

Commonwealth backs PLO as Arafat welcomed in four capitals

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S strong anti-PLO stand received further battering during October as the result of a series of events which underlined the isolation of the United States in its stance towards the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Washington's continued support for Israel at the expense of the rights of the Palestinian people.

At the end of the Commonwealth Heads of State summit in Melbourne on 7th October, the leaders of the 40-nation grouping stressed in a communiqué, 'the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination'. It added, 'Most heads of government affirmed that the Palestine Liberation Organisation must be involved in negotiations for a settlement.'

The passage in the declaration on the Palestine conflict began with an expression of 'grave concern' which the heads of government felt because 'the unresolved problems of the Middle East, especially in the central question of the Palestinians, remain a serious threat to peace and security in the region and throughout the world.'

The statement said that 'the heads of government recognise that a just and lasting settlement should be based on the relevant solutions of the United Nations and the recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people, including their inalienable right to a homeland.'

In a further important development concerning western recognition of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, Mr Yasser Arafat — the PLO leader — arrived in Japan on 12th October. Although the PLO leader has previously paid official visits to other western countries such as Austria



PLO leader Yasser Arafat welcomes the latest signal of support for the Palestine Liberation Organisation. The new socialist government in Greece has announced full diplomatic recognition for the PLO in the first such move by a member state of both the EEC and the NATO Alliance.

and Spain, his arrival in Tokyo marked an important penetration into the ranks of the United States' major economic and political allies.

The Americans are now viewing with concern reports that Britain's Lord Carrington, will hold talks with Mr Arafat in the next few weeks during the Foreign Secretary's visit to Saudi Arabia, where Prince Fahd's Eight Point Peace Plan will be high on the agenda of issues to be discussed.

Although Lord Carrington will meet the PLO Executive Chairman in his capacity as President of the EEC's Council of Ministers, it will not be lost on Israel and the United States that Lord Carrington has long advocated a role for the PLO in any new initiatives to resolve the Palestine conflict.

Asian tour

As the Commonwealth leaders were meeting in Australia, PLO leader

Yasser Arafat set out on a tour of Asian states which took him to China, North Korea, Japan and Vietnam. This four-nation tour was followed immediately by a visit to Moscow, and is part of the Palestinian leader's efforts to ensure that the Palestine issue remains firmly on the agenda in international forums, particularly at the United Nations, where the General Assembly will again review the situation in Palestine later in the year.

According to Tokyo correspondent Henry Scott Stokes in the *International Herald Tribune* on 20th October, Mr Arafat 'won impressive diplomatic gains for the Palestine Liberation Organisation' during his Far East tour. He pointed out that although the PLO leader's invitation came from the Japan-Palestine Friendship League, a parliamentary group, 'in fact the visit was organised behind the scenes by the government'. In Tokyo, Mr Arafat held talks with Premier Zenko Suzuki, and Foreign Minister Sunao Sonoda, who later told a parliamentary foreign affairs committee, 'The Japanese government might soon recognise the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians.'

Citizens of Hanoi turned out to wave flags and streamers and to give Mr Arafat a hero's welcome when he arrived in Vietnam from Japan. Meanwhile, at the start of his tour the Palestinian leader received assurances of continued support from China, which in recent years has aligned closely with the United States on foreign policy issues.

In Kuala Lumpur, on 15th October, the House of Representatives unanimously passed a bill granting diplomatic status to the PLO office in the Malaysian capital.

Beware Israel plans for West Bank

THE ISRAELI government is now promoting what it terms a new scheme for the occupied West Bank region of Palestine. Funds to elected representatives of the Palestinians are being blocked, while Israeli sponsored 'leaders' are being funded to create a new Quisling state. Meanwhile, the elected mayors are facing increasing restrictions on their freedom of movement and speech. Dr Alan George examines developments in the West Bank on page 7.

Palestine essays

IN THE first of a series of essays which will look at the fundamental issues in the Palestine conflict, we examine Zionist ideology and the movement which promoted the settlement of Palestine and the expulsion of the Palestinian Arabs from their homeland. See page 8.

Europe and the Palestinians

RECOGNITION OF the PLO by Britain and the EEC must be an integral part of a new plan to replace the Camp David process, argues Labour MP Andrew Faulds on page 9. He asserts the urgent need for Europe to act independently from the United States in dealing with the Palestine conflict. Any new plan must be based firmly on respect for the rights of the Palestinian people, over which there should be no compromise.

Murder in Rome

ONLY MONTHS after a Rome Court accused the Israeli government of complicity in an assassination campaign of Palestinian officials in European capitals, Zionist assassins struck again in the Italian capital. From Rome Louis Fakis reports on the murder of Majed Abu Sharar, and the conference on Israeli suppression of the press and cultural expression which he was to have attended.

News Reports

A REVIEW of news and events during the past month appears in Palestine Briefing on pages 2 and 3. Reports from the occupied territories on page 4 detail a campaign for the release of political prisoners and the Israeli efforts to annex the occupied Syrian Golan which is being resisted by local inhabitants. A report on page 5 looks at a new Israeli terrorist campaign being waged in the Lebanon.

Britain urged to act

BRITAIN SHOULD make use of its understanding of the Middle East to play a greater role in peace efforts in the area, Saleh Khalaf, deputy to PLO leader Yasser Arafat, told the Daily Telegraph on 21st October.

Mr Khalaf said that the British understood the area, 'yet their policy here is very closed. They leave it to the Americans who are amateurs and don't understand anything'. He added that a meeting between Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington and PLO leader Yasser Arafat was a welcome prospect; it is widely expected that such a visit may take place during the Foreign Secretary's next visit to the Middle East.

Mr Khalaf criticised the US

policy of ignoring the PLO. He commented that statements urging US talks with the Palestinians, made recently by former Presidents Carter and Ford, showed their 'feelings of guilt' that the policy of excluding the PLO from peace talks had failed. 'If you had asked me who killed Sadat, I would have told you that American policy killed Sadat. Part of that policy is to ignore the PLO,' he declared.

The failure of the Camp David talks had opened the way for new peace initiatives, such as that put forward by Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Fahd. This, he said, 'represents the minimum possible from the Palestinian point of view'. Prince Fahd's plan calls for Israeli withdrawal from

the 1967-occupied territories, including Jerusalem, which would become the capital of an independent Palestinian state, and the recognition of the right of all states in the area to live in peace.

Mr Khalaf said that he expected Prince Fahd's plan to be adopted, perhaps with some amendments, by the Arab summit meeting to be held in Rabat in November.

After Arab agreement to the plan was obtained, both the Europeans and the Soviet Union would have a role to play in the peace process, he said. Mr Khalaf refused suggestions that an independent Palestinian state would be a satellite of the Soviet Union. 'No state that will have Jerusalem as its capital can be a communist state,' he said.



Churchmen say PLO represents Palestinians

A HIGH powered delegation from the British Council of Churches has returned from a fact-finding tour of the Middle East convinced that the PLO fully represents the Palestinian people, and that the PLO must have a central place in any peace negotiations.

In their preliminary report, the seven-person delegation says, 'It is essential that representatives of the Palestinian people' be included in any peace negotiations. Who those representatives should be was up to the Palestinians themselves, the team continues, but adds: 'We wish to report that in our many conversations with Palestinians throughout the region, we met none who doubted that the PLO represents the aspirations of the Palestinian people and could deliver obligations it undertook in any agreement.'

During their visit, which embraced Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel, Egypt and the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the churchmen held discussions with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat at his Beirut headquarters.

The delegation included the Bishop of Durham, Mr David Bleakly, General Secretary of the Irish Council of Churches, Mr John Clark of the Church Missionary Society, the Rev Brian Duckworth of the BCC's international affairs division, Gillian Hopkins of the Society of Friends, Mildred Neville, General Secretary of the Catholic Institute for International Relations, and the Rev David Lyon, General Secretary of the Church of Scotland's Overseas Council.

Palestinian books and art under threat by new arrests

THE ISRAELI occupation forces have arrested a Palestinian bookseller in the West Bank town of Ramallah for selling material banned by the military government 'for security reasons'. Reporting the arrest, the *Jerusalem Post* on 7th August said Mr Assad al Assad was being interrogated after a routine check by Israeli troops revealed he was selling Palestinian nationalist posters, and a book by Ghassan Kanafani, entitled *Return to Haifa*.

Ghassan Kanafani was one of the most distinguished and internationally known of Palestinian writers, and was spokesman of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. He was assassinated in Beirut in 1973, when Zionists placed a bomb in his car.

In a second incident, the best-known artist in the Israeli-occupied West Bank has been detained for alleged 'security' violations. He was arrested, along with his wife and father-in-law, near the Kalandiya refugee camp on 27th July as he was driving to a picnic area near Nablus. No specific reason has been given for his detention. Mr Mansour teaches art at a United Nations Relief and Works Agency vocational school near his home town of Ramallah.

Resistance to 'village leagues'

PALESTINIANS in the occupied West Bank are organising against the Israeli-sponsored and funded 'village leagues', headed by collaborators, which the Zionists are trying to establish to undermine the influence of the elected mayors in the

palestine briefing

PLO envoy in Moscow gets diplomatic status

THE PALESTINE Liberation Organisation's office in Moscow has been granted full diplomatic status by the Soviet authorities, it was announced on 20th October. The move is seen as an indication from the USSR that it intends to play a greater role in the search for peace in the Middle East in the wake of the failure of the Camp David process.

The PLO's offices in most Arab

and many Third World countries already enjoy diplomatic status. A PLO spokesman said in Beirut that the Soviet move 'indicates the support and backing by the friendly Soviet people and their just struggle for self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.'

Announcing the decision, which followed talks between PLO leader Yasser Arafat and Soviet Presi-

dent Leonid Brezhnev, the official Soviet newsagency Tass said that the two leaders were concerned about the 'openly declared strategic alliance between Washington and Tel Aviv', and over the 'worsening of the situation in the Near East brought on by the military efforts of the USA and the growing aggressiveness of Israel.'

Israel, the newsagency continued, was being used by the

United States as an agent in achieving plans for 'political, military and economic domination over the peoples of the Near East'. This was exemplified by escalating US arms sales to Israel, the continued occupation of Arab lands, and attacks on Lebanon, the statement went on.

The Palestinian Ambassador in Moscow, formerly the PLO representative, is Mohammed Asheir.

region. Israel radio reported on 3rd September that leaflets published by the Committee for the Safety of Palestinian Villages had been distributed in the West Bank urging farmers to resist Israeli land seizures and colonisation in the region, and to adhere to the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians.

Israel 'atomising' West Bank economy, says UN

CONTINUED ZIONIST settlement of the 1967 occupied territories is 'atomising' their economies, and the eventual result will be the replacement of the Palestinian population with one of Israeli settlers, according to a United Nations report.

The report, presented to the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) board meeting in Geneva in early October, said Israelis were seizing land and water and that the Arabs had no means of redress.

The document says the present problem of colonisation was 'atomising' the Arab economies, increasing hindrance to contacts and reducing the mobility of the Arab people'. At the same time, communications were being improved between the Zionist settlements and Israel.

'If settlement and emigration both

continue in the way that they have, the eventual effect will be the replacement of an Arab population with an Israeli one,' the UN report added.

The authors, who drew on information from Arab sources, but were not allowed to see Israeli officials or visit occupied areas, said Palestinian workers earned on average about 42 per cent of what Israelis received. They said that the entry of Israeli goods into the West Bank and Gaza Strip was unrestricted, but that there was no reciprocal right of entry of products from occupied areas into Israel.

US students for West Bank

WASHINGTON'S GEORGETOWN University has inaugurated a programme which allows students to spend part of their summer vacations at universities in the West Bank or Jordan. The first participant in the programme, Stephen Carattini, a third-year student in the university's School of Foreign Service completed a six-week period at Bethlehem University at the end of July, and many more students are expected in the future. The School of Foreign Service prepares candidates for State Department posts.

Dr Gabi Baramki, acting head of Bir Zeit University, the leading in-

stitution of higher education on the West Bank, has said his university is considering joining the programme. Already Bir Zeit students have conducted research at Georgetown.

Mr Carattini says the six-week period at Bethlehem had been 'invaluable' to him in learning about the Middle East 'and especially West Bank realities'.

Redgrave attacks Zionist film ban

VANESSA REDGRAVE, the international acting star who is a strong supporter of the Palestinians, has firmly condemned Israel's state television company for refusing to broadcast her award winning film *Playing for Time*. Isaac Shimoni, the director of Israeli television, has admitted that the ban had been prompted solely by Ms Redgrave's support for the PLO.

In the film, she plays the part of Auschwitz survivor Fania Fencel who was a member of the women's orchestra in the Nazi death camp. In September's Emmy Awards, granted for television performances, Ms Redgrave won the prize for best actress. Arthur Miller won the best screenplay award, and Jane Alexander won the best supporting actress award.

Shimoni told reporters in early

October: 'Redgrave's acting ability may be very impressive but we in Israel cannot separate this from the fact that she desires to see Israel eliminated.' He added: 'So long as she publicly supports the PLO, and the PLO desires Israel's elimination, Israeli TV will not broadcast the film.'

Speaking in London on 4th October, Ms Redgrave rejected the Israeli TV director's assertions, saying, 'I have never called for the "elimination" of Israel and nor has the PLO.' She explained, 'I entirely support the aims and urgent campaign of the PLO that negotiations should begin between the Palestinian Arab people and the Israeli Jews.'

She added: 'This will be the first step towards a democratic secular state of Palestine which will safeguard and uphold the basic democratic rights of both peoples, and the first step towards peace.'

Playing for Time was made by CBS in the United States in 1979, in the face of a determined campaign involving intimidation, and sometimes violence, by Zionists. Attempts were made to have Vanessa Redgrave removed from the cast, and when this failed, efforts were made to stop commercial sponsorship of the film.

The witch-hunt collapsed, however, when the film was acclaimed highly by critics and it received one of the highest audience ratings since *Roots*.



Israel condemned by IAEA

ISRAEL HAS been strongly denounced by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for its June attack on Iraq's nuclear reactor. At the agency's annual conference in late September, a resolution was passed denouncing the Israeli action as an act of aggression that also struck at the agency itself and its system of safeguards designed to prevent the diversion of nuclear materials for military use.

The agency also called on its 111 members not to transfer to Israel any materials that might be used in the manufacture of nuclear weapons and to halt immediately all technical assistance to the Zionist state. A decision as to whether to suspend Israel's membership was deferred until next year. The resolution said that Israel would be suspended if it had not by then complied with the UN Security Council Resolution calling on it to open its nuclear facilities to inspection by the agency.

Voting on the resolution was 51 to 8 with 27 abstentions. The United States voted against, while the ten EEC members abstained.

However, the Zionist state is to shortly start production of uranium, a key raw material for atom bombs, the *Jerusalem Post* reported on 18th July. Yellowcake uranium will be produced from phosphoric acid at a plant nearing completion south east of Beersheba in the Negev desert. Phosphoric acid is a product of phosphate ore, of which Israel has extensive reserves in the Dead Sea. Each 1,000 kilograms of acid yields about half a kilogram of yellowcake.

The new plant is near Israel's nuclear reactor at Dimona, where the country's atomic bombs are assembled, and it is significant that a committee formed to oversee the new project includes representatives from Dimona.

UNESCO condemns Israel over Jerusalem

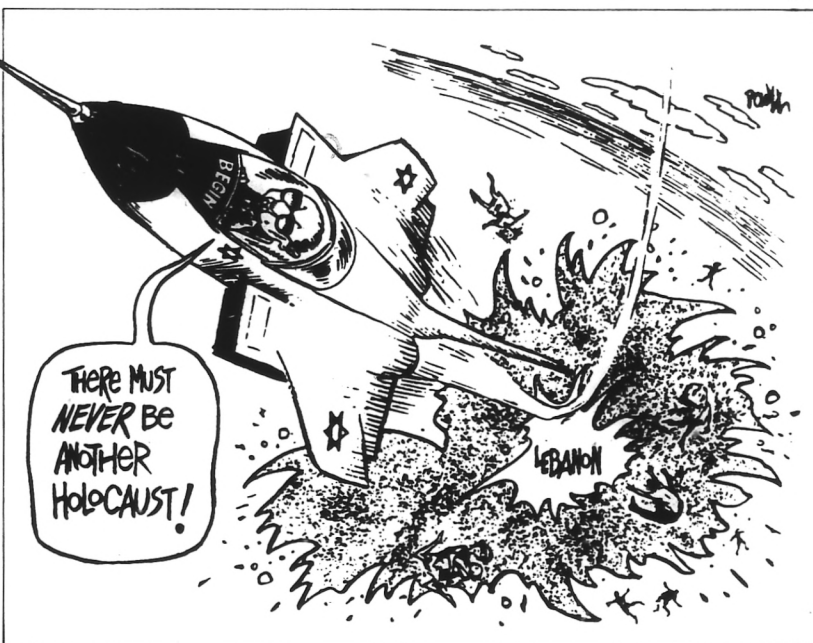
THE EXECUTIVE Council of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has condemned Israel for its archaeological and construction work in occupied Arab Jerusalem. It has also decided to put the question of East Jerusalem onto the agenda of the UNESCO general assembly next spring, and urged the UN body's world heritage committee to speed up the inclusion of Arab Jerusalem and its historic fortifications in the 'endangered world heritage list'.

The motion, passed in late September, condemned the 'persistent and deliberate Israeli violations' of previous UNESCO resolutions on Jerusalem. It was passed by 28 votes to one (the US), with 12 abstentions.

US-Israeli military links boosted

ONLY DAYS after the Reagan-Beign summit in Washington in early September, where they reached agreement on 'strategic collaboration', top US officials were despatched to the Zionist state to identify specific areas of co-operation. On 18th September Mr Frank West, US Assistant Secretary of Defense, arrived for talks with Israeli defence minister Ariel Sharon and top Zionist army officers. He was followed by Mr Robert MacFarlane, a senior councillor at the State Department.

Also in Israel last month was a



special nine-member US defence trade team which was studying the possibility of buying up to \$200 million worth of Israeli military equipment. The hardware is expected to be stockpiled in Israel for use by America's Rapid Deployment Force. The force is ostensibly designed to

'protect' Arab oilfields from any Soviet threat, but many Arabs see it more as a police force intended to hold Arab governments from adopting independent nationalist policies.

The full extent of the 'collaboration' agreed between the Zionists and Washington began to emerge

from a September interview by Israeli foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir. He said Israel would provide 'facilities' for US warplanes and ships, as well as for repair and maintenance. Joint naval manoeuvres had been agreed, with joint exercises by ground forces a topic for future talks. Israel had

Arafat: Saudi peace plan 'positive'

THE PALESTINE Liberation Organisation has described as 'positive' an eight-point peace plan put forward by Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Fahd, which calls for a complete Israeli withdrawal from the 1967 occupied territories and the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The plan, announced in an 8th August interview with the Saudi Arabian news agency, provides for a temporary UN trusteeship following Israeli evacuation, and for the dismantlement of all the illegal Zionist settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. The rights of the Palestinians to repatriation or compensation would be recognised, and the right of all states in the area to live in peace would be guaranteed. Freedom of all states in the area to live in peace would be guaranteed. Freedom of worship in East Jerusalem's shrines would be assured for members of all religions, and the overall settlement would be guaranteed by the UN or some of its members.

Prince Fahd also sharply attacked US policy on the Palestine question. Noting that international opinion was urging the US to recognise the PLO, he said: 'The time has come for the US government to be less biased toward Israel and more just towards the Arabs.' He added, 'We had hoped, and still hope, that the Reagan administration would concede that the Camp David accords are futile as a framework for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.'

The Saudi peace plan was rejected outright by the Zionists. In a peculiarly contradictory statement on 10th August, deputy premier Simcha Erhlich welcomed Saudi Arabia's

tacit recognition of Israel's right to exist, but said the Saudi proposals were clearly aimed at the state's ultimate destruction. The day before, foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir described the plan as a 'formula for the liquidation of Israel by stages'.

Palestinians took a less intransigent view. In a 17th August interview with the *New York Times* PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat welcomed the plan as 'a good beginning for a lasting peace'. Mr Khalil al Wazir, deputy commander of the Palestinian forces described Prince Fahd's proposals as 'positive', and said it was being studied in detail by the Palestinian leadership and the PLO's Central Council. He added that he saw the Saudi Arabian condemnation of US policies as particularly encouraging.

The final stage of the Israeli-Egyptian part of the Camp David agreements is scheduled for implementation next April, when Israel makes its final withdrawal from Sinai. The other, and ultimately far more important, part of the accords provides for 'autonomy' for the Palestinians of the 1967 occupied territories, and has stalled totally. Prince Fahd's initiative was clearly designed as an alternative, and its timing was aimed at encouraging the US to change direction. It was unveiled just as President Reagan and the late President Sadat were ending talks in Washington on how to preserve Camp David.

The PLO and Jordan have also presented peace plans in recent weeks designed to ensure that the Palestinian question is not simply left to fester when Camp David grinds to a complete halt after April. Addressing the World Balance of Powers

Conference at Leeds Castle, Kent, in early August, Jordan's Crown Prince Hassan advocated a three-step process. First, a Geneva-style conference should be convened to discuss the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in Palestine. Second, he urged a termination of the Camp David process after Israel completes its Sinai withdrawal. Camp David should be carried over into a peace initiative co-ordinated by the UN. Finally, since 'further endorsement of the Camp David peace treaty could well be futile and a waste of crucial time', support was essential for 'a more independent and determined peace initiative by the European Community'.

The PLO peace plan was first put forward by Mr Afif Safiyyeh, a political aide to Yasser Arafat, at a recent UN regional seminar on Palestine, convened in Sri Lanka. It was then published on 24th August in the Beirut weekly *Monday Morning*. Mr Safiyyeh's formula calls for 'speedy withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied territories'; a joint UN-PLO trusteeship for an interim period between Israeli occupation and Palestinian sovereignty; and the convening of a UN conference where 'all parties concerned, including the State of Palestine' would agree on outstanding issues.

All three recently published peace plans have in common with each other, and with the EEC's plan (as it has appeared in the press) the establishment of a fully independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as the only viable alternative to the 'autonomy' — which in effect means perpetual Israeli occupation — called for by Camp David.

agreed to stockpile weapons for use by US troops.

Mr Shamir refused to equate the word 'facilities' with bases. 'This term military bases is not very clear,' he said, 'people speak of facilities.'

The new level of Israeli-American collaboration makes it unlikely that President Reagan's budget cuts will affect aid to Israel. On 21st September Israeli finance minister Yoram Aridor left for the US with a total aid request of \$3 billion for the fiscal year 1983.

Zionists to step up colonisation

THE WORLD Zionist Organisation has unveiled a plan to settle an additional 100,000 colonists on the West Bank, excluding occupied East Jerusalem, over the next four years, bringing the settler population to about 120,000.

Outlining the scheme, Mr Matityahu Drobles, co-chairman of the WZO's colonisation department, said that 12 to 18 new villages were planned, as well as substantial expansion of the existing 80 settlements. Most of the new settlers, he said, would be housed in satellite towns and residential suburbs, and would continue to work in the 1948 occupied territories. He said he expected the Jewish population of the West Bank to exceed 1.5 million by the year 2010.

According to the *Jewish Chronicle* on 9th October, Mr Drobles was 'convinced' that the new settlements would benefit the Palestinians, but that in any case, 'The plan is a plan for Jews. I don't care if the Arabs accept it or not.'

Israeli arms for Switzerland

THE ZIONIST state's arms trade has been boosted by the conclusion of a \$38 million order from Switzerland for tank shells. The deal was finalised during talks held in Switzerland in September between Israeli defence minister Sharon and Mr George-André Chevallaz, head of the Swiss Department of the Military.

Israel's arms exports last year were valued at \$1.25 billion, making the Zionist state the world's seventh largest exporter of weapons. Economy minister Yaakov Meridor was quoted by the *International Herald Tribune* on 18th August as saying an increase of over \$2 billion was envisaged over the next four years.

PLO participation in Law of the Sea Conference

THE LAW of the Sea Conference has agreed to consider participation in its work by the Palestine Liberation Organisation and other liberation movements. Dr Ali Homaïdan, Head of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates at the recent Law of the Sea Conference in Geneva, said on 4th September that the Arab group had secured the conference's agreement to discuss the issue during its next meeting, scheduled for next autumn in New York.

He said some western countries had opposed the move, claiming that liberation movements did not represent countries. Charged by the Arab group to reply, Dr Homaïdan pointed out to the conference that liberation movements represented peoples with vital interests in the exploitation of marine economic resources.

Campaign to free Israel's prisoners of conscience

A CAMPAIGN has been launched by the London Friends of Palestine group to secure the release from house arrest of seven Palestinian residents of the 1948 occupied territories. The seven have already been subject to successive six-month detention orders, and these are likely to be renewed again soon. The military commander of Israel's Northern Region, General Ben Gal has given no reason for the restriction orders, saying only that they were 'necessary for the security of the State of Israel'. When lawyers challenged Ben Gal in the Israeli Supreme Court, the authorities would say only that they had 'secret information' on the detainees which could not be revealed. The seven Palestinians thus have no knowledge of what — if anything — is alleged against them.

All seven, however, have been active in Palestinian nationalist circles, and it is evident that they have been detained for political reasons. 'Security' has been cited frequently by Israel as a pretext for its suppression of Palestinian nationalism, both in the 1948 and 1967 occupied territories. All but one of the seven are closely associated with the movement Abna al Balad — Sons of the Land — which fights for equal rights for the Palestinians in Israel. Abna al Balad is a legal organisation in Israel and seeks to achieve its aims by peaceful political and legal means. It emphasises the Palestinian identity of the Arabs under Israeli rule since 1948, and stresses the unity of the whole Palestinian people and their right to self-determination.

Four of the detained Palestinians live in Umm al Fahm, the largest Palestinian village in the 1948 territories, and have been under house arrest since June 1980. General Avigdor Ben Gal, Military Commander of Israel's Northern Region, used his powers under the Emergency Defence Regulations (1945) to forbid the four from leaving Umm al Fahm at any time, and from leaving their houses from sunset to sunrise. The police have the authority to check their whereabouts at any time, while the four are also required to report to the police station — which is ten kilometres from the village — every day at a specific time.

□ **Ghassan Fawzi Aghbaria** is a founder member of the Abna al Balad, and is currently Secretary of the organisation in Umm al Fahm. Because the restriction order prevents him leaving the village, he is now unemployed.

□ **Raja Shrem Aghbaria**, a graduate of Bar Ilan University and a member of Abna al Balad, has for the past eight years been a primary school teacher in Umm al Fahm. Six months after the first restriction order was imposed, he was given six months' notice that he would be dismissed from his job — despite the shortage of teachers in the village.

□ **Muhammad Salama Mahjina**, married with one child, is a blacksmith and a founder member of the Abna al Balad.

□ **Hassan Ahmad Jaharin** is the manager of a bookshop in the village. Married with one child, he is a founder member of Abna al Balad.

On 27th December last year, the restriction orders were renewed for another six months, and further extended on 5th July this year. Last February the four men's lawyers demanded from Ben Gal an explanation for the orders. They received a four-line reply, saying they were 'necessary for the security of the State of Israel'. The lawyers then turned to the Supreme Court, which in April ordered the General to give his reasons for not cancelling the orders. In June he supplied an affidavit repeating his earlier 'explanation' of the orders, and adding that he had secret information about the four Palestinians which he could not reveal in court. His testimony was backed up by a written statement from premier Beigun. In July, the lawyers petitioned the Supreme Court for the 'secret information' to be disclosed, but the court has so far not responded and the four Umm al Fahm residents remain under house arrest.

On the same grounds of 'security', General Ben Gal has ordered ten other supporters of Abna al Balad in Umm al Fahm not to set foot in the 1967 occupied territories.

Three people from other towns are also being detained:

□ **Faraj Kneifles** from the village of Shafr Amr is an active member of the Druse Initiative Committee and Abna al Balad, and has been under house arrest since 15th July this year.

□ **Maysara al Sayyed**, a resident of the coastal town of Acre, is the Secretary of Abna al Balad in the town. His first restriction order was

issued on 10th July last, and he has been suspended for two years from his studies at Ben Gurion University in the Negev desert.

□ **Ibrahim Nasser**, from the village of Arrabeh in Galilee, works as a lawyer in Jerusalem and has been active in the Arab students movement. He is currently under his third

successive restriction order.

The restriction orders on the seven political prisoners are due to expire in December 1981 and January 1982, and a number of human rights groups have launched an international campaign to bring pressure on the Zionist authorities not to renew the oppressive orders.



لغسلطينين حقوق انسانية ايضا

PALESTINIANS
HAVE
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TOO

גם לפלסטינאים זכויות אדם

Golan Druse shun Israel's trick annexation

MORE THAN half the Arabs of the occupied Syrian Golan Heights who took on Israeli citizenship have since renounced it, the Jerusalem Post reported on 20th September. So far, some 200 out of the mere 364 who had opted for citizenship have handed back their identity cards to the Zionist Interior Ministry. The paper quoted local Arab leaders as saying that in a few weeks only a handful of people in the Golan region will still have Israeli citizenship.

Most of the Golan Heights are of the Druse religion, an offshoot of Islam. The Zionists have consistently tried to drive a wedge between the Druse and their fellow Arabs under occupation by extending to them special 'privileges'. Those in the 1948 occupied territories are even allowed to serve in the army, which in turn entitles them to a wide range of family welfare payments made available only to ex-servicemen, thereby excluding Israeli Arabs from a wide range of welfare services.

The question of Israeli citizenship has been at the centre of a bitter dispute between the Golan Druse and the occupation forces over the past year. As part of its moves to incorporate the Syrian region into Israel, the Zionists a year ago passed a law allowing the Golan Druse to become Israeli citizens. David Shipley noted in the *New York Times* on 22nd September that: 'The measure was sponsored by politicians who failed in an effort to annex the Golan Heights outright. The hope was that

the residents themselves would, in effect, accomplish the annexation by taking up the offer of citizenship'.

The Zionists have exerted severe pressure on the Druse to take up citizenship. A year ago the military government sacked or transferred some 30 teachers in retaliation for their refusal to become Israeli citizens. In September a school strike was staged in the Golan region in protest at the sacking or transfer of five more teachers.

The Nazareth district labour court threw out an appeal by the five on 22nd September, but it was quite clear what was the real issue at stake. Early in the hearing, the Israeli state council said the government would readily grant tenure to three of the teachers, provided they became Israeli citizens. And in their ruling, judges Meir Weinstein and Yosef Piek said: 'The applicants rejected citizenship and the rights which go with it. They cannot hold the stick at both ends.'

In a minority opinion, however, court President Khalil Aboud said the dismissal of two of the appellants was 'illegal' and contrary to 'public morality'. He pointed out that the five had been teaching for ten years, and that there had been no complaints against them. 'Only Allah and the Education Ministry know why they were sacked,' he added.

Education ban
Those Druse who accepted Israeli citizenship have been socially and

economically boycotted by their communities. The Israelis have reacted with their customary harshness. 'The army has arrested some organisers of the boycott and moved against those signing a declaration opposing citizenship, holding them in administrative detention without trial,' said David Shipley in the *New York Times*. He added: 'One prominent sheikh, Kamal Kanj, now in prison, is an outspoken pro-Syrian, and his three sons have been blocked from higher education.'

Sheikh Suleiman Kanj Abu Saleh, one of the Druse leaders, told Shipley that, in addition to the sacking and transferral of teachers and other measures, Israeli pressure on the Golan Druse has included the demolition of houses that had been built 'without permits — a widespread practice in the region because the military government rarely grants building permits.'

Sheikh Kanj added: 'They threaten people with goats, saying: "If you have no Israeli ID card, you can't graze goats".' Another technique has been to impose taxes only on those local farmers who have refused Israeli citizenship: 'Here we have apple orchards,' said Sheikh Kanj. 'Everyone who wants to take a quantity of apples to market has to get a permit from the [Israeli military] governor. This year for the first time he will take taxes on the apples, but only from people who didn't want to be a traitor.'

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Panic in Sidon as bomb explodes in renewed Israeli campaign against Palestinians.

Israel's new terror war in Lebanon

HAVING FAILED to crush the Palestinians during last summer's 15-day war in Lebanon, the Zionists have now changed tactics and have launched a campaign of terrorist bombings in Lebanon which have so far claimed the lives of more than 100 people and wounded about 500. The bombings represent a serious breach of the cease-fire which brought an end to July's savage fighting between Israel and the joint Palestinian-Lebanese leftist forces. The PLO has warned that if the terror bombings continue, Israel can expect retaliation.

The first blast came on 17th September, when a 650-pound car bomb exploded outside the regional headquarters of the joint PLO-Lebanese nationalist forces in the south Lebanese port city of Sidon. 21 people were killed and 100 injured, the great majority civilians caught in the morning rush hour. The bomb went off shortly before 40 military commanders were due to meet at the centre.

The bombings that followed included a blast at a cement factory in the northern town of Chikka, which killed ten people and wounded eight, and an explosion in a crowded Beirut cinema on 20th September that left four people dead and 35 injured — most of them children.

The worst carnage, however, came on 1st October when a massive car bomb exploded outside the PLO's overseas information office in Beirut, killing more than 100 passers-by and wounding more than 300. The office is in the busy Bustani Street, which was the target for the Israelis' 17th July aerial bombing attack that killed 300 Palestinian and Lebanese civilians and wounded hundreds more. Like the Zionist air raid, the car bombing was timed for the morning rush hour.

Eye witness accounts of the bombing were strikingly similar to those following the air raid. A 2nd October UPI report in the *Irish Times* said, 'Reporters who reached the area just moments after the 220-pound bomb went off found a scene of devastation reminiscent of the day Israeli jets bombed the heart of the Lebanese capital. The street was cluttered with mangled bodies, many missing arms and legs. Some were buried beyond recognition.'

Responsibility for the wave of

terrorist bombings has been claimed by a shadowy group calling itself the Front for the Liberation of Lebanon from Foreigners. Since most of the bombings have been aimed at Palestinian targets, it is clear that the 'foreigners' the terrorists have in mind are the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

The PLO and the Lebanese authorities have identified those responsible as Israel or its rightist Lebanese allies, and see the terror campaign as a continuation of Israel's war against the Palestinians. Israel now stands accused of violating the 24th July cease-fire that ended 15 days of open warfare in which the Palestinians and their Lebanese leftist allies fought Israel to a stalemate. The Israeli air attacks in summer were aimed at sabotaging moves towards establishing peace between the various armed groups in Lebanon, which in turn would have severely restricted Israel's scope for intervention against the Palestinians. The current bombing campaign has the same objective. As a *Reuters* report in the *Guardian* on 3rd October said: 'The explosions appear designed to maintain Lebanon's six-year-old cycle of violence.'

Speaking in the wake of the Bustani Street bombing, Lebanese Premier Shafiq Wazzan blamed Israeli agents, saying: 'Now that Israel has been prevented from persisting in her acts of destruction and killing in Lebanon through her air force or other attacks, she is looking for other tactics, the cowardly ones to which she is currently resorting either directly or through agents.'

In a 4th October interview with the Lebanese weekly *Monday Morning*, leading PLO official Salah Khalaf echoed Mr Wazzan's view. He said that following the ceasefire in Lebanon, Israel 'has stopped firing in the south and has given us a new war instead — the war of [Israeli defence minister] Ariel Sharon, the war of terrorist bombs, which is the work of Sharon.'

Mr Mahmoud Labadi, the PLO's official spokesman, has accused Israel of violating the ceasefire in Lebanon, and warned that retaliation was an option. Speaking on 2nd October he said, 'This is a new kind of war with Israel and we have to get accustomed to it', and added: 'The option is always open' for striking back at Israel.

Sadat death may open way to peace

THE ASSASSINATION of Anwar Sadat by soldiers of the Egyptian Army on 6th October has not been mourned by Palestinian and Arab opinion. Many felt that the death of Sadat presented a real opportunity for Egypt to break with its present policies of capitulation to American and Israeli interests, and join again with other Arab states in the search for peace in the Middle East based on the realisation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat said at a dinner in his honour in Tokyo: 'We are witnessing today the beginning of the failure of the Camp David agreement with the fall of one of its symbols. We have been convinced that the night of Egypt would not last long. We are sure that the Egyptian people are committed to the national cause, of which Palestine is the core.'

The PLO leader's sentiments were echoed by most prominent Palestinians. Nablus Mayor Bassam Shaka commented that Camp David was dead, as well as Sadat. 'We must ask for mercy for anyone who is dead, but the fact is that the people of this town are happy to see him go,' Mayor Shaka said, adding that the death neither surprised nor saddened him.

The hope that Egypt would return to the Arab fold in the wake of the death of Sadat was echoed by the Palestinian press. The Jerusalem daily *Al Fajr* commented that the Egyptian people had destroyed 'the new Pharaoh', and had thus 'set the stage for the return of Egypt to the Arab nation'.

Palestinians had never forgiven Sadat for halting the Middle East peace process which had been set in train in the early months of 1977. In October that year, a joint US-Soviet statement had called for the convening of a Geneva conference on Palestine, at which the PLO would have represented the Palestinians.

'Talk to PLO,' say US ex-Presidents

A GUARDED welcome has come from the PLO for suggestions by two former US Presidents, Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, that the United States should take steps to talk to them. The suggestions came from the two men in an interview given to reporters on the Presidential aircraft, Air Force One, as they returned from the funeral of Anwar Sadat. Because of the venue, the text of the interview was released by the White House press office.

Mr Carter personally pledged to Israeli premier Menachem Begin during the Camp David talks that the US would never have any contact with the PLO until it recognised Israel. In fact, low-level contact between the US and the PLO is frequent; and in the airborne interview, Mr Carter went back on his pledge in public for the first time, saying, 'I think a simultaneous acknowledgement of the PLO and that Israel has a right to exist, and our dealing with the PLO would certainly be something that I favour.' He added that the characterisation of Palestinians as 'terrorists' was 'a very fallacious thing to do.



Reverse

Instead, Sadat put the process into reverse by flying to Jerusalem, and announcing jointly with Israeli Premier Menachem Begin that the two would negotiate what was effectively a separate peace treaty between their two countries under the auspices of the US alone.

When the Camp David accords were signed in March 1979, the worst fears of the Palestinians were confirmed. While the clauses dealing with Israeli withdrawal from Sinai were specific, with dates and concrete arrangements for its handover, those dealing with 'autonomy' for the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza were vague in the extreme. The consequence was to divert efforts to secure a settlement based on the Palestinians' rights to self-determination, and to block pressures to force Israeli withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied by Israel in 1967.

The past four years of escalated Israeli colonisation of the 1967-occupied territories have shown how justified were Palestinian fears over Camp David. Israel has said throughout that it would never give up the 1967 territories, something which Begin repeated after his victory in this year's Israeli election. In July 1980, the Israeli Knesset passed a 'law' purport-

ing to annex East Jerusalem to the Zionist state. The Egyptian response each time has been to break off the talks, but they have twice been resumed without any fundamental changes being demanded in the Israeli position.

On his last visit to Washington before his death, Sadat is generally believed to have asked Reagan to ensure both that the Israelis handed over the last part of occupied Sinai — scheduled for April 1982 — and also made at least some concessions to the Palestinians. He was offered no help by the White House, say Egyptian opposition supporters. This determined Sadat to clamp down on his own domestic opposition; the repressive measures of September in turn fuelled the explosion of October.

Already, President Hosni Mubarak has started the process of accommodation with other Arab states, saying that he will refrain from his predecessor's bitter and shrill attacks on them. But many Palestinians doubt whether Mr Mubarak alone will succeed, any better than Sadat, in getting the Reagan administration to pressure the Israelis for real concessions. The acid test will come if and when the final section of Sinai is returned, but the deadlock on Palestinian rights persists.

□ See editorial comment on page 11.

It stigmatises a race of people and is a racist approach... he said.

Mr Ford also favoured talks with the PLO: 'At some point, that has to happen,' he answered one reporter. He too supported a formula which would allow the mutual recognition by Israel of the PLO and by the PLO of Israel's right to exist.

Most important

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat drew a distinction between former Presidents and the present incumbent. 'I hope that President Reagan will understand that the PLO is the most important figure in the Middle East question', he said in a television interview during his visit to Japan. 'Not only ex-Presidents, but also those in power should understand this reality. While in power, they were trying to ignore the PLO. But it is very good that we hear from them now.'

Zehdi Terzi, the PLO's permanent observer at the United Nations, said that the call was in itself 'positive, constructive and significant'.

'I am really encouraged,' he told an interviewer. 'The two ex-presidents

have finally realised there is no way to peace without discussing the question of Palestine, dealing with the Palestinian question through their representatives, the PLO.'

The change in attitude of former President Carter is perhaps the most striking. Having been a firm opponent of the Palestinians, and thus of the PLO, he said in the airborne interview: 'I do not see any possibility in the future, certainly within my lifetime, of the Palestinian world and the Arab world acknowledging any other leadership for the Palestinians other than the PLO.'

An Israeli statement expressed 'regret' at the two former Presidents' comments: the White House said that present policy, that the US would not talk to the PLO unless it recognised Israel, would continue. Political observers noted the similarity between the two former US leaders' support for a formula which would amount to mutual recognition by the PLO and Israel and the proposals backed by the ten Common Market countries.

□ See editorial comment on page 11.

Israelis kill PLO leader in Rome

IN THE latest killing of Palestinian leaders in Europe, Israel has been accused of the murder in Rome on 9th October of Majed Abu Sharar, a member of the central committee of Al Fatah — the Palestinian liberation group headed by Yasser Arafat, and spokesman for the PLO's Unified Information Office in Beirut.

Mr Abu Sharar was in the Italian capital to attend a conference of Palestinian writers and journalists. The assassination happened in the early hours of the morning when a bomb, which had been planted under Sharar's hotel bed, exploded.

The device which was detonated by a remote control system has previously been used by the Israeli secret service, Mossad, to kill other Palestinian officials, including Mahmoud Hamchari, the Palestinian representative in Paris, who suffered fatal injuries from such a device on 8th December 1972. In the early seventies a wave of killings of Palestinians across Europe eventually led to the arrest and conviction of an Israeli hit squad. Only a few months ago the Rome Court of Assize

published a report into its investigations related to the 16th October 1972 murder in Rome of the Fatah representative Wael Zu'aiter. It concluded that the crime 'concretely expressed a premeditated policy... carried out systematically and with a typical military efficiency, by an organisation belonging to the State of Israel.' The Court considered the crimes in question 'are to be charged to the responsibility of an Israeli secret service, and in particular to a special section of this service having world-wide contacts and mobilised... to carry out actions of revenge.'

Majed Abu Sharar joins a growing list of Palestinians writers and journalists who have been assassinated by the Israelis, in an apparent campaign to deprive the Palestinian movement of its articulate spokesmen. Like Abu Sharar, it was Wael Zu'aiter's successful ability as a writer and spokesman, which had earned him many political friends and widespread respect in Rome's cultural circles, that put the Israeli assassins on his trail.

On 7th August 1972, Ghassan Kanafani, probably the most widely renowned of contemporary Palestinian writers, was assassinated in Beirut. The following year, on 10th April 1973, Israeli assassins raided Beirut, and amongst those on the Zionist death list were Kamal Nassar, editor in chief of Falastin Al-Thawra, member of the PLO Executive Committee, and a respected writer and poet. Also killed in the raid was Kamal Adwan, prominent Palestinian resistance leader, and also a respected writer. In Paris on 3rd January 1977, the Israelis killed Mahmoud Saleh, writer and journalist, and more recently the PLO Representative in Brussels, Dr Naim Khader — also a respected writer and important link between the PLO and the EEC — was assassinated in the Belgian capital.

The plot

The operation to kill Abu Sharar appears to have been complex and highly organised. In an apparent attempt to cast suspicion on his presence in Rome, the killing was

preceded by an earlier bomb explosion at the Israeli airline office in Rome. The PLO believes that both this bomb and that which killed Abu Sharar were part of a single operation by Mossad. Until it was known that the dead Palestinian was a leading political figure, the Italian authorities were under the impression that Abu Sharar had, in fact, been making a bomb which had exploded accidentally. Subsequently they had to accept that a member of the Fatah Central Committee would hardly undertake such a mission, and that the earlier bomb had been intended simply to cast suspicion on Sharar's presence in Rome.

The Conference of Arab writers and journalists in Rome paid tribute to Abu Sharar, who had been expected to address the delegates on the day of his murder. Archbishop Hilarión Capucci, the exiled Christian leader from Jerusalem, told delegates, 'My heart is torn with bitterness. I would like to say to those who killed Majed: we know our enemy does not want to see us live either as Palestinians, as Arabs or as a

community. Martyrdom is perhaps our fate, it is our strength. Whenever a martyr dies, a thousand more are born in our midst. His light is out, but it will continue in our hearts and we shall bear it wherever we go.'

Yahir Yaslie, secretary general of the Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists, said, 'I am torn by sorrow and pain. He was a beautiful person who helped us relentlessly and urged us on to solve our problems. Majed belongs to the hawks that fly in the free skies. Those who love the Palestinian revolution are called upon to love it more deeply.'

Saad Qassim Hamoudi, president of the Union of Arab Journalists also paid tribute: 'Many martyrs have been killed. Majed Abu Sharar is one of them. He fought and shed his blood on the pathway to peace. The Israelis tremble at the sincere and honest words of these men. The Zionist forces of darkness and evil are deceived if they think that killing human beings is enough to silence the voice of freedom.'

Report by Louis Eaks in Rome



Al Fajr — the Jerusalem newspaper — faces continuing harassment from the Israeli occupation authorities.

The pen versus the tank:

Rome conference debates Palestinian press freedom

THE LIST OF Israeli reprisals against all forms of Palestinian expression rejecting the illegal occupation of the territories seized in 1967 increases by the week. In an effort to focus western attention on these continuing violations of Palestinian rights, journalists and writers from the Arab world and Europe attended a three-day conference in Rome to discuss the problems experienced in the Palestinian territories under Israeli military occupation.

Host for the conference was the Federation of Arab Journalists, and delegates attended from Britain included journalists Peter Mansfield and Michael Adams, Free Palestine editor Louis Eaks, and actress Vanessa Redgrave.

The conference heard, in a paper submitted by the General Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists that the Zionists' 'campaign of oppression and destruction' penetrated every aspect of Palestinian cultural life, and ranged from petty harass-

ment, through vindictive destruction of books, paintings and other expressions of cultural nationalism, to arrests, imprisonment and even murder and assassination.

In any situation where a society is held under military occupation passive resistance hinges strongly on cultural rejection of the invader, and this is no less true in Palestinian society and its strong attachment to Arab nationalism. The press, provides an essential means of communication in informing the Palestinians of Israeli activities in the field of land seizures, settlement building, and news of arrests and imprisonments, and has therefore experienced much of the occupation authorities' efforts to restrict freedom of expression.

According to the GUPWJ three editors and one journalist are currently under house arrest. The editors are Beshir Al Barghouti of *Al Raleea*, Akram Hania, of *Al Shaab*, and Ma'amun al Sayed of *Al Fajr*. Jour-

nalist and writer Badran Jaber is also under similar restriction. The Union also reported details of eighteen journalists and writers who have been subjected to arrest and imprisonment at various times from the 1967 region.

Although Israel proclaims loudly its self-styled democracy and pays lip-service to freedom of speech, these do not apply to the Palestinians under occupation. The risks of expressing one's opinions against an occupation, which has been universally branded illegal, are great. The editor of the daily *Al Fajr*, Yusef Nasri Nasr, was kidnapped in 1973, and never seen again. The GUPWJ says he was assassinated by the Israeli Secret Service. The editor of *Al Shaab*, Ali al Khatib, was deported in November 1974.

Abdel Jawad Saleh, the exiled mayor of occupied El Bireh, who has endured the experience of arbitrary deportation at the hands of the Israeli military, explained that actions were taken to stifle any expression of Palestinian nationalist feeling. He cited the example of a statue which had been erected in his town square. It was of a Palestinian woman in national costume, child in arms, looking to the sky. Two hours after being placed in the square the occupation forces arrived and removed it.

Media bias

Other Palestinians argued that foreign coverage of the Palestine conflict led, in its bias and distortion, not only to a misunderstanding of the issues involved, but to wrong political decisions being taken and imposed on the area, such as Camp David. This view was forcefully expressed by another deported Palestinian mayor, Fahd Qawasmeh, of occupied Hebron. He recalled how politicians and press alike refused to listen to their warnings that Camp David would not succeed in resolving the Palestine issue. Of Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, he said, 'It was very painful for us. The Palestinian people could not welcome Sadat in Jerusalem.' In other circumstances, 'We would have liked to come out in our millions to greet him. But when the occupation forces urged us to go out and greet him, we had to say no.'

And from Mahdi Basaisso, who endured several years' imprisonment by the Israelis, the message was the same. The international press did not



Resistance through art: Defiance from the pen of Suleiman Mansour.

want to know about political prisoners in the Israeli-occupied territories. Yet, he pointed out, the press supports massive propaganda campaigns when Soviet Jewry are imprisoned for wanting to leave their homeland; Palestinians receive no support in their efforts to remain in their country.

He recalled the cultural isolation experienced by the Palestinian prisoners. Even the complete edition of the Koran was banned in Israeli prisons, he said. Newspapers other than those supporting the Israeli government were also banned, and he spoke of how the prisoners pub-

lished their own newspaper within the prison — written in a notebook and passed from hand to hand.

The leader of the French delegation spoke of the distortion in the western press, and argued that the strong Zionist lobby had been successful in turning opinion in the United States. He wondered why when Israelis bombed the Arabs it was presented as legitimate pre-emptive strikes, but surely this could have been the case of Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbour. Camp David had been heralded as a triumph for peace, yet in the Palestinian reality it was a latter-day Munich.

IN ONE of the most significant developments since Israel seized the West Bank in 1967, the new Zionist defence minister Ariel Sharon is engaged in a systematic campaign aimed at neutralising the Palestinian leadership in the occupied region. The key element is the creation of a collaborationist 'alternative' leadership, comprising the heads of Zionist-sponsored and financed 'village leagues'. Israel hopes that these compliant 'leaders' will play important roles in a proposed civilian administration for the region, along the lines called for by the moribund Camp David accords.

Camp David provides for Palestinian 'autonomy' in the West Bank and Gaza, with the local residents having responsibility only for such matters as municipal services. Real power would remain with the Israeli occupation forces. It is because of this denial of their internationally recognised right to self-determination in a state of their own in Palestine that the Palestinians spurn the US-sponsored Camp David process. They see 'autonomy' as nothing more than a device for continued Israeli colonisation of the 1967 occupied territories, leading to their ultimate incorporation in the Zionist state.

There is nothing new in the tactics now being deployed to break the Palestinian leadership. What is new is that methods that have long been used haphazardly have been drawn together into a coherent strategy with a clear set of aims. The 'new' approach has four distinct and complementary threads: the repression of the elected nationalist mayors; the organising of potential collaborators into an 'alternative leadership'; a cosmetic toning down of the day-to-day harassment of Palestinians, in the hope that this will make the occupation more acceptable and the assassination of the Palestinians' national leadership centred in Lebanon.

The Palestinian mayors — elected with overwhelming majorities in 1976 — have always been special targets for the Zionists, and measures designed to muzzle them form an intrinsic part of the new policy. In July, the military government summarily dismissed Mr Muhammad al Mashrazi, the Mayor of Dahiya, a small town south of Hebron, on the pretext that he had aided Palestinian guerrillas. The Mayor insists his dismissal stemmed purely from his stated support for the PLO.

On 10th August Ramallah's Mayor Karim Khalaf — who last year was maimed in a Zionist terrorist bombing — was prevented from holding a press conference in Jerusalem. The same day he was arrested for interrogation for the second time in two weeks over statements supporting the PLO attributed to him in the East Jerusalem Arabic daily *Al Fajr*. On the first occasion he was charged with 'incitement', and released only on bail. Mayor Khalaf's first arrest came in the wake of a new Zionist regulation forbidding West Bankers to make statements in support of the PLO.

Serious blow

A potentially far more serious blow at the Mayors, however, was in 3rd August order from the Israeli military government forbidding the entry of Arab development funds into the West Bank. These had been channelled through the Amman-based joint PLO-Jordanian Committee, formed after the signature of the Camp David accords. Last year the Committee disbursed about \$70 million to West Bank municipalities, covering about 60 per cent of their operating budgets and 100 per cent of their develop-



WEST BANK: New tactics, same targets

ment budgets. The Israeli hope is that the certain severe decline in urban services and the inevitable halt on new projects, will drive a wedge between the Mayors and the townspeople.

To exploit any such split, the Zionists are nurturing and funding 'village leagues', headed by a handful of collaborators. The focus on rural areas is revealing in itself. As leading anti-Zionist Israeli Ms Elfi Pallis observed to *Free Palestine* 'Palestine is a modern country. Genuine leadership comes from the towns, not the countryside.' The first village league was formed in the Hebron region in 1978. Headed by one Mustafa Dudin, it now claims a membership of 74 villages with a total population of 140,000 (see box). The Zionists have recently set up two more leagues, in the Bethlehem and Ramallah regions, although the Hebrew daily *Al Ha'mishmar* reported on 20th July that 'almost all those invited to join refused the offer'. By the end of this year, they hope to establish two more, in the Tulkarm and Jenin areas.

Key tactic

Another key tactic in the Zionists' new approach to consolidating their hold on the 1967 occupied territories is

a cosmetic 'softening' of their harsh occupation regime. The explicit aim is to reduce Palestinian resentment at the Israeli presence by reducing the gratuitous harassment of residents that has been such a characteristic of the 14-year occupation. The hope is that Palestinians will thus be more easily induced to abandon the nationalistic leaders and turn instead to the village leagues.

On 12th August Sharon issued a set of new guidelines for the occupation forces, urging them, *inter alia*, to treat Palestinians stopped at roadblocks with more courtesy, to avoid collective punishments such as curfews, and to refrain from invading schools when suppressing protest demonstrations. The guidelines, however, are not orders: the plethora of military regulations that govern every aspect of life for the West Bankers remain in force and can be invoked, as always, to justify a host of violations of human rights carried out in the name of 'security'.

The Palestinians of the 1967 occupied territories saw Sharon's guidelines for what they were. Gaza Mayor Rashid Shawa commented: 'What bothers us is not some roadblock. What bothers me and my people is the Israeli occupation.'

In a further move, Sharon on 23rd September announced that the military government would be ended. In its place there is to be a civilian administration, although its responsibilities will not extend to 'security' matters. These will remain in the hands of the military. The new civilian administration, in which collaborators like Mustafa Dudin will play key roles, will be headed by Menachem Milson, a former adviser to the military government.

Big defeat

As well as being aimed, like Sharon's guidelines, at 'sweetening' the occupation, the civilian administration is a clear attempt to impose the 'autonomy' called for by Camp David, which the Palestinians have firmly and consistently rejected. But, as Elfi Pallis points out, 'If they turn up with Dudin or anyone else from the village leagues, it will be as big a defeat as if they had turned up without any Palestinians at all.'

The move to 'abolish' the military government was seen by West Bankers as being no less fraudulent than the Sharon 'guidelines'. Nabul Mayor Bassam Shaka denied it as 'a desperate and futile attempt to undermine Palestinian unity,' and

added: 'In the final analysis they want to annex the West Bank.' Rashid Shawa of Gaza spoke for all his fellow mayors when he said, 'As long as Israel continues to ignore the rights of the Palestinians, including the right to self-determination and to set up an independent state, we shall regard any step adopted by Israel as a continuation of the occupation of our lands.'

While the Zionists have moved firmly to emasculate the Palestinians' elected leaders on the West Bank, they have also sought to neutralise their national leaders, based in Lebanon. Responsibility for the spate of major bombings that have rocked Lebanon in recent weeks, killing and wounding hundreds, has been claimed by a shadowy group calling itself the Front for the Liberation of Lebanon from Foreigners (ie Palestinians). The fact that a number of the largest blasts were intended to kill PLO leaders, however, points to the identity of the terrorists. The PLO and the Lebanese authorities are agreed that the bomb outrages were the work of Israeli secret service agents.

Cosmetics

In short, Sharon's 'new' package for the West Bank aims at nothing less than the destruction of the Palestinians' authentic leadership, and the establishment of a bogus 'alternative leadership' centred on collaborators. The fatal flaw in the Sharon scheme is the assumption that the PLO is not in fact representative of the Palestinians. As the Israeli journalist Yehuda Litani said in *Ha'aretz* on 18th August: 'Anyone who believes that somewhere out in the [1967 occupied] territories there are leaders hidden away because they are frightened to speak does not understand a thing. Real leaders do not fear to speak up, even if their views are not acceptable to all.'

He added: 'Within a few months it will become clear that a different, more moderate leadership, with whom it will be easier to negotiate, does not exist, and that one cannot apply cosmetics to an occupation. For the occupation remains in force, and most of the inhabitants of the occupied territories want to get rid of it.'

Dr Alan George

Mustafa Dudin: Profile of a Quisling

THE CREATION of a compliant 'alternative leadership' in the West Bank hinges on collaborators such as Mustafa Dudin, and on the power they can wield through their Israeli-sponsored 'village leagues'.

The occupation authorities systematically favour the leagues against the municipalities in the crucial sphere of economic development. Permission for urban projects has frequently been turned down, but the Zionists have never forbidden any of Dudin's development schemes. To date, his Hebron league has won approval for projects worth \$16.5 million. Further, while Israel contributes nothing to the cost of municipal development, half the cost of Dudin's schemes has been met by direct grants from the Zionists.

The Israelis are also transfer-

ring the functions of the municipalities to the village leagues. Permission for community projects, and permits to travel outside the West Bank, for example, must now be referred to Mustafa Dudin. 'If someone from the Hebron area has a problem with the Israeli military authorities and I ask for help, the Israelis will refuse,' says Hebron Acting Mayor Mustafa Natseh. 'But if the person goes through Dudin the military will help.'

Interviewed in Free Palestine in 1978, leading Israeli human rights campaigner Dr Israel Shahak summarised Dudin's credentials as a collaborator: 'Dudin was a member of the Jordanian government — Interior Minister during Black September. After the Palestinians were broken in Jordan, he was thrown out of the govern-

ment of King Hussein, and came to live in the West Bank.'

Having demonstrated his lack of any spontaneous support by failing miserably in the local elections on the West Bank in 1976, Dudin openly embraced the occupation regime. Shahak recalled: 'In the presence of the Israeli military governor of the West Bank, farmers of the Hebron area were herded together, and Dudin was "elected" as chairman of a co-operative which they were forced to form. Of course he has the sole rights to import fertiliser and agricultural tools.'

Any doubts as to Mustafa Dudin's status should be dispelled by Shahak's recollection that Dudin 'has even gone so far as to appear on television and claim that Yasser Arafat is not a Palestinian'.

'WE ARE aliens; they do not let us dissolve into the population, nor are we able to do so.' With these words in his diary in 1895, Theodor Herzl, the founder of Zionism, unwittingly summed up its moral bankruptcy. Zionism was a reaction to European anti-semitism; but it adopted the key prejudice of the anti-semites: that Jews and non-Jews were innately incompatible. The Zionists saw anti-semitism as a congenital sickness amongst gentiles, and claimed that Jews would find freedom only if they set up a state of their own.

Herzl was born in Budapest in 1860, where he lived until aged 18, when his family moved to Vienna. There, he studied law, and gained his doctorate in 1884. At the time, anti-semitism was as rife in the Austro-Hungarian Empire as it was elsewhere in eastern Europe. Jews were banned from numerous professions — including law. After working for a time as a government official, during which he gained a reputation for his political writings, Herzl moved to Paris and became correspondent of the Vienna paper *Neue Freie Presse*.

Two events he covered for the journal profoundly affected his thinking on anti-semitism: the Panama scandal, in which Jews were falsely accused of financial misdeeds, and the Dreyfus affair, which came to a head in December 1884. Dreyfus was a Jewish French army officer who was accused of spying for the Germans. On the basis of evidence later proved to be false, he was cashiered and sentenced to life-long exile from France. More than the trial itself, it was the virulent outbursts of anti-semitism during and after it that particularly shocked Herzl.

In the wake of the American and French Revolutions, America and the states of western Europe revoked the callous legislation, rooted in the Middle Ages, that set Jews apart from the wider societies of which they were a part. In America, Virginia paved the way in 1776 with a law guaranteeing equality for all its people, regardless of religion. The rights of all French citizens were guaranteed by law in 1791. Emancipation subsequently gained momentum in other western European states.

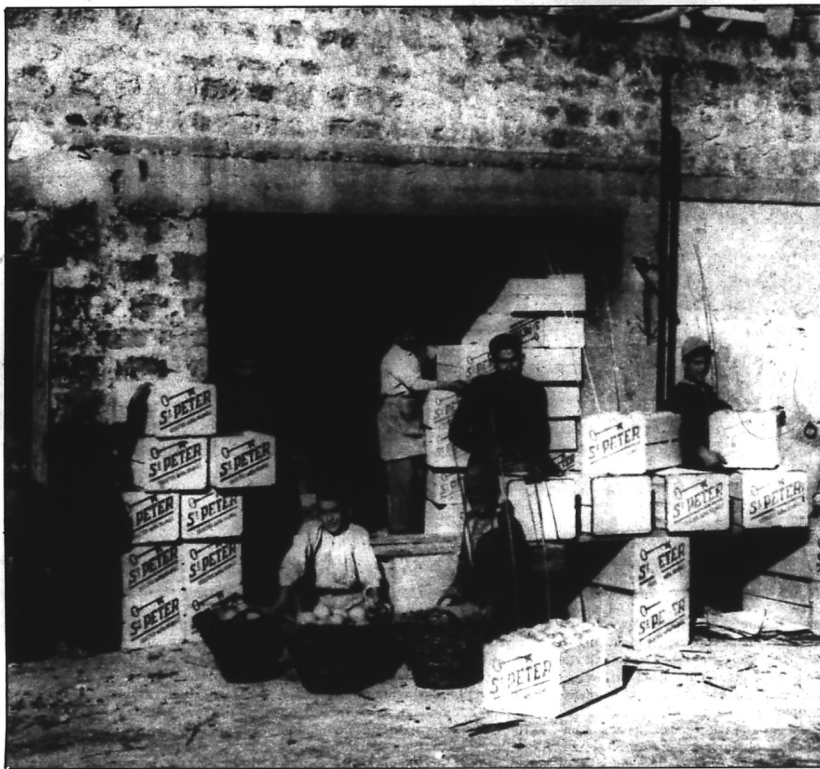
The American Rabbi Jacob Petuchowsky has described the moves towards equal rights for Jews as a major turning point in their history: 'Having been treated for a long time by Christian society as an outcast, the Jew could now at least enjoy the Rights of Man which were everyone's prerogative. The walls of the ghetto had been broken. As a result, Judaism found itself in an unprecedented situation.'

Dreyfus affair

Legal emancipation did not, however, result in an immediate and universal acceptance of Jews as equals. The prejudices of centuries do not die easily. Herzl interpreted the anti-semitism surrounding the Dreyfus affair as damning proof that emancipation had failed. He became convinced that Jews would find real security only if they had a state of their own, in which they constituted a clear majority. In 1896 he published *The Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution to the Jewish Question*. It was to become the founding document of the Zionist movement.

Others had reached similar conclusions. Following the Russian pogroms of 1881 and 1882, a movement developed called Chibbat Zion — 'Lovers of Zion' — which advocated settlement in Palestine and a revival of the Hebrew language. In 1890 Chibbat Zion set up an 'association for the support of Jewish farmers and workers in Palestine and Syria'. It came under the leadership

The Palestine Conflict: Part I



The rights of these Palestinian workers in Jaffa (1902) were ignored by the Zionists: Christians and Muslims were to have no place in the Zionist state, and be driven from their homeland.

Zionism: A racist response to racism

THIS IS the first of a series of Palestine Essays in which various contributors will examine some of the fundamental issues involved in the Palestine conflict.

At the heart of the conflict is the Zionist ideology on which the state of Israel was founded, yet its racist approach to the Palestinians and their rights continues to provide a major obstacle to peace. The Arab experience is that Zionism makes them second class citizens in their own land.

of Leon Pinsker, who was the first to advocate a Jewish national home.

The interest aroused by Herzl's book prompted him to convene a Zionist Congress in Basle in 1897, attended by about 200 delegates. 'We have gathered here to lay the foundations for the home that will give the Jewish nation shelter,' declared Herzl. His use of the word 'home' was a careful circumlocution. He meant a state. In his diary he confided: 'Were I to sum up the Basle

Congress in a word — which I shall guard against pronouncing publicly — it would be this: at Basle I founded the Jewish state. If I said this out loud today, I would be answered with universal laughter. Perhaps in five years, and certainly in fifty, everyone will know it.'

Arab expulsion

The early Zionists were careful to disclaim any ambitions for the establishment of a state, fearing the

reaction of the the Ottoman authorities then in control of Palestine. The Zionists knew that the country on which they had set their sights was already populated, and that a Jewish state would be fiercely resisted by the Christian and Muslim Palestinian Arabs. A small number of Zionists had been settling in Palestine since the 1880s, and the Arabs were already deeply suspicious of their long-term intentions.

It was clear from the start, however, that the Zionist enterprise would necessarily entail a takeover of Palestine, and the expulsion of its inhabitants. This was dictated by the internal logic of Zionism. The expulsion of the Palestinians would be inevitable if the Zionist state was to have the Jewish majority which was deemed essential. As former Israeli premier Golda Meir said in the Knesset in 1969: 'I want a Jewish state with a decisive Jewish majority which cannot change overnight. I always believed this was plain Zionism.' Close observers of Zionism have concurred that this was how the Zionists saw their mission. The late historian Arnold Toynbee, speaking in London in 1971, said: 'I believe it was the intention of the Zionists right from the beginning to dispossess the Palestinians from their homes.'

In his book *Cross Roads to Israel*, Christopher Sykes commented: 'This was indeed the whole problem of Palestine: it was inhabited.' For the Zionists, this was merely incidental. As nineteenth-century Europeans, they shared the predominant view — held even by socialists at the time — that coloured peoples were 'non-

persons' whose main function was to be 'civilised' by Europeans. In *The Jewish State* Herzl wrote: 'We should there [in Palestine] form a rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilisation as opposed to barbarism.'

It was this arrogant ethnocentricity that enabled the Zionists to win such widespread support from European governments. But, while nineteenth-century Europeans could view Zionism as a progressive philosophy offering the Jews liberation from centuries of oppression in the Christian west, the Palestinian Arabs rightly saw it as an aggressive and racist colonialist movement, which threatened their security within their own homeland.

Colonial mind

The 'civilising mission' of Zionism was nevertheless still being invoked by propagandists as late as the 1930s, when the sun was already setting on the age of European imperialism. Louis Golding, in a 1938 Penguin Special entitled *The Jewish Problem*, asserted that, far from facing dispossession, the Palestinian Arabs actually stood to gain from a Jewish state: 'The Arabs would profit from the influx of capital, the utilisation of new methods, the introduction without cost to themselves of the material advances for which their neighbours may have to wait for generations.'

Golding asserted that a possible Jewish state would indeed be so benevolent that it would shun violence totally, precluding the possibility of forced dispossession of the Arabs. One of the state's main functions, he said, would be to allow the Jews to develop still further their rich intellectual and cultural traditions. 'If the utmost that some Jews hope from Zionism is achieved, even a Jewish National Home which is completely autonomous, it will not be a road lined with tanks and field guns,' he said. 'It is a stronger thing to have no armies and navies than to possess armies and navies.'

His views contrast starkly with the more honest admission of former Israeli defence minister Moshe Dayan: 'We are a generation of settlers, and without the steel helmet and the canon we cannot plant a tree and build a home. This is the fate of our generation, the choice of our life — to be prepared and armed, strong and tough.'

The flaw in Zionism is the same as that in anti-semitism or any other form of racism: peoples, regardless of religion or colour, are quite simply not fundamentally different from each other. As well as being morally repugnant, therefore, racism cannot be the basis for a successful long-term political programme. This has been amply demonstrated by Israel's experience.

In his book *The Palestinians*, journalist Jonathan Dimbleby, reviewing the beliefs of the early Zionists, said: 'They were convinced that all Jews in the world did belong to one nation: that their state was to be created by Jews for all Jews; that all Jews would eventually be driven to the Jewish state by the pathological anti-Semitism of the Gentile world; and that the fundamental purpose of the state was to secure the "ingathering" of the exiles.'

It has not turned out that way. There are more Jews in the United States than in Israel. Jewish immigration to Israel has dwindled to a trickle. Emigration has reached alarming proportions. It is no surprise that the anachronistic philosophy of Zionism is grinding to a halt. Anti-semitism has always been its lifeblood. As it has receded in the west since the Second World War, the Zionists have been left high and dry.

Anti-Semitism Dying Out

ANTI-SEMITISM has declined significantly in the United States, although a small minority is still prejudiced against Jews, according to a study completed last May for the American Jewish Committee.

Measured against a similar study published in 1964, the new survey shows a 'definite decline in anti-Semitic stereotypes of Jews,' said Ruth Clark of the public opinion research firm Yankelovich, Skelly and White, which conducted

interviews with a representative sample of more than 1,200 people.

The percentage of persons holding 'highly anti-Semitic' views declined from 19 to 9 per cent, while the proportion of those who believed Jews were 'shrewd and tricky' dropped from 40 per cent to 27 per cent.

'It's not a rosy study, but the country is in better shape in 1981 than in 1964,' said Ms Clark.



Zionists protest in New York: Britain should no longer base its Palestine policy on the prejudices of the Americans. Progress towards peace depends on recognition of the PLO by the Westminster government.

EUROPE MUST BACK PLO PLAN

IT IS no exaggeration to say that the Arabs in general, and the Palestinians in particular, have been seriously misled into believing that Europe had both the ability and the intention of launching such an initiative. Europe is far from independent in its ability to formulate a foreign policy on principles and priorities which differ from those of the military who have assumed control in Washington.

Nowhere is this more obvious than in respect of Europe's proclaimed intention to formulate a European initiative to resolve the Palestine question.

The PLO, in seeking an initiative to resolve the Palestine question from the European Community, has provided the EEC countries with the opportunity to establish a position of respect and friendship in the Middle East which is firmly in our interests, and those of future generations of Europeans.

The interests of neither Europe nor the Arab peoples are served by the crude assertion of power which is the basis of Reagan's foreign policy. As Europeans we can no longer tolerate the subjugation of our foreign policy and economic interests to those of the United States, particularly when the policies of the Reagan administration directly undermine our interests. In this respect our freedom to determine our own policies is challenged in much the same way as that of the Palestinians' right to freedom and dignity in an independent state.

Israel is not only a challenge to the rights and security of the Palestinians. The policies being pursued by the Beigin regime threaten the very security of Europe. Each and every one of us has a responsibility — a moral responsibility — to ensure that the human tragedy of the Palestinian people is not prolonged. Already they have endured more than three decades of repression at the hands of a Zionist regime, whose power is largely dependent on the support it receives from Europe and the United States.

ANDREW FAULDS MP argues that there is an urgent need for Britain and the EEC to adopt a foreign policy which is independent of the United States. Recognition of the PLO, as the representative of the Palestinians, must be an integral part of the new plan to replace the Camp David process.

The Camp David accords between Israel, Egypt and the United States do not provide the basis for a just settlement of the Palestine conflict. They were designed specifically to undermine efforts to secure a settlement based on the creation of an independent Palestinian state by devising the so-called 'autonomy scheme'. Those of us who have long been involved in the anti-apartheid campaign heard the words 'autonomy scheme' long before Camp David. It was the very basis of the apartheid regime's plans for the creation of Bantustans.

The Camp David autonomy scheme has not deceived the Palestinians, nor must it deceive us. It shows total and sinister contempt for the Palestinians and their rights. It is intended to perpetuate the Israeli military occupation by feeding the crumbs of local autonomy to a nation of Palestinians denied their right to self-determination. We should hardly be surprised that the Palestinians refuse to accept a plan which offers them fewer powers than a municipal council.

Moreover, it is a futile exercise to attempt to find a settlement formula which satisfies both Palestinians and Israelis. Israel occupied Arab land, seized by military force, illegally and in flagrant violation of international law and the resolutions of the United Nations. There is no room for compromise: Israel must withdraw from the territories it seized on the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967.

Peace programme

If we compare the Israeli policy in Palestine with that of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, there is no

been subjected to the Palestinian experience. The United Nations General Assembly has stated that the 'inalienable rights' of the Palestinians are their right to return to their homeland from which they have been dispossessed, and their right to self-determination in an independent sovereign state.

It is Israel and the Zionists — not to mention the United States — which stand as an obstacle to any settlement based on these rights. On what basis, therefore, do the governments of the European Community persistently refuse to support these principles in the form of an independent European initiative?

Conciliation

We should all know that the Palestinian Liberation Organisation has endorsed these principles as an acceptable basis for a just settlement of the Palestine question. Indeed, for many years the PLO has held out its hand in conciliation to the Jewish settlers in Palestine. Quite rightly, it cannot compromise with Zionism, but it has sought to distinguish between the excesses of the Zionists and the quite separate needs of the Jewish community in Palestine.

It is a total distortion of the truth for Europeans to claim that concessions are required from the Palestinians and the PLO. Concessions have been made — Yasser Arafat, himself, stated quite clearly and unequivocally before the United Nations General Assembly that the Palestinians looked to a solution in which Palestine would become a single, democratic and secular state in which Jews, Christians and Muslims

doubt which offers a programme on which peace and security in the region can flourish. Zionist policy even prior to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, has been wholly contemptuous of the Palestinians. In 1948, the Zionists secured a Jewish state in Palestine, despite the fact that the majority of the population in that land were Muslims and Christians. To create a Jewish majority in such a situation depended on the calculated and planned expulsion of the Christian and Muslim Palestinians from their homeland.

For three decades, and more, the state of Israel has paraded itself before the international community, acclaiming itself as a bastion of freedom and democracy in the Middle East. Yet we must not let the world forget that its foundations rest on the dispossession of the Palestinian people from their homes and a rigid refusal to respect their basic human right to return to their homeland.

It must be self-evident to all that no settlement can be achieved in the Middle East so long as the Palestinians are forced to endure their paramount injustice. Yet, there are no signs within Israel's political leadership — neither from Beigin's Likud nor Peres' Labour alignment — that the Zionist state offers any proposals which do not prolong the Palestinian exile and reject the Palestinian right to self-determination. How then does the EEC expect to secure a solution which attempts to balance justice with injustice, right with wrong?

We are faced with a totally absurd situation, in which the international community, quite rightly, has agreed, in various resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, that any settlement of the Middle East conflict, and specifically the Palestine question, must be based on respect for the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. These rights are not exceptional. We would expect, indeed demand, the very same rights had we

enjoyed equal rights and responsibilities, and equal protection from discrimination. It is a solution which I believe no reasonable person would reject. Yet it is rarely — if ever — presented to Western public opinion by our political leaders or in the media. The secular democratic state concept proposed by the PLO was vigorously rejected by Israel's Zionist leaders, both in the years that the Israeli Labour Party was in government, and now by the Beigin regime.

The PLO then revised its approach, faced with this implacable opposition from the Zionists. Recognising the urgent need to end this terrible era through which the Palestinian people are living, the PLO sought, as an alternative, to secure an independent Palestinian state on the Palestinian territories seized by Israel in 1967 — the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Let us not delude ourselves. It is not an easy decision for any Palestinian to accept the partition of his homeland. But the needs of the Palestinians to the security of a sovereign state are pressing and urgent. It is the hope of the Palestinian leaders that the creation of such a West Bank/Gaza state would provide the foundations on which co-existence between Palestinians and Israeli Jews might be developed. Yet even this compromise — this major concession from the Palestinians — has been rejected with the obstinacy and intransigence which we have come to expect from the Israelis.

Recognise PLO

Moreover, not only is it important that our governments in the European Community adopt a position consistent with the rights of the Palestinians. It is equally important that Europe should recognise the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, as the United Nations General Assembly has already done.

Anyone who has had the opportunity to speak with Palestinians in the Middle East, both those in exile and those under Israeli military occupation, will be aware of the widespread popular support which the PLO enjoys. In very difficult circumstances the PLO has sought to ensure that all sections of the Palestinian people, all classes and political groupings, are embraced within the PLO framework. The PLO provides the most democratic system that it is possible to create for a community which is so divided by the barriers of war, and so dispersed around the world.

We must not allow our governments to be party to the attempts of the Zionists to create some 'Quisling' Palestinian leadership. Even if the Israelis could find such a group willing to collaborate with the Zionists and betray the rights of their own people, do we seriously believe that a secure and lasting peace could be established on this basis? And so long as a just solution is delayed, the prospect of a new war in the Middle East remains a very real danger.

The PLO represents the two communities of Palestinians — those in exile as refugees, and those living under Israeli military occupation. It is able to speak with a single voice, and to ensure that the interests of one section of the Palestinian society are not set aside. We can see in the Israeli tactics a very clear effort to ignore totally the rights of the Palestinians in exile. Only the PLO can ensure that a comprehensive solution is reached rather than some form of piecemeal plan as was the result of Camp David.

This text is an edited version of a speech given by Andrew Faulds, Labour Member of Parliament for Wulley East and a member of Free Palestine's editorial board, to the Irish-Arab Society in Dublin on 22nd October.



Palestinians' exile ignored by new Zionist propaganda tract.

Beware the Zionist myth machine

FROM ITS title onwards, this book, *PLO Strategy and Tactics*, by Aryeh Yodfat and Yuval Arnon-Ohanna, is a hoax, but in one sense, a carefully calculated confidence trick. Written by two Israeli Zionist 'academics' it is a shoddy assemblage of carefully selected 'facts' and uncritically accepted Israeli prejudices. There is not a vestige of academic rigour in its writing and research, and the more appropriate title would have been *PLO: Press cuttings, rumours and official Zionist misinformation*.

The authors claim in their preface that they 'present a comprehensive study of the PLO in terms of a systematic research discipline'. If they had admitted that they simply repeat the usual propaganda lines, the book would never have been read by anyone except their own supporters. But the authors, and the Israeli information services who presumably backed their efforts, are aware that there is growing interest in Europe in the PLO, and growing appreciation of the rightness of the Palestinian case. So a book which, produced a few years ago, would have been entitled something like *Israel and the terrorist threat to democracy is now*, in the light of evaporating sympathy for Israel, packaged with the letters 'PLO' in bold bright yellow capitals across the cover, to try and catch the rising interest in the PLO.

The trick has worked; in at least one London bookshop, with radical pretensions, this book has been on sale alongside writings on other liberation movements by the members and supporters. The uproar which would have greeted attempts to sell a South African official tract on SWAPO in the same place would have been deafening.

But having succeeded with a marketing ploy, the plot falls flat on its face because of the content of the book. It is pretty evident that any consideration of the strategy and tactics of the PLO must be in the light of the Palestinian people's experiences at the hands of the Zionists, and particularly of the State of Israel since 1948. Because they are Zionists,

the authors' commitment to the State of Israel renders them incapable of attributing any blame for the present condition of the Palestinians to the actions of Israel itself; such actions go unexamined.

Starting at the beginning, they get it wrong, and steadily more wrong. They claim that: 'A Jewish state named Israel was proclaimed on May 15, 1948 . . . the Palestinians joined the armies of Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Sudan in an invasion of the country to end Israel's existence' (p 21). Even David Ben Gurion admitted in his story of the birth of the Zionist state, *Rebirth and Destiny of Israel*: 'Until the British left, no Jewish settlement, however remote, was entered or seized by the Arabs, while the Haganah, under severe and frequent attack, captured many Arab positions, and liberated Tiberias, and Haifa, Jaffa and Safad'.

The idea that Palestinians were 'invaders' in those parts of their country allocated under the partition plan to the Jewish state is novel; the fact that the Arab armies made no attempts to seize the area allotted to the Jewish state, whereas Zionist forces sought to take and hold as much land as possible before and after the departure of the British, is not even considered.

'A state of Palestine was not created even though more than 70 per cent of its area — according to the UN plan of partition — remained in Arab hands from the crucial period of 1947/48 till 1967,' the authors claim a few lines later. In fact, the UN plan of partition concerned itself solely with Palestine, and not with Transjordan, which Zionists often conveniently forgot was placed under a separate administration by the British in 1923. The UN planned to partition Palestine — the area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean — into Jewish and Arab states. Partition was rejected by the Palestinian Arabs, who rightly felt that they were to be confined to just over half their land, though they were in an overwhelming majority. After the war, only 23, not 70, per cent of

Palestine was 'in Arab hands'. Palestinian society — and any political authority — was destroyed. Most Palestinians had been displaced from their homes. This context of the birth and growth of the Palestinian resistance movement is omitted.

Thus the authors are enabled to join the 'small radical minority' school of sociology, which can ignore the manifest social causes of political dissent, and attribute it to unrepresentative radical minorities. One of the major aims of the authors is to present the leadership of the PLO as unrepresentative of the Palestinians as a whole. On page 75, they carefully list eight prominent Palestinians — only three of whom were actually ever members of the PLO Executive — in order to point out that they come from the 'coastal strip' — the areas occupied in 1948 — and are therefore not supported by the 'hill farmers' (as the authors mysteriously choose to call the largely urbanised West Bank Palestinians). Even if the PLO leadership did come entirely from the 1948-occupied territories, this would prove nothing at all about the support which they enjoy from fellow Palestinians living under occupation.

The authors fail to mention that supporters of the PLO swept overwhelmingly to victory in the only elections ever tolerated by Israel in the 1967-occupied territories. But they are forced to contradict their own allegations about the unrepresentative nature of the PLO leadership when, on p 146, they admit that Palestine National Front supporters (who, they concede, succeeded in getting seats on some municipal councils) became members of the PLO Executive Committee after Israel banished them from occupied Palestine.

Much of the book is devoted to proving that the PLO wants 'the destruction of the state of Israel'. This is not difficult, since the Palestinian aim of a democratic secular state in Palestine would involve the dismantling of the Zionist state. What does not follow, which the authors find great difficulty in getting round, is that this aim implies physical harm

to Jews. Racist Rhodesia was destroyed; the vast majority of those who supported that state are equal citizens of liberated Zimbabwe. Even a former racist leader — Smith — still lives there. Various comments from Palestinian leaders as to the interpretation of the relevant clauses in the Palestine National Covenant are discussed. The authors choose to present some remarks by PLO leaders, including Yasser Arafat, about their personal interpretations of articles in the covenant, as 'true' where they appear uncompromisingly anti-Israel, and to dismiss them as western-oriented window dressing where they are conciliatory (pp 56-57). Their minds are firmly made up.

The final absurdity which results from the authors' obsession with the 'irresponsibility' and the 'unrepresentative nature' of the present Palestinian leadership is the stupid allegation that the decision of the 1974 Arab Summit conference in Rabat means that 'all Arab states are committed to whatever substance the PLO

may choose to endow on the term 'legitimate national rights' (p 57). It was of course because the term 'legitimate national rights' had been amply and fully defined that the Arab states agreed to support the Palestinians.

The book is the work of two men who are either total incompetents or almost at the edge of desperation in their attempts to provide a respectable, academic, support for the expansionist policies of the Israeli government. One final example of the truly Goebbels-like standards of the work is provided by the ultimate 'big lie': the authors allege that 'The official ideology [of the PLO] as presented in the National Covenant . . . aims to establish that state in the whole area of both Israel and Jordan' (p 58).

Phil Kelly

□ *PLO Strategy and Tactics* by Aryeh Yodfat and Yuval Arnon-Ohanna, published by Croom Helm, 1981. Price £11.50.

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EDITORIAL

Real issues must be tackled after Sadat's death

IT WAS a violent end for the Egyptian ruler Anwar Sadat, and one which he must have anticipated in the wake of the massive wave of arrests which he had ordered only a few weeks before his assassination. Yet although his death was loudly mourned in the West, the response from his own people was in marked contrast to the public grief expressed at the death of President Nasser, when tens of thousands of mourners poured out onto the streets to express their anguish.

Sadat was not mourned by his own people, nor by the wider Arab world, because he was not a great Arab leader. He had set in motion a process of events which served the interests of Israel and the West, and weakened the power of the Arab nation to challenge what it perceives as a direct challenge to its integrity and independence. His recognition of and peace with Zionist Israel was followed by his obsession with seeking the patronage of the United States, and this in turn led to domestic policies which might have boosted the coffers of the Egyptian elite and the American multinationals, but within Egypt led to spiralling prices and added deprivation and poverty for his own people.

If there is surprise in the West that the Arab nation did not mourn the passing of Sadat, it merely serves to underline the continuing Western

misconception that the Arab nation can be easily separated from the Palestine conflict. Sadat's devotion to the Camp David accords may have served Egyptian interests, but this was only in the short term and at the cost of Egypt's isolation from the Arab world. For the Arabs in general, and the Palestinians in particular, Camp David meant not only surrender to Israel. It resulted in a serious weakening of the Arab ability to confront Israel and to challenge the illegal Zionist occupation of Arab lands, and the violation of the Palestinians' rights to return to their occupied homeland and create an independent Palestinian state.

Sadat may have been sincere in believing that a comprehensive settlement could have developed from the Camp David accords, but this was based on a naive analysis of Zionist strategy which no doubt the Americans were happy to support.

In fact, by his obsession with the Camp David accords, and his proclaimed friendship with the Zionist leadership, Sadat moved so close to the Israelis that he jeopardised even America's wider designs and schemes for the Arab region. He dragged the United States into a tripartite alliance which forced Washington to be identified so closely with Israel and the Zionists that it was unable to maintain even the façade of independence from

Israeli policy necessary to pursue its 'strategic alliance' with other Arab countries. Sadat's inability to take any firm stand towards Israel's flagrant back-stepping destroyed America's wish to create the impression that Washington was a neutral, independent force in the Middle East.

The assassination brought not only the end to Sadat, but almost certainly the Camp David process as well. The Israeli-Egyptian agreements on Zionist withdrawal from occupied Sinai may still be fulfilled; some facade of progress towards Palestinian 'autonomy' may still emerge for the West Bank. But the events of 6th October have opened the way for new plans to be formulated, and perhaps for a closing of ranks between the Arabs and Egypt once again.

The call for the PLO to be brought into any new schemes which has come from ex-presidents Carter and Ford were not simply the views of two private citizens of the United States; at the time both were acting as representatives of the US President. Given the proclaimed grief of the American administration at the death of Sadat, the Carter-Ford pronouncements look like a hasty attempt by Reagan to create a new scenario in the region.

And whatever the White House may say to appease the Zionists, the new

flirtation with the PLO is clearly designed to present the US as a friend reborn to the Arabs.

Carter and Ford were careful to make recognition of the PLO conditional on the PLO's recognition of Israel. This remains the general thrust of the European Community's declarations. However, this is not an even-handed, balanced approach to the issue which Washington and the West would like to claim. What conditions have been made on the West's recognition of Israel? Indeed, none at all. Israel is not only recognised by the West, but supported by arms, funds and mass media — and all this despite the Zionists' rigid refusal over many decades to recognise the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, let alone respect them.

Moreover, PLO recognition of Israel is not a factor in resolving the conflict. The conflict did not arise from Palestinian rejection or non-recognition of Israel, but from Israel's policies directed at the dispossession of the Palestinian Arabs from their homeland, the expropriation of their land and homes, and disregard for their national rights. The tensions and conflict will not end until these issues are resolved.

Nor can it be ignored that while there appears to be an orchestrated 'Let's talk to the PLO' campaign in Washington, the Reagan administration remains closely involved with Israel in a concerted effort to crush the Palestinian movement through assassinations of PLO leaders, genocidal bombing campaigns of Palestinian refugee camps in the Lebanon, and the new moves in the occupied territories to weaken the elected pro-

PLO municipal leaders and create a new Quisling leadership. If cannot be coincidental that precisely the same approach is being conducted in southern Africa by the apartheid regime whose closest allies today are Israel and the United States.

The realities of the Palestine conflict become grossly distorted by the western media in its general reflection of American government and Zionist presentation of the issues. It is important, therefore, that western public opinion should examine the issues more carefully. The West would do well to remember how it welcomed the Camp David process, and declared that the Palestinians and the Arabs were being unreasonable in their opposition to the US scheme. Only time could prove that the Palestinians were right, and even when it finally dawned on the Europeans that Camp David was purely a cosmetic process which left the fundamental issues untouched and that the prospects of a new confrontation in the region remained, the EEC found itself limited in its options by pressures from Washington.

In the coming months the Egyptians and the Israelis will probably make some effort to put some life back into the defunct West Bank 'autonomy' talks, but this must not be allowed to impede progress on formulating a new initiative.

Any proposal which does not deal with the root issues and causes of the Palestine conflict, and fails to secure full respect for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people is not only unworthy of support, but it must be vigorously opposed.

Koch speaks out ... on some things

NEW YORK'S Mayor Edward Koch has said the English should get out of Northern Ireland, and that the 32 countries should be reunited by peaceful means. This could be achieved, he added, if the rest of the world spoke out in favour of reunification and condemned oppression.

Speaking at a reception to open Irish Trade Week on 23rd August, he declared: 'I speak out against the oppression of Irish Catholics in Northern Ireland where there is oppression in housing, in political rights and employment. I speak out on this just as I speak out against the treatment of certain citizens in Russia.'

Mayor Koch doesn't, however, speak out on all cases of oppression. On a recent visit to Israel he was full of praise for the Zionists. But then he doesn't have many Arabs amongst his electorate — the Jewish and Irish New Yorkers are keys to mayoral power in the city.

Beigin's dilemma

JERUSALEM'S King David Hotel was the venue for a bizarre reunion in September, when a gang of Zionist terrorists converged on the hostelry for the launch of a new book, *By Blood and Fire*, written by one Thurston Clarke of America.

The subject of the book is the blowing up of the same hotel, by the same people, in July 1946 when it housed the British military headquarters in Palestine. 91 people were killed — British, Arabs and Jews.

Reporting the event on 28th September, the *International Herald Tribune* said: 'The man who set the fuses was there. The woman who made three futile telephone calls of warning was there. The man who brought the explosives into Jerusalem, the man who guarded a key corridor, the man who was drinking

quietly in the bar were there.' The paper continued, 'But only their commander, Menachem Begin, now prime minister of Israel did not attend. He had been invited and had apparently vacillated all week, and finally did not appear.'

One can sympathise with Mr Begin's dilemma. When you spend much of your time insisting that Palestinians are nothing but murderous terrorists, it is a bit awkward being invited to such a reunion.

The friends and relatives of those killed in the King David blast, however, will no doubt be interested in the comment of the woman who allegedly telephoned the warnings.

(There is no record that these calls were in fact ever made.) They will see 91 reasons to dismiss her statement to journalists at the reunion: 'I think we did our utmost to save lives.'

There's gratitude for you

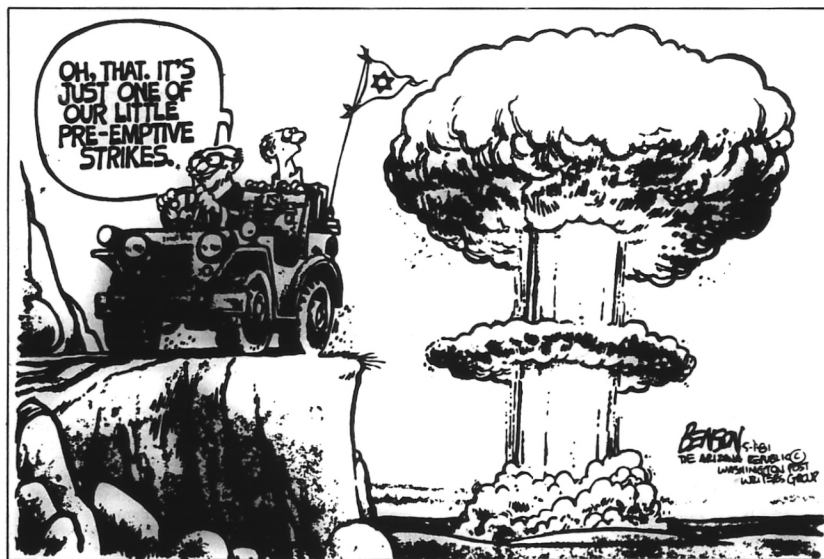
THE UNITED STATES has refused a visa to the Greek Catholic Archbishop Mgr Hilarion Capucci, because of his links with 'terrorist or subversive groups'. American Embassy officials said in Rome on 3rd September.

Mgr Capucci, who was formerly based in Jerusalem, was imprisoned by the Israelis in 1974 for allegedly smuggling arms. He was released after an appeal by Pope Paul VI, but was deported from his homeland.

The Palestinian churchman is a close friend of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, and played a key role in negotiations with the Iranian government to obtain the release of the American refugees in Tehran.

An American Embassy official agreed that the US had written to Mgr Capucci thanking him for his help over the hostages, but added: 'That does not affect his eligibility for a visa.'

london notes



How considerate!

PRESIDENT REAGAN and Secretary of State Haig were taking 'very seriously' the personal assurance of premier Begin that Israel would in the future carefully weigh US interests in the Middle East before opening any new military action outside Israel's borders, the *Jewish Chronicle* reported on 21st August. This assurance, the paper added, had been 'a very important factor' in Reagan's decision to lift the suspension on the delivery of F-16 and F-15 warplanes to the Zionist state.

The embargo was placed on the planes following Israel's assault on Iraq's nuclear reactor, and was extended after the bombing of central Beirut in July.

Begin's assurances are at first sight very considerate. But they will not reassure the Palestinians who are the standard target for 'military action outside Israel's borders'. They see no difference at all between Israeli and US interests in the region.

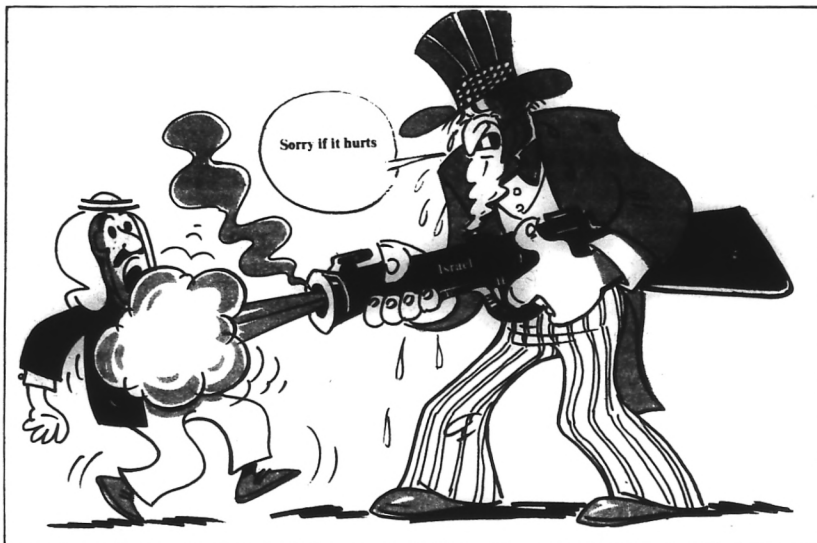
When is a lobby not a lobby?

THE US Treasury Department is being sued for records of the dollar holdings of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, the *Financial Times* reported on 28th July. The group issuing the writ is concerned about the growing size of Arab investments in the US, and 'the influence this might give these countries on US foreign policy'.

The writ is being issued by none other than the American Jewish Congress, a part of the well organised and powerful American Zionist lobby whose sole purpose is precisely to 'influence US foreign policy'.

When is a lobby not a lobby? When it is Zionist, it would seem.

فلسطين حرة free palestine



Arabs warn British firms on canal

THE ARAB-British Chamber of Commerce has warned that any involvement by UK companies in Israel's planned canal through the occupied Gaza Strip, linking the Mediterranean and Dead Seas, will jeopardise their business in the Arab world.

In a notice issued to its members in October, the ABCC points out that the British Government views the project as illegal. The notice quotes the answer of Mr Douglas Hurd, Minister

of State at the Foreign Office, to a question put to him in the House of Commons in July by Conservative MP Richard Needham: 'The project as planned is contrary to international law, as it involves unlawful works in occupied territory and infringes Jordan's legal rights in the Dead Sea and neighbouring regions. No official support will be given by Her Majesty's Government in respect of the project.'

The notice says the ABCC was

prompted to act by 'its increasing apprehensions concerning the UK-based campaign, spearheaded by the British-Israel Chamber of Commerce, to raise funds and mobilise support in Britain' for the project.

The 100 kilometre canal, scheduled to start at Qatif on the Gaza coast, will utilise the 400 metres drop in altitude between the two seas to generate hydro-electricity. A planned 600 MW power station to be sited near the Dead Sea will provide about 15 per cent of Israel's energy needs in the early 1990s. Already \$100 million has been raised towards the total \$700 million cost of the scheme.

The ABCC notes that the official British position was closely echoed by the recent UN conference on new and renewable energy sources. The conference, the first of its kind, was convened in Nairobi and ended on 21st August with a strongly worded resolution denouncing the Gaza canal as 'a violation of the United Nations Charter and international law'. The resolution, opposed only by Israel, described the project as 'an aggression against the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their occupied land', and called on Israel to cease all work on the scheme.

The ABCC says the Israeli decision to go ahead with the project 'indicates once more its intransigence and its lack of respect for world opinion in the face of widespread international condemnation'.

The Chamber concludes by warning: 'British firms and financial institutions should be aware that any participation in this scheme or any contribution to the fund raising effort towards its implementation will put at risk their business in the Arab countries.'

Synagogue attack condemned

THE BRUSSELS office of the PLO strongly condemned the bomb attack in a mainly Jewish business district of the Belgian city of Antwerp on 20th October. Two people died in the incident, and over 100 were injured.

The explosion occurred outside a synagogue on the Jewish holy day of Succoth, but most worshippers had left the area after the service had finished. Police described the bomb attack as 'racist', and responsibility for it was claimed in a telephone call by a Belgian branch of the banned French neo-Nazi group 'Action Directe'. Sources close to the group later denied this.

In June this year, Naim Khader, the PLO representative in Brussels, was gunned down outside his home by an unknown assailant, generally thought to have been working for an Israeli intelligence organisation. It is also possible that the Israelis are working with the renegade Palestinian splinter group headed by Sabri Al Banna, known as Abu Nidal. In July last year, two men claiming to be supporters of the Abu Nidal group were arrested after grenades were thrown at a group of Jewish schoolchildren in Antwerp. A fifteen year old boy was killed. One man has since been convicted of the offence, and another is awaiting trial.

Mrs Thatcher rebuked by PLO

COMMENTS MADE by the British Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, during her September visit to Kuwait, in which she asserted that the Palestine Liberation Organisation was 'associated with terrorism' and committed to 'driving Israel into the sea' have brought a firm rebuttal from the London representative of the PLO, Mr Nabil Ramlawi.

Speaking at a meeting of the Labour Middle East Council in Brighton during the Labour Party Conference, Mr Ramlawi said these were the words of Menachem Begin which he did not expect to hear from the British Prime Minister.

'If Britain is genuine in its claim that it seeks a just solution to the Palestine question, wild allegations such as these are totally negative and serious damage friendly relations between Britain and the Arab world,' he said.

With Mrs Thatcher's remarks already the subject of bitter criticism in the Kuwaiti press, Mr Ramlawi continued, 'We do not expect to hear from the lips of the British Prime Minister these old fantasies of Zionist propagandists. These are old myths which are intended as barriers to peace in Palestine. We in the PLO believe that peace can only be built on facts, and the first fact which must be recognised is that the Palestine Liberation Organisation is the sole representative of the Palestinian people.'

Mr Ramlawi said that despite PLO encouragement for the EEC to adopt a positive and independent attitude on the Middle East, we have to recognise that there is no initiative from Europe.

He continued, 'I have to say it is no credit to the European Community that it should be forced to adopt a foreign policy dictated by the United States and within the limits imposed by Washington.'

'Europe comes to the PLO and argues that we must recognise the state of Israel,' Mr Ramlawi said.

'This is the American position. By our recognition, we are asked to confer legitimacy on a settler administration established on our land, at the expense of our legitimate rights, and the suffering of four million Palestinians forced to live either in exile as refugees or under military occupation.'

Responsibility

The PLO envoy added, 'When has it been the responsibility of a liberation movement, or of an oppressed people,



Prime Minister Thatcher

to confer legitimacy on the regime which denies its people their basic rights? The timetable to any settlement to the Palestine question may involve a series of moves towards the establishment of a sovereign independent Palestinian state. Recognition of states is the responsibility of other states, not of a people deprived of their rights to statehood nor of the liberation movement which represents them. Do not confuse the rights of peoples with the responsibilities of governments.'

Despite his criticism of Mrs Thatcher's remarks, Mr Ramlawi continued, 'We still ask Europe to provide the new and independent initiative which is required to provide a just settlement of the Palestine question.' However, he warned, 'An initiative tied to American policy is no initiative at all. I stress that the PLO seeks an independent initiative based on respect for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people as defined by the United Nations General Assembly. If a process towards peace is to be set in motion, it must include the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people.'

Turning to the current Israeli-Egyptian talks on Palestinian 'autonomy', Mr Ramlawi said, 'I ask you not to be deceived by the proposals for Palestinian "autonomy". The autonomy scheme is intended to prolong Israel's military occupation and block all moves towards the creation of an independent Palestinian state.'

He continued, 'Camp David offers the Palestinians what the Bantustan has given the Africans in South Africa. We reject the so-called Palestinian autonomy scheme not because we are committed to war and conflict, but because it is an insult to our dignity and a betrayal of our right to self-determination. It is a direct contradiction to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people agreed by the international community in the General Assembly of the United Nations.'

New Labour drive on Palestine

THE LABOUR Middle East Council, LMEC, is to launch a new drive to have the Palestine question raised inside the Labour Party. A series of regional meetings of LMEC supporters is planned, which will aim at getting resolutions on the Middle East and in particular the urgency of involving the PLO, as sole representative of the Palestinian people, in future negotiations.

The first meeting, for London supporters of LMEC, took place in September, chaired by LMEC Chairman David Watkins MP. After an introduction from Committee Member and former Labour Students' leader Hilary Barnard, the meeting heard reports from several London area Labour Parties and unions. There was general agreement that international issues were less difficult to raise at

Labour Party local meetings than formerly, but that it was still difficult to have a substantial discussion.

The meeting — particularly the exchange of information on feelings over the Palestine issue within local Labour Parties — was generally judged a success. A model resolution for possible submission to next year's Labour Party London region Conference was agreed, but it was also realised that circumstances in each local party might dictate different resolutions being submitted.

A further meeting of London area members is planned for November, and other regional meetings are under consideration. For further information contact LMEC at 21 Collingham Road, London SW5 0NU, phone (01)-373 5227.

FREE PALESTINE

PO Box 492 London SW19 4PJ Tel: 01-947 7679

Editor: Louis Eaks

Associate Editors: Alan George and Phil Kelly

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