

the facts

ABOUT THE PALESTINE PROBLEM

A monthly bulletin produced by « The Arab Women's Information Committee »
P.O. Box 218 - Beirut, Lebanon - Vol. III No. 1 1970.

Only six issues of our monthly bulletin « The Facts » have appeared in 1969. This is due to financial difficulties, our committee being entirely dependent upon contributions, and to the fact that we managed to produce a colossal piece of work, « The ABC of the Palestine Problem » as well as six supplements, 2 French and 3 German translations.

Should our financial prospects improve, we hope to be able to make it up in 1970.

This being the first issue of the 1970 series, the editors would like to extend their warm greetings to their readers. We would also like to inform you that, after thoughtful consideration, we have come to the conclusion that perhaps the most effective way of using « Facts » would be to concentrate the background section on one, or at the utmost, two subjects.

The Current Developments section will focus primarily on events in the Occupied Territories.

We would very much welcome any criticisms which would help us make 'Facts' more effective.

BACKGROUND

WHAT DID THE BIBLE PROMISE ?

The following excerpts are from *Palestine and the Bible*, published by the « Institute for Palestine Studies, » Beirut :
« The Old Testament alone, in its truest sense, points to a spiritual kingdom for all mankind and not to a political Israel that occupies territory and homes belonging naturally to another people. »

« No more heinous distortion of the Bible could be imagined than using it to justify the expulsion from their homes and lands of modern Palestinians, whether Christian or Moslem, by equating them with ancient Philistines, Edomites, Moabites and Ammonites. »

(Dr. William F. Steinespring, Professor of Old Testament and Semitics at Duke University, USA, op. cit., p. 11-12)

« The first explicit promise of Palestine to the descendants of Abraham was at Sechem (now Nablus) in Genesis 12, 7 :
« Unto thy seed will I give this land. » The promises were

THE PROMISED LAND

Editor's note :

This is not a magazine, nor even a newsletter. No attempt will be made at long-winded analysis or description. It is literally a «factual» sheet.

FACTS will try to present the facts of the Palestine Problem. We think these will speak for themselves and need no comment or elaboration. It is this ignorance of the facts by the outside world that has been responsible for much of the human suffering that has taken place in Palestine. It is time that the facts were known. Only on their basis can disinterested and fair-minded people reach objective and intelligent conclusions. To help such people is our objective.

FACTS is produced by the Arab Women's Information Committee, a voluntary, non-professional, non-profit and private organization of Arab women living in Beirut, Lebanon, who have been appalled at the manner in which the Palestine Problem has been presented so far in the English-speaking press.

FACTS will be divided into two sections, the first dealing with background material, the second with current developments. It will appear on a monthly basis. We also hope to be able to publish supplements on specific issues as the occasion arises.

The background section will comprise quotations from Zionist writings to illustrate Zionist ideological and strategic thought, statistics pertaining to various aspects of the Palestine Problem, and summaries of the more important historical events and developments of the problem.

The selection of this material is necessarily arbitrary, but it is hoped that as much ground can be covered in successive issues of **FACTS** as space permits.

As to the section on current developments, it will focus attention on the developments that have taken place since 5 June 1967.

We shall endeavour throughout to give detailed references for all the material that we publish. We hope that our efforts will contribute, however modestly, to a better understanding of the Arab point of view on the Palestine Problem.

FACTS welcomes all comments, suggestions and inquiries by its readers.

repeated to Isaac and to Jacob. It is generally supposed that these promises were made to the Jews and to the Jews alone. But that is not what the Bible says. The word 'to thy seed' inevitably includes Arabs, both Moslems and Christians, who can claim descent from Abraham through his son Ismael.

Moreover, when the covenant of circumcision was made with Abraham (Gen. 17) and the land of Canaan was promised as an everlasting possession it was Ismael who was circumcised; Isaac (the father of the Jews) had not then been born.

