

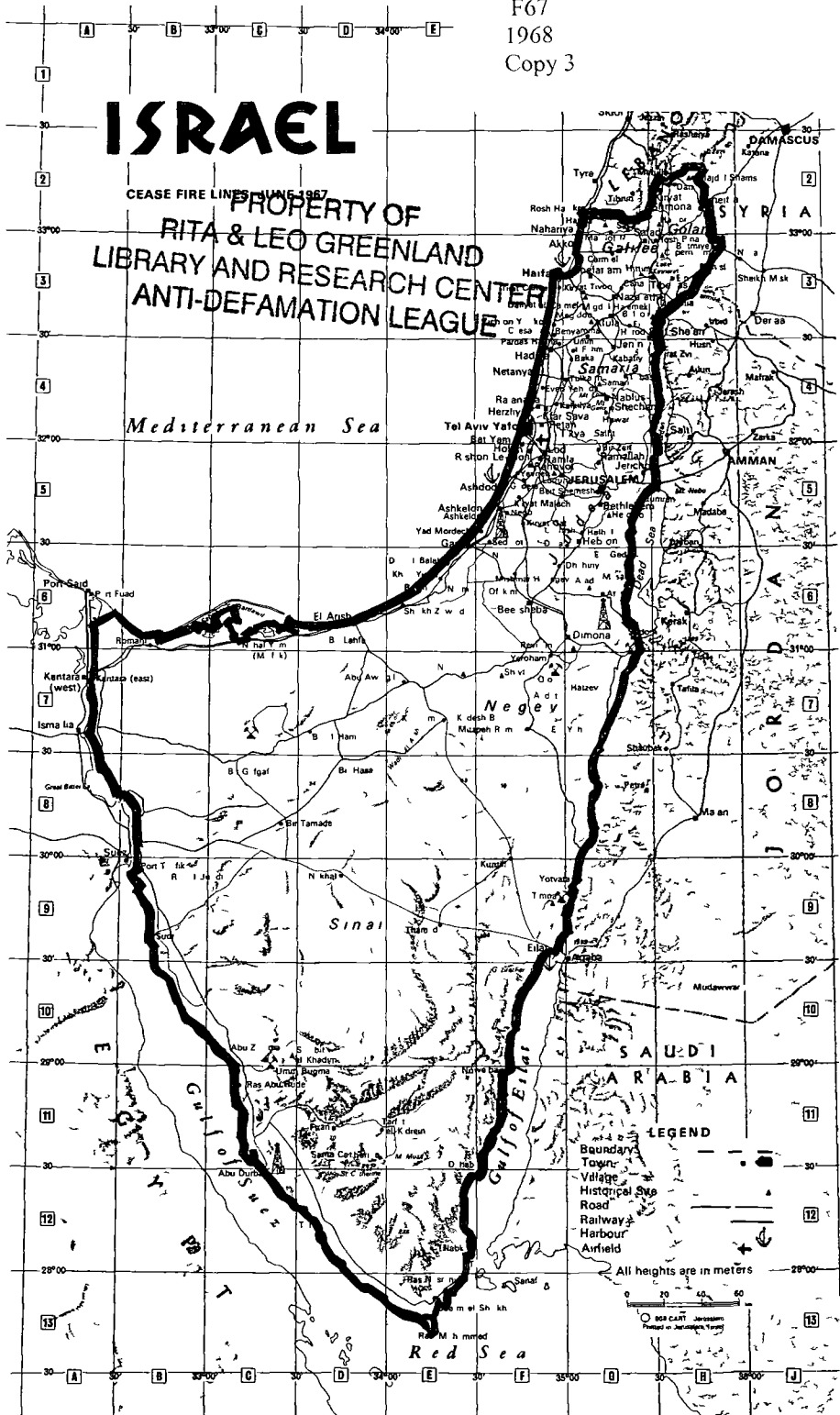
report from israel

by
arnold forster

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ISRAEL

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report
from
israel
by
arnold forster

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
315 Lexington Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10016

BY ARNOLD FORSTER

ANTI-SEMITISM, 1947

A MEASURE OF FREEDOM

* * *

WITH BENJAMIN R EPSTEIN

THE TROUBLEMAKERS

CROSS-CURRENTS

SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS

DANGER ON THE RIGHT

REPORT ON THE KU KLUX KLAN

REPORT ON THE JOHN BIRCH SOCIETY, 1966

THE RADICAL RIGHT


Introduction

When we think of the centers of human suffering and strife in today's world — the Middle East, Biafra, Vietnam — it is all too easy to become downcast. But to read Arnold Forster's up-to-date account of his experiences in Israel is to be given fresh hope — hope for humanity and hope for peace.

We have to recognize that peace will not finally come to Israel and to the Middle East until the sovereignty of Israel is freely and fully acknowledged by her enemies. One of the more intriguing and encouraging parts of Mr. Forster's report is the suggestion that a similar viewpoint may be applied to the place of the Palestinian Arabs.

Today Israel is trying to teach us all, and especially the Arabs, that our human impulses to self-destructiveness may be vanquished by the reasonableness of self-preservation and the good life for our fellows as well as ourselves. A poignant example provided us is that of the Arabs of the Gaza Strip. "As far as Israel is concerned, we are at peace with the Arab world." That such words can come from none other than an Israeli army general, in a day when there are still implacable foes pledged to his country's annihilation, is a moving tribute to the moral stature and contribution of Israel today. The paradox of the Middle East, but also its hope, is that a peaceful and prosperous Israel offers the one real promise of peace and prosperity for the entire region.

No people would have more right to be dispirited than the Israelis, deprived as they are of security and peace. Yet the people of Israel refuse to surrender to despair or cynicism — in remarkable contrast to many outside Israel. Mr. Forster conveys again and again the testimony of persons high and low that Arabs and Jews can live together in concord if they have the will for the great task. This is not the facile optimism of mere dreams or words. Instances of human hopefulness usually fall somewhere between an impossible idealism and a final realism. Human hopefulness is ultimately granted vindication only through tangible acts of understanding and cooperation. The Israelis are not enticed by a utopianism that waits for miracles above or beyond human effort. Their optimism is wholly tough-minded. It is an optimism of deeds.



In the report that follows, we are apprised of steadfast efforts to make human ideals a reality, not only within Israel proper but in the territories under her present administration. Despite their own grievous trials, the people of Israel have long since embarked upon the work of building for a tomorrow of justice and brotherhood. They are doing this in a variety of ways — socially, economically and religiously. Surely there are lessons in such applied optimism for all of us, Americans and men everywhere. The good thing is that in the very process of introducing us helpfully to major facets of the life and problems of contemporary Israel, Mr. Forster is also enabling us to take heart for the future.

A ROY ECKARDT

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Preface

In June 1967, the world held its breath while Israel battled on several fronts the armies of the Arab nations who threatened her existence. In the amazingly short space of six days, and for the third time in less than twenty years, Israel overwhelmingly defeated her enemies.

For the "victors," however, the hoped-for results of that war — recognition, secure boundaries, and peace — have turned out to be as elusive as ever. By ordinary logic, the utter defeat of their armies ought to have convinced the Arabs that the time had come to accept the reality of Israel, negotiate a peace settlement, and work cooperatively for a greater Middle East. But logic of any sort seems hardly a factor here.

One factor that *does* carry great weight is that the Arabs are not operating completely on their own. While the Israelis were still clearing away the burned-out tanks and other destroyed equipment, the Soviet Union was shipping the Arabs new arms and equipment to replace what had been lost — literally overnight. Shamed by their defeat but encouraged by the Russians to keep trying, the Arabs have talked not peace or negotiation, but have made more threats, shown more hostility.

Not yet ready, however, to commit their regular armies to another round of fighting, the Arab governments have openly aided groups of Palestinian "irregulars" to infiltrate the borders of Israel, lay mines on roads and in fields and place time bombs in movie houses, bus stations and busy markets. These terrorists have even struck at Israel's major lifeline to the rest of the world, her airline, by attempting to blow up *El Al* planes — not on Israeli soil, but in neutral European airports.

Determined to protect its citizens, and frustrated in attempts either to bring about negotiations or to achieve redress through the United Nations, Israel has responded with retaliatory measures aimed at wiping out the terrorists' bases and strategic installations. At the same time, she has cooperated with U N Ambassador Gunnar Jarring's attempts at a "third party" mediation of the conflict.

Unfortunately, little progress has been made in this direction. In recent months, louder and stronger voices, led by the Soviet Union and France, have been raised in favor of imposing a four-power settlement on the belligerents. Whether or not the U S and Great Britain will go along with this scheme is, at this writing, uncertain.

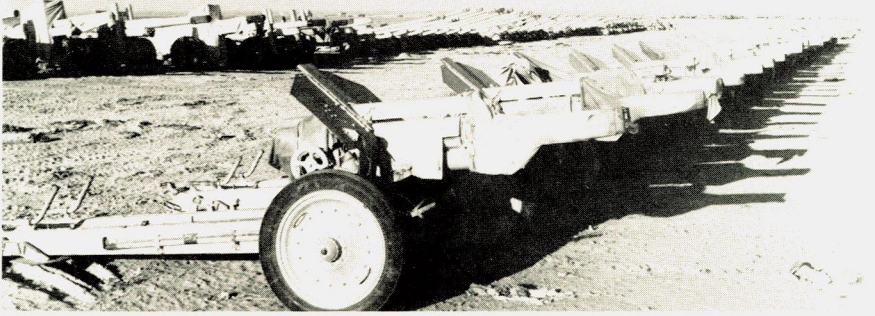
What is clear is that Israel itself is unalterably opposed to any plans for an imposed settlement. For a variety of reasons, Israelis feel that they and the Arabs must work out their common destiny together. Even in the face of intensified terrorist activity and antipathy at the U N, Israel maintains an independent and optimistic stance, insisting that Jews and Arabs can reach an accommodation.

This, then, is the situation as of the spring of 1969, a situation in many respects more critical than what I had observed in July '67, immediately after the Six Day War, or a year later, in the summer of '68. Both times I had gone to Israel to survey developments subsequent to the war, and to hear from Israelis themselves how they assessed their situation. While visiting the principal cities, villages, border settlements and the occupied areas, I tape-recorded conversations with as many spokesmen as I could persuade to talk to me. I wanted the views of government and army officials, of course, and of Christian and Moslem leaders, and also the thinking of the man in the street, particularly the youth.

In January 1969 I made still another trip to Israel, this time a short one, and tried to gain additional perspective on the events that had taken place in the period intervening.

It is my hope that this report will shed light on many of the problems facing Israel today, on how she is dealing with them, and what a number of informed Israelis see when they look to the future.

ARNOLD FORSTER



Russian-made weapons captured by the Israelis in the Six Day War.



Israeli soldiers at the Suez Canal.



Israeli representative to the United Nations Abba Eban (front) speaks at an evening session of the Security Council.

Wide World Photos

Chapter 1

The Political Picture

Israel is a nation of two and a half million people, some two million of them Jews, the remainder Moslems, Christians and Druze. Surrounding her are fifty million Arabs whose leaders have been threatening for twenty years to liquidate every man, woman and child who calls himself a Jew. Throughout this period, there has not been one moment of peace in the area. Despite the resounding blow delivered by Israel to her enemies in June 1967 — the most recent full-scale battle — the state of belligerence goes on. To outsiders this situation must often look hopeless, Israelis, however, can't afford to accept that view.

Is a lasting peace possible? In the summer of '68 I discussed this question with top government leaders, foremost among them Foreign Minister Abba Eban, who served so brilliantly in former years as Israel's spokesman in the United Nations and as Ambassador to the United States.

For much of the time Eban sat twiddling his pencil as he talked, in what at first appeared to be simply a nervous gesture, but was in fact a physical habit attendant upon his thinking process. He sat in his shirt sleeves in his office at the Foreign Ministry where I had come to interview him. Seated behind a long table, he talked very rapidly and gave the impression that he was a little impatient with some of my questions, the answers to which seemed obvious to him. Nevertheless, he often went into meticulous detail in explaining some particular point.

We talked about the various approaches to peace in the Middle East, including the "indirect" method of trying to arrive at agreement through a third party (specifically, the mission of UN Ambassador Gunnar Jarring). Though Israel has cooperated with this mission, she insists that the only viable method is direct negotiation. When I remarked to Eban that many Americans wonder if this insistence isn't a sign of recalcitrance on Israel's part, he objected:

"To seek negotiation is not stubbornness. Negotiation is the only method in the entire course of human history which has ever led to peace settle-

ments It is the refusal to negotiate which is stubborn, which is inflexible and which blocks the road to peace Why doesn't world opinion criticize the refusal to negotiate?

"The United Nations Charter says that states which are involved in a dispute shall first of all submit that dispute to negotiation Therefore, Israel's position is in accordance with international practice, experience and law "

Admitting the logic of this position, wasn't it also true, I asked, that Nasser's position in his own country and in the Arab world would be seriously endangered if he agreed to meet the Israelis?

Eban again demurred "We have to assume that governments are sovereign and are able to carry out their international obligations Nineteen years ago an Egyptian government, wishing to settle a problem with us, sat around a table at Rhodes We *did* reach agreements which were signed in each other's presence Now, if Nasser's position is so weak, I cannot think that it will be made stronger by the indefinite maintenance of the present situation I can't see why refusal to negotiate offers him any better alternative than to negotiate "

Eban went on to say that, while direct negotiation is the Israeli goal, other means are not being overlooked "In an effort to promote a negotiated settlement, we have taken several steps, and we have presented detailed agendas for peace We have proposed a four-stage program for implementing the establishment of a just and peaceful settlement negotiation, agreement, contract, implementation Through Ambassador Jarling and others, we have tried to explore with neighboring states our comparative concepts of what is involved in a peace settlement

"A lot of diplomatic activity has gone on and is still going on, in advance of peace negotiations But in all history I have never heard of states reaching binding agreements without being able to look each other in the face, to check exactly what it is they are agreeing to do, to check interpretations "

Eban likewise stressed that the Suez Canal question, which is of concern to many nations outside the Middle East, could be settled separately — even before peace negotiations

"The opening of the Suez Canal and our military presence are two separate subjects We have said that if there is a desire and a willingness on the part of the United Arab Republic to open the Canal to international shipping, Israel would cooperate — provided the Canal were opened for free and legal navigation, and not for obstruction and discrimination In

other words, Israel's right of passage must be identical with those of the United States, the Soviet Union, Sweden and the United Arab Republic itself. That need not involve any change in the cease-fire position. The cease-fire lines are a matter to be negotiated in another context, the establishment of what are called secured and recognized boundaries. When such boundaries are negotiated, then the problem of the military presence arises. The Suez Canal can be opened for international shipping without disturbing the cease-fire agreements."

Eban, who regards the "one-sided policy" of the Soviet Union in arming the Arabs and encouraging their belligerency as "one of the major causes" of the Six Day War, sees a certain ambivalence in the present Russian posture. "Soviet identification with Arab policy still continues, but I have noticed in recent expressions of Soviet opinion a certain reservation. They do not want to carry their identification with the Arab states to the point of war, to the point of confrontation. On the other hand, while they may be urging the Arab states not to make war, I don't have the feeling that they are really urging them to make peace. But," he emphasized, "it isn't the will that matters, it is the consequence of action. If the Soviets pump arms into Arab states which refuse to make peace with Israel, then those Arab states will make war, whether the Soviet Union wants it or not."

"I don't believe that the Soviet Union wanted the U A R to carry its aggressive pressure against Israel to the point which it carried it in May and June of 1967, but if it gives the U A R the impression that it can solve matters by force, then it is contributing to the possibility of war. The only possible remedy is to eradicate that impression by showing that the balance of arms shall not be changed in such a way as to make the U A R believe that it can handle war."

To the question as to whether Israel is concerned about United States shipment of arms to Jordan, Eban replied "We keep a close watch upon the quantity and the nature of any rearmament that goes to Jordan. Naturally we are anxious about building up military power in a state which refuses to negotiate peace. On the other hand, we understand that the United States shares our general objective of peace in the region."

The Foreign Minister does not share the view that time is working against the Israelis. "Even in the Arab world itself, there is a very slow but perceptible movement toward the idea that Israel's inevitable reality has to be accepted." And, without sounding a note of false optimism, he concluded with the following

“If we can hold firm on our position, if we can illustrate to the Arabs that they cannot change the present situation except by peace, they then will explore a peace settlement with us — a firm, solid peace, bringing the historic conflict between Israel and the Arabs to a permanent end. But, while we await peace, we will not surrender the security that we have gained through our successful resistance to last year’s aggression ”

I next discussed the question of Arab-Israeli negotiations with Mordecai Gazit, advisor to the Prime Minister. A tall, ascetic-looking man who spoke a broken yet highly cultivated English, he had a casual manner of speech that almost can make one forget that he is one of the key theoreticians in the high echelons of the Israeli government — particularly in the area of foreign-policy making. Before assuming his current role, he was Deputy Director General of the Israel Foreign Office for the Middle East — an assignment to which he came after several years in London and Washington, where he was advisor in each capital to Israel’s ambassador.

At first blush he seemed to me somewhat stiff and formal, but this impression abated the more I engaged him in conversation. He grew increasingly relaxed, though he obviously gave considerable thought to whatever he said.

We first spoke of Nasser. According to Gazit, Nasser wants an agreement that is not negotiated, one that is arrived at by hocus-pocus diplomacy, by some kind of make-believe diplomacy in which people pretend they understand each other. “This,” Gazit said, “was tried in 1957 (after the Sinai Campaign), but it failed. Nevertheless, Nasser seems to have the audacity to suggest that we should enter into a similar agreement nowadays.

“What we say is this: ‘Mr Nasser, we understand you don’t trust us, which is quite natural from your point of view, but neither do we trust you. At the same time, people who don’t trust each other can nevertheless conduct business, if they sit down and discuss all their deeply buried frustrations, suspicions, and get down finally to business.’ ”

Gazit was quick to acknowledge that for Arab leaders to sit at a peace table with Israel had to be considered an occupational risk. “I would say,” Gazit suggested with a smile, “that leadership requires a certain amount of courage and willingness to face the consequences. I think for the Israeli government to make peace, with some kind of arrangement not unanimously applauded by one hundred percent of the Israeli population, likewise takes courage.”

We talked a little about America's role in the general situation. Gazit told me that the Israeli people "appreciate what the United States has done over the last year." He also referred to the principles for reaching a peace settlement which were enunciated by President Johnson in June 1967 — "principles, I think, which are on the whole very fair and impartial ones. If there were a will for peace in the area, the Arabs would have found the United States was treating both sides with a lot of friendship."

Because of the importance of the question of Soviet influence I delved further into this subject with a colleague of Mr. Gazit, Netanel Lorch, Director of Information of Israel's Foreign Ministry. Brought to Palestine from Germany as an infant nearly forty-five years ago, he is a *summa cum laude* graduate of the Hebrew University where he majored in modern history and philosophy. In the 1948 War for Independence he served first in the Haganah, and then as a company commander in the regular armed forces. After tours of duty in the United States and Ceylon (as consul general and *charge d'affaires* respectively), and in Peru and Bolivia (as Israeli ambassador), he assumed his present post.

I interviewed Lorch in the living room of his home, which is a typical Israeli apartment in a lovely quarter of Jerusalem. The room opened onto a balcony with glass doors through which a brilliant sun poured. Lining the walls were evidences of his activities in recent years, including his tour of duty in South America — Aztec art, wood figures, etc. — which I regarded with interest, while, from some other part of the apartment, I could hear the chatter of his teen-age kids and his wife trying to hush them.

An outgoing, friendly man, still in the prime of life, Lorch presented something of an interesting contrast. While he looks like a football player, he has one of the most brilliant minds in the Israeli government. His knowledge of Soviet history in the last 50 years is profound, and it poured forth in a torrent of words. In fact, I often had to stop him when I thought I had more than a sufficient answer to a particular question of mine.

My first question to Lorch was why, in his opinion, the Soviets don't want to see a war break out in the Middle East. "It is not," he said, because of any love for Israel, but because of fear of another defeat, and also because three billion dollars is a lot of money — even for the Soviet Union. I don't think they are very happy at having to replenish Arab

arsenals every ten years We know that some countries in the eastern bloc are unhappy that every few years they have a demand presented to them to supply the Arabs with more trucks, more armaments — which are then lost in a few days in the Sinai Desert And so, for that reason, one has the impression that the Soviets are not in a hurry They are rather counseling the Arabs to bide their time, to get ready militarily and not to run the risk of another defeat ”

Did this mean, I asked him, that the Soviets can control the actions of the Arab states? Lorch was doubtful “The Arabs aren’t very easy to control by anybody — not even by the Soviets The Arabs were not ready in June ’67 The problem was that they *thought* they were ready When the Arabs again will be under that illusion, one really cannot foretell ”

Lorch pointed out to me that Westerners are often surprised to learn that Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Algeria, all heavily subsidized by Russia, are hostile to and suppress communism within their borders Soviet acceptance of this is based purely on pragmatic needs “Basically the Soviet Union is not very much concerned about the internal regime of one Arab country or another But it is very much concerned about its political position, and Egypt happens to be next door to the Suez Canal, it happens to be at the crossroads of Asia and Africa Therefore, Egypt is most important, and the Soviet Union will support any government which will help it achieve its aims in terms of global confrontation between East and West The internal regime is secondary and can be tolerated ”

It is a known fact that the Soviet Union has shown its hostility to Israel, not only through active support of the Arabs, but through a clearly established policy of harassing and restricting Jews in Russia and the satellite countries In tracing the development of this policy, Lorch explained that “the Communist Party at the outset outlawed anti-Semitism, but it went back to at least tolerating anti-Semitic manifestations, particularly in Stalin’s time — although it became more subtle There is no longer physical persecution, but the anti-Semitism today may in fact be more dangerous because it is a deliberate policy to abolish the Jewish people and Jewish identity by refusing educational facilities, religious facilities, organizational facilities, and so forth It is true that the Soviet Union is deliberately following an atheistic or anti-religious policy, but it must be said that the policy toward other religions is by no means as extreme or as determined as that which is pursued against the Jews ”

Does the Soviet Union encourage anti-Semitism in order to please the Arabs, I wondered Lorch did not believe that “the Arab consideration

is paramount I think it is something which originally existed per se Yet Soviet anti-Semitism has been found to be very, very useful in the effort to make friends among the Arabs ”

The extent to which the Soviets were responsible for touching off the Six Day War may never be fully revealed, he felt What is known for certain is that Russia “convinced” Nasser that the Israelis were building up troops on the Syrian border As Lorch tells the story “The Soviet Union’s newest acquisition was Syria — the Baath regime in Syria had become a protege of the Soviet Union Now Syria is extremely important because it is near the soft under-belly of Turkey And Turkey is a member of NATO and is adjacent to the Soviet Union

‘So control of Syria is a very important aspect of the Soviet Union’s military policy, their Middle Eastern policy The Soviet Union thought the Syrian regime was in danger of being toppled, and they were very keen on a ‘diversion’ — getting Egypt to support Syria in an apparent defensive action against Israel That is no doubt the reason why the Soviets gave Nasser completely false information about Israeli troop concentrations near the Syrian border

“They pushed Egypt into the war because they thought that Syria, or rather the Syrian regime which is completely dependent on the Soviet Union and is extremely important in the relationship with NATO, with Turkey and with the NATO bases in Turkey, was in danger ”

Though the Six Day War produced a disastrous military defeat for Soviet arms, it seems to have had at least one beneficial effect for them large Soviet naval and air forces now frequent the Mediterranean, making it a kind of Soviet lake Lorch confirmed the open secret of Russia’s aspirations for a Middle East foothold, an important aspect of which is Soviet presence in the Mediterranean

“They haven’t made it into a Soviet lake yet,” he said, “although they have stated very openly that they consider it to be so Gromyko says that he considers it a Soviet right to be in the Mediterranean because it is adjacent to the Black Sea He does not think the Americans have any business in the Mediterranean at all But the Soviet presence is not tied in only with the Six Day War The Soviet Union has been building up its naval forces the past few years — very systematically, very deliberately — and no doubt their aim was to be able to establish Soviet presence in the Mediterranean They were ready with their time-table after the Six Day War ”

Did he feel the Russians would have penetrated the Middle East more quickly had there not been a Six Day War? Lorch considered this "an open question," but he tended to answer in the affirmative "There is no doubt at all that, if the Suez Canal were not closed, the Soviet presence in that area would by now have been extended way beyond the Mediterranean into the Persian Gulf So you see that one of the results of the Six Day War is just the other way round — to limit the Soviet presence to the Mediterranean for the time being, although they have made visits to the Persian Gulf In any case, the Soviet Union is on the march in the Middle East, and it is something which has to be reckoned with "

In conclusion, I asked Lorch whether another war was inevitable, and if so, when in his judgment it could erupt He laughed heartily "There is a Hebrew saying that, since the destruction of the Temple, the only prophets are fools I may be a fool, but I'm certainly not a prophet However, there's something very interesting which, as a historian, has intrigued me — that since 1921, there was an outbreak between the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine every eight to nine years But there are no magical rules in history, so I would not want to prophesy Let's say this, that another war is likely whenever any important Arab government — and this is most likely Egypt — considers itself strong enough to get away with it In order to avoid this, it is of extreme importance that Israel have the arms with which it can defend itself and that the Arabs know that Israel is in possession of these arms If the Arabs realize that Israel is strong enough to defend itself, then war can be postponed indefinitely, and ultimately I do hope that serenity will develop Speaking for myself, I am very hopeful about the human relations between us and the Arabs in Palestine "

Finally, I talked with Dan Bawley, a graduate in political science of the Hebrew University, reporter for Israel's English-language daily, the *Jerusalem Post* and co-author of *Sandstorm*, a new book on the June '67 war

Like sandstorms, said Bawley, wars in the Middle East come suddenly, cause great havoc and end swiftly, leaving much wreckage behind "At present," he told me, "there is no doubt the signs of peace are remote The status quo along the borders established by the Six Day War may remain for some time As long as there is no settlement, there is going to be an ever-impending danger of one more war Every effort should be made

to convince everyone concerned of the terrible dangers of just one more such war ”

We discussed the growth of Soviet influence in the area (Historically, the Russians are latecomers to the Middle East, eager to fill the partial vacuum that was left when the British and French were forced out in the forties) Bawley saw the beginning of Soviet support of the Arabs coming in early 1955, not long after Stalin's death It was then that the Russians came to the conclusion that, in order to gain power, “they had to move beyond Communist countries and use other countries undergoing new, nationalist revolutions as potential areas in which they could buy or otherwise influence power ”

Bawley went on to indicate that, in addition to achieving a foothold in Egypt, the Soviets also succeeded in gaining influence in Algeria, in Iraq and in Syria Of all the Arab states, Syria is today the most firmly ensconced in the Soviet camp, despite the fact that “it is not a socialist country, not even in the terms of Cuba or any of the other satellites of Russia ” Bawley explained it this way “The Arab people of Syria have for the past couple of decades been terribly uneasy in their search for identification They believe in socialism, they believe in equality, and yet they don't know how to move towards these beliefs Inside the country there is a dictatorship, but no new advance towards socialism They are still fully controlled by the army with a lot of Russian arms, Russian tanks, Russian planes and Russian technicians ”

Algeria, according to Bawley, “is an experiment of the Russians which has not yet been fully formulated Algeria, the Russians believe, is a developing, nationalist country which can be pressed towards socialism After the revolt against the French, the Algerians turned to Russia and towards some other socialist countries for aid, which was given willingly The Algerians have since been giving the Russians air space and ports for use by the Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean ”

Jordan, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia are, thus far, still friendly to the United States Was there any chance, I asked him, that they could turn pro-Soviet?

“Jordan is in a state of uncertainty,” Bawley replied “It is torn in all directions and could very easily be lost by the Americans Lebanon, if Jordan falls, will also be under increasing Arab pressure to go the same way But Arabia is a completely different question Saudi Arabia is a very prosperous country run by the Saudi King, sheiks and princes The chances of it turning to the Soviets are far more remote at this stage ”

By January 1969, when I visited Israel for another look, the Soviet Union was not the only big power causing the Israelis concern. General Charles de Gaulle, who had declared an embargo on future arms sales to Israel in June 1967, suddenly announced that France was going one step further — it would not honor existing contracts to supply spare parts for the French-made planes already in Israeli hands. This unilateral, punitive action stunned not only Israel, but the general's own countrymen and the rest of the world. For, instead of the warm friend and supporter of Israel, the general had now become an antagonist.

The reasons for this about-face are complex, and I was fortunate in being able to discuss the intricate web of French-Israeli relations with Michel Salomon, roving reporter and international affairs expert for the prestigious weekly, *L'Express*. Once the editor of *L'Arche*, the leading Jewish newspaper in France, Mr. Salomon is the author of numerous books, among them *Prague, or the Strangled Revolution* and *Israel Kingdom and Utopia*.

Salomon characterized the reaction of the average Frenchman to de Gaulle's imposition of the embargo as "shame." This feeling, he told me, "even reaches into circles traditionally hostile to Israel, especially because of the growing feeling that the general is getting to be more and more 'unpredictable,' so that one may expect anything, and because his government methods are slowly but implacably becoming more and more totalitarian in nature. While not yet another Franco, he is close to becoming another Salazar."

"The reasons for de Gaulle's attitude are multiple and complex," Salomon went on, after a brief pause. "He is too shrewd a statesman to really believe that Israel was the aggressor in June 1967. In his eyes, what Israel is actually guilty of is committing aggression against the complicated scaffolding erected by de Gaulle for his own 'policy of grandeur.' There is no doubt that he is also haunted by the possibility of a third world conflict which, for reasons known only to him, he situates in the Middle East rather than in Berlin or in Asia."

When I suggested that de Gaulle's pro-Arab stance might be the outgrowth of his anti-American feeling (or simply the desire to acquire new markets), Salomon nodded. "All these reasons — new markets, oil, his pathological anti-Americanism, etc. — are no doubt valid enough," he said. "One should certainly have reservations about the pro-Arab feelings of a man who has dealt with them in extremely pejorative and vexed terms, both in his memoirs and in spontaneous remarks reported by his biographers. It seems to me that his main reason is the fear of being left out of one or several future 'Yalta Conferences.'"

Salomon is convinced that "de Gaulle is neither anti-Semitic, anti-Israel nor pro-Arab. But his intimate feelings — being undoubtedly esteem and admiration for Israel's peace and war accomplishments — do not interfere with his policy, which is a policy of false prestige and of 'grandeur' based on Machiavellian (and actually quite childish) methods that ruin the national economy, interfere with European unity and undermine the structure of the free world. All this in the name of 'a certain idea of France' conceived by de Gaulle in his adolescent days when he was under the influence of Charles Maurras, leader of the ultra-nationalist and anti-Semitic 'Action Francaise' movement."

At this point I questioned Salomon about the apparent contradiction between de Gaulle's increasingly intimate relationship with the U S S R and his internal policy of keeping the French Communist Party under tight control. "In the name of non-alignment," was the reply, "he aligns himself with the foreign policy of the U S S R, while at the same time executing and jailing communists. Experience has proved that such a policy is not possible over the long range. How great must be de Gaulle's hostility to the United States if he follows this path! Even with police repression, he is risking an increase in communist strength inside France."

Did he think that de Gaulle would continue to supply arms to the Arabs, even if by so doing he helped to precipitate another full-scale war? Salomon's opinion was "that nothing will deter de Gaulle from extending unconditional support to the Arabs who have become his political clients in this big planetary game. But, unless the Arabs are subsidized by the French budget, i.e., out of the pocket of the French taxpayer, I don't see how the Arabs could 'purchase' expensive arms — especially when they can get much better terms from the Soviet Union. Aside from Lebanon and perhaps the states of the Persian Gulf — but what would they even buy? — I cannot imagine a 'commercial' flood of arms from France pouring into the Arab Middle East."

Before making my departure, I asked the journalist how he thought the Israelis were reacting to what they experience as de Gaulle's betrayal of them. "After the bitterness of the first shock," he said, weighing his words carefully, "the general feeling appears to be purpose and determination. Boycotts and embargoes have always ended in Israel's favor. For example, the Arab maritime blockade led to the creation of a merchant fleet that is rated among the best in the world. And *El Al* came into being because the Arabs refused landing rights to airlines doing business with Israel. Now,

as a result of the embargo, an actual aeronautical industry will undoubtedly come into being, coupled with a spectacular development of electronics that will propel Israel into a new era of modern technology. What would have evolved slowly will be, I think, accelerated by the embargo. The man in the street in Israel is aware of all this, and instead of losing confidence, Israelis have a sincere, perhaps even exaggerated feeling of confidence in the country's creative capacity."

Since the above interview took place, General de Gaulle has resigned as President of France — and his successor, Georges Pompidou, has just taken office. France's future role in the Middle East, therefore, is still uncertain. But informed opinion generally believes that the General's departure will mean some slight change for the better in the relations between the two countries.



The El Al plane, damaged by Arab terrorists in Athens Airport.
Israeli Office of Information



Israeli border police in action.



Armed female teen-ager herding sheep on Golan Heights.

Chapter 2

Terrorism on The Borders

The Six Day War of June 1967 ended with a cease-fire, but a border war involving Arab terrorist activities has been smoldering ever since. Not that such terrorism is a new phenomenon to the Israelis. The Sinai Campaign of 1956, for example, was preceded by eighteen months of intensive infiltration and sabotage carried out by *fedayeen*—guerrillas operating primarily out of Egypt.

Most observers consider that the activities of Al Fatah, a guerrilla organization that sprang up in the middle of 1964 among Palestinian students in Germany, Austria, Cairo and Algiers and became an active force in 1965, was a major factor in triggering the Six Day War. In Dan Bawley's view, "There is a very acute danger that this could happen once again."

In the interim, Al Fatah has been joined by other similar groups. Thus, Bawley further informed me, "Since the beginning of 1968, the Egyptian foreign policy has been to encourage these subversive Palestine organizations. The Jordanian government permits them to operate through its territory, aided and trained by the Syrian and Iraqi armies. They get their arms from almost every one of these countries. They are financed by the sheiks and by various Arab governments."

To discover in detail how Israel evaluates the effects of Al Fatah activity and how it deals with the terrorism, I interviewed General Aaron Yaariv, Chief of Intelligence of Israel's armed forces, who was staff chief in the Sinai Campaign of 1956. A diminutive man in his early 40's, the general has clear dark eyes and jet black hair combed straight back. He was soft-spoken and had a thoughtful air.

At his invitation, we sat in the garden of his Palestinian house—typically small and old—which was located in the suburbs of Tel Aviv. The garden, too, was small, no larger than a good-sized American living room. Some very old concrete figures were scattered about, while the concrete bench on which we sat was shaded by a small fruit tree. There were also many flowers, but they seemed to be growing in a kind of casual disorder. From a number of small bikes that had been ranged on the lawn in front of the

house, it was obvious that the general had children. As a matter of fact, when the interview was over, two children broke into the garden. I asked them some questions in Hebrew, took down their replies on my tape recorder and then played "the interview" back to them. They listened with fascination, it was clearly a new and unique experience for them.

General Yaariv provided me with a number of facts about the Arab terrorist machinery. All in all, he told me, there are "quite a number" of terrorist organizations, "but no more than three important ones. Al Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the commando organizations supported by the Syrians.

"They have no more than between fifteen hundred to two thousand real operational people. They do have an administrative wing and there are many Arabs working in their own areas supporting commando actions, gathering funds, etc. Most of their operational bases are in Jordan. They have training camps in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and in Egypt, but their jumping off ground is Jordan."

All such groups get support from at least one Arab government. The Al Fatah is based in Jordan, and its officers are "mostly Palestinians — officers who have themselves been trained in the various Arab armies — Syrian, Jordanian, Iraqi and Egyptian armies. And most of the important training camps are in Syria."

I asked the general whether Israeli border police and soldiers receive special training to enable them to deal with guerrilla incursions. "The general training and operations experience our combat units have," he replied, "are usually sufficient to enable them to handle this problem. We have developed a number of tactics and techniques during the years which aid us in taking quite effective measures against Al Fatah even though we haven't been able to stop them completely."

Israeli guards keep a close watch on traffic crossing the Jordan River bridges into the West Bank. With this in mind, I mentioned to General Yaariv that I had personally witnessed the arrest at the Allenby Bridge of two young Arab men and one woman, whose baggage contained concealed grenades and other bombs, and had seen all three being put aboard a truck and driven away into Israel. I was curious to know how these matters were dealt with.

"There is a very strict legal procedure," he replied. "These people are arrested and charged under the law. They stand trial and are questioned about their activities, they are free to remain silent. If convicted and sentenced, they go to prison. We do not mete out any death sentences."

The reason for this, the general explained, is that Israeli law does not regard these Arabs as prisoners of war, "since they are insurgents or underground fighters they are regarded as criminal prisoners"

In the effort to defend its citizens against murder and sabotage, Israeli forces have on several occasions crossed over into Arab territory to wipe out guerrilla bases or strategic installations. How effective such actions have been in achieving their aims only time can determine. General Yaariv and his colleagues believe they are necessary, though he is careful to emphasize that "we do not do this lightly. We watch the situation, we see the number of incidents rise, we see Arab governments, responsible just as we are for maintaining the cease-fire, not doing anything about the situation. We pass appropriate warnings across the border to the governments involved — in this case it is mostly the Jordanian government — and when nothing happens after repeated warnings, except that terrorist incidents mount and casualties multiply, we have to take self-defense measures. I think we are then justified in crossing the border"

Israelis, according to General Yaariv, have discovered when they capture guerrillas and their arms that "over ninety percent of the equipment comes from Russia. Here and there," he added, "we also find Chinese-made weapons. The Al Fatah have no problem handling such equipment. It consists mostly of automatic rifles, submachine guns and mines. They are not always efficient in handling the more sophisticated booby-trap weapons and the bazookas which they try to launch"

The general evaluated the effect of terrorist activity on Israel's economy and security in these words: "It places a certain strain on the army but it does not create an atmosphere of terror, an acute state of insecurity, nor does it affect our economic situation." As for relations between the terrorists and the Arabs of the occupied areas, he had this to say: "The Al Fatah has not succeeded in mobilizing the Arab population on the West Bank or the Gaza Strip to any extent. There certainly is sympathy for the Al Fatah, but there is no readiness to support them actively on any important scale"

I asked him whether Al Fatah activities disrupted the economy of the West Bank Arabs. "This is one of the things the Arabs in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip fear," he said quietly. "Though they do not love us, they admit they can live quite comfortably under our rule. Therefore, they have definite self-interest not to let their more or less normal life be interrupted by intensive guerrilla activities"

If, as he claimed, the terrorists had not succeeded in seriously disrupting Israeli life, were the Israeli raids into Arab territory justifiable? And I

reminded him that some people had called them "over-reactions" General Yaariv had no doubts on this score "If the Al Fatah is not as effective as it hopes to be, it is not as a result of their inefficiency, it is a result of Israeli defense forces stopping them in every way possible!"

I pushed the matter further Since the terrorists are in effect violating the cease-fire agreement that the U N brought into effect in 1967, why, I asked, did not Israel retaliate with full-scale war? After a moment of thought, he said "Israel is intent on maintaining the cease-fire We have no interest in reopening full-scale war As long as we can handle this problem by minor measures as compared to a full-scale war, we are going to do just that But this does not mean that we can stand by idly when we see the cease-fire being broken intermittently by an Arab government on the other side of the border "

In concluding his remarks to me, the general made it clear that he does not think it possible in the foreseeable future "to make the Al Fatah activities stop completely But it is definitely possible for us to keep them down to a minimum with which we can live for a long time to come "

A short time after this informative interview, I decided to see for myself what was going on I therefore visited an area where terrorist activity is a fact of daily life — Nahal Golan A para-military settlement located on a plateau of the Golan mountain range, it is within a mile of the cease-fire line between Israel and Syria To the east, less than two miles away and visible to the naked eye, lies an armed Syrian village

The residents of this outpost are boy and girl soldiers in their late teens and early twenties They belong to the *Nahal* — the "Pioneer Youth Fighters" — an extraordinary unit that teaches agriculture as well as armaments The members, less than two hundred in number, were brought to the bleak, heat-ridden Golan plateau to cultivate the land and to defend the border

Once there, I made it a point to talk with nineteen-year old Anna Fuchs and David Simone They both looked considerably younger than their years The boy was blond and stocky, the girl, attractive, also blonde, and much smaller than one would suppose a girl working at a dangerous front would be Had I not known differently, I would have taken her to be a high school student

I had some difficulty getting them to agree to be interviewed on tape. The reason for this, I felt, was due both to the fact that their English was uncertain, and to a kind of modesty — as if the roles they played were not important enough to warrant their being interviewed by me. And yet, in spite of this constraint on their part, their overall attitude exuded a sense of purpose and the confidence of youth.

For a little while, we gazed together at the Syrian village that we could see across the hills. What about it, I finally asked. “The village is full of Al Fatah,” Anna replied in her faltering English. “They are trying to destroy all settlements along the borders of Israel, to kill all the people.” As for David, though he did not believe the Al Fatah powerful enough to destroy Israel, there was no question in his mind that “they *are* trying to disturb our life.”

Both Anna and David knew quite a lot about the terrorists. They told me that the average age of the guerrillas is “twenty to thirty,” and they are “mostly Jordanians and Syrians. They get their training in Syria,” and, in Anna’s opinion, “they get their money from Syria.” According to David, the raids come “almost every day. And almost every day a soldier or a civilian is killed in a Fatah raid.”

How does Al Fatah operate? was my next question. “We think it operates through a few units,” David told me, “each separated from the other, but they all try to disturb us here.” In other words, he wanted me to understand that it is not all one army. “There are different organizations. Each has its own leadership, but they operate together.”

No prisoners have been taken at Nahal Golan, my informant went on, “but, along the border generally, over a thousand Fatah prisoners have been taken. We prefer taking prisoners to killing,” he said. “They help us in our intelligence work.”

Anna and David confirmed what General Yaariv had told me about the weapons used by the terrorists. “We have found automatic rifles made in Russia, Chinese mines and Czech machine guns. British mines, too, but they were old equipment.”

I asked them something of their daily life which consists in the main of cultivating fields and building up the settlement (Nahal Golan is farming about six hundred *dunam*, or about 150 acres, and raising sheep, too.) David explained that the girls go out to tend the sheep and “they have to take a machine gun for protection. We are quite close to the border and we have to watch for infiltrators.” Otherwise, boys and girls share responsibilities equally. As David describes it, the boys and girls work in

the fields, right up to the cease-fire line if necessary, and "the boys carry guns while they work. One of us stands guard at all times. If any movement is seen, the guard calls us and we all take our guns."

Nahal Golan has been attacked more than once. Terrorist mines placed in the fields left ten injured, one girl was killed when a bazooka hit the settlement's kitchen. Anna and David know they are doing something important and they accept the risks with equanimity. Said Anna, "I like to be here, to cultivate the land, even though it is dangerous", while David told me, "I am working in my own fields and I have to protect them. I guard in the night and I know I am protecting my friends as well as my fields."

When I asked them whether the guerrilla activity hurts the morale of the Israelis, David unhesitatingly shot back "Not here!" However, on further reflection, he admitted that "in Tel Aviv and Haifa people are sometimes frightened. Every day they hear another boy was killed, another injured." But at Nahal Golan? I insisted "Here morale is very high," he repeated "We have a wonderful life here, and I think we have the situation under control."

During the six months following my talk with Anna and David, terrorist activity increased both in intensity and in irresponsibility. The shelling and mining of border settlements was apparently not sufficient. New targets were selected by the terrorists: civilian centers deep inside Israel, and *El Al* airplanes (with passengers aboard) at European airports.

In December 1968, members of the Palestine Liberation Front operating out of Lebanon flew from Beirut to Athens, carrying guns and explosives, and attacked an *El Al* airliner in Athens airport. One passenger — an Israeli engineer setting out on a mission to South America for a U N agency — was killed, and several others wounded. A few days later, in retaliation, Israeli helicopters swooped down on Beirut airport, soldiers first ushered all persons in the area to shelter, then proceeded to blow up thirteen Arab civil aircraft. This action prompted a special meeting of the U N Security Council which passed a resolution condemning Israel. However no similar condemnation was voiced with regard to the attack by the Arabs in Athens.

While visiting Israel about a month later, I discussed these developments with Yuval Elizur, a leading Israeli columnist for *Ma'ariv*, the largest newspaper in Israel, as well as correspondent for the *Washington Post* and other American and European newspapers.

According to Elizur, the Beirut action was not conceived by the Israel government as an act of revenge or reprisal, but rather as a "warning" In the journalist's own words "The Beirut raid was intended to deter the Arab governments, and especially Lebanon, from extending support to the terrorist gangs Israel had to demonstrate dramatically that it cannot and will not remain idle if its lifeline, its air routes, are threatened again"

Many Israelis, nonetheless, did view the Beirut raid as out-and-out reprisal The Israeli man in the street had built up a store of frustration and anger in the preceding months In July 1968, Arab terrorists had hijacked an *El Al* plane and forced it to land in Algeria It took several months of intensive diplomatic activity to secure the return of the plane and its passengers, as well as agreement by Israel to release sixteen Arab political and criminal passengers As Elizur explained to me, "Although the release of the Arab prisoners was termed a 'humanitarian gesture' done at the request of the Italian government, many Israelis saw in it a legitimization of piracy in the air Yet they understood the reasons why their government chose to depend on the diplomatic solutions only But, when the terrorists attacked the *El Al* plane in Athens, the man in the street expected prompt retaliation I do not think, though, that the desire for revenge motivated the action of the government

"Mind you," Elizur continued, "I don't think a government of a democratic state may ignore for any extended period the feelings of frustration and the pressures that exist among the population It must take into consideration the defense burden that has to be borne by the Israeli people, in terms of financial costs, the time they have to put in on army reserve duties and the exposure to attacks of terrorists This burden is heavier now than at any time since the establishment of the state Yet I believe that the government would not have acted on the basis of these feelings alone"

Not all Israelis gave unequivocal support to the Beirut action, Elizur was at some pains to point out "Other warning raids," he said, "especially those directed against Egypt, enjoyed more enthusiastic support than the raid on Beirut The Israelis realized, even before they were condemned by the Security Council, that the *political* risks of the Beirut raid were bigger than those with which the raid deep into Egypt (the Naj Hamadi raid) was involved I could not find one Israeli who pitied the Lebanese airlines or who thought that Lebanon was not guilty, but some may feel that when the Israeli government took its decision, it did not weigh all the facts carefully enough"

We then discussed briefly the growth of the Arab guerrilla organizations and their attempts to terrorize the civilian population of Israel. I asked Elzur whether Al Fatah had succeeded in creating tension and fear among the Israelis. He indicated that they had, but not to any significant extent. "Their impact is much smaller," he said emphatically, "than their efforts would justify, and much smaller than what the Arabs claim."

"There are a few reasons for this. For one thing, Israelis are encouraged by the success of their own security forces in preventing the terrorists from reaching their targets and in arresting them in large numbers. Then, too, even when the terrorists have reached their targets, their actions are usually inept. These are pin-pricks rather than wounds inflicted on the Israeli. Until now the terrorists have not stopped the tourists from coming, or prevented Israelis from going anywhere or doing anything in the areas which they occupy. Under no circumstances can the effect of Al Fatah on life in Israel be compared to what the F L N succeeded in doing in Algeria or what the Vietcong is doing in Vietnam."

I thanked Mr. Elzur for his time and cooperation and, after shaking hands with him warmly, took my leave of him.



Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan with representatives of refugees in the Gaza Strip.
Wide World Photos



A street scene in Gaza, with Arabs and Israelis intermingling peacefully.



Free traffic across the Allenby Bridge.

Chapter 3

The Occupied Areas

What will happen to the Arabs in the areas occupied by Israel in June 1967? In government offices and in sidewalk cafes Israelis debate this subject heatedly. Government spokesmen, however sympathetic to the plight of the individual Arab, insist that the occupied areas were and are strategically essential to provide the country with tenable boundaries. Though some Israelis feel the territories should never be given up, the government position is that they are negotiable, but *only* as part of a larger peace settlement. On the other hand, the Arabs insist that, until Israel withdraws from these areas, there can be no talk of negotiations.

While waiting to break this impasse, Israel has to face the day-to-day problems of governing close to a million alien Arabs now inside the cease-fire boundaries created by the Six Day War. Nearly all these Arabs are in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank area of the Jordan River.

The Gaza Strip, a tiny slice of land on the south of Israel's Mediterranean flank, was given to Egypt to administer by the United Nations in 1948. At that time, to the small permanent population of the area, 200,000 to 250,000 Arabs were added who came as refugees from Palestine. For nineteen years the latter lived in camps hemmed in by the Egyptian government, which had its own reasons for not permitting them to go elsewhere and try to rebuild their lives.

At army headquarters in Tel Aviv, I met with the brother of Mordecai Gazit (see Chapter 1), General Shlomo Gazit, liaison officer directly under General Moshe Dayan, and commanding officer of the Gaza area.

Blondish, stocky, handsome, smartly dressed though open-shirted, he looked like the stereotype of the military man, but his words showed a depth of sociological understanding that belied this image. The room in which I interviewed him was spare and small, almost spartanly furnished. As I sat down on the far side of the small desk behind which he was seated, there was the sudden noise of power drills from some other part of the building. I was afraid the noise would interfere with the taping, so I asked if he could get the men to hold up their work for the length of

our interview His answer was unexpected he didn't think he had the power to do that When I pressed my point, however, saying the drilling would make our interviews difficult, if not impossible, he got on the phone and, as gently as I have ever heard a man speak, asked the foreman of the work gang if it was possible for him to call a 15-minute break! Apparently it was, for the noise stopped almost at once

The general began our discussion by drawing a sharp distinction between "the normal residents" of the Strip — "a little over 100,000 — and the over 250,000 refugees, most of them in camps "

The permanent Gaza residents are in the same situation as the Arabs of the West Bank, in that they have always led relatively stable lives "But the refugees," he went on, "kept for nineteen years in the camps — without work, without any possibility of going and coming, without any future — have reason for bitterness and frustration "

I asked General Gazit whether the Israel government had a special policy toward the refugees "The answer is both yes and no," he replied "We have no possibility of solving the refugee problem by our own means Knowing that there is no future for the refugees in the Gaza Strip is perhaps the only common denominator between us, the refugees and everybody else We know that the refugee problem must be solved outside the Strip We did permit, for the first time after nineteen years, free exit for all the refugees to go and come at will "

Once the doors were open, the Gaza Arabs began to move out in droves, to visit Israel and the West Bank — and then, for the most part, to return to Gaza In fact, as the general informed me, "the number who left and did not come back at all doesn't go over some 30,000 or 35,000 "

I expressed amazement at the fact that those people had not left Gaza a long time ago After all, the deplorable conditions in the camps were well known

"It was very difficult for them," the general explained "The Egyptian regime did not permit them to leave in a normal way For them to leave meant emigration, and that meant to go to Cairo, to have papers arranged in some other country, to have a visa, to have money At one time, they had normal exit through the West Bank and the bridges eastward, and they did try and find their own living, their own new occupation If they found something, if they thought it worthwhile, they did do it If they didn't, they just came back But," he continued, "after July 1968, this freedom of exit was denied them by Jordan

"The natives of the West Bank, on the other hand, still go back and

forth with ease The West Bank Arabs are considered Jordanians by the Jordanian regime The Arabs can't permit themselves, for political reasons, to say that they won't let them come into the East Bank But the Palestinians of the Gaza Strip are not Jordanians The Jordanian decision is, I think, based upon two reasons One is political — playing the Arab game which is against any solution of the refugee problem As long as the refugees are in the camps, the Arabs can say this is a problem that Israel should solve, that Israel does not permit a solution

“The other reason is an internal one Things in Jordan are very difficult today and they can hardly afford to permit any additional refugees into the East Bank But, while they can't keep out the West Bankers, they can keep out the Gaza Strip Arabs ”

General Gazit scoffed at rumors that Israel was encouraging Gaza Arabs to leave so that the area would be free for Jews to move in Israel now has “so many Arabs that a few more don't really make any difference The problem is whether these refugees can remain in their camps without any hope and without any future We can't permit that ”

In his view, the Gaza Arabs are beginning to accept the fact of Israel's presence “At the beginning of this present occupation, the residents thought it wouldn't last, that Israel would retreat That hasn't happened and I think they understand that this time things are different, that this time Israel isn't going to give back the Strip — unless it becomes part of a peace agreement ”

As an occupied area, Gaza is subject to military censorship of news, though not political censorship While the Israelis have tried to encourage a local newspaper, “in spite of all our endeavors,” the general said, “we have not succeeded in finding somebody to print one The Arabs there believe this would be showing a dangerous degree of cooperation with the Israelis ”

The general added that the residents of Gaza are “free to listen to the Arab radio, to the Arab television networks, and” — he laughed — “I think they do it much more often than they listen to the Israeli broadcasting services ”

As General Gazit saw it, the real problem for the Gaza Arabs is how to attain stability, i e , “to end the impasse, the uncertain future, the cycle of one war following another war without any political solution but with repeated physical damage and personal sacrifice They are very sincerely looking for a political solution to end this seemingly unending process ”

While assuring me that Israel, too, seeks a political answer, he made it

clear that "we will not give up the Gaza Strip unless that is part of a general political solution for the whole area. I think the problem of the local refugees can be solved by getting them out of their camps and settling them somewhere else. I don't think there will ever again be a green line — the demarcation line meaning no entry in either direction — which was on the maps between Israel and the Gaza Strip before June 1967. Whatever the future will be, we shall always be in a position to visit the Gaza Strip, and they in a position to visit Israel. Perhaps even more important, the Gaza Strip can benefit from Israel's technical advice."

General Gazit then went on to talk about the West Bank, which has a population of 600,000, of whom more than 100,000 are registered as refugees. Here the situation has been relatively stable. The general told me that even the West Bank refugees, though they are officially on the rolls of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), "are already organized, have their homes, are employed, and aren't any problem to anybody."

Regarding the employment situation in the area, he was quite emphatic. "They never had it so good! There is almost no unemployment in the West Bank except for seasonal problems — because it is an agricultural society and there are off-seasons. We employ on our government payroll some ten to eleven thousand men in the West Bank. The most important thing is that they are employed inside of Israel where the wage is higher. In most cases they work in areas near the border. They come in the morning and return home in the evening. But of course there are some exceptions when they work a little bit further off. Then they go home only for the weekend.

"The schools are open and running normally," he concluded. "There is practically no censorship, no control over their schools. In fact, we know of cases where teachers and headmasters are propagandizing against Israel but we don't do anything about it."

The general volunteered the opinion that, by and large, the West Bankers were better off than their brothers east of the Jordan River. "Here they are living completely normal lives, and I would say rather prosperous lives. On the other side, in most cases, they are refugees in camps under difficult conditions. Even from the political point of view, I don't know if they are as free in the East Bank to say what they want to as they are on our side."

Though he felt the overall economic picture was encouraging, he was quick to admit that it was no easy task to govern over half a million Arabs who are basically hostile, if not overtly dangerous. In the period immediately following the Six Day War, there were some problems with

sabotage, but, according to General Gazit, the population as a whole does not presently constitute a security risk. He was of the opinion that Israel had made it clear that "we have no intention of dominating Arabs. We did not come in because we wanted to expand our territory, we came here because we had a military problem."

We discussed the fact that, at the beginning of the occupation, the Arabs tried civil disobedience against Israel, hoping that, together with political action by the Arab states, it would force Israel to withdraw quickly. But the general felt that this effort had "failed completely, basically because civil resistance is against the interest of the mass of the population. If they strike and close their shops, it's against the interests of the local population. If they close their schools, the ones that suffer are their own children."

I also learned that, despite the fact that the West Bank is occupied territory, Israel tries to give the Arabs as much freedom as possible in their day-to-day affairs. Cities in the West Bank, for example, have been self-governing almost from the start of the occupation. In addition, the Israelis are intent on keeping open the channels of communication between the West Bank and Jordan itself.

This last remark led me to comment on the fact that Israel has very rarely closed the Allenby Bridge leading to Jordan, even when there had been shooting elsewhere on the border, or terrorists coming in to commit acts of sabotage. Furthermore, that because of Israel's policy, though Jordan and Israel are technically at war, the people who live on both sides of the Jordan River are working with each other, talking with each other, visiting with each other and trading with each other. I admitted to being surprised by this.

General Gazit agreed that "there are large security risks in keeping the bridge open. This is especially true now that we have the rest of the border rather well secured by our military forces. The only means of infiltrating Israel are by the bridges. But we keep them open because we believe it's now just traffic of men and goods, and it is an important beginning of a positive process of mutual understanding between the two people, Israelis and Arabs."

"As far as Israel is concerned," he went on, "we are at peace with the Arab world. We are ready to permit everything to go on, as is normal between two people and two states which are at peace. As a matter of fact, if it weren't for the Jordanian government and for outside political Arab pressure, I think we would have had an official agreement long ago between the local Palestinians and ourselves."

The general underscored his country's position on the vital matter of negotiation "We give the people of the West Bank the option of getting rid of us whenever they wish to do it They simply have to put up one small finger and say, 'We are ready to start negotiating with you,' and they can negotiate to get rid of us if they want to"

The future of the West Bank? "It's for the Arabs themselves to decide," General Gazit declared "The first and most important point in our policy is, we are not going to force anything We want *them* to choose We want *them* to decide But if I might be some sort of prophet, I think we are not far from the point when they won't have any choice but to negotiate directly with us There is a difference, of course, between negotiating a settlement with the local Palestinians and negotiating a settlement with the rest of the Arab world But I am sure that in either case there won't be any difficulty in giving local autonomy to the Arabs on the West Bank"

Before concluding my interview, I asked him a last question Are you optimistic about the future? He smiled "Otherwise I wouldn't be in my post "

The general's optimism was heartening, particularly since there were clearly so many problems to be untangled before any kind of accommodation could be reached To understand better the issues blocking progress, as well as the various peace plans that have been suggested, I decided to talk with unofficial but influential representatives of both sides Aziz Shihadeh, a Bethlehem-born Arab lawyer, once Secretary of the Palestine Refugee Congress and delegate in 1949 to the Palestine Conciliation Commission in Switzerland, and the Israeli journalist of Dutch origin, Dan Bawley, whom I had spoken with some days earlier, but in a different context

The two men arrived together at my hotel room Though they do not share the same view of Arab-Israeli problems, they are nonetheless close personal friends, and are able to see across their disagreements and respect each other's beliefs

Shihadeh and Bawley both agreed that there had been lost opportunities in the past to work things out In Shihadeh's view, the Partition Plan voted by the UN in 1947, which called for the creation of separate Arab and Jewish states in Palestine, should have been carried out, even after the War of Liberation "The Arab states started to fight against the partition scheme, and there were outside factors, too In 1949 when the Palestinians asked through the Palestine Refugee Congress for implementation, the Israeli delegation in Lausanne put them down"

Bawley saw merit in that view, but was more concerned with the lost

opportunities of 1967 and 1968 "In 1967, right down to the Six Day War and immediately after, it probably would have been possible to implement an immediate cease-fire under which a peace agreement could have come. At the time, the Arab countries were defeated completely and the Palestinians were looking for an out. They would have accepted then an immediate solution which would have made them a separate entity."

Treating the Palestinians as "a separate entity" or, in Shihadeh's words, "as persons who are party to the discussions," is one key to reaching an accord. On the assumption that the Palestinians will have a voice in the discussions to decide their fate, we explored a number of possible plans.

Annex the West Bank to Israel? Shihadeh objected "Annexation is contrary to the wishes and the national feelings of all Palestinians. The Palestinians appear very peaceful in the Western Bank at the moment, but they will not accept any annexation."

Return the West Bank unconditionally to Jordan? Bawley explained why this was unlikely to happen "There are two reasons. One, I don't believe that the Palestinian Arabs want to go back to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and, two, the Israeli government would not consider returning the West Bank to Jordan without receiving guarantees that there would not be another war from the east."

Set up a confederation composed of an autonomous West Bank state and the State of Israel? According to Shihadeh, federation with either Israel or Jordan might be considered at a later stage, but right now the West Bankers "would continue to fight for their independence. At the moment, I think the ambition of the Palestinian Arabs is to have an autonomous nation."

Bawley agreed with him "There are many points in favor of establishing a separate autonomous Palestinian nation, which would be of advantage to Israel as well as to the Arab countries. For one, it could be a buffer state between the Arab countries and Israel. Also, as a separate state it could work in close cooperation economically, socially and politically with Israel. It could not happen by one stroke of a pen. It would have to go through a gradual series of evolutionary stages."

Asked whether such a buffer state would have an army, Bawley replied "For some time, under arrangement with the Israeli government, it would either be demilitarized or would have a mixed military unit which would include both Israeli and Arab military units. If Jordan decided to invade the Palestinian community, it would be up to the Israeli defense forces to protect it."

Shihadeh thought that "the question of protection would have to be guaranteed by the United Nations. If there would be such guarantees, I don't think there would be need for Israeli or Jordan military defense from attack. The U N would be the protector."

In discussing this proposed autonomous state, Shihadeh made the point that "once the state is formed, there is nothing to prevent it from federating with Jordan. We would like always to be connected with the Arab states and not isolated" (Shihadeh, by the way, disputed the official West Bank population figure of 600,000, he believed it is higher.)

Bawley felt it was "too early" to discuss whether an autonomous Palestinian nation could be federated to Jordan. "There is no question," he said, "that the majority of the Jordanians today originated as Palestinians, and that after a Palestinian state on the West Bank is established they would have to have connection with the Arab people eastwards from the river Jordan. The question whether this would be a federation or a more loose relationship could be determined later on. There would be another possibility which one could envision — some kind of a common market similar to that of West Europe in which the West Bank, Lebanon and Jordan would participate."

Shihadeh raised the subject of Jerusalem, which, he told us, would have to be the capital of the new Palestinian state. "Without Jerusalem," he insisted, "there would be no state. With Jerusalem, it is possible to make peace and agree with Israel."

Since Israel has maintained that the city of Jerusalem is not subject to negotiation, I wondered how such an arrangement could be possible. Bawley explained "The whole city of Jerusalem is not negotiable. But there are parts of the new Jerusalem which are not an intrinsic part of the main of Jerusalem. There are quite a few suburbs which are, I'm sure, not a part of that original proclamation that Jerusalem is indivisible. There is a possibility of maintaining one city of Jerusalem, while at the same time giving the Arab Palestinian state the possibility of operating its capital from the north and east of Jerusalem."

Actual negotiations to work out the West Bank's future will call for delicate handling. There may be agreement that the Palestinians themselves have to sit at the negotiating table, with or without Jordan. But who takes the first step?

Bawley believed that "the Israeli government is waiting for the Palestinian leaders of the West Bank to express themselves. There have been many informal meetings, but they have not taken any official form." In

Shihadeh's view, "The Palestinians are not taking the initiative because they do not wish to disconnect themselves with the Arab states before they have some sort of a declaration of policy giving them the right to decide their fate "

Is a settlement for the West Bank dependent on King Hussein's participation? In Shihadeh's words, "The negotiations would have to be carried out by the Palestinians rather than by King Hussein. Because if he went against the Khartoum resolutions—no recognition of the Israeli, no negotiations, no peace—he would be in trouble "

Bawley, too, agreed that the first arrangements would have to be between Israel and the Palestinians living on the West Bank

That first big step of moving from point "a" to point "b" is the major stumbling block. As Bawley commented, "One of the paradoxes and tragedies of the Middle East has been that each side is always waiting for the other side to take the initiative "

Shihadeh maintained that the first move was up to Israel, that Israel should "take the offensive for peace and offer either the Arab states or the Palestinians something which would be a real ground for discussion "

Bawley suggested that Israel could take a first step by showing "a clear intent" to solve at least part of the refugee problem, perhaps through payment of compensation for certain financial losses. But the Arabs, too, he insisted, had to show some initiative. "Perhaps the mayors of Arab cities, or other notable and respectable representatives of that community should say that they want peace with Israel and that they are willing to represent the Arab people to achieve it "

However, Shihadeh objected, as he had earlier, that the Palestinians would not "disconnect themselves from the other Arab states before they had a firm offer from Israel "

Despite the obvious good will of both gentlemen, it was hard for me not to feel discouraged about the prospects for a speedy settlement of the West Bank situation. But Bawley, like General Gazit, took an optimistic view. As he saw it, an autonomous Palestinian nation was evolving right now in the area, helped along by Israel. "The Israeli government," he said, as both he and his friend rose to leave, "has gradually increased autonomous activities of the local population, mainly on the municipal and sub-district levels. It has permitted as far as possible free trade with the East Bank, with Jordan, and with the State of Israel. It has motivated more and more civil activity.

"It does not believe that there is a possibility of coming to peace in

one natural act. This is a question which will take a substantial period of time. The longer it takes the Arab countries to come to agreement, the better are the chances of establishing a separate Palestinian state which, with a new leadership gradually growing up and accepting the presence of Israel, will also come to peace with Israel.”

Some six months after my conversation with Aziz Shihadeh and Dan Bawley, I was brought further up-to-date on conditions in the occupied areas by another conversation with the journalist Yuval Elizur.

In answer to my first question as to whether the situation had deteriorated since I had last been in Israel, he said: “No, I don’t think the Arabs in the occupied territories are more hostile today than they were immediately after the Six Day War. Just that today the moderates, who I believe are still the majority, are more reluctant to speak up. There was a very short period after the war had ended — it lasted maybe less than three months — in which it seemed as if some contact between Jew and Arab was possible. Since then only the loudest, more extremist voices are heard. The trouble with the Palestinian Arabs has always been, since way back in the 1920’s, that their wise leaders, who could easily have had most of the people behind them, never had the power of their own convictions. They were terrorized by hotheads such as the Jerusalem Grand Mufti — who spent the World War II years in Nazi Germany.”

He went on to say that, in his view, “the traditional leaders of Palestine — the mayors, the rich landowners and the former Jordanian politicians — have lost much of their hold on the population since the terrorist groups have become a political factor. They dare not stand up and resist them. It must also be noted that, while the Israelis did not depose any mayor and only exiled a few vociferous agitators, the occupation has done much to upset the position of those traditional leaders in their communities.”

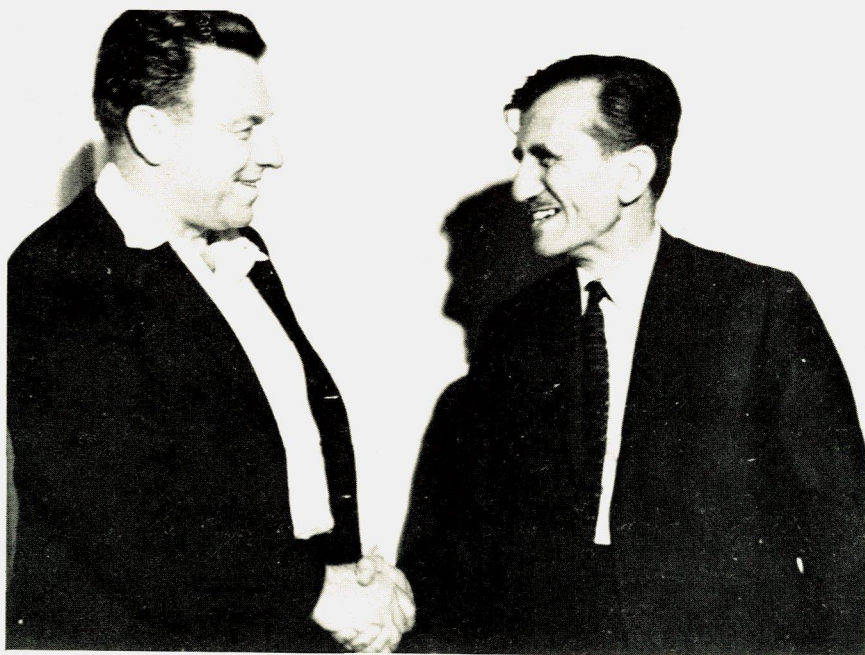
The loss of status by traditional leaders is apparently not the only change to have taken place among the Palestinians. Through getting to know Israel better — at first hand, and not from propaganda — the Arabs have begun to question their attitudes toward many things. As Elizur explained it to me, “once the Arabs in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank realized that they could settle things with the Israeli authorities without paying bribes, that the police are not corrupt, and that workers may earn almost as much as government officials and lawyers, they began to be dissatisfied with their own social and political institutions. Yes, the Arabs are more

frustrated and impatient today than they were soon after the war. But they are dissatisfied not only with the Israeli occupation but also with their own leadership, with the Jordanian government and also with Al Fatah, which offers no immediate solution to their plight but makes their life under Israeli rule even more miserable, by forcing the Israelis to take security precautions which hit first and foremost the West Bank and Gaza populations."

To what extent, I asked, do the occupied peoples help the terrorists who come across the border to plant bombs and mines on Israeli soil? "Well," he replied, "there is no doubt that some of the inhabitants of the occupied territories aid and abet the terrorists. Some do it out of patriotic conviction, others because they are afraid lest they be considered 'collaborators' and be punished by the terrorists. Yet there is ample proof that Al Fatah and the other groups do not enjoy the full backing of the Arabs in the occupied territories. Gangs that were captured soon after they crossed the Jordan confessed that their instructions were not to mix with the local population. The fact that so many Al Fatah members are apprehended before they have a chance to commit any crime is due at least to some extent to the fact that local villagers and townspeople report them to the Israeli authorities."

We then discussed the difficulties involved in administering the occupied areas, with their population of close to one million Arabs. Elizur had much to say on this subject, the essence of which can be summarized in his statement that "Israel's defensive positions are so much better today than they were before the Six Day War that this more than compensates for the difficulties Israel faces in maintaining law and order in Ramallah, in Nablus and in Jericho."

I mentioned to him the possibility of Israel's withdrawing from the territories as an inducement to bringing about peace. Elizur, however, doubted that unilateral withdrawal would have such an effect. "We must remember," he cautioned, "that Al Fatah has rejected the Security Council's resolution of November 22, 1967 and has pledged to fight on even after a political settlement is reached. This type of war would impose on Israel a much heavier burden than the one she is carrying at present. It is easier to prevent the terrorists from crossing the Jordan than from sneaking through the former armistice line near Jerusalem. And," he concluded, "as long as the Arabs have not given up the hope of totally destroying Israel, there is no better position for Israel to be in than the one in which she is today."



Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek (left) with his Arab counterpart in the Old City, Mayor Ruhiel Chatib.
Wide World Photos



An arab merchant in Jerusalem's Old City does business with a Jewish customer.
Wide World Photos

Chapter 4

Jerusalem United

In 1948, war left the holy city of Jerusalem split sharply in two the Kingdom of Jordan held the Old City on the east, while the new State of Israel retained the New City on the west and made it its capital An ugly scar demarcated this brutal separation — a block-wide strip of rubble-filled lots, half-destroyed buildings and barren valley Called No-Man's Land, it was a constant reminder to the Israelis that a vital section had been ripped from the City of Jerusalem

Some twenty years later, in June 1967, Israeli forces recaptured the Old City In front of the Wailing Wall, battle-weary soldiers, atheists and orthodox Jews stood together and wept for the first time since before the days of Jesus, Jews ruled over the ancient city of Jerusalem

Many non-Jews, and perhaps even some Jews, have been puzzled by the intensity of Israel's feeling about Jerusalem After all, they point out, political control of the city had been in many hands throughout the centuries (The ancient Israelites, Romans, Mamelukes, Christians, Turks, the British — they, and others, have all had their day in the history of that part of the world) And, while it is true that there have always been Jews in Jerusalem, for the Jewish people isn't its central importance spiritual rather than political? Why then, they ask, have the Israelis insisted that, unlike other areas occupied in 1967, Jerusalem is absolutely not negotiable?

I discussed this key subject with Dr Yaacov Herzog, Director-General of the Prime Minister's Office, and his political advisor A son of the late Chief Rabbi of Israel and himself ordained, Dr Herzog was eminently qualified to answer my questions

A short and handsome man, whose English was as good as his Hebrew (both languages obviously had always been used in his home, since his parents were originally from Great Britain), Dr Herzog received me in his sumptuous office located in a magnificent recently-completed government building Modernity manifested itself everywhere — in the furniture, fixtures, complicated intercom system, etc Everywhere, that is, except on the walls where there were religious paintings and antique Israeli art Though

he seemed impatient with the press of business, he could not speak without his detailed biblical knowledge constantly seeping through. It was not always easy for me to keep up with the intense flow of his words.

"When you talk about Jerusalem," he began, "you touch a very sensitive nerve within the Jewish consciousness, and indeed within the Jewish faith — an interlocking of the spiritual and national aspects. There have indeed been many conquests of Jerusalem through the ages, but the only entity in world history which has declared in faith, in determination and in ceaseless dedication, that without Jerusalem it has no life, is the Jewish people. Jewish renaissance is in the renaissance of Jerusalem.

"The link between the Jewish people and Jerusalem is of a unique character. For us, Jerusalem is not only a political denomination, it is not only a spiritual possession, it is something far deeper. It touches the very core of our existence. It touches the whole concept of the Return, the concept of Exile — an exile which would be and actually was obliterated when we returned to Jerusalem."

Dr Herzog made it clear that he of course understood the profound bonds that link Christianity and Islam to the City of Peace. For Moslems, Jerusalem is the third holiest place in the world, after Mecca and Medina, for Christians it is the place where the Crucifixion and the Resurrection occurred. As for the Jews, it is not, he explained, that Jerusalem is "holier" for them than for the others, but the fact that the nature of the attachment is different.

"For us," he went on, "Jerusalem is the beginning and the end of an entire experience, if one can use the word 'end'. This is an evolving experience down the ages. The idea of 'return to Jerusalem' means the renaissance of a people, a capacity once again to serve mankind. Without Jerusalem, I would say, the Jewish people lose their soul. Therefore, you cannot put this link in the category of most other religious links.

"And yet," he emphasized, after a moment's hesitation, "there is no contradiction between the Jewish feeling about Jerusalem as a unified city under Jewish sovereignty, and the possibility and probability of reaching arrangements with Christianity and Islam which would fully satisfy for each of them their religious status.

"Over the past year and a half, relations of a cordial nature have developed. We hear no complaints from Christian world authorities. Pilgrimages continue, the holy places of Christendom are inviolate, their whole autonomy is internal, their administration is autonomous. And I would say that one can now see the seeds of an arrangement which may

make Jerusalem a focal point of prayer and religious activity for all religions ”

In answer to a question of mine, Dr Herzog pointed out that, in their terms, there is complete freedom of religion for all faiths in Israel (though they don't all have the same obligations to the political state), and that this was spelled out in the Israeli Declaration of Independence. On this issue, he was quick to add the following “On the day the city of Jerusalem was reunited in 1967, the Prime Minister met with heads of all Christian and Islamic communities in Israel and made a clear statement of respect for their religious rights and for the rights of all communities to their holy places and to their right of absolute control ”

When I asked him as a final question whether anything approaching a spirit of ecumenism existed among the three major faiths in the city, this was his answer “There is initial cooperation developing between Moslem and Jew in Jerusalem, and certainly between Christian and Jew the trend is toward deeper cooperation. The people living here, although they have daily chores and problems and emotions, are touched by the eternity of the city. I believe we are moving toward peace, although there are many, many difficulties and dangers ahead. But, with God's help, Jerusalem may someday be a beacon light of peace ”

A man who echoed Dr Herzog's hopes for the future was the mayor of Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek, who daily copes with problems that compare in scope and complexity with those faced by mayors of much larger cities. Indeed, it has sometimes been said that, if the mayor of New York has the most difficult job in the world, then the mayor of Jerusalem runs him a very close second.

Though born in Europe, Kollek speaks English as if he had spent the major part of his life in America. Always in short-sleeved shirts, always harried, always effervescent, he received me in his office which is located in a busy downtown business section. The large windows were wide open, as a result of which the street noises drowned out the sound of one's own voice. Rather than close the windows—the heat was quite oppressive—he guided me instead into a 3 x 4 foot windowless anteroom where he seated himself behind an old shabby desk.

As I set up my equipment for our interview, I recalled to myself that, when the battles of the Six Day War ended, Teddy Kollek had found himself at the head of what had previously been two separate cities, whose

people had been at war with each other for nineteen years, who spoke different languages and who differed, in fact, in almost every aspect of their lives. As I watched and observed him out of the corner of my eye, I could not but feel it was Israel's good fortune that the staggering task of creating a unified city out of what was near chaos had fallen on the capable shoulders of Teddy Kollek — a man not only of great exuberance, but one who had been tested in the top echelons of government and had proved again and again that he could get things done, and get them done well.

The first question I addressed to him was whether any progress had been made in integrating the Jews and Arabs, both of whom call Jerusalem home. However, instead of answering me, he objected to the question itself. "I don't think they should be integrated," he said. "This is not an American city where everyone wants to be an American. I would rather compare it with Montreal, where the French are French and the English are English, and both are good Canadians and live together."

"True, there's a little strife from time to time, but on the whole, it's a good city to live in. And I think the Arabs would like to remain Arabs, and *should* remain Arabs — connected with the Arab people all over the world in the spiritual sense, and in the cultural sense having the freedom to travel freely to the Arab world, if they so choose."

"And certainly," he went on animatedly, "the Israelis, the Jews, don't want to become Arabs. So why shouldn't both Arabs and Jews live here one day peaceably, contented? We live fairly peacefully now, though not so contented. Which is hardly surprising. After all, the Arabs didn't exactly vote for this unification, you know."

We next talked about the actual physical unification of the city, i.e., the removal of the barbed wire and concrete walls that had marked the border for so many years. I wondered out loud if this might not be considered a symbol of Arab-Jewish rapprochement.

Kollek appraised my words carefully, cautiously. "There are signs," he finally repeated, "that eventually we will be able to live together. It isn't easy, of course. The Arabs are unhappy at the fact that Jerusalem has become the capital of Israel. But they participate in all municipal affairs, and we don't ask them for a loyalty oath. We tell them we don't want to know their opinions, except on questions of sidewalks and sewerage and sanitation and education and such things."

By "such things" it turned out that he meant the ordinary, day-to-day economic and social activities of the city's inhabitants. In this regard, much had already been accomplished, he assured me. "It's a contented

city as far as employment is concerned," he said with conviction "Over a third of the Arab labor force, which was largely unemployed before, now works in Jewish places of employment — on building sites, in factories, as gardeners and truck drivers About 500 — a large percentage because our total municipal labor force is between 12,000 and 14,000 people — work as employees of the city Their salaries for low grade jobs are the same as the salaries of the Israelis and far better than what they earned before, while, in the higher grades, the salaries are about the same as before In short, the differential between low and high is much smaller here than it was in the Arab world

"Also, the city is full of tourists, and all the hotels are full It took a little time to improve the Arab hotels and to give them the services expected by the type of tourist coming here now

"Jerusalem," he continued, "has one administration We are providing the water, we are providing the education There are at this moment 16,000 children in day camps — the first time Arab children are in day camps We have a Youth City where every afternoon a few thousand children — Jews and Arabs — run their own city with entertainment, with sports, with a variety of things "

One problem which I knew that Jerusalem shares with many other cities throughout the world is the housing shortage But, according to Kollek, the city is trying to alleviate that situation, and at the same time to restore and beautify the historic landmarks "The Arabs," he told me, "who live within the Walled City are used to very congested conditions We are gradually liquidating all the slum areas We are starting now to build the first two hundred apartments for Arabs whom we would like to take from the inner city into the suburbs of Jerusalem This will also enable us to rebuild the houses where these Arabs live now Some of them were probably built six hundred or eight hundred years ago and are fine examples of Islamic architecture But gradually a little shack was added here and a little shack was added there These additions have to be torn down and the houses have to be brought back to their pure style They will be beautiful, but a great deal of money is needed and this is a poor city "

When I asked him about the status of the holy places, I learned to my surprise that Arabs of all countries could, if they wished, be admitted to Israel to visit their shrines I was surprised because it simply never occurred to me that a nation technically at war would welcome belligerents within its borders!

Patently the mayor explained the situation to me "For the first time in

many, many years, there is free access to the holy shrines for everybody. We have a great number of Moslems coming in from Jordan to visit their families and pray on Friday at their shrines. There are a great number coming in from African states to pray. So far none have come from Egypt, Syria or Saudi Arabia, but not because we wouldn't give them visas. They are afraid of their own governments and, therefore, don't ask us for a visa. But the fact that Jordanians come here is proof that everybody else could come too.

"As far as the Christians are concerned, they have absolutely free governing rights of their own holy places. We have close cooperation with all Christian denominations. We have always been very friendly with them but there is now, of course, much more cooperation because the subject matter has become of much greater importance. We have, I believe, more Christian denominations than in Rome. Some are very small, very ancient. The major ones are the Greek Orthodox community in the city, the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church. The Anglican archbishop has no rights in the old shrines, the others have had these rights since the fourth or fifth centuries. The Protestants are latecomers. But they have good schools and they have a cathedral of their own, and our relationship with them is extremely good."

It was at Mayor Kollek's suggestion that I arranged to meet with the Commanding Police Officer for most of Israel, Shaul Rosolio, at the magnificent new police headquarters in East Jerusalem. A strong well-built man in his late 40's, who obviously keeps himself in top physical condition, Rosolio was smartly dressed in the tan short-sleeved uniform of the Israeli police, with no tie or jacket. His office was large and well appointed, the furniture was new and expensive, and reflected — as did the whole building — the bustling, efficient air of the modern police establishment. He spoke excellent, highly literate English, and his understanding of Arab problems revealed a mind of considerable range — frankly, the last thing I expected from the tight-lipped authoritarian kind of policeman that he outwardly appeared to be. As he ushered me into his office and motioned me to be seated, he explained to me that he had formerly been quartered in an old and completely unsuitable building in the New City, "but, when we came into this part of the city, we found a half-completed building meant by the Jordanians to serve as police headquarters for the district, and we completed it."

Health, Education and Recreation in Jerusalem

To the extent that united Jerusalem functions as smoothly as it does, credit must be given to a handful of institutions and individuals who have made a special effort to bring Arabs and Jews closer together, and to provide facilities of a rewarding nature for *all* the city's citizens

Chief among such institutions are the Hadassah Hospital and the Hebrew University. The two institutions are closely woven into the fabric of the city, they have shared in every moment of Jerusalem's fate, and are major contributors to its development.

Both the hospital and the university were originally built on Mt. Scopus, which lies to the east of the Old City. In the war of 1948, the Jews successfully resisted Arab attacks on this site, but the area surrounding it was given to the Arabs in the U.N.-arranged cease-fire. Thus, Scopus was left a lonely enclave in wholly Jordanian territory. In 1949, the Israel-Jordan armistice provided for Israeli access, on the road only, to the university and the hospital. And while a small Israeli police force was permitted to keep watch over the buildings, and was relieved twice a month by personnel whose passage was insured by a special U.N.-protected convoy, the buildings were left to rot. As a consequence, the institutions had to start life anew in other parts of the city.

For a number of years, the hospital and the university improvised by renting dozens of generally unsuitable buildings wherever they could be found. In 1952, however, the university started to build its present campus, which now has some 100 buildings. Hadassah, for its part, moved in 1961 to the Jerusalem suburb of Ein Karem, into beautiful new buildings, where it is located to the present day.

My first visit was to Hadassah, where Lucien Harris, Director of Information Services, showed me around the hospital — including in our tour the famous Chagall windows in the chapel. The largest and best-equipped medical institution in the Middle East, Hadassah's facilities would, in fact, be enviable anywhere.

Harris seemed to me the typical Englishman Round-faced, bubbly, enthusiastic, he was clearly interested in his work, but, like any administrator of a large institution, beset by a multitude of problems At the end of our tour, he graciously led me from his tiny but noisy office into the large doctors' lounge where we could more quietly tape an interview Scattered about in comfortable chairs were some nurses and doctors absorbedly reading journals and magazines

"Our hospital has 647 beds," Harris said, as we sat down in an empty corner of the room "If there is need to expand we have a capacity of 800 to 900 beds In addition, we have almost a thousand outpatients every day in our consultative clinics, in every branch of medicine and surgery Patients of all races and creeds are treated, in accordance with Hadassah tradition "

I was curious about the heliport I had seen right alongside the hospital, and Harris was quick to explain "The Hadassah women of America," he said, "displayed great foresight in making possible its completion It was here when the Six Day War broke out From the battlefields surrounding Jerusalem, we received up to a thousand casualties in a period of two and a half days Many of the wounded were brought right from the battlefield to our heliport Today, civilian emergencies are brought to this heliport "

The medical school adjacent to the hospital is run jointly by Hadassah and the Hebrew University Harris told me that it trains Arab students, both Christian and Moslem, as well as some Druze And, as part of Israel's program of assistance to less developed countries, the medical school has enrolled some seventy students from African and Asian countries

The hospital has always opened its doors to Arab patients Since the unification of Jerusalem, their number has increased and they bring with them a whole range of new ailments "As soon as the roads were open after the Six Day War," Harris said, "there was a daily stream of Arab patients from the area now administered by the Israeli military government Some were sent in to us as very urgent cases by our medical officers, others found their own way

"In comparison with some of the far-flung areas of the Arab world, their medical condition was rather better on the West Bank But, nonetheless, our Hadassah doctors are now finding that they have to treat certain conditions and diseases in West Bank Arabs which we have not seen in Israel for over twenty years We have quite a number of eye cases and skin conditions that are very difficult to treat — possibly because of neglect, possibly because of inaccurate diagnosis or of no diagnosis — because of the expense of going to a specialist in Beirut or Cairo "

When I asked him whether an Arab from the Old City or the West Bank could afford to pay for Hadassah's services, he explained their fee system "We proceed according to our traditions. We have a tariff committee and we have always tried to assess people according to their means. In Israel itself, seventy to eighty percent of the population is insured by a pre-payment scheme, something like Blue Cross-Blue Shield. They are covered for medical services and for hospitalization. The Arab population of East Jerusalem is now joining the Histadrut, Israel's labor federation. The Arabs are beginning to become trade unionists and, as they do, they are entitled to medical services as other citizens are. If they are not covered by an insurance scheme and they are poor people, they are treated as any other poor people in Israel are. We get a small subsidy from the Israel government to treat poor patients here. But the bulk of the money for treating them comes from the good Hadassah ladies of the United States and all their chapters from Alaska to Puerto Rico. The more well-to-do Arab patients pay for their medical services as they receive them."

I told Harris I had heard that both Hadassah and the university planned to repair their original facilities on Mt. Scopus and put them to use. By way of reply, he described the condition of the old hospital building and Hadassah's plans for it. "It had been subjected to shell fire by the Arab Legion in 1948, as well as in 1967, and to a great deal of intermittent sniping throughout the years. The walls were pockmarked with shells. We are now in the midst of a campaign in the United States to raise funds for the renovation and repair of the hospital complex on Mt. Scopus. It will become a rehabilitation institute. In addition, there will be a school of occupational therapy.

"At the end of the complex there will also be a Jewish youth center which is being put up by Hadassah in the United States in order to house Jewish youngsters who come from other countries to study in the Holy Land. Two floors of Hadassah Hospