing, namely Menachem Beigin. Such actions only serve to strengthen the determination of all Palestinians to stand united in the struggle for the liberation of our occupied homeland,' Mr Ramlawi declared.

□ Beigin's murderous road back to power, and Mossad, the Zionist killing machine: see page 8.

Israelis abandon radar sites in central Lebanon

WHEN THE Arab peacekeeping forces moved into the mountains around Zahle, in central Lebanon, during May, Israel was forced to hastily dismantle a listening post established on Lebanese territory. The loss of this strategically important base lies, according to observers in Beirut, at the heart of the latest Middle East crisis, in which the Zionists have taken the region to the brink of a major war.

The loss of the listening post, together with Syria's movement of missiles into the Beqaa valley, has seriously weakened what the Zionists consider their 'rights', namely to use Lebanese territory as though it was their own, and to make regular reconnaissance flights and bombing raids over Lebanon, writes Phil Kelly.

Israel was operating a listening post, described as a 'radar station'

from a position in the mountains known as the 'French outpost', built by the French during their colonial rule in Lebanon, and controlled since 1976 by the Lebanese Phalangists.

This outpost was abandoned by the Phalangists last month, when they were forced to retreat by Syrian and Lebanese leftist forces after their unsuccessful attempt to link the town of Zahle with the remainder of the rightist-held enclave by building a new road through the mountains.

It was during the clashes between the Syrians and the rightists that US-built Israeli jets downed two Syrian supply helicopters; this in turn led the Syrians to station SAM-6 anti-aircraft missiles in the Beqaa valley, at the foot of the Sannin mountains, missiles which Zionist Premier Menachem Beigin claimed, absurdly enough, to be a threat to Israel's security.

The Israelis had destroyed equipment in the 'French outpost' before withdrawing. Radar equipment in such a position, over 2,500 metres above sea level, 35 kilometres from the Mediterranean, and about twice that distance from the Syrian capital, Damascus, would have been able to scan most of Syria, having a radius of some 250 kilometres.

It seems unlikely that an Israeli-operated listening post in such a strategic position would have been confined to radar monitoring of Syrian air movements. Israel has US-built Grumman Hawkeye E2C spy planes, which while not as modern as the Boeing AWACS E3A planes currently based in Saudi Arabia, are better than any ground-based radar station at monitoring air movements and controlling air combat. It is highly probable that the station had a range of Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) capabilities, and could have eavesdropped on Syrian military and diplomatic communications, to say nothing of the radio messages between units of the Lebanese army, the Lebanese left, and the Palestinians.

One of the main conditions put forward by US envoy Philip Habib for a solution to the 'missile crisis' has been that Syria should relinquish

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Mossad: The killing machine

AROUND the world the Zionist intelligence agency, Mossad, has struck with incidents of assassination and sabotage. In less than one month Mossad has killed the PLO representative in Brussels and masterminded the bombing raid on Iraq's nuclear reactor. A special report appears on page 8.

Life under Zionist occupation

ZIONIST military occupation on the West Bank is manifested in a campaign of land seizures, and intimidation of the local Palestinian population. A report of how the occupation is affecting the lives of Palestinians in Hebron appears on page 4.

Westminster reports

SUPPORT for the Palestine Liberation Organisation came from all political parties during a recent foreign affairs debate in the House of Commons. See page 12 for report.

Focus on the Lebanon crisis

LEBANON has been under heavy Israeli attack throughout this year, with Israel escalating the tensions in recent weeks. A special report and analysis of these events appears on pages 6 and 7.

control of positions in the Sannin mountains. When fighting erupted in the area in April, the State Department denounced Syrian moves, calling them a dangerous change in the status quo in Lebanon. This statement was denounced by Yasser Arafat and other PLO leaders as giving Israel 'a green light' for attacks on Lebanon; two days later, the Syrian supply helicopters were attacked.

Israel and the US are clearly concerned lest Syria install its own listening post on the Sannin mountains.

Such a base would be able to spy on the activities of US and Israeli warships in the Mediterranean, and it is likely that just as Israeli information about the Syrians and the Russians would be passed to Washington, so Syrian information about the Americans and the Israelis would find its way to Moscow. Thus the Soviet Union might acquire a monitoring capability in the Middle East to balance western facilities in Turkey and in the British base at Ayios Nicolaos in Cyprus.

Equally, such Israeli concern would make such a listening post a prime Zionist target in the event of an escalation of the 'missile crisis'.

Irish government refutes allegations of PLO-IRA links

THERE IS no evidence to support allegations that members of the IRA have trained recently in PLO camps in Lebanon, the Irish Special Branch and the Irish Embassy in Lebanon have concluded after extensive investigations.

The allegations were made in December last year by the noted right wing propagandist, Robert Moss, in an article in the *Daily Telegraph*. The article was official welcomed by the Zionists, and the Israeli government paid to have it reprinted and distributed in thousands of copies. In common with many of Moss's articles, the allegations were simply repetition of propaganda lines spread by the intelligence organisation of a right wing government, in this case Israel.

The Irish, understandably annoyed that the Zionists chose to make such serious allegations through a newspaper rather than directly, have told the Israelis that they do not believe the Israeli-Moss joint allegation that a 26-year old Arab woman acts as an intermediary between the PLO and the IRA; the figure of 44 Irish republicans said by Moss to have trained in Lebanon in 1979 is described as 'spurious'. Moss is known to give his articles the air of truth by plucking figures and names out of thin air, and has been caught out on more than one occasion.

The collusion between Moss and the Israelis over the allegations arose, the Irish government feels, because of Zionist hostility to the efficient job which the Irish contingent in the UNIFIL peacekeeping force in south Lebanon is doing in keeping in check Israel's surrogate militia headed by Sa'ad Haddad. The Israelis are also furious that the Republic of Ireland has publicly called for the involvement of the Palestinians in any future Middle East peace talks. The Irish are concerned that the article might have harmed Anglo-Irish co-operation by implying that the Republic does not care about terrorism. The Zionists have been told that if they have any real facts, the Irish government and police will investigate them.

Arab Americans slam racist AP article

THE AMERICAN-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, ADC, formed at the end of last year, has taken action to correct distortions contained in an article written by a Marion Kwartler and distributed by Associated Press to hundreds of American newspapers as part of its normal 'news' service.

The article appeared in January in several US papers, some choosing to put it on their front page. Ms Kwartler alleged that dozens of unmarried pregnant Palestinian women were escaping death at the hands of their families by fleeing to Europe with the aid of Israeli doctors and European missionaries. The article presented a picture of a violent and tradition-ridden society where helpless young pregnant women were routinely subjected to violence by their menfolk, and were saved from it only by Israelis and Europeans — a picture of Palestine and 'the Arabs' dear to the hearts of Israeli propagandists.

ADC, in a letter to editors and to AP, pointed out that the article had not a single source for the alle-



gations made. Jim Fine, Middle East representative of the American Friends Service Committee (The Quakers) was alleged by Ms Kwartler to have said that Jerusalem convents provided homes for pregnant girls to have their babies or to make contact with an alleged 'abortion underground' which helped the girls leave the country. Mr Fine never said anything of the kind, and told ADC that what Ms Kwartler wrote was 'completely contrary to what I told her'. He has never heard of the 'underground railroad' out of Palestine, has 'no information about convents', and considers the whole story 'very unlikely'.

The story also alleged that at least one 'honour killing' took place each week in the West Bank. The only source of this was an anonymous 'Jewish doctor', who, if he existed, would probably have little knowledge of Palestinian society. Dr Israel Shahak, President of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, contacted by ADC, told them that he believed that 'honour killings' of unmarried pregnant women did take place: 'approximately three cases a year', and he added, the victims came from remote and backward Arab and Jewish villages.

Rebel soldier Elgazi thrown out

PRIVATE GADI Elgazi has been thrown out of the Israeli Army for refusing to serve in the occupied territories. He had already served eight months of a year-long jail term

imposed by a military court after he said that he could not support the Israeli policy of exiling Palestinians, demolishing houses of suspects, and shooting at unarmed demonstrators. On his release, he was told that he would have to return to his unit and complete his three-year conscription period. When he again refused to serve in the occupied territories, he was discharged.

Zionist extremists claimed that Mr Elgazi's discharge would encourage other Israelis who increasingly wish to avoid conscription. But Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan said that the discharge would not be treated as a precedent. In any case, his early discharge means that Mr Elgazi will not be entitled to the ex-service benefits available to virtually all Jewish Israelis.

While still a serving soldier, Mr Elgazi took part in a demonstration in Nazareth held to mark the Day of the Land, the traditional day of protest against Zionist colonisation by Palestinians in both the occupied territories and pre-1967 Israel.

Israel moves against Christian guides

CHRISTIAN GROUPS will be worst hit by the Israeli Ministry of Tourism's ban on non-Israeli guides escorting organised tours of the Holy Places in Israel and the occupied territories, including Jerusalem. Priests and ministers of the various Christian denominations have been used to leading tour parties, and to instructing pilgrims in the significance of the various holy sites according to their

own beliefs.

Now, the Zionist authorities have said that tour operators which do not conform to the new ruling by 1st July will have their licences revoked. A leading churchman said that the Israelis had abandoned the traditional right of pilgrims to be guided by members of their own faith, a right first granted by the Moslem rulers of Jerusalem in the 7th century of the Christian era, and confirmed by all authorities, particularly Moslem, until the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967.

Pilgrimage organisers say that Israeli guides — almost all of whom are Jewish — tend to include political and Zionist propaganda in their discourses. Unemployment among guides is a growing problem as the number of visitors to Israel falls steeply.

'We won't twin with Zionists', say Scots

ISRAEL'S CONTINUING fury at the growing support for the Palestinian people, as evinced by the twinning of the Scottish city of Dundee with Nablus in the occupied West Bank, has led to strange moves in Scotland. After a visit to Israel, paid for by the Strathclyde Regional Council, Council convenor James O'Halloran proposed that each of the region's districts should consider twinning with an Israeli town, a suggestion which had been put up by the president of the Israeli Union of Local Authorities, who was Councilor O'Halloran's host in occupied Palestine.

'This is obviously a political move by the Israelis,' commented Ernie Ross, the Dundee Labour MP who has been at the forefront of the twinning with Nablus. 'We don't want to stand in Councillor O'Halloran's way, but if any Scottish towns do link up, I hope they will be asking questions such as why the Israelis have displaced four million Palestinians,' he said.

Glasgow District Council, the largest Strathclyde district, has already decided that it will not be taking up Councillor O'Halloran's suggestion. Students from the city's universities and colleges demonstrated against him after his return from Israel, and the Lord Provost (Mayor) of Glasgow, Dr Michael Kelly, pointed out that the city had never twinned with other cities, though it maintained links with cities like Turin which had similar problems such as high unemployment.

Academics attack interference in West Bank colleges

INCREASING ZIONIST interference in the running of the universities of the occupied West Bank has come under fire from Israeli and British academics. Their concern has been prompted by the effects of the occupation authorities' decision to extend the 1963 Jordanian law on Education and Culture, which did not formerly apply to the West Bank's universities, to cover them. The law enables the state — in this case, the military government of the occupied territories — to licence the universities annually, to oversee the appointment of staff and the selection of students, and to control the contents of courses and reading material.

'These dramatic changes to the Jordanian law, which has hitherto safeguarded the universities' autonomy, contravene the Geneva conventions and open an ugly prospect of increased intellectual repression, with the threat not only of closure, but of extinction,' according to a group of British academics headed by Sir Robert Birley, in a letter to *The Times*. A report drawn up by five professors at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and circulated to all 3,000 Israeli university teachers was also sharply critical of the military government's moves.

ILO slams Zionist exploitation of Arabs

IN A highly critical report just released in Geneva, the International Labour Organisation details the slow and increasingly irreversible decline of the 1967 Palestinian occupied territories into a satellite of Israel.

The report is due to be discussed at the ILO's annual labour conference, where it seems certain to arouse the wrath of Arab delegations. The item has been regularly discussed for several years.

This year's report concludes that many of the ILO's recommendations have not been carried out by the Israelis. More serious, it notes that the Arab workforce is increasingly dependent on work in Israel — with all the attendant abuses familiar to migrants in Europe. It also argues that much of the territories' indigenous economic potential — vital if the territories were ever to become even semi-independent — is being squeezed dry.

The total Arab workforce on the territories is 215,000, of whom 75,000

last year worked in Israel. The ILO mission, which visited the region in March, was told by the Israelis that, overall, the GNP has risen by 10.5 per cent annually in the past 13 years and per capita income by 9 per cent. Unemployment in the territories is low — only 1 per cent — and the differential in wages paid on the territories and in Israel is slowly disappearing. In 1970, wages in the territories were 50 per cent those of Israel: last year, 80 per cent.

The report also states that the Arab workers are subjected to dis-

comforts: previous reports had pointed to the abnormally long working hours — because of the distances between the territories and work, and this still remains a problem. In addition, up to a third of the workforce is irregular — and so liable to exploitation. Arab workers are not entitled to residence permits in Israel. However, they pay contributions to all branches of the Israeli National Insurance Scheme, but do not collect benefits based on residence — for old age, unemployment, sickness and family.

At Bir Zeit University in particular has a student body which strongly supports the PLO. The university has suffered the deportation of its Principal, Dr Hanna Nasser; the deportation of several European and Arab staff members; continual military incursions onto its campus; and last year was temporarily closed in punishment for holding a Palestinian festival. In April, students supporting the PLO again won the student elections at Bir Zeit.

Anniversary clashes in 1967 occupied territories

ISRAELI TROOPS fired tear gas and live rounds at young Palestinians who demonstrated on 1st June in several West Bank towns. Palestinian flags were raised in many places, and troops clashed with demonstrators in Nablus and Ramallah. The demonstrations marked the first anniversary of the attempted assassinations of three West Bank mayors by Zionist settlers; the investigation into the car bombs, which maimed Nablus Mayor Bassam Shaka and Ramallah Mayor Karim Khalaf has been stopped by Zionist leader Menachem Begin. The protests also marked the commemoration by the Zionists of the seizure of Arab Jerusalem in the 1967 war.

Arafat invited to Paris

FRENCH PRESIDENT François Mitterand has issued an official invitation for PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to visit Paris, according to the UAE paper *Al Bayane*. Quoting sources in the French Socialist Party, the paper said that the invitation was seen as a 'balance' to Mitterand's intended visit to Israel.

'Peace Now' expels two for meeting Palestinians

AN INDICATION of the increasingly Zionist orientation of the Peace Now movement has been given by the organisation's decision to expel David Zucker and Yael Tamir, two of the organisation's members who met with Palestine National Council member Dr Issam Sartawi in Vienna earlier this year. The meeting was arranged by one of Peace Now's financial backers, Austrian Jewish businessman Karl Kahane. The two Peace Now members were only able to inform their organisation of the meeting after their return to Israel. Peace Now said that any meeting with Palestinian officials was contrary to the organisation's policy, which was that talks with the PLO should start only after it had 'renounced terrorism and recognised Israel's right to exist'.

Dr Sartawi was criticised for his contacts with Israelis by some members at the recent PNC meeting in Damascus, but his offer to resign from the PNC was not accepted. This was interpreted as a willingness on the part of the Palestinian leadership to continue contacts with Israelis where it felt that this could be instrumental in moving towards a peace settlement.

THE ARAB world has been cautious in its reaction to the victory of François Mitterand in the French presidential elections because of his declared Zionist sympathies during the election campaign. Nevertheless, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has urged Mitterand to support the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

Ironically, while radical and progressive Arabs have not concealed their delight at Giscard d'Estaing's defeat, and their hopes that France under Mitterand will adopt a less neo-colonialist role in Africa, Mitterand has not readily identified with the Palestinian liberation struggle.

In a cable to Mitterand, Arafat said, 'We congratulate you on your success in the presidential elections, and hope that France's policy under your leadership will support the people's rights, and particularly the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.'

During the election campaign Giscard was given an ultimatum by French Zionists that unless he acted to close the PLO office in Paris, then the Zionists would urge French Jewry to vote for Mitterand. However, the Zionists, while generally pleased at Mitterand's victory, are concerned that he has accepted that the PLO is representative of the Palestinian people.

As-Safir, the Lebanese radical daily, editorialised on 11th May that the 'radical change' promised in the French foreign policy would involve France falling more into step with the United States on Middle East questions. The newspaper noted that during his recent televised debate with outgoing Giscard, Mitterand said he supported the Camp David accords and the plan for Palestinian 'autonomy' in the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

Peace Now has fallen increasingly under the domination of the Israeli Labour Party, which does not want to be seen to be 'soft on the Palestinians' in the middle of an Israeli election campaign totally dominated by Menachem Begin's chauvinist excesses.

Over 30,000 Palestinian homes lost to Zionists

OVER 20,000 Palestinian homes have been destroyed by the Zionist occupation authorities since the 1967 war. The exact total, according to the Beirut-based Committee for the Defence of Palestinian Human Rights under Israeli Occupation, is 21,287 houses in the West Bank alone up to the end of 1980. In addition, the Committee disclosed recently, an estimated 11,000 homes have been confiscated because they were owned by 'absentees' — Palestinians forced into exile by the Zionist occupation.

The Committee said that houses are still being destroyed because the military authorities are suspicious that the occupants may support the Palestinian resistance movement, though they do not need to prove any such connection, or because the



A new President: Mitterand.

An official PLO spokesman on 11th May said it was to be hoped that Mitterand would follow a different line on the Palestine question to that he adopted as candidate. The spokesman added that if the new president is genuinely interested in a solution to the Middle East conflict, he should take into account the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people to establish an independent state under the leadership of the PLO.

Mr Farouk Qaddoumi, Head of the PLO Political Department, whose responsibilities are equivalent to foreign minister, said on 16th May in a *Voice of Palestine* radio interview, 'We have seen that the French position has frozen at a certain limit. Will Mitterand be able to take this position forward? We shall see. We will not judge Mitterand despite his unfriendly statements.'

Over the years, however, Mitterand has been slowly but steadily

moving away from uncritical support for Israel. In 1978 he declared his recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and even during the election campaign he went on record as favouring the establishment of a homeland for the Palestinians.

An indication that the sympathy for the Palestinians which has characterised French policy in recent years will continue under Mitterand came on 26th May when the new French President sent PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat a letter in which he affirmed French support for Palestinian self-determination. In reply to a cable the Palestinian leader had sent congratulating him on his victory at the polls, and urging him to support Palestinian rights, Mitterand said: 'You are aware of France's attachment to the fundamental principles of international life, including people's right to self determination.' He

continued: 'You are also aware of my wish to see the realisation of a just peace in the Middle East, as a result of which these principles will at last be fully implemented in mutual respect of the legitimate rights of all peoples to live in peace.'

Palestinians have also been heartened by Mitterand's choice of Claude Cheysson as his Foreign Minister. Strongly sympathetic to the developing countries, the former EEC Commissioner for Third World Affairs is held in high regard in the Arab world for his resignation from the French Foreign Ministry in 1956 in protest at France's refusal to grant independence to Algeria. He was the only senior foreign service official to have taken such action.

M Cheysson's enlightened attitude to liberation struggles was underlined in his first policy statement since becoming Foreign Minister. Addressing an African Liberation Day conference at UNESCO headquarters in Paris on 25th May, he stressed that France would give political and diplomatic support to 'all those who struggle for democracy and the dignity of man.' He added: 'We must continually and repeatedly condemn, both in international organisations and our personal relations, all those who accept racism.' This remark has far-reaching implications. In 1975 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution branding Zionism as a form of racism.

Another augury of continued growth of French support for Palestinian rights is the presence of the Marxist Régis Debray as one of Mitterand's close advisers. In the 1960s Debray wrote a book on Che Guevara's guerrilla movement in Bolivia, and was arrested by the Bolivian regime for his association with the commandos. He is not seen as an obvious supporter of Zionism.

homes have been built illegally; the occupation authorities refuse to grant any permits for Palestinians to build new homes.

Israelis grab electricity supply in Jerusalem

FACED WITH the refusal of the Israeli courts to permit a Zionist seizure of the assets of the Jerusalem District Electricity Company, the Zionist government has decided to cut off all its customers in occupied East Jerusalem and to connect them to the Zionist state's national grid. The company, which is Palestinian-owned, will be left with the customers which it supplies in the occupied West Bank.

The original intention had been to take over and to close down the company, so that all customers in the occupied territories would have had no source of supply other than the Israeli grid. But the law — in the shape of the concession granted to the company under the British mandate — made it impossible for the Zionists to grab the firm and close down its generators, which are based in the company's Jerusalem plant. There was strong opposition from the Palestinian workers of the Electricity Company.

The decision is in line with Israel's purported 'annexation' of Arab Jerusalem, and it will mean that 43,000 homes and organisations in Jerusalem — mostly Palestinian — will be forced on to the Israeli electricity grid. The Jerusalem company will be left with only its 29,000 consumers on the West Bank.



BASSAM SHAKA, the Mayor of Occupied Nablus, and last year the victim of a Zionist terrorist attack, seen here arriving to meet EEC President and Dutch Foreign Minister, Christoper van der Klauw, during the latter's recent Middle East tour. Mr Shaka received medical treatment and the fitting of artificial legs in Britain last summer.

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WHILE WORLD attention is focused on the latest turns of the crisis in Lebanon, Zionist colonialism is strengthening its grip on the occupied West Bank. Continuing land seizures and the creation of administrative infrastructures for the Zionist settlements amount to 'Israeli annexation by another name', according to Bethlehem's Mayor Elias Freij.

For the past fourteen years of military rule over the occupied territories in the West Bank, under both Labour and Likud governments in Israel, Arab lands have been seized by the Zionists on the pretext that they are necessary for 'security reasons': military posts are established, and then, after a period of time, the land is handed over by the military to civilian settlers, so that the original purposes of the seizure — the establishment of a new settlement — can be fulfilled.

In the four years during which Menachem Beigin's Likud Party has been in government, the 'security' pretext for land seizures has worn so thin that even the Israeli Supreme Court has been unable to sustain the legality of one or two such confiscations. But Palestinian farmers appealing against land grabs have had to meet very difficult conditions to prove that the seizures are illegal under the laws and decrees imposed by Israel in the occupied territories. Firstly, the owner of the land must be able to prove his title to it — never an easy matter given the control of Palestine successively by the Ottoman Turks, the British and, in the case of the West Bank, the Jordanians, over the past century.

But the Court has felt itself able, as in the case of the settlement at Elon Moreh, near Nablus, to inquire into the reality of the 'security' grounds cited by the military administration for land seizures. In the case of Elon Moreh, the Court found that these reasons were not well founded,

Arab land seizures: Expanding the Zionist state

and refused to allow the seizure. In most other cases — for example, over the settlements at Givat Ha'arava, Kiryat Arba, and Neveh Tzuf, the Court has let the land seizures go ahead.

In order to avoid the delays caused by the minor inconvenience of illegality, the Zionist authorities are now avoiding the seizure of land where ownership is clear. Instead, they are using the situation of land tenure on the West Bank gradually to undermine the legitimacy of Palestinian claims to land which they have owned and farmed for generations.

When the Elon Moreh settlers looked for new land to grab to re-establish their outpost, they sought state land. They discovered — or rather, the Likud government advised them — that only about 30 per cent of land on the West Bank is clearly owned with titles which the Israeli courts might recognise. Much land is held in communal or family ownership, and land which is not suitable for regular cultivation may not be 'owned' in the western sense at all.

All land not registered to individual owners is, by decree of the occupation authorities, 'state land' — that is, the Zionist state's land. The past few months have seen an escalated Zionist use of this device. In 1979, the occupation authorities decreed that they were absolved from any

check on the use to which they put this expropriated land. 'Regulation 59' of the military government authorised the military government to do what it liked with 'state land'.

So even the petty restriction imposed by the Israeli Supreme Court has been circumvented. The Israeli newspaper *Davar* commented on 20th March 1981: 'There is no longer any need to seize land for real or imaginary purposes or to prove anything. Instead the Israeli authorities simply locate some deserted land in some part of the West Bank which has not been registered, and announce: "This is state land." This declaration is handed to the local mukhtars, who are told that appeals against it have to be presented within a certain period, usually three weeks, to a special appeals committee.'

Davar continued: 'Why a committee? Because according to other military government regulations, land disputes between West Bank residents are not brought before the local [Arab] courts, but before a military committee. The committee usually contains three jurists who are soldiers on reserve duty, and their rulings are only recommendations.'

'The Arabs have to appear before the committee in order to prove that they own the land in question, which is not a simple matter. It requires much time and money; first of all the

Arabs have to locate the precise area, commission an expensive land survey and present all their documents. Some of these documents may be in Amman, others may be in government offices, or in other countries. They may have to prove inheritance rights, and bring testimonies regarding the use of the land since the Ottoman period. The cost of experts, especially lawyers, and of travel and means of Arab villagers. In the case of a large area, the Arabs do not stand a chance of having the necessary evidence ready in time for the hearing. And while the committee is sitting, the military authorities may use the disputed land as they see fit.'

In March this year, Palestinian villagers were arrested when they tried to stop bulldozers protected by armed soldiers moving on to land near the village of Anabta, near Jerusalem, four days after it had been declared 'state land', despite the claimed two-week appeal period.

Davar estimated that 'hundreds of thousands of dunams' of land had been seized in this way over the past eighteen months (4 dunams = 1 acre). The paper slammed the Zionist authorities for their actions: 'Israeli experts are proud that they have found a legal way to seize West Bank land, but God save us from such legality. It is just a form of

robbery and the legal devices and appeal committees are mere deceit.'

An aerial survey of the whole of the occupied territories commissioned by the Beigin government shortly after coming into office has now been completed. By the Zionists' own definition, the Israeli state now 'owns' 1.5 million dunams of land in the occupied territories. The Zionists also have records of all land including 'non-owned' land, which they can now grab at their leisure, while the Palestinians can only respond to each new seizure after the event.

General Ariel Sharon, Minister of Agriculture and overlord of the land grab and settlement programmes said in February that by June — when the Beigin government must face elections — there would be 85 settlements on the West Bank.

Five of the settlements have now been officially declared 'municipalities' by the Zionist authorities. They are Kiryat Arba, near Hebron; Na'aleh Adumin, Elkana, Ariel and Ma'aleh Ephraim. The 'mayor' of Elkana said that the move amounted to 'the last step before the annexation of Judea and Samaria'; he wanted this to be completed before the June election.

A further attempt to legitimise the permanent occupation of the West Bank was the creation of a municipal court, equivalent to a magistrates' court, in Kiryat Arba. This will have the power to impose fines and imprisonment, and appeals will be referred to the Israeli district court in Jerusalem.

Ms Felicia Langer, an Israeli lawyer who has defended many Palestinians in Israeli civilian and military courts in the past says that the establishment of the court is 'a dangerous development in blatant contravention of the international law covering occupied territory.'

Hebron becomes focal point of Zionist intimidation

HEBRON IS a microcosm of the conflict between Zionist settlers and the Palestinian people in the 1967 occupied territories. With the encouragement of the Israeli government, Zionist settlers from the nearby encampment of Kiryat Arba — now housing some 4,000 settlers — have mounted a campaign of harassment and terror against the 30,000 Palestinian citizens of Hebron.

In the past few months, the harassment has been stepped up. Those principally responsible are Americans. *Life* magazine (May 1981) described them as 'yarmulke-wearing gunslingers... prominent among Kiryat Arba's fanatics are Jewish Americans, many of them born in the Bronx or Brooklyn and raised on the stern doctrine of the Jewish Defence League.'

Whether *Life* intended the schoolyard pun on 'stern' or not, it is with the blessing and protection of former terrorist leader Menachem Beigin and his Likud government that the Kiryat Arba settlers are harassing Hebron and its people. The Israeli paper *Ha'aretz* commented recently: 'The military government has given the settlers the freedom to do as they like... however, it would be wrong to only blame the military administration which is, after all, only the faithful executor of government policy. When the military administration understands that the government finds it convenient to overlook certain things, it will do the same.

When the military administration understands that it is supposed to be the tool of Gush Emunim, it becomes that tool.'

Hebron has been a centre of conflict since the foundation of the Kiryat Arba settlement by the extremist Gush Emunim movement in 1968. In 1976, three boys from Hebron were kidnapped, taken to Kiryat Arba camp and were locked in a hut while a dog was set to savage them. No-one was ever punished for the attack.

For years, armed settlers from Kiryat Arba have made daily 'patrols' through the streets of Hebron. They assault passers-by, subject them to racist abuse, and demand identity cards from local people — without even the slim pretext of occupation law to justify it. *Life* reported: 'The Israeli military, while embarrassed, just looks the other way. The gangsters break into houses "to search for terrorist guns". They are determined to assert their authority over the city.'

Foremost in the harassment campaign are two extremist groups, both led by Americans. Gush Emunim is headed by New York born Rabbi Moshe Levinger, and Kach — Hebrew for 'thus' — by Rabbi Meir Kahane, also an American, and founder of the New York Jewish Defence League, which helped to foment anti-black violence in that city under the guise of 'defending' Jewish people — who had never asked for Kahane's help in the first place.

Levinger and his wife Miriam organised the takeover of a former hospital in Hebron, known as Beit Hadassah, which had stood empty since the 1948 war. The takeover was tokenised denounced when it happened in 1979 by the Israeli government, but no attempt was made to shift the occupiers. Now, they have official permission to live there, and the Israeli army guards the building.

Beit Hadassah overlooks Hebron's main market, and passers-by have been subjected to stones thrown from the building, and have even been urinated on by the settlers' children from the building's balconies. Stones are also thrown at the windows of neighbouring houses. Muhammed Nabil al-Atal, who lives virtually next to the Hadassah building, has been forced to abandon those rooms facing it, because constant stoning broke all the windows and rendered the rooms uninhabitable. His sister, who lived in those rooms with her children, recounted how night-time attacks would bring the children screaming and terrified, into her bed. Rabbi Levinger's men, brandishing machine guns, regularly break into his home, and like other Palestinians, he is frequently told that the houses belong to the Americans. 'If they want to return here, why won't they let us return to our house in Jaffa?' he asked a journalist. Mr Al-Ata came to Hebron as a refugee, driven with his family from Jaffa ▶



Zionist troops patrol in occupied Hebron.



Arafat challenges 'terrorist' label and directs attention to US activities

THE UNITED States has been accused of double standards and hypocrisy on the issue of 'terrorism'. The charge came from Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, speaking during a rally to mark the 23rd anniversary of the Zionist colonisation of Palestine.

The PLO Leader's presence at the rally held in the Libyan capital, Tripoli, and in the attendance of the Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, underlined the dramatically improved relations between the PLO and the Libyan Jamahiriya. Only two years ago relations reached a critical point, with Libya closing the PLO office in Tripoli. However, the increasing US threat to the Palestinian movement and the independence of the Arab region, has acted to heal many of the rifts in the Arab ranks, and Iraq has now pledged its backing for the Syrians in the event of the expected Israeli aggression.

The PLO leader condemned America's aggressive attitude towards the Palestinians, and its continuing support for the Zionists, which enabled them to continue their attacks. Mr Arafat said that the Palestinians supported the revolutionary movements of countries such as Nicaragua, El Salvador and South Africa. 'If these are terrorists, then we welcome terrorism. But we are here to remind America that the genuine terrorism, organised international terrorism, is carried out by the United States itself,' he declared.

This terrorism against the Palestinians and the Lebanese included attacks by land, sea and air and was backed by the United States; in the Arab world, the reactionary and isolationist regimes received the support from the same source, he said: the Pentagon. The US Rapid Deployment Force represented yet another attempt by the United States to impose its will on the Arabs. 'America and the

Zionists have defeated Egypt, which should be an Arab strong-point, by forcing Sadat's abject surrender and humiliating capitulation. This US agent is now offering the Americans facilities and military bases on Egyptian soil. But the Egyptian people will create a tidal wave which will drown all these agents and US puppets,' he insisted.

Mr Arafat also criticised the

governments of Oman and Somalia for making similar offers of military facilities to the United States.

Mr Arafat warned that a large-scale Zionist military build-up was taking place in south Lebanon, where the Zionists were awaiting orders from the United States for a full-scale invasion, which would end in the annexation of south Lebanon to the Zionist state and

the imposition of a right-wing regime on its people. But he warned, the Zionist threats would not bring the Palestinians, or the Lebanese, or the Syrians, to their knees; rather, they would continue their fight until they achieved victory.

The PLO leader said that the United States had expected to subdue the whole region through

the Camp David agreements but the Arabs had refused to call off the fight against Zionism, imperialism and fascism. He said that the creation of the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front, which links the PLO, Libya, Algeria, Syria and Democratic Yemen, represented a challenge to the defeatists in the Arab world, who wanted to give way to imperialism and were working on its behalf.

PLO welcomes talks with Carrington

FAROUK QADDOUMI, head of the Political Department of the PLO, and effectively the Palestinian Foreign Minister, has emphasised the welcome which the Palestinians give to the European initiative, and the recent remarks by Britain's Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, acknowledging that the PLO represents the Palestinian people.

In an interview with Voice of Palestine radio in May, Mr Qaddoumi said that the talks which the PLO had held with the current President of the EEC Council of Ministers, Dutch Foreign Minister Christoph van der Klaauw, had been very useful. The PLO, Mr Qaddoumi said, was interested above all in creating a political movement among the ten EEC countries, which was not the same thing as working for a settlement. A settlement now, he said, would only be at the expense of the interests of the Palestinians and Arab people, and the time was in any case not right.

'We welcome what Carrington said, that the PLO is the only representative of the Palestinian people, and that he would meet brother Abu Ammar [Yasser Arafat] when he assumes the Presidency of the EEC. This is a positive sign,' the PLO spokesman said. But, he continued, some EEC countries did not have a very positive attitude towards the Palestinians, and it was necessary to continue trying to persuade them to



Lord Carrington

take a more positive line. 'We ask these big countries of Europe to take more advanced positions towards the Palestinian cause because this will contribute to establishing peace in the region, and will doubtless protect their interests,' Mr Qaddoumi said. He made it quite clear that the basis of a settlement would have to be justice: 'We must push hard, so that peace may prevail on the basis of the national rights of the Palestinian people,' he said.

Of Mr van der Klaauw's visits to the Middle East, Mr Qaddoumi said: 'We told him that the bases on which the PLO will accept a settlement are the same: the right to return, the right to self-determination, and the establishment of an independent Pales-

tinian state. We also said to him that the Venice Declaration had neglected the PLO, the right to return, and the establishment of a Palestinian state. The declaration referred to UN Resolution 242. This is somewhat negative, bearing in mind that the Soviet initiative has already gone beyond 242, and is based on the realisation of the national rights of the Palestinian people.' This, Mr Qaddoumi said, was far better than anything so far offered by the EEC in the Venice Declaration.

Mr Qaddoumi added that Mr van der Klaauw had heard the same things from Palestinians under Israeli occupation, 'because the position of our people and brothers in the occupied territories is well known'. Therefore, the Palestinian leader insisted: 'The European countries must really reconsider their attitudes in order to take a more advanced position on the Middle East.'

In his other remarks during the interview, Mr Qaddoumi said that the United States was mainly to blame for the escalation of the crisis over Lebanon, which he referred to as 'the fabrication of a new crisis'. Mr Qaddoumi said that the role of the United States had been illuminated by the remarks of President Reagan's National Security Advisor, Richard Allen, who had supported Israel's attacks on south Lebanon. 'The United States and Israel are directly responsible for these Nazi and fascist

crimes and the stepping up of the crisis in Lebanon,' he said.

There was a real possibility of an all-out war in the region, the PLO leader said, because of the attitude of the United States, which had encouraged Israel in its crimes against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples.

It was not correct to refer to the crisis as one about 'Syrian missiles', the Palestinian spokesman pointed out. The missiles were stationed in the Beqaa Valley in order to protect the troops of the Arab Deterrent Force. Those troops, he reminded his listeners, were the forces of legitimacy in Lebanon. They had come into the country at the express wish of the Lebanese government, and remained there with its continuing support. This legitimate force, he said, had the right to protect itself when it was attacked.

The core of the crisis, Mr Qaddoumi emphasised, was the fact that the United States and Israel had begun to draw another 'red line', this time in the heart of Lebanon, contrary to all norms of accepted international behaviour; this, and the aggressive posture adopted by the United States under the Reagan administration, were the roots of the present crisis. It had been created he said, with the express aim of allowing the United States to conceal its aggression, and their intention to increase the presence of its forces in the area and in the Gulf.

► in 1948. Now he says, 'The humiliation and the threat of expulsion are with us again.'

When Shulamit Aloni, Israeli Knesset member and leader of the moderate Zionist Civil Rights and Peace Movement, led a party delegation in April to investigate harassment of Hebron citizens by the settlers, the occupiers of the Hadassah building obliged by pelting them, first with vegetables and then with gravel.

The extremist settlers use the Hadassah building as a base from which to propagate their demands that they be allowed to do exactly as they wish in the occupied territories. Tourists, also mainly Americans, are brought to the building by bus. In May last year, Palestinian commandos attacked a group of settlers outside the building, killing six, all of whom proved to be Americans. One, James Mahon junior, was a veteran of Vietnam, and had convictions for street violence in New York; he was known as a fanatical racist and anti-

communist, a member of Rabbi Kahane's group.

The occupation authorities used the incident to deport Hebron's Mayor, Fahd Kawasme, though there was no evidence that he had anything to do with the attack. But the support of Hebron's people for the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and the repeated protests by Mayor Kawasme and other local leaders against Zionist harassment, was pretext enough for the occupation authorities.

Mustafa Natshe, Mayor Kawasme's deputy, is now Acting Mayor. Complaint after complaint against the Zionist settlers is turned down by the military authorities, he said. A roof of a shop is brought down by the Hadassah settlers — 'an accident caused by enthusiastic festival dancing' said the authorities. Girls from a nearby school are beaten up by young male settlers — 'exaggerated reports,' said the authorities. Settlers' children are encouraged to stone local people — 'overblown incidents' said the authorities, even when Israeli

TV showed filmed confessions from the school-age miscreants, who said they stoned people 'just because they are Arabs'.

Most insulting of all are the regular 'pilgrimages' by settlers to the shrine of Abraham, a mosque set on what is believed to be the burial ground of the Prophet. Although Abraham is revered alike by Jews, Christians and Muslims, the building has never been anything but a mosque, and indeed may not be on the actual site of Abraham's tomb itself. Nevertheless, the occupation authorities have insisted that Jewish worship be allowed in the building on the Jewish Sabbath, which begins on Friday evening as the Muslim holy day is ending. The settlers use the occasion to hurl abuse at Muslim worshippers, and they bring in wine and food, turning their 'prayer' into a celebration of their domination of Hebron's Arab people.

Because the occupation authorities have backed the settlers, Acting Mayor Natshe has sought publicity

for the plight of Hebron's Palestinian citizens from sympathetic Israelis and the world's press. For this too, he has been attacked. 'He is preparing the atmosphere for terrorist attacks,' one settler claimed.

But the Hebron situation is not to be improved in the near future. Begin is relying on support from the settlers and other extremists in June's Israeli General Election, so no restraints will be placed on their anti-Arab activities by the government. And on 1st May, the Israeli Supreme Court finally sanctioned the occupation of Beit Hadassah. An appeal by sixteen Palestinian citizens of Hebron was rejected, after a government lawyer told the court that the settlers had official permission to live there. Judge Miriam Ben Porat said that as the building belonged to the 'Custodian of Desereted Property' — an Israeli government department responsible for seizing and expropriating Palestinian property in Israel and the occupied territories — the settlers had 'as good a

title to live in the building as anyone'; 'in the absence of a better qualified claimant, there is no reason to evict the settlers,' she ruled.

The predictable result of the government's official sanctioning of the Hadassah occupation was the takeover of Hebron by the settlers. Arab families were evicted from their homes, and about 90 settlers moved in to them. Acting Mayor Natshe and other local leaders called for a day-long strike and demonstration on 27th May. The Zionist occupation authorities responded with a show of force; shopowners were forced to open at gunpoint, and thousands of Israeli troops and police flooded Hebron and the surrounding area. Acting Mayor Natshe was forced to cancel a press conference after the local military governor threatened to cut all municipal services, and solidarity delegations from Nablus and Bethlehem were turned back by Zionist occupation troops. Nevertheless, the confrontation in Hebron will not go away.

FOCUS ON LEBANON

Syrian missiles only a cover for crisis

THE CRISIS over Syria's stationing of anti-aircraft defence missiles in Lebanon has provided the world with yet another example of Israeli arrogance and expansionism. The missiles were moved into the Beqaa valley in central Lebanon after Israeli jets, on 28th April, downed two Syrian supply helicopters during fighting between Israeli-backed Phalangist militia and the Syrian peacekeeping force.

The missiles are stationed some 50 kilometres north of the Israeli border, and they are the SAM-2 and SAM-6 types, suitable only for air defence. They cannot be used against the Phalangist positions in the Samnin mountains above the Beqaa. The SAM-2, low-altitude, version has been used several times in recent weeks against pilotless Israeli spy planes. They are hopelessly out of date and ineffective when pitted against the latest American fighters at Israel's disposal.

Even the newer SAM-6 missiles, designed for defence against high-altitude planes, can be rendered useless by the sophisticated electronic counter measures (ECM) equipment which the Americans supply to the Israelis, which can jam the missiles' guidance systems and throw them off the track of the target plane.

The Syrian missiles are too far north to have any effect on the regular Zionist air raids on Palestinian camps and villages in southern Lebanon, which go on, year in, year out, without attracting any of the attention raised by the missiles.

The western press has misleadingly and wrongly suggested that the Syrian forces are stationed in northern Lebanon with Israeli agreement. According to this theory, the mainly Syrian Arab Deterrent Force, which moved in during 1976 to try and end the Lebanese civil war, was prevented from going into the extreme south of the country by agreement between Syria and Israel. The same 'tacit agreement' it is alleged allowed

Commentary by Phil Kelly

Israel freedom to overfly Lebanon. The Syrian government has categorically denied all of this, and has pointed out that several Syrian pilots have lost their lives in air battles with Zionist planes over Lebanon. But it does not take a great deal of consideration to realise that the US has ensured that Israel is the most powerful military nation in the region, and that the best way to tackle such a monster is not always necessarily by flinging oneself unprepared into the fray to certain defeat.

The current crisis is entirely of Beigin's making, from the increased aid to the rightist militias to the downing of the Syrian helicopters. He believes that the tension will win him votes in the forthcoming Israeli elections, and he seems to be right. He no doubt calculated that there would be opposition from within his country but he seems also to have correctly guessed that this would not prevent him from making electoral gains.

Beigin has demanded not only that Syria remove the missile batteries newly stationed in Lebanon, but also those moved up inside Syria towards the Lebanese border. Those in Lebanon, he claimed, were to be attacked by the Israeli Air Force, but the move was pre-empted by the US, which instead provided the requisite 'peace mission' in the person of Mr Philip Habib.

The Palestinian news agency Wafa commented: 'It may seem odd that a state should claim that its security is at risk if its spy planes can be shot down over the territory of a neighbouring state.' Wafa explained that for the Zionists, 'security translates into a self-arrogated "right" to patrol Lebanese air space, keep up a virtually constant artillery barrage on south Lebanon's towns, villages and refugee camps, and destroy the boats

of Lebanese fishermen naive enough to think they can operate in their own national territorial waters.'

All sides are aware of the basically trivial events which led to the present crisis. Expansion by the Israeli backed Phalangist militia, including its attempts to take over the strategic town of Zahle, provoked fighting with the Syrian forces, which are based in the country precisely in order to prevent such expansion; President Assad's firmness in refusing to remove the missiles which provide essential air cover for the task which Syrian peace-keeping troops are intended to perform, has stopped Israel's efforts to extend its influence by stealth.

But this has not altered the fundamental problem in the region, or mitigated Zionist support for the right-wing in Lebanon. The Phalangists are increasingly beholden to the Zionists; in the south of the country, the Haddad militia is a virtual subsidiary company of the Israeli army. Zionist overights of Lebanon and Syria continue.

Voice of Palestine radio compared the Habib mission to an attack of illness, with public opinion being seized by fits of optimism and pessimism turned on and off by the western media, much as a sick person has bouts of high temperature and periods of remission. But beyond this superficiality, the radio said, the problem goes much deeper, and it concerns the confrontation between the Arabs and the Zionists, supported by the United States. 'In other words, it is the problem of the Arab-Zionist conflict in all its dimensions and how this conflict should continue in the right direction and revolve around its central issue: Palestine,' the radio commented.

Habib intends to defuse the 'missile crisis' by exacerbating divisions among the Arabs so as to prevent them from acting. Anthony McDermott reported for the *Financial Times* from Beirut on May 18th. This is



A Sunday Times map puts 'missile crisis' in perspective.

right, but inverted. The United States seeks to divide Arab from Arab as an essential component of its policy, and the current 'crisis' provides merely a better-than-usual opportunity. The irony is that the United States helped provoke the crisis by supplying weaponry to the Israelis, yet now pretends to seek a 'solution'.

The US has also used its 'crisis' as a way to insert itself yet deeper into the affairs of the Middle East. Habib talked not only with Beigin and President Assad, but with leaders of various Lebanese groups. The role has been long sought. There is no possibility of a solution which does not allow the continuing defence of the Syrian peacekeeping force. But as so often, talks seem to be an end in themselves, because they preclude action. President Assad has confirmed that the United States has no plan, only vague suggestions and the transmission of the unacceptable Israeli demands. State Department spokesman Dean Fisher claimed 'There is no American plan' in so many words.

There may be no detailed plan, but

the US intention is clear: to resolve the 'missile crisis' without approaching the solution of the problems of the Palestinians which underlie it and all other manifestations of the Middle East conflict.

The solution which the Americans have in mind, according to well-leaked information from the Habib entourage, involves offering the Israelis information on Syrian and Palestinian military activity from US spy satellites in return for a limitation — not a cessation — of overflights. No question has been raised that Zionist air attacks on Palestinian camps will be allowed to continue.

The Arabs appear to be behind President Assad in his refusal to remove the missiles. It would be shocking if there was not total Arab unanimity on the matter, stemming as the crisis does from particularly blatant Zionist expansionism. It remains to be seen whether the unanimity can be extended from that point to rebuild the Arab unity on which Palestine has been so sadly lacking for the past three years.

Sinister moves to destabilise Lebanon

WORLD ATTENTION on the current crisis in Lebanon is focused on the confrontation between Israel and Syria over the stationing of Syrian anti-aircraft missiles in the Beqaa valley. Less notice has been taken of the continuing attacks by the Israeli backed right wing militias on Palestinian refugee camps and districts of Beirut where the people support the Lebanese national movement, writes Phil Kelly.

While the US special envoy, Philip Habib, held talks in Beirut, Damascus and Tel Aviv intended to produce a 'peaceful solution' to the crisis, the war which has been continuing for the past five years claimed yet more casualties. The current

crisis started when Israeli-backed Phalangist militias attempted to expand their northern enclave, and Israel's surrogate force in southern Lebanon, the Haddad militia, poured a murderous artillery barrage into the town of Sidon on Easter Sunday.

Overshadowed by the missile crisis was the breakdown in talks designed to achieve a 'national understanding' between the various communal groups in Lebanon, and a new definition of a role for the Syrian peacekeeping force. The talks were an attempt to reach agreement on rebuilding the authority of national government in Lebanon, and there was great pressure on both the Phalangist and Haddad militias to

break their links with Israel in the interests of Lebanese national unity.

The Zionist attack on the two Syrian helicopters at the end of April, which sparked the current crisis, seems to have been a warning to the Lebanese right that they were too necessary to the Zionists to be allowed to make their own decisions.

In the wake of the breakdown of the talks, rightist shelling of Palestinian camps and Lebanese towns and villages escalated. Six people were killed in Beirut in an outburst of rightist shelling which started up on 9th May, and it was reported that the rightists had been backed by units of the Lebanese Army.

After the failure of a ceasefire agreement, new shelling began on 16th May, and exchanges of fire between rightist held areas and those under the control of the Syrian peacekeeping force and the Palestinians and Lebanese nationalists continued with lulls over the following days. Casualties were mounting as this edition of *Free Palestine* went to press. In the first 48 hours of the exchanges, more than 40 people were killed and 150 wounded in Beirut alone, as Syrian forces replied to Phalangist shelling of west Beirut. In the south, the town of Nabatieh came under fire from both the Haddad militia and Israeli artillery.

The Palestinian news agency Wafa issued a call for restraint, saying that Palestinian forces had orders not to retaliate against the shelling of Palestinian camps around west Beirut, but warning that the rightists would be responsible for whatever might happen if their 'bestial' attacks continued.

Israeli armour and troops continu-

ed to mass in northern Israel and in the Haddad-controlled border area. Two Israeli-made shells fired from the Haddad enclave hit the Lebanese Army barracks in Sidon, wounding two Lebanese soldiers.

The central committee of the Palestine National Liberation Movement, Al Fateh, said that urgent and united Arab action was required to confront the critical situation in Lebanon. It said that the attacks on the Palestinians and the Syrian troops of the Arab peacekeeping force had been prompted by the United States and Israel in the realisation that the road from Camp David had reached a dead end.

The completion of Camp David, Al Fateh said, required the transformation of Lebanon into a new US-Israeli base. The statement expressed astonishment at the fact that an Arab Foreign Ministers' Conference had not been held by mid-May, despite the fact that its importance was not denied by any Arab state.

FOCUS ON LEBANON

ISRAEL'S RAIDS into Lebanon have been described in the House of Commons as 'official terrorism'. David Watkins MP (Labour) looks at the background to the crisis in Lebanon and how Israel has orchestrated a 'crisis' to justify a new aggression against the Arabs. This article is based on Mr Watkins' comments in Parliament during the 7th May foreign affairs debate.

LEBANON IS the current reflection of the long-standing situation in the Middle East which is a danger to the peace of the world and a potential flash point.

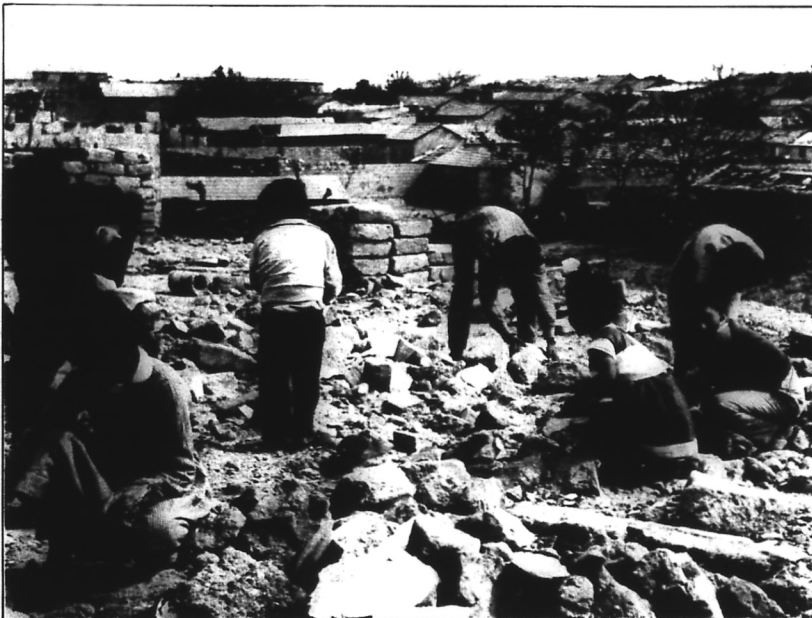
The conflict in that country is not simply between Christians and Muslims, as it is so regularly represented in the Western press and as it is regarded in Western thinking generally. It is far more complicated than that, involving complex internal factors arising in no small measure from a semi-feudal society. The position has been worsened, and continues to be worsened deliberately, by the physical and political intervention of foreign Powers anxious only to further their own ends by maintaining instability in the Lebanon. The situation is not helped by the bland platitudes of countries which could do much more to end the conflict.

In analysing the situation in the Lebanon, we return to the conflict between Christians and Muslims. It must be remembered, first, that there are three main Christian groupings, which are hostile to one another, and that there is also conflict among Muslims. There are also alliances between Christians and Muslims.

The National Movement, led by Mr Walid Jumblatt, exists to try to embrace people of all confessions. — it succeeds in doing so — and is perhaps the ultimate hope for the Lebanon. It was at the invitation of Christian factions within the Lebanon in 1976 that Syria originally intervened to protect them against attacks. It is one of the heavy ironies of the present situation, when the Syrians are being accused of deliberately attacking Christian communities, that that should be so.

It was the invitation of the Syrians into the Lebanon in those circumstances in 1976 that resulted in the brutal obliteration by the Syrian Army of the predominantly Muslim-Palestinian township of Tel al Zattar on the outskirts of Beirut. However, against that, since the 1975-76 civil war in the Lebanon, Syria has played the major role in the pan-Arab force which was established by the Arab League to try to maintain order in the country. That has proved a heavy military and economic burden upon Syria and has had its repercussions in the internal politics of Syria.

Syria has received precious little support from either Arab or Western countries and we should not be surprised if it has turned for help to the Soviet Union. That is the only quarter from which help for Syria has been forthcoming.



Palestinians search the rubble of homes bombed by Israel.

British MPs accuse Israel of 'official terrorism'

One of the appalling features in the Lebanon is the existence of private armies. Among the Christian faction, Mr Bashir Gemayel has emerged as the leader of the main private army, that of the extreme right Phalange Party, which is historically modelled — it originated in the 1930s — upon Mussolini's Fascist movement in Italy. It now has the open and total support of the Israeli intervention in the Lebanon. It was that group's attempt to take military control of the town of Zahle after consultations with the Israeli Chief of Staff, General Eytan, who went to North Lebanon to consult its representatives, that was the direct cause of the present conflict.

No country has a record of intervention in the Lebanon to match that of Israel. It was shortly after the 1967 war, which was launched by Israel, that the Israeli Army landed at Beirut airport — in a country which had never been at war with Israel — and deliberately destroyed the Lebanese civilian airline fleet. The Israelis have been bombing and shelling and making incursions into the Lebanese territory ever since then, by land, by sea and by air, in a campaign of official terrorism designed to control the south of the country in their interests.

In 1978 there was a full-scale Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon. That resulted in Israel leaving its puppet, Major Haddad, to command what are, in effect, its forces of occupation. Those Israeli-backed forces of Major Haddad have been engaged ever since then — quite apart from other activities — in continuous attacks against the international forces of the United Nations which were put there after the 1978 invasion in order to seek to control the position — something that they have had a very little success in doing.

It is astounding that the world community, which has a responsibility for those international forces, is seemingly so prepared to tolerate this position, because it is not an exaggeration to say that Lebanon today is being used as a battlefield by foreign Powers to further their own objectives in the way that Spain was used as a battlefield by foreign Powers in the late 1930s. The central object of Israeli policy is to maintain the destabilisation of the country in pursuance of its own expansionist policies.

I have a telegram which I received from Beirut, dated 2nd May. It is from Mr Innam Raad, who is the president of the Syrian Social Nation-

alist Party, which is a part of the national movement to which I have already referred — an amalgam of various groupings. I should like to quote the relevant parts of the telegram, because it is significant in drawing attention to the military intervention which has been carried out by the Israelis.

The telegram states: 'Israeli air attacks on Mount Lebanon and some villages in the Boukka district is an escalation in aggression . . . This new aggression is taking place during negotiations held in the Republican Palace for National Reconciliation with the aid of the Syrian Minister for Foreign Affairs where all Lebanese factions were summoned for preparatory hearing. Israel is trying to destroy all political solutions for the Lebanese crisis.'

I make no comment on the telegram, which comes from a man whom I have met in Lebanon, and who has very considerable standing within that country. Whether it is in Lebanon today, or in relation to some moves towards an international settlement involving the Palestinians or others, there is invariably some sort of Israeli action which is designed to prevent negotiations from being carried out.

I welcome the initiative from Washington seeking to involve the United States with the Soviet Union, Syria and Israel, in trying to settle the problem. Indeed, on this very day action is taking place in that direction. What I find disturbing, however, is that in that bringing together of other Powers there is virtually no mention of Lebanon itself. It would seem that foreign Powers are to decide among themselves what is to be the future of Lebanon. That is on a par with the attitude, which has persisted for 30 years, of trying to settle the Palestinian problem without involving the Palestinians.

Amongst the many complexities perhaps the most fundamental is the presence in Lebanon of 300,000 Palestinians. They are there only because they were driven from their homeland by the establishment and the subsequent expansion of the State of Israel. The appalling problem of Lebanon is inextricably bound up with the problem of Palestine. Neither of those problems can be settled separately. Until they are both settled there will be endless conflict in the Middle East and endless repercussions world-wide.

I want to suggest some principles upon which courses of action might be based. The United Kingdom and West European Governments should state plainly that Lebanon, which is the focus of tremendous conflict throughout the region, must be a free and sovereign country in its own right. There can be no talk of partition. The whole history of partition in Palestine, Cyprus and Ireland has proved to be a recipe for disaster rather than for the resolution of problems. Secondly, it should be stated plainly that all countries should desist from military intervention and from policies calculated to maintain a state of destabilisation in that country.

Thirdly, in so far as there is any intervention, it should only be from, and in the name of the United Nations, effectively to seek to sustain the legitimate Government of Lebanon and to allow the country to live in peace within secure borders. It is often said by protagonists of the Israeli case that all that resolution 242 and many other resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly call for is that Israel alone should be able to live in peace within secure borders, but Israel's policy has been one of constant incursion and expansion into the territory of neighbouring countries.

Of urgent and paramount importance is the need to establish the right of Lebanon to live in peace and security behind secure borders. None of that can be achieved without the self-determination of the Palestinian nation, which is inextricably bound up with the whole conflict in the area. If those two vital issues continue to be sidestepped as they have been for so long there can only be endless conflict and bloodshed and a growing threat to the whole of mankind.

I conclude by hoping that we can see something more positive. A slavish following of United States' policy by Western Europe is not a solution because there are grave defects in that policy. Western Europe should be taking a more positive initiative. With this country's experience in the area it is better placed than any other Western European country to give a lead.

Israel's responsibilities in Lebanon

TONY MARLOW MP (Conservative) writing in *The Daily Telegraph* comments on Israel's terrorism against civilians in the Lebanon:

'A large share of the cause of the present instability arises from the terror tactics of Israel and her

henchman, Haddad (charged with treason by the Lebanese Government) against both Lebanese and Palestinians in Southern Lebanon.

It seems you are saying, that Israel's patience can be fairly exhausted by the actions of Syrian

forces operating on Lebanese soil with the authority of the Lebanese Government, while at the same time the Israeli air force is at liberty to maim and kill scores of women and children through a policy of savage and incessant bombardment.'



Mossad's victims in Beirut (left to right): Kamal Nasser, Abu Youssef and Kamal Adwan all shot down in their homes by Israeli assassins.



Mossad's victims in Paris: Mahmoud Hamchari (second right) and Muhammed Boudia (right).

Mossad: the Zionist killing machine

MOSSAD, ISRAEL'S equivalent of the CIA or MI6, is responsible for secret Israeli operations abroad. Like its counterparts in most western countries, it is an independent organisation whose head, currently Brigadier General Itzhak Hoffi, enjoys direct access to the Premier. But the inter-agency rivalries common among intelligence organisations have meant that others too have been involved in Israel's overseas murder operations, writes Phil Kelly.

Mossad, like many Israeli organisations, traces its history to before the creation of the Zionist state, to secret operations against the Arabs, and non-Zionists, outside Palestine. Mossad is Hebrew for Institute, and Mossad's full name is The Institute for Intelligence and Special Tasks. The dual name signifies that like most overseas intelligence organisations, Mossad not only gathers information, but also functions as a way of carrying out the foreign policy of the state by secret means, from black propaganda through bribery to murder.

Mossad ranks high in status among the world's secret services. It enjoys a special relationship with America's CIA which dates from the 1950s. After the Suez aggression against Egypt, the Americans realised that if they were to play a strongly interventionist role in Middle East politics, then they would have to improve both their understanding of, and their ability to intervene in, the Middle East. Mossad became vital for the CIA in supplying information on Arab countries; the warped perceptions of the Zionists no doubt contributed to the distorted view of events in the Middle East which continues to cloud the understanding of the United States' military and political establishment.

Although a separate organisation from Israel's Foreign Ministry, Mossad is operationally close to it. Like most such services, its principal overseas operatives are 'under diplomatic cover', working out of Israeli Embassies and pretending to be diplomats. Unlike other countries' services, Mossad has the added flexibility of being able to place operatives under cover with various Zionist organisations.

Mossad's reliance on the Israeli Foreign Ministry for carrying out its terrorist tasks was revealed in 1973, when two of the six Mossad members arrested for the murder in Norway of a Moroccan waiter were held at the flat of an Israeli 'diplomat', Yigal Eyal. Eyal, later deported by the Norwegians, was almost certainly a Mossad agent under diplomatic cover. Abraham Gehmer, one of those convicted of offences connected with the murder, had also served under diplomatic cover, as a cultural attaché at Israel's Paris embassy.

Such links were criticised by Menachem Beigin, as opposition leader in 1973. Beigin and Likud

suggested that such operations should be entrusted to privately run organisations, which would receive state backing as and when required. Most secret services operate front companies, both to run businesses which are useful to them, and to provide additional 'cover' for agents. But Beigin was suggesting a greater use of his own, ex-Irgun, gang of terrorists in place of the official Israel, largely ex-Palmach, terrorists.

Nevertheless, the close liaison between terror and Israel's 'diplomatic' overseas missions continues. David Kimche, brother of the Swiss Zionist journalist Jon Kimche, was recently appointed as Director (top civil servant) in the Foreign Ministry, after serving for years as number two in Mossad.

Beigin has taken the opportunity to beef up Israel's foreign terror activities. Like many politicians on coming into office, he was nervous of the power of the intelligence community; all the more so, since he suspected that their loyalties lay with the Labour-Zionist establishment which he so cordially dislikes. He therefore chose to use the post of the Advisor to the Prime Minister on

Terrorism and Security, a political appointment, to impose a tighter control over the security services.

This post was created by Golda Meir when she was Premier. It has always been closely concerned with the organisation of the murder of Israel's political opponents abroad. As long ago as February 1973, *Time* magazine named former Israeli Army Intelligence chief Major General Aharon Yariv, the first holder of the post, as the man behind the activities of the hit squad which was snatched in Norway. Another holder of the post under Labour was Ariel Sharon, now Minister of Agriculture and responsible for the continuing dispossession of Palestinians from their lands to replace them with Zionist settlers.

But Beigin's first appointment to the post, Amikahy Paglin, a former Irgun terrorist, failed to make any significant impact on Israel's secret world. The fact that he had been arrested in 1972 for smuggling arms into Israel destined for the extremists around Rabbi Kahane was viewed askance by the establishment spooks. Paglin turned to his friends in the Gush Emunim and Kahane's Kach

organisation for footsoldiers.

Creating an organisation was the task taken on by Rafi Eytan who succeeded Paglin. Rafi Eytan, a member of Mossad from the early 1950s, is not to be confused with his namesake who is now Israeli Army Chief of Staff. Eytan operated as a Mossad agent for many years, rising to become head of European operations, co-ordinated and executed from the European headquarters in London. Later, he operated under commercial cover as an aide to US millionaire Amos Barnes, who has been a leading figure in links between Israel and South Africa.

Eytan managed Ariel Sharon's election campaign in 1977, when Sharon ran on an independent ticket, and was awarded subsequently the agriculture portfolio by Beigin. They used their connections with the extremist settler movements to hand over to them land in the West Bank which they claimed to have bought privately; in most cases, they forged the documents purporting to show that the land had been sold.

It was the Sharon-Eytan connections with the settlers which led Menachem Beigin to limit the 'investi-

gation' into the car-bombs which maimed Bassam Shaka, Mayor of Nablus, and Karim Khalaf, Mayor of Ramallah, in June last year.

The head of Shabak, Israel's internal security service, Avraham Akhiv, resigned after he had been ordered by Beigin not to investigate the links between Gush Emunim, Kach, and the bomb attacks on the mayors. The internal security service had evidence that Rabbi Kahane and settlers from the Beit El settlement near Ramallah were responsible for the attacks on the mayors. But the investigation was stopped after Eytan told Beigin that among those whom the Shabak wished to question were people who had been participants in operations outside the occupied territories and Israel, who might be used again, and who could therefore not be allowed to suffer the glare of publicity.

Using settlers for the hit squads has distinct advantages. They speak their own languages, are entitled to passports from other countries, and are familiar with other countries' ways. It is from among the very same extremists who seize Palestinian lands that the assassins are drawn.

Beigin murders his way to a second term

THE KILLING of Naim Khader is the latest in a series of assassination attacks on Palestinian leaders, part of a deliberate campaign started when Mrs Golda Meir was Prime Minister of Israel to weaken the Palestinian movement by killing prominent leaders and spokesmen. A wave of such killings took place in the early 1970s in capitals across Europe, and were only ended when a hit team were arrested in Norway and found by the courts to have been part of an Israeli intelligence (Mossad) assassination squad, writes Louis Eaks.

The Israeli hit team was working its way through a list which included three persons in London, a Briton and two Palestinians. However, the London targets were given a reprieve as the result of intervention by Scotland Yard which made it clear to the Israeli authorities that if any murders took place on British soil action would be taken to end the basing of Israel's European intelligence HQ in London.

The first attack in a European capital came on 17th October 1972, when the PLO Representative in Rome, Wael Zuaiter, was shot dead at point blank range. A recent court hearing in Rome accepted that Zuaiter was shot by the same persons responsible for the subsequent series of killings of Palestinian spokesmen in Europe.

Less than two months later, in Paris, the PLO Representative, Mahmoud Hamchari, was seriously injured on 8th December by an explosive device attached to his telephone. He subsequently died on 9th



Menachem Beigin

January 1973.

The Israeli hit team then moved to Nicosia, where a similar device to that which killed Hamchari was used to kill Bashir Abu Khair, the PLO Representative in Cyprus. An electronically detonated bomb had been placed under Abu Khair's bed.

Later in 1973, on 28th June a sophisticated device exploded in a car in Paris, killing Muhammed Boudia, a former member of the Algerian FLN, who had been associated with the Palestinian movement since he lived in the French capital.

It was, however, on 21st July 1973, that the Mossad team, operating under the code name 'God's Wrath' made the blunder that was to lead to the arrest of five members of the hit squad. The incident in question was the murder of Ahmed Bouchiki, a Moroccan waiter who had been mistaken for the PLO Representative in Norway. Six people were arrested for the murder of Bouchiki, and five

received prison sentences. Two of the six were arrested at the flat of an Israeli diplomat, who was later declared persona non grata by the Norwegian authorities.

Those arrested and convicted of the Bouchiki killing were Marianne Gladnikoff, Sylvia Rafael, Abraham Gehmer, Dan Aerbell, and Zvi Steinberg. Michael Dorf was acquitted. All were members of Mossad, the Israeli intelligence organisation. Gehmer had served under diplomatic cover as 'cultural attaché' at the Israeli Embassy in Paris.

Before taking their assassination campaign to Europe, the Israelis had earlier sent a commando team into Beirut, where on 10th April 1973 they killed three leading members of the Palestinian resistance movement: Abu Youssef and Kamal Nasser, who were both members of the PLO Executive Committee, whose Chairman is Yasser Arafat. Also killed in the Beirut raid was Kamal Adwan, a member of the Central Committee of Al Fateh, the organisation headed by Yasser Arafat. A number of bystanders were also killed in the Israeli raid.

After the arrests in Norway, the Mossad campaign was suspended, but in recent years, there has been evidence of a renewed campaign. In February 1977, Mahmoud Saleh, who had headed the PLO office in Paris for a brief period following the death of Mahmoud Hamchari, was shot at his bookshop in the Latin Quarter.

More recently, Cyprus has been the scene of renewed Mossad attacks. In

December 1979, two Palestinians were shot and killed in a Nicosia street by Mossad agents. The victims were Samir Tuqan, a member of the PLO office staff in Nicosia, and Abu Safwat, a Palestinian visiting from Beirut. Then on 4th January 1981, Hani al Hindi, a Syrian associated with the Palestinian movement in the past, but not politically active at the time of the incident, lost an arm in a car bomb explosion in Cyprus. The local police detained an Israeli, travelling on forged Canadian documents, Moshe Bavli, in connection with the incident.

The assassination of Dr Khader in Brussels is an extension to the current Israeli terrorist campaign in the Lebanon, which on Premier Beigin's own admission is intended to crush the Palestine Liberation Organisation and to remove it from the Middle East equation. Hundreds of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians have been killed in recent weeks as the result of almost daily bombing raids on Palestinian refugee camps and Lebanese towns and villages.

The Lebanon attacks and Dr Khader's murder are also an important part of Beigin's election campaign. Having started the campaign trailing badly in the opinion polls, Beigin has now bombed and shot his way to level pegging with his Labour opponents. Beigin's attacks on West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, the judicious purchase of votes with extra money for West Bank settlements, and the terrorist campaign against the Palestinians, are his way back to power.

THE FORGOTTEN PALESTINIANS

A report on the 'Israeli Arabs'

THE BANNING, last December, of the Congress of the Arab population in Israel, which was to have taken place in Nazareth, has led to further deterioration in the relations between the Likud Government and the Arab population of Israel (within its pre-'67 borders). In order to prevent the meeting, it had been necessary to invoke the Emergency Regulations of 1945 (Art. 84) which date back to the British mandate but are still in force today. This provoked an outcry, not only amongst the Arab community but also amongst liberal Jewish circles. [1]

Nowadays the Arabs represent 14% (525,000) of the population of Israel [2]. M Tawfiq Ziyad, the Mayor of Nazareth, who is registered as the most eminent representative of the Israeli Arabs, did not fail to protest against the banning of the Congress: 'Not only are we treated like second-class citizens, but also we are forbidden to debate legally.' In fact the Congress would have been the first meeting of its kind since the creation of Israel in 1948. No doubt the idea of a Congress was conceived when discriminatory measures against the Arab community in Israel increased following the election victory in May 1977 of the nationalist Right and the simultaneous intensification of repression in the occupied territories.

The land problem is still the principal source of anxiety to the 'Israeli Arabs'. Following the establishment of the State, a complex legal system was set up which permitted the expropriation of Arab land [3]; over the years, 150,000 hectares of land have been confiscated for Jewish settlements.

Most of the expropriations have taken place in Galilee where, over two years ago, some thirty little 'forts' were established: small settlements belonging for the most part, to the military agricultural units (Nahal), are built on the hills overlooking the Arab villages in the hope of restricting the development of those villages — a policy which is summed up in the following remark made by the Foreign Minister, Mr Yitzhak Shamir, at the beginning of the winter: 'Galilee will not be a place for Goyim [Gentiles or non-Jews] but for Jews.'

While the expropriations in Galilee were being carried out, the government was passing on unprecedented law concerning the eviction of almost ten thousand Bedouin from the Negev and the setting up of military installations on their land, in preparation for the eventual evacuation of Western Sinai. According to the new law, the Bedouin will have no recourse before the law. Hundreds of sedentary families in the Negev will also be evacuated from their homes with no other choice than to become a cheap labour force in the area. Whereas the Israeli Jews who settled on land confiscated from the Bedouin in North East Sinai after the six-day war and who are to be evacuated in a year's time in accordance with the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Agreement, will receive thousands of pounds in compensation, the Bedouin displaced in accordance with the same Agreement, will receive a mere pipette.

Since the foundation of the State, six hundred and thirty-five Jewish settlements (one hundred and twenty-five of them in the occupied terri-



Those who remained in Palestine became second class citizens.

In this article Israeli journalist Amnon Kapeliouk looks at the problems facing the Palestinians who have lived under Israeli rule since 1948 as second class citizens in their own land.

tories) have been established. But not one village has been built for the Arab citizens (except for a few groups of dwellings for the Bedouin) despite the fact that the Arab population has tripled in size since 1948. The development plans for the Arab villages are marking time. Thus, in the general budget for development for 1979-80, from a total of I£6,540 million, only 2% was allocated to Arab areas. The construction projects for villages for the Arab community are either 'frozen' or approved after a considerable delay. Under demographic pressure, unauthorised buildings have now sprung up which the police or the frontier guards will soon demolish. Over 40 per cent of the Israeli Arabs are already living under difficult conditions with at least three people to a room.

Although 'Israeli Arabs' have been gradually dispossessed of their land and now provide the economy with a workforce which performs the most menial tasks, no less than 25 per cent of them are still farmers. However, only 10 per cent of their land is irrigated compared with 55 per cent of the Jews' land. Their consumption of water for irrigation accounts for no more than 2.5 per cent of the total.

Only 2 per cent of the civil servants in the Israeli government are Arab. Four years ago, the former Adviser on Arab Affairs to the Prime Minister's Office, Mr Shmuel Toledano, described the actual status of this class of citizens: 'All the key positions dealing with the country's economy are occupied by Jews. They control all the banks, the companies, government policy, the Histadrut (the main trade union). They hold all the power of the state in their hands. When it is decided to devalue the

pound or to reduce the subsidies, the Arabs have no say even though all this directly concerns the half a million Israeli-Arab citizens. In effect, the Israeli Arabs are not represented on any forum where decisions are made which directly concern them.' [5]

The discrimination is always subtle and disguised. For example, on 17th December 1980, the Israeli Knesset passed a law granting aid to large families (ie with four children or more). The law did not exclude the Arabs from taking advantage of it but a short paragraph simply stated that the law was only applicable where one member of the family had completed his compulsory military or reserve service. It is well known that Arabs are not called up for service which means that although their birthrate is one of the highest in the world — all their families are large — the entire community is prevented from benefiting from this new legislation. It is the same iniquitous situation with housing aid for young couples, which is also granted on completion of military service.

In the field of education, recent statistics have shown that there is a need for two thousand classes for the Arab pupils. In secondary school, only 8 per cent of the Arab children attain their baccalauréat, as compared with 24 per cent of the Jews. At university they represent only 3.7 per cent of the total (fifty-four thousand students). Over the last three years, the student organisations have gradually passed into the hand of the extreme right, as a result of which the Arab students have become targets for constant acts of aggression and have sometimes been expelled (as at Beer Sheva) or made to live in their home towns or villages. This is only one of many examples, especially now that the extreme right wing students feel encouraged by the series of anti-democratic laws passed last summer in the Knesset: for example, one of the laws authorised the Minister of the Interior to deprive of his Israeli nationality any individual who was 'unfaithful' to the state; another forbade any expression of solidarity or sympathy with any 'terrorist organisation', the Palestine Liber-

ation Organisation being defined as such by the law.

Certain opinions currently held by those in power are by their nature alarming to the Arab community as regards their long term future in the country. Mr Moshe Sharon, a former adviser on Arab Affairs to the Prime Minister, made the following statement after his resignation from the post: 'In the course of my duties I came across a number of individuals motivated by militarist feelings who believed that an uprising by the Arab minority was inevitable. This eventuality did not worry them because they believed that it would give them the opportunity to chase the Arabs out. Other people would say, "If it is true that such an uprising is inevitable, then we must channel it in such a way that it takes place at a time and in conditions which are favourable to Israel. Why wait until the end of the 80s when it would be better if it happened at the beginning of the 80s?" That's how they are talking.' [6]

The Commander, General Avigdor Ben-Gal, declares that as far as he is concerned, the Arabs of Israel are 'a cancer in the body of the country' [7].

General Sharon, the Minister of Agriculture and champion of the settlements in the occupied territories, has on several occasions, referred to the Arab citizens as 'strangers', threatening them, as it were, with a new exodus: 'They must beware of extremism,' he has said, 'if they want to avoid a second tragedy similar to that which befell the Palestinian people in 1948.' [8] Another of the Ministers in Mr Beigin's government, the Minister for Industry and Commerce, Mr Gideon Patti, made the following suggestion: 'If any member of the Arab minority does not like it here, he can take a taxi and, within half an hour cross the river Jordan, and we will wave goodbye to him.' [9]

The vast majority of 'Israeli Arabs' see themselves as an integral part of the Arab Palestinian people, the rest of whom are under military occupation in the territories conquered by Israel, or dispersed throughout the Arab world. Palestinian consciousness was reinforced

in the minds of the Israeli Arabs by the bloody events of the 'Day of the Land' of 30th March 1976, in which six farmers were shot dead by the Israeli army. Some Arab citizens are asking for 'Arab' to be replaced by 'Palestinian' on their Israeli identity cards as a more accurate description of their nationality.

In line with this solidarity, the manifesto of the congress which should have taken place in Nazareth, was signed by hundreds of Arab individuals with diverse political leanings.

It laid down that peace depended on Israel's withdrawal to its pre-1967 borders, the recognition of the Palestinians' right to self-determination and the creation of an independent Palestinian state. The manifesto of the congress also specified that the PLO was the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and that it would be necessary to deal with the PLO to establish peace. It was, however, this phrase which served as the pretext for banning the congress, with the Israeli authorities taking refuge behind the following argument: the Israeli Arabs are part of the Palestinian people; according to the Nazareth Congress, the PLO is the representative of the Palestinian people and therefore of the Israeli Arabs. However, the law regards the PLO as a terrorist organisation.

Notes

- 1 Some editorials in the Israeli press have condemned the banning.
- 2 Excluding the 115,000 Palestinians living in Arab Jerusalem who are always included in the official statistics on Israeli Arabs, although they do not have Israeli nationality. The number of Arab inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza is around 1,300,000.
- 3 For more details on these laws and ordinances see Amnon Kapeliouk 'Arab Land in Israel', *Le Monde*, 1st June 1976.
- 4 *Ha'aretz*, 7th November 1980.
- 5 *Ha'aretz*, 28th January 1977.
- 6 *Jerusalem Post*, 9th November 1977.
- 7 Broadcast on national radio, 9th August 1979.
- 8 *Ha'aretz*, 2nd December 1980.
- 9 *Ha'aretz*, 4th December 1980.

The above is an edited translation from *Le Monde Diplomatique*, February 1981.

A WRY Arab scholar once pointed out that Palestine was the perfect place for the settlement of persecuted Jews, if only it hadn't been populated already. Harold Wilson has developed this idea into a vast book. He has contrived to write a history of the making of Israel with hardly a mention of the Arab people who lived there before it was made. The Palestinian Arabs crop up from time to time, rather awkwardly, in official reports and politicians' speeches. But in Wilson's own narrative and comments, it is as though they had never been. The index has: *Arabs, Palestinian, Harold Wilson* on p 368.

The single reference, in a speech he made as leader of the Opposition in 1973 is to 'the Palestinians who lost their homes in what they regard as the land of their fathers in 1948. This is a problem that I have constantly raised...'

It is a 'problem', however, which he constantly does not raise in his book. He devotes himself instead to the story of how a brave and tenacious people were led by far-sighted leaders back into the promised land, with no one to help them but the government of the United States of America (all the time) the government of Russia (at the crucial time) and the most fantastic programme of economic and military aid ever afforded any nation on earth.

Leave the Palestinian Arabs out of this, and there is no limit to the rewriting of history. The Balfour Declaration, a cynical document which promised a 'national home' to the Jews in Palestine without affecting the 'civil and religious rights' of the Arabs whose home it was, becomes the foundation stone of wise statesmanship. The policy of encouraging free immigration of Jews into Palestine, provided they could show they were what Churchill called 'good citizens who will build up the country' ('we cannot', he explained 'have a country inundated by Bolshevik riff-raff') gets Wilson's accolade as Britain's answer to the problems of 'Hitler's persecution of Jews in Germany'. In this he forgets not only the Palestinian Arabs but also the immigration policy of Britain and America which was at that time as hostile as ever to foreign settlers, especially to the Jewish refugees.

In his book on the immigration service, Mr T W E Roche writes of Jews coming to Britain from Austria in 1938:

'In some instances, passengers reached the ultimate in self-debasement, kneeling on the ground, begging the immigration officer for mercy and yet, when they realised that their pleadings were in vain, suddenly switched from abject beseeching to vituperation and vilification.'

They were sent back to Dachau and other such places without a murmur of complaint from all the high-principled Zionists in the British government and opposition. The only place where the Jews could go in large numbers was to Palestine, where they would eventually outnumber and expel the existing population. There are those awkward Arabs again, cluttering up the ideal.

In 1939, the British government realised the trouble it was stoking up, and published a White Paper restricting Jewish immigration into Palestine. Wilson describes this as the 'all time nadir in the long history of Britain's relations with the Jewish people'.

The high point of his fantasy and the low point of his book is his description of the formation of the state of Israel. He supports the plan for partition drawn up and approved by the United Nations in 1947 (in

Harold Wilson's shoddy fantasies about Palestine



THE FORMER Prime Minister Harold Wilson has recently published his latest book, devoted to glorifying the Zionist movement and its actions in Palestine. Paul Foot, son of Lord Caradon, and himself born in Palestine, accuses Wilson of 'rewriting history' in this review which appeared in The Spectator on 9th May.

which some quarter of a million Arabs were asked to live in a permanent minority, or leave). He supports the Jewish armies' seizing by force of arms about 25 per cent more territory even than that allotted to them by the UN; and he manages to tell the story without himself once recording that, at the very least, half a million Arabs were driven from their homes. There is nothing about the massacre of Deir Yassin, in which 254 women and children were massacred and then held out as a warning to thousands of other Arab villagers to leave; nothing about the take-over of Jaffa (an Arab city, allotted to the Arabs by the UN), nothing about 'solving' the problem of Jewish persecution by creating one of the most intractable refugee problems the world has ever known.

In so far as these things are mentioned at all, they are put into the mouth of Ernest Bevin, Labour's post-war Foreign Secretary who, with the support of the Prime Minister Attlee, tried without success to stem the Zionist tide. In two enormous chapters entitled *Britain Puts the Clock Back* and *Bevin Moves the Reference Back*, Wilson conducts a furious assault on Bevin, ridiculing his trade union background ('was it perhaps that Bevin regarded Truman as one of the secondary dockyard managers he had out-manoeuvred in his Transport Workers' days?') and charging him with hostility to the Jewish people. In the course of this attack, he quotes Bevin at length, as though to expose him. In these quotations, the Palestinian Arabs come back into the story, and at last someone is talking some sense. 'We cannot make two viable states in Palestine, however hard we may try' said Bevin, and he was absolutely

right. 'Either the Arabs in a partitioned state must always be in an Arab minority, or else they must be driven out' he predicted, absolutely correctly. And when they were driven out...

'The fact is that 500,000 Arabs are gone; they are refugees; and I do not think they walked out voluntarily... The marvel to me is that the conscience of the world has been so little stirred over that tragedy. I think that the driving of poor, innocent people from their homes whether it is in Germany by Hitler or by anybody else, and making the working people of the place suffer is a crime...'

How was it that this simple humanitarian response was so unpopular among socialists at that time? Wilson reminds us that the Party had from its formation been more Zionist even than the Tories. He shows how Bevin, always in a minority in the Cabinet over the Middle East, was vigorously opposed on the Right of the Party by Hugh Dalton ('let the Arabs be encouraged to move out as the Jews moved in'), and on the left by Aneurin Bevan.

Most Labour politicians at the time, understandably enough, were consumed with horror at the Fascist holocaust, and what it had done to the Jews. They saw support for Zionism as support for the persecuted Jewish people, and were easy prey to the old Zionist argument that anyone who argues against Zionism is anti-semitic. In fact, Zionism complements anti-semitism. It accepts that anti-semitism is endemic to the human condition, and cannot be fought and scotched by a multi-racial society. It concludes that the only solution to anti-semitism is to construct for Jews their own country, their own chauvinism, their own superstition and their own right to persecute their minorities.

As Wilson recognises in a footnote, many socialists who supported Zionism in the late 1940s came to adapt their position, and to sympathise more with the Arabs as Israel continued her conquests and her occupations. But Harold Wilson moved in the opposition direction.

In the postwar government, whose Cabinet Wilson joined before the State of Israel was declared, his was the mild, undogmatic Zionism of most of his colleagues. Fond as he is of quoting himself, he can't find a single contribution which he made in Cabinet in support of the new Israeli state.

In 1956 when the Israeli, French and British Governments combined in a nasty, violent struggle against Egypt, Wilson was shocked. His monumentally boring two chapters on Suez much as they whitewash the Israeli involvement, cannot but conclude with his speech at the time that Britain was behaving like a 'bullying imperialist power' against a 'weaker, coloured nation'.

As Prime Minister after the 1967 six-day war, he approved UN Resolution 242 calling for a withdrawal from occupied territory. He sanctioned his Foreign Secretary's speech to the UN General Assembly strongly opposing the acquisition of territory by war. When Gerald Kaufman, who worked in Wilson's office, visited Israel for a holiday in 1969, and sent to Downing Street a postcard from the occupied territories, Wilson was furious and considered sacking him. In all this time, his basic sympathies were with Israel but he could see

that the Arabs and the Palestinians had a point of view.

The change came during his years as Leader of the Opposition in 1970 to 1974, and in his two years as Prime Minister following that. He drew closer to a circuit of wealthy friends, many of whom were involved in one way or another with raising funds for Israel. The Lords Fisher, Pluresden, Kagan, Weidenfeld (who publishes this book), Kissin, old friends, and all ennobled under Wilson's premiership, were joined by Sir Eric Miller, of Peachey Properties and the Churchill Hotel, where so many Zionist meetings were held.

The connection between Wilson and the Israeli government became very close. The Israeli Prime Minister or London Ambassador had a direct line to Wilson and his personal and political secretary Lady Falkender, and they used it. On one occasion, Foreign Secretary James Callaghan was moved to complain that he and his department were being by-passed.

So Wilson became an unswerving Zionist at the time when the Zionist case was at its weakest. His book is an attempt to establish that case. It ends with a pathetic little postscript in which he voices his 'anxieties' about his Israel. The 'democratic humanitarian socialist state' which Wilson defended so vigorously for so long is now run by the most brutal terrorists of the Irgun and Stern gangs on the economic principles of Milton Friedman. The 'sanctuary for the Jewish people' has become for Jews one of the most insecure places on earth. And while the Beigin government continues with its military occupation of the Arab West Bank and of Jerusalem, the Israeli Labour Party, Left and Right, offers not the slightest hope of any alternative.

The whole wretched experiment of Zionism is in ruins. It says something about the condition of a once proud and dignified politician that he has devoted 400 pages in an attempt to shore it up.

□ *The Chariot of Israel, Harold Wilson (Weidenfeld & Nicholson pp.406, £14.95)*

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Editorial

Palestine, Zionism and the West

A MAJOR Israeli response is being mounted to the growing support for the Palestinian people in Britain, especially in the Labour movement. But the Zionists' efforts are going awry almost before they have started.

It was reported recently that the Histadrut, the trade union wing of the Zionist movement, is to set up an office in London. Already, links between the British and Israeli trade union movements, which have been slowly atrophying over recent years, are being resuscitated by the Israelis.

For the first time in twelve years, a Histadrut representative turned up at the recent Scottish Trade Union Congress. According to delegates, the Histadrut's man left the gathering 'angry and bitter' after most of his approaches were met either by avowals of support for the Palestinians, or at the very least by expressions of concern from moderate delegates about Israeli policies, particularly in the occupied territories.

The fact that the Histadrut barred Arab Palestinians from membership for the first forty-five years of its existence, and that it has never passed so much as a token resolution criticising Israel's colonial and racist policies is now too well known for the Zionist 'trade union' to have much credibility with British unions. Histadrut representatives are now assiduously courting speaking invitations from British Trade Unions and Trades Councils. But such bodies as Trade Union Friends of Palestine are well placed to counter Zionist arguments. Given equal access to the trade unions, the Palestinian case wins over anyone with the slightest democratic leanings.

The Zionist Federation and a small group of MPs have launched a 'campaign' against the twinning of the Scottish city of Dundee with Nablus in the occupied West Bank. Tel Aviv gives the word, and the British Zionists, led by Greville Janner, President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, respond. A petition has been launched, backed by Janner and MPs from Scottish constituencies. They include two Conservatives from adjacent seats, a Scottish Nationalist from a Dundee seat, and a Labour MP from a nearby town. Like Jerusalem, Dundee is being encircled by the Zionists.

But the Dundee exercise has an inept air which shows the desperation behind it. The crude attempt to link the twinning with disgraceful anti-semitic daubings on Dundee's synagogue has convinced no one. And Dundee Council, the Zionists' main target, is a tough nut to crack. On a matter completely unrelated to the Middle East, the scale of municipally-owned housing, it has earned a great deal of respect, at least among Labour voters, by standing up to the present Conservative government. The left-wing council in Dundee is backed by many who do not necessarily share every article of its socialist faith. It owes its election in part to a revulsion against corruption in previous City administrations.

As far as the city's overwhelmingly Labour electorate is concerned, the involvement of a Scottish Nationalist and two Conservatives in the campaign makes it just another right wing attack on their Council. Not much scope for the Zionists to win friends there. As to the involvement of

the two Labour MPs, one active member of the local Labour Party dismissed Greville Janner out of hand: 'Everybody knows he's a Zionist first and a Labour man a long way second.' The involvement of the other Labour MP, Richard Douglas, who represents Dunfermline, was described as 'mainly intended to cause embarrassment to us in Dundee and the Party in general.'

The Zionists appear to be stuck with the right wing of the Parliamentary Labour Party. Rather than launching a broadly-based national campaign against the Nablus twinning, they seem to have run aground on the reefs of the permanent left-right split in the Labour Party.

No wonder the Zionists feel it necessary to re-think their propaganda. At the beginning of July, a gathering in Jerusalem of 'public relations professionals' from all over the world was convened by the World Zionist Organisation. It decided to launch a new publicity campaign on behalf of Israel.

But in the jargon of advertising, the basic flaw in the strategy of marketing Israel in the 1980s is the product. Any 'public relations professional' will admit that there are some products which just cannot be made acceptable to the public.

That Zionism is now less acceptable to western public opinion than ever before is the responsibility mainly of the activities of the PLO. The diplomatic successes in the Third World, which led to Yasser Arafat's speech at the United Nations in 1974, have been built on in Europe over the past seven years. This movement will not itself lead to a solution, still less one which is

based on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. But it is a massive advance from the days when Zionism was accepted without question by liberal opinion in the whole western world.

A catalyst for the changes of the past few years has undoubtedly been the altered face of Zionism. Previous public relations successes of the Zionists were achieved by the Israeli Labour Party, whose urban, relaxed and above all, European emissaries were the acceptable social democratic face of settler colonialism.

The mask dropped when Menachem Begin won the last Israeli General Election. Though the Likud regime has been only marginally more vicious towards the Palestinians than its Labour predecessors, Begin's truculent and aggressive style, his unwarranted attacks on respected international statesmen like Helmut Schmidt, and the open glee which has accompanied Zionist bombing attacks on refugees in Lebanon have combined to destroy the carefully projected image of Zionism in the west. This geriatric hoodlum doesn't have the ability to conceal the true nature of his beliefs as Labour did.

The ILP has spent the past four years assuring its friends that the Begin victory was a temporary aberration, and that Labour would soon regain its rightful position in charge of the Zionist state. But as the 1981 election campaign has progressed, Begin's lead has increased. Labour must now explain to its friends in social democratic and liberal parties, in unions and foreign ministries, how it is that the Begin nightmare is proving to be not just a passing phase, but the start of a whole

new era in the history of the Zionist state.

They must also explain why it is that, if Israel is the democratic and socialist utopia which they claim, how Begin wins votes by naked appeals to racism, by attacking neighbouring countries, by vicious repression and escalated colonialism in the 1967 occupied territories, and by gutter-snipe attacks on international statesmen. Is this the way to attract votes from Israel's 'socialist' electorate?

It seems likely that Begin will win in June. If he does, Labour will probably never rule Israel ever again. Begin, as he intended, has altered the nature of the Zionist state. What is happening bears strong parallels to the conquest of state power in South Africa by the Nationalist Party, the Afrikaners, in 1948. The basic impossibility of pretending that settler colonialism can have a liberal or democratic face has caught up with the Israelis.

The eager young men from Tel Aviv battering on the doors of British trade unions and political parties no longer carry the conviction of a few years ago.

The product has turned out to be basically unsaleable. This is not to minimise the attacks which will be directed in the next few months against supporters of the Palestinians. But if those who support the Palestinians have the breadth of vision and tolerance to back the initiatives of people as different as the Dundee councillors and Lord Carrington, then the Zionists will not get very far. The basis of our strength is the steadfastness of the Palestinian people, and we in the West cannot afford to let them down.

LONDON NOTES

Award for Vanessa

READERS OF *TV Times* have voted Vanessa Redgrave, a prominent supporter of the Palestinians, as the Best Actress from among all those who appeared on television in Britain in the past year. The *TV Times* award came on the strength of her performance as the French Jewish singer Fania Fenelon in *Playing for Time*, the harrowing narrative of Ms Fenelon's imprisonment in the Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz.

When Ms Redgrave was chosen to play the part in the film, made originally by CBS in the United States, there was considerable opposition from Zionist organisations. This stemmed in part from the award of an Oscar which she had received in 1978 for her part in the title role of the film *Julia*. That award, for Best Supporting Actress, came also for a part depicting an anti-Nazi.

Apart from the most fanatical Zionists, critics of the choice of Ms

Redgrave for the part of Fania Fenelon were silenced by her outstanding performance. It was evident that her personal knowledge of the horrific effects of racism, which she has seen at first hand in the course of her work on behalf of the Palestinian people, was a firm basis on which her acting was based. *Playing for Time* is certainly one of the great television dramas, as viewers have acknowledged by choosing Ms Redgrave as television's best actress. Perhaps we could have a repeat?

Look back in anger

WHO WOULD ever have thought that one would look back on Jimmy Carter's four years in the White House with nostalgia? Yet somehow, the architect of Camp David appears almost sane in comparison with the malicious incompetence displayed by Reagan and Haig in dealing with Middle East affairs. Former Israeli Foreign Minister (and current BBC-TV star) Moshe Dayan, in his latest

book, says that when he met Carter with Vice President Mondale, the President and his number two took turns in 'launching charge after charge against Israel'. It was all 'most unpleasant', says the Zionist leader. How odd it must have been for him to meet an American President with any criticisms of Israel at all.

The considerate demolition experts

ZIONIST OCCUPATION forces in Gaza recently demolished the homes of two Palestinians suspected of involvement in nationalist activities. The Israeli news agency *Itim* gravely reported: 'The houses were destroyed only after the occupants and all their belongings had been removed and steps had been taken to prevent any damage to neighbouring structures.' So that's all right, then; or perhaps we should infer that such precautions over people, property, and 'neighbouring structures' are taken so seldom that when they are, it's news indeed.

Palestinian refugee granted asylum in Britain

MAHMOUD ZAID, a Palestinian with Israeli citizenship, has been granted political asylum in Britain. Mr Zaid was arrested in 1967 when he tried to cross from Israel into Syria to make contact with an uncle in that country.

He was accused of spying by the Zionists, and was imprisoned. After his release in 1975, he was harassed so much by the police and the authorities that his life was made intolerable. He lost several jobs after police told employers about his 'criminal' record.

Mahmoud Zaid waited two years for the Israelis to grant him a passport, and then came to Britain in 1979. Observers feel that the granting of political asylum indicates that the British Government accepts that Palestinians in Israel are ill-treated by the Zionist authorities because of their nationality.

Some like it hot

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S National Security Advisor Richard Allen recently referred to Israeli attacks on south Lebanon as 'hot pursuit of terrorists'. Writing in the New York weekly *Village Voice*, British journalist Alexander Cockburn commented: 'It must be one of the most prolonged and sanguinary hot pursuits in history, since it has produced — between 1969 and 1981 — approximately 800,000 refugees from south to north Lebanon and approximately 100,000 casualties from Israeli bombing, strafing, napalming, 130 mm rockets, cluster bombs, etc.'

Richard Allen is not unfamiliar with the tactic of hot pursuit — invasion of neighbouring countries was a frequent practice of the colonial forces of Portuguese dictator Marcello Caetano, one of Allen's former employers.

Palestine refuses to disappear

ZIONIST ATTEMPTS to wipe the name of Palestine out of all written records are being wrecked on the immovable rocks of history. The occupation authorities' attempt to prevent the Jerusalem paper *Al Fajr* from calling its English-language weekly edition 'A Palestinian weekly' petered out in embarrassment when the paper's owners pointed out that the leading Israeli English-language paper, the *Jerusalem Post*, is published by the Palestine Post Ltd, a company which pre-dated the Zionist state.

Now, the military governor of occupied Gaza has allowed the Bank of Palestine to re-open its offices there.

The Bank was closed when Israel invaded Gaza in 1967. When permission to re-open was granted, the Zionists had insisted that the Bank should change its name, but the move was dropped after the directors petitioned the Israeli Supreme Court.

A spokesperson for the Israeli Justice Ministry said that they had changed their mind because the Bank had acquired its name more than twenty years ago. This did not mean that they would allow new enterprises to carry the name 'Palestine', he averred. However, there remain thousands of enterprises in the company registers of the Zionist State which have 'Palestine' or 'Palestinian' in their titles.

Free Palestine

Support for PLO at Westminster

THE HOUSE of Commons Foreign Affairs debate in May saw greater realism than ever over the future of Palestine. With varying degrees of enthusiasm, front bench spokesmen and back bench members from all the major parties agreed that it was right for Britain to have official discussions with the PLO, and that the PLO should be associated with any future talks on the Middle East. However, the debate also brought a timely warning of the inadequacy of the EEC's present plans for the European Middle East peace initiative.

The Lord Privy Seal, Sir Ian Gilmour, the Government's foreign affairs spokesman in the Commons, said that they hoped for 'renewed progress' towards a comprehensive peace settlement in the second half of this year, when Britain holds the presidency of the EEC Council of Ministers. 'The principles of the Venice declaration, which are carefully balanced, will remain the basis of our efforts. Our object is to persuade all concerned to accept them as a reasonable and realistic basis for peace,' Sir Ian said. The Venice declaration, he added, 'is designed to ensure that the Israelis' legitimate security should be balanced by the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians.'

Sir Ian gave way to Labour MP Andrew Faulds, who urged that PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, whom he described as 'responsible and moderate' should be brought 'into the centre of discussions'. Mr Faulds also asked whether it was possible 'to impose on that simplistic cretin who is the present President of the United States, that a Palestinian involvement in this matter is essential'. Sir Ian balked at the description of President Reagan, but agreed with the principle: 'The Venice declaration mentioned that the PLO had to be brought into the negotiation,' he confirmed.

Labour Foreign Affairs spokesman Denis Healey said that he agreed with the government that 'there can be no peace until there is a solution of the Palestine problem. There will be no solution of the Palestine problem without the implication of the Palestine Liberation Organisation.'

Mr Healey was diplomatically vague when talking about the need for the PLO to recognise Israel's right to exist, avoiding the key question of whether, as some European politicians have suggested, this recognition should be the price which the PLO would have to pay merely for entry into the negotiations. But he went on to slam Israeli Prime Minister Begin, who, he said, 'has had some success in seeking votes through the ruthless exploitation of greed, chauvinism, and even latterly racism.' Labour's Foreign Affairs spokesman



Denis Healey (top) and David Owen (bottom)

said that remarks made by Mr Beigin accusing West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and the German people of being personally responsible for Nazi atrocities against the Jews served only to isolate Israel from the rest of the world.

For the Social Democrats, Dr David Owen, Foreign Secretary in the last Labour government, said that it was right that the PLO should be brought into the negotiations, but said that the timing of the meeting between the Foreign Secretary and Mr Arafat was 'of the utmost delicacy'. 'As Foreign Secretary,' Dr Owen said, 'I authorised our ambassadors to open a dialogue with the PLO in certain key Arab countries'; but he added that Britain's major contribution to the European initiative would be 'as a candid friend of Israel'. Continued Israeli settlement in the West Bank 'flouted international opinion', Dr Owen declared.

Tory backbencher Dennis Walters was less equivocal when he insisted that recognition of Israel by the PLO could only come when Israel recognised the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. Western interests in the Middle East were being threatened, he said, because pro-western Arab countries were unable to support the West fully because of the Americans' determination to back Israel. The remedy, he felt, would be an American declaration of their acknowledgement of Palestinian rights, and perhaps a statement by the Reagan administration as to what they would regard as secure and recognised boundaries.

Mr Walters also called for the association of the Soviet Union with any peace making process in the Middle East. 'No settlement will stick that does not command at least acquiescence from the Soviet Union,' he told MPs. The point at which peace had been nearest, he said, was the joint US-Soviet declaration of October 1977: 'It was a tragedy,' Mr Walters declared, 'that within days the Carter administration turned away from that hopeful initiative in response to Israeli protests and the orchestrated campaign of the Zionist pressure groups in Washington.'

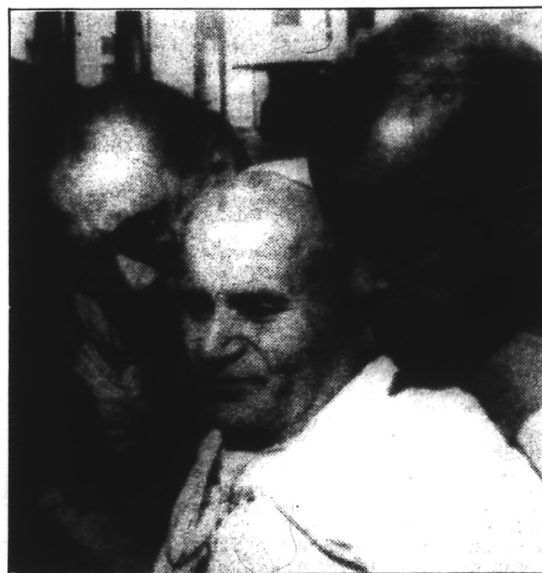
Labour MP Ernie Ross said that the support for the PLO from Palestinians under Israeli occupation and those exiled from Palestine was evident to the most casual observer. The support in the occupied territories was despite the harshness of the Israeli occupation forces, he said.

Mr Ross said that the PLO had grave reservations on the European initiative. He singled out the failure of the Venice declaration to recognise the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people; this, he said, served only to harden the Israelis and to bolster their intransigent position.

Mr Ross stressed that the only hope of success for the European initiative was if it was clearly seen to be independent of the Americans, and certainly independent of Camp David. He attacked those parts of the EEC proposals which envisage the holding of a referendum only among Palestinians living in the 1967 occupied territories. The EEC had no right, he said, to raise in such a referendum matters such as the possible federation of a future Palestinian state with Israel or Jordan. Such matters, said Mr Ross, were the sole prerogative of a sovereign Palestinian state to decide.

Mr Ross added that by ruling out the PLO from participating in the supervision of the transition to independence, the EEC was seeking to treat the Palestinians in a colonial fashion, as incapable of determining their own future. He questioned the proposal that such a referendum should be supervised by a force which would include Israelis and Egyptians: 'Far from removing the prospect of intimidation, who is more likely to intimidate the Palestinians than the Israelis and the Egyptians?' asked Mr Ross.

The Labour MP expressed the hope that the expected meeting between Lord Carrington and Yasser Arafat should take place in London, because of the historic role which Britain had played in Palestine's affairs, and he concluded that the EEC initiative should be independent. 'We must,' he insisted, 'be seen to be distancing ourselves from the American Camp David accord that has clearly failed.'



Pope John Paul: a friend of Palestine.

Arafat cables Pope

ARCHBISHOP HILARION Capucci, the former Archbishop of Jerusalem, has dismissed a claim, made soon after his arrest by the would-be assassin of Pope John Paul II, that he was acting on behalf of, or out of sympathy with, the Palestinian cause. 'The Pope is in favour of the Palestinian cause. Why mix the Palestinian cause with terrorism?' asked the Palestinian Catholic Archbishop, who has lived in Rome since his deportation from Jerusalem by the Israeli authorities two years ago.

The Pope's assailant, Mehmet Ali Agca, claimed after his arrest, 'I am a Palestinian, a comrade,' and also said that he had been a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, all without any foundation. At various during his interrogation, he has claimed that he planned to murder the Queen, European Parliament President Simone Weill, and UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, because, he claimed, they were symbols of what the superpowers were inflicting on the Third World.

Agca's pretensions to 'Islamic' beliefs seem particularly shaky. 'His actions have nothing to do with Islam; he is an extreme right criminal, but I do not believe he belongs to any group,' Archbishop Capucci said. Islam holds that both the prophets of the Old Testament and Jesus are to be revered.

The attempt on the life of Pope John Paul II brought strong condemnation from leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Mr Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, said in a 14th May telegram to the Pope that he had 'received news of the criminal attempt on your life with deep sorrow'. The PLO leader continued, 'While I strongly denounce the shocking and criminal attempt, I thank the Almighty God for your safety so that you may pursue your blessed efforts to realise a world in which peace, love and brotherhood prevail.'

In Abu Dhabi, Mr Farouk Qaddoumi, Head of the PLO Political Department said, 'We have received with contempt and deep sorrow the news about the attempt on the Holy Father.' He added, 'The Palestinian people and leadership are strongly

against such irresponsible acts — especially against the spiritual leaders who normally support the rights of the Palestinian people.'

Earlier this year, an 18th March meeting between Mr Qaddoumi and the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, brought protests from Zionist leaders. Mr Qaddoumi told a news conference in Rome that 'the Vatican and particularly the Pope have an important role in bringing about Middle East peace.' He added that the Holy See has 'a position of solidarity' with the Palestinians and condemns Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem.

Andrew Faulds joins editorial board

MR ANDREW Faulds, the Labour Member of Parliament for Warley East and Opposition spokesman on the Arts in the House of Commons, has joined the editorial board of *Free Palestine*. Mr Faulds was one of the earliest of British MPs in supporting the Palestinian cause, and was sacked from his position as spokesman on the arts during Harold Wilson's leadership of the British Labour Party for what many people saw as a rebuff by Wilson of Mr Faulds' anti-Zionist commitment.

During the 1970s, Mr Faulds was President of the Palestine Action Campaign in Britain, and has also been active in the Anti-Apartheid Movement in the UK. He also presented the *Free Palestine* production of 'The Right to Return', which was screened by BBC TV on the Open Door programme, and opened the Palestine Folklore Exhibition in London last year.

All members of the *Free Palestine* editorial board serve in an honorary capacity, and receive no payments for their services.