The word ('olam') means 'a long time', 'antiquity', 'futuraity' and 'everlasting' is not the proper meaning.

After the Babylonian exile, «The Jew did return to Judea, they did rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, and they did rebuild the Temple. Thus the prophesies of the Return have been fulfilled and they cannot be fulfilled again.»

(Professor Alfred Guillaume, Professor of Old Testament Studies at the University of London, Ibid., p. 14-18).

« A group of the most distinguished Reform Rabbis of the day, meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1885 declared :
« We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish State.»

For the genuine orthodox Jew, the Messianic « Return to Zion » is an integral part — indeed the climax — of a spiritual process. There are orthodox Jews who actually repudiate the present Israeli sovereignty as a profanation of the Biblical texts.

Even the appropriation of the name « Israel » is a source of resentment to many such Jews. For to them « Israel » is a religious, spiritual concept sanctified in a tradition of holiness which they do not find in the existent, secular state.»

(Rabbi Elmer Berger, a distinguished Jewish American scholar and writer, Ibid., pp. 19-23)

« The people of God as described in the New Testament are not to be identified with any existing or future political state... « the Israel of God » is made up of *Jews and Gentiles* wherever and whenever they may live.»

(Dr. Frank Stagg, Professor of New Testament, New Orleans, USA, Ibid., p. 27)

« No orthodox Jew believes that the present State of Israel is the accomplishment of the injunctions of the Old Testament.» Berger gives the case of a religious group living in the Israeli sector of Jerusalem as an example. He says that this group considers « The Israeli State as an heretic phenomenon with respect to his faith.»

(Elmer Berger, Israel and the Holy Scriptures, pp. 19-25)

THE UNBROKEN LINK

« The silence of Herodotus is still a problem to some, but its solution is perfectly simple. Judea was so small a district and its inhabitants were so insignificant that the most intelligent traveller in the 5th century B.C. (the date of Herodotus) might even visit what was then called Syria-Palestine, or Syria of the Philistines, and never hear of the Jews... They were numerous in Babylonia and Egypt, but in Palestine they were well nigh negligible. »

(Foakes Jackson, « Josephus and the Jews, » quoted by J.M.N. Jeffries, Palestine, The Reality, p. 11)

« There was only one Jew in Jerusalem in the XIIth century (this fact is mentioned in the journal of « Patahia », a Jewish traveller of that period.) »

« In 1752, there were one hundred and eleven, their names are to be found on page 207 of the book of the Religious Court of Justice of the period. »

(Ania Francos, Les Palestiniens, Julliard, Paris, 1968, p. 53)

« Nahman Gerandi, in A.D. 1267 found only two Jewish families in Jerusalem »

(General Assembly's Official Records, 5th Session, Supplement No. 9, U.N. Document A/1286, p. 13)

HOW STRONG WAS THE PULL OF PALESTINE ?

CYPRUS ?

« Chamberlain said : 'As to Cyprus, the island is inhabited by Greeks and Moslems whom we could not evict for the sake of newcomers. If the Greeks were to resist Jewish immigration, the difficulties would be insuperable'. I replied : 'Not everything in politics is disclosed to the public but only results.' I then unfolded my plan... Five million pounds; the Greeks would gladly sell their lands at a good price and migrate to Athens or Crete. »

(The Diaries of Theodore Herzl, translated by M. Lowenthal, pp. 375-376)

TRIPOLI ?

During an audience with the King of Italy, Herzl expounded his Tripoli scheme : « To direct the surplus Jewish immigration into Tripolitania, under the liberal laws and institutions of Italy. » The King replied : « Ma e ancora casa di altri. » (But it is still someone else's home).

(The Diaries of Theodore Herzl, translated by M. Lowenthal, p. 427)

UGANDA ?

In 1903, the British Government offered the Sixth Zionist Congress the territory of Uganda for the establishment of a Jewish National Home. This was accepted by 295 against 175 votes.

(Weizmann, Trial and Error, p. 115)

Among the arguments put forward against this scheme was the fact that « the few white settlers, mostly English, who were already in Uganda, would fight against a Jewish influx into their territory, which could not accomodate more than a very limited number ».

(Weizmann, Trial and Error, p. 118)

THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

In his book, *Trial And Error*, Chaim Weizmann said : « Should Palestine fall within the British sphere of influence, and should Britain encourage a Jewish settlement there, as a British dependency, we could have in twenty to thirty years a million Jews and perhaps more; they would develop the country, bring back civilization to it and form a very effective guard for the Suez Canal ».

General Dayan stated :

« ...it is better than when I was five years old. Now we are alongside the canal. »

(L'Express, 19 - 25 May 1969)

In a speech to the Canadian Jewish Congress, Nahum Goldmann spoke of a conversation between himself and Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Minister : « Bevin said to me : 'Do you know what you are asking when you ask me to establish a Jewish State ? You are asking me for the keys of the most important strategic region of the world. You must allow me to think very seriously before putting these keys in your hands'. Palestine is today the centre of world power strategy, and all those statesmen who are now interested in Zionism think so. I would like the Zionists themselves to understand this. It is not always honesty and justice that matter in this world. Nations and Governments will base their attitudes on their realistic interests. And these considerations will be decisive. All humanitarian aspects of this problem which could have played a role will not be of any decisive value, and we must adapt our policy to the realistic aspects of this problem... When a statesman or a politician thinks of Zionism nowadays, he does not do so in the manner of the Prophets, the idealists or the poets. He thinks in the very realistic terms of petrol, Jewish State, Middle East, Russia or America. »

(Nahum Goldmann : The Congress Bulletin, Montreal, 31 May 1947)

In a letter from the Zionist agent, Mohammed Assad Bey, to his friend Dr. Wolfgang Weist, a prominent Jewish Austrian orientalist : « After all, the only serious motif in the struggle for the Holy Land is its strategic place in the future. Should Palestine become part of a pan-Arab state, which would also comprise Egypt, we would have there a power of 25 million Moslems commanding the Suez Canal and the road to India. Should Palestine become a Jewish State, it would be an obstacle to the creation of this state, even though other Arab countries might unite. »

(De Suez à Aqaba, par Pierre d'Istria, Cujas, Paris 1968, p. 56)

« The president of the World Jewish Congress, Dr. Nahum Goldmann, at Montreal in 1947, declared : 'The Jews might have had Uganda, Madagascar and other places for the establishment of a Jewish fatherland, but they want absolutely nothing except Palestine; not because of the Biblical or religious significance of Palestine; not because of the Dead Sea waters which by evaporation can produce five trillion dollars worth of metalloids and powdered metals, not because (following Mr. Fulles) the sub-soil of Palestine contains twenty times more petroleum than all the combined reserves of the two Americas, but because Palestine is the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa, because Palestine constitutes the veritable center of world political power, the strategic military center for world control ».

(L'Unité Nationale, No. 41/1953, published in Montreal, Canada.)

C. P. Scott, editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, spoke of the 'National Home' as a security measure for British Suez.

(Quoted by Alfred Lilienthal, What Price Israel ?. Reprint published by the Institute for Palestine Studies, Beirut, p. 22)

THE RELUCTANT INGATHERING

« In 20 years the Jewish communities of the diaspora received, as many if not more immigrants for Central Europe, Oriental Europe, North Africa, Asia as for Israel. »

(*Marc Hillel, Israel en Danger de Paix, p. 78*)

« Yet few Jews have left to live in Israel (from America). It is doubtful whether more than 10,000 have gone since 1948. And it is questionable whether even these are true immigrants. Americans who live in Israel call themselves Americans. »

(*B. Litvinoff, A Peculiar People, quoted by the Observer, 2 March 1969*)

The American Jews do not come to Israel for a rather paradoxical reason : The absence of religious sentiment in Israel.

(*Marc Hillel, Israel en Danger de Paix, p. 250, pub. 1968, Fayard*)

For various reasons, from family obligations to a precaution 'in case anything happened',

most Israelis who had a nationality before they came to Israel keep it for themselves and their children. In this way, Germans are both Israeli and German, the French remain both French and Israeli, as do the English, the Americans etc.

(*Ibid., p. 86*)

It is very unusual indeed to find scientists, politicians, artists or authors of any renown in their countries of origin who have emigrated to Israel.

(*Ibid., p. 86*)

Recently the Jewish Agency tried to buy the 'Liberation' of the Jews in Eastern Europe, especially Rumania; they paid \$2,000 per head. However, many of these expensive candidates for emigration stopped on the way. In Naples, they besieged the foreign consulates to try and get visas for countries other than Israel.

(*Ibid., p. 311*)

Of the 130,000 Jews who had left Algeria, a little more than 100,000 settled in France. Among those who had chosen Israel, 20,000 have already left. The Jewish community in the USA numbers 6 million; less than 15,000 left for Israel and half of these have returned to the USA.

(*Ibid., pp. 77 & 246*)

The American Joint Committee declared in January 1968 that of the 24,000 Jews who left the Arab countries, 15,000 have already resettled in France.

(*Ibid., p. 58*)

« In the twelve years from 1920 to 1932, 118, 378 Jews (or $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1 percent of the world's Jewry) voluntarily returned to their 'reputed home.' »

(*Lilienthal, Alfred, What Price Israel ? p. 19, Institute for Palestine Studies*)

OURS NOT TO REASON WHY

« In his book, *My Mission To Israel*, James McDonald says : « Where can the Jewish refugees expect to go after the war ? To the United States ? Unhappily there is no present prospect for the liberalisation of the admission of Jewish refugees to this country. We shall do well if we succeed in blocking those exclusionists who would reduce or eliminate the existing quotas... To Alaska ? This potentially very rich territory is nearly empty; but as a territory of the United States, the immigration limitations which apply to the rest of the country also apply to Alaska. On the record, Palestine offers incontestably the primary hope for the solution of the problem of Jewish refugees. »

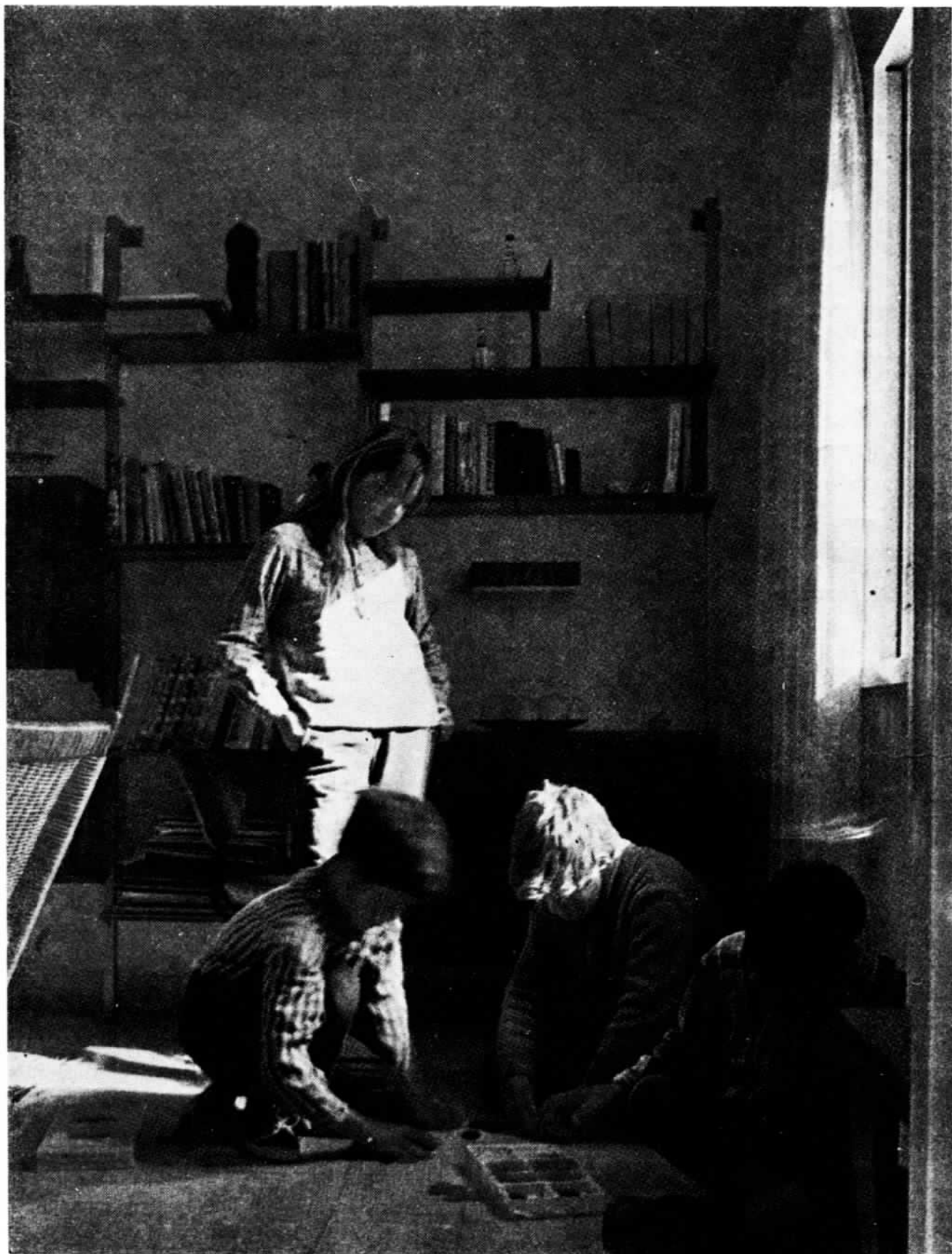
« I maintained the thesis » Dr. Weizmann says « that we could not rest our case on the consent of the Arabs; as long as their consent was asked, they would naturally refuse it. »

(*Chaim Weizmann, Trial and Error, p. 534*)

Lewis Namier, the real Zionist author of the Balfour Declaration, said about living in Palestine : « I would never feel at home there. Everything would have a haphazard character, with no roots, no organic cohesion, and much too temporary. »

(*De Suez A Aqaba par Pierre d'Istria, Cujas, Paris 1968*)

ISRAELI CHILDREN PLAYING AND



(From Israel, No. 10, Spring 1968, published by the Israeli Ministry of Information)

THE ARAB CHILDREN THAT THEY HAVE DISPLACED

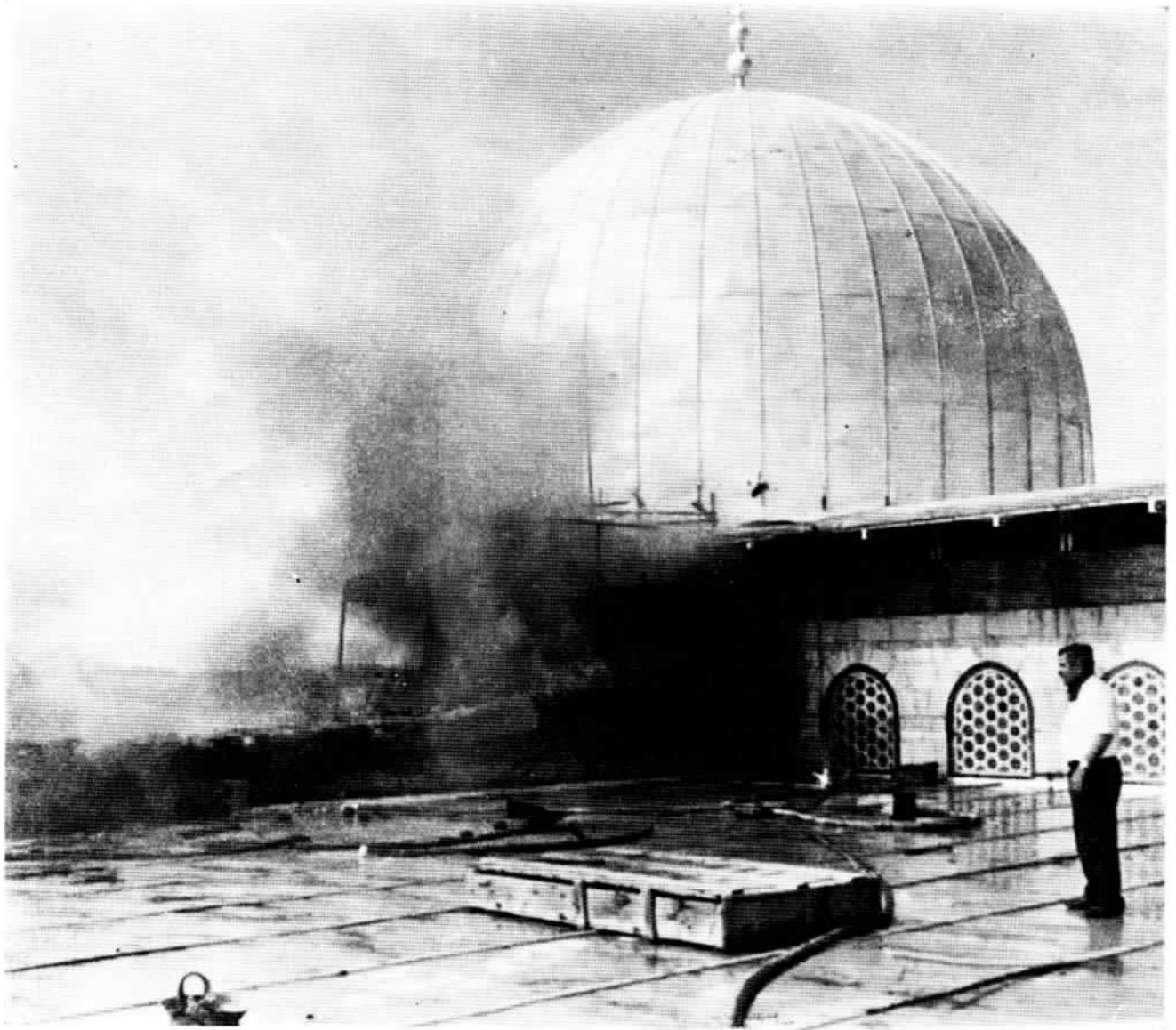


(From Al-Anwar, 6 July 1969)

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

THE AQSA MOSQUE FIRE

« Perhaps there will be an earthquake » ...



... Or a fire

The Act

On 21 August 1969, a fire broke out in the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem — after two years and two months of Israeli occupation. The damage to the Mosque was heavy and the Dome was partially destroyed.

The Israeli authorities have since accused Michael Rohan, an Australian living in an Israeli Kibbutz, of deliberately setting fire to the Mosque. Never before in the history of Islam had a fire been thus deliberately provoked in this most sacred of Islamic shrines.

The Motive

On 30 June 1967, Time magazine ran the following report : « The Temple (of Solomon) must be constructed on its original site. This could only be done by demolishing Islam's Dome of the Rock... »

The great medieval philosopher Maimonides, in his code of Jewish Law, argued that every generation of Jews was obliged to rebuild the Temple if its site was ever retaken... »

« Says historian Israel Eldad (a former Irgun terrorist) : 'We are at the stage where David was when he liberated Jerusalem. From that time until the reconstruction of the Temple by Solomon, only one generation passed. So will it be with us. « And what about that Moslem shrine ? » Answers Eldad : « Who knows ? **Perhaps there will be an earthquake.** » »

On 23 July 1967, the London paper, the Sunday Times, said that « Reports that sentiment exists in Israel to rebuild the Temple, which could entail destruction of the present Moslem sanctuary, have further heightened tension. »

On 16 August 1967, the military Rabbi of Israel, Shlomo Goren, expressed the wish to see the Jewish Temple rebuilt on the site of the Moslem Holy Shrine of El-Aqsa.

(L'Orient, 17 August 1967, AFP)

Epilogue

« A group from the Bitar, a faction of the Herut Party, entered the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem and held their service and prayers inside the Mosque. Their leader gave a sermon after the prayers in which he told his followers that they were now standing on the most sacred spot to the Jewish people and that the Temple, whose area strangers had so far appropriated, will be rebuilt again. » (B.B.C. World Service, 3 o'clock News in Arabic, 26 September 1969)

THE PEACE PROPOSALS OF Mr. ABBA EBAN

On the 20th of September 1969, Mr. Abba Eban, the Foreign Minister of Israel, solemnly declared at the U.N. General Assembly that :

« Israel is prepared to negotiate without any prior conditions. »
« Israel is prepared for negotiations on every issue. »

But he also added that :

« The refugees are an international problem and should be discussed at an international conference, at which countries of the Middle East would participate. »

« The Holy Places, and only the Holy Places, of Islam and Christianity could be administered by those organizations who have since 1907, taken care of them. » (No mention of the Old City of Jerusalem or Arab Jerusalem)

« Israel is prepared to discuss the problems raised by the 22 November Security Council Resolution as well as other relevant problems » (No mention of the acceptance by Israel of this resolution).

NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT PRIOR CONDITIONS :

« We resolve once and for all not to waste the victorious achievements of the Israeli Defence Forces but to translate them into a new reality of peace and security. »

(Abba Eban, The Daily Report, 12 June 1967)

« Eban, who avoids mentioning 'annexation' and says he prefers to use his own vocabulary, told the Assembly (the U.N. General Assembly) that « the unity of Jerusalem, once achieved, is irrevocable. »

(U.P.I. Dispatch, United Nations, 5 July 1967)

« Israel recognizes the universal interest in Jerusalem. But this applies only to the Holy Places themselves, » Mr. Eban stated.

(Jerusalem Post, 10 August 1967)

« The map that existed before June 5th has now disappeared and should be replaced by a new one which must be freely negotiated. »

(Abba Eban, The Jewish Chronicle, 18 August 1967)

« Israel is striving for renovation, — not the old tortuous

map, but a rational system of frontiers answering Israel's need for a spacious and secure life. »

(Abba Eban, The Jewish Observer, 20 December 1968)

Comments

« What better overture to these vital talks in Washington (of Israeli Premier Golda Meir concerning arms supplies) than a show of sweet reasonableness in New York ? (on Abba Eban's part). »

« Mr. Dayan's comments on his government's willingness to negotiate 'without any precondition' are revealing. He drew a distinction between discussion and negotiation. If the Arabs want to discuss Jerusalem well and good. It does not follow that the Israelis are willing to negotiate its status as Israel's unified capital.

« There is little evidence that Israel is changing the content, rather than the words, of its invitation. The projected, and actual, colonization of certain areas is a very good imitation of a substantial precondition. »

(The Economist, 27 September 1969)

THE «DECENT» EXPANSIONISM OF Mrs. GOLDA MEIR

« The essence of the woman is conviction without compromise and expressed with all the subtlety of a Centurion Tank. »
(Time magazine, on Golda Meir, 19 September, 1969)

« We don't have any expansionist ambitions. All we want is peace. »

(Mrs. Meir in a CBS televised interview, reported by l'Orient, 22 September 1969, AFP)

In the same interview, Mrs. Golda Meir, talking about the Israeli annexation of Jerusalem said :
« You can't put the clock back. »

In 1956, after the Israeli aggression on Egypt and the occupation of the Gaza strip, Mrs. Golda Meir, then Foreign Minister of Israel, declared « that Gaza was an integral part of Israeli 'territory'. »

(C. Douglas-Home, The Arabs and Israel, p. 32)

« If it is necessary to put up a settlement on the other side of the green line (the Arab side) in order to safeguard that those settlements on this side of the green line (the Israeli side) can maybe put their children to sleep in beds rather than in shelters, I do not think that this is a good reason why the Arabs should not make peace with us. » declared Mrs. Golda Meir referring to the establishment of new settlements in the occupied Golan Heights.

« The pre-June 6th frontiers are no longer acceptable » declared Mrs. Meir.

(The International Herald Tribune, 22 March 1969)

In her speech on Friday, Mrs. Meir stated the minimum rather than the maximum positions which Israel can retain. « We will not forego Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and some other places. (?) We will not rely on others to protect our shipping rights. » she said.

(The Jewish Observer, 25 April 1969)

« Israel will never accept the internationalization of Jerusalem. »

(Golda Meir in an interview with the Italian newspaper La Stampa, reported by l'Orient, 12 May 1969)

« The Israeli capital will never be divided again. » declared Golda Meir.

(Le Jour, 16 May 1969, AFP, UPI, Reuter)

Concerning the Syrian Golan Heights Mrs. Meir says :

« Anybody who tells us that we should step down so that the Syrians again can put their guns in position... is not moral. It is not decent. »

Concerning the West Bank of the Jordan and its restoration to Jordan :

« On that I am prepared to stand for elections — that this cannot happen ».

Concerning Sharm el-Sheikh and the Straits of Tiran :

« And I am not prepared that anybody should safeguard for me the free shipping through the Straits of Tiran. »

(Golda Meir, in an interview with Time magazine, 23 May 1969)

« Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and Sharm-el-Sheikh cannot be returned to the Arabs » said Golda Meir addressing the students of Bar Ilan University.

(L'Orient, 31 May 1969, AFP)

In a television interview in Tel-Aviv, Golda Meir affirmed Israel's decision to maintain the present frontiers. She added that these frontiers were « ideal ».

(Le Jour, 10 June 1969, AFP)

On Jerusalem

«No Jordanian flag will ever fly over Jerusalem again,» said Mrs. Meir, «And there are some territories which for our security we can never give back.»

((Le Monde, 25 November 1969)

PUBLICATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

I The Monthly Bulletin <Facts >

of which the following issues have already appeared :

Vol. I N° 1 - 8

Vol. II N° 1 - 6

II Other Pamphlets

«The Big Lie of the Boots »

«From the Nile to the Euphrates »

«Israel's Record at the U. N. »

«Israel and the Demilitarized Zones »

«For an Arab-Jewish State in Palestine »

«When the Soldiers Cried »

«Jerusalem 1967, the Occupation »

«Plan Dalet, the Zionist Plan for the Occupation of Palestine»

«Women's Resistance, January-March 1969 »

«How to Use Facts»

«Confidential Directives from the American-Jewish Committee »

III A Memorandum on the «Arabs Under Israeli Occupation.» (1967 - 1968) (Price 2L.L.)

IV A Full Page Advertisement In the «Times» and the «Guardian» of London on behalf of the «Arabs of Palestine Under Israeli Occupation ».

V The ABC of the Palestine Problem. Part 1, 1896 - 1949 (Price 3 L.L.)

(A Summary of the main events leading up to the establishment of the
State of Israel)



All the above publications are available free to students.

The Committee would be grateful for any contribution, large or small, which
would enable them to continue this work.

The following pamphlets are in preparation :

«Questions and Answers»

«The Arabs Under Israeli Occupation » (Part II, 1968 - 1969)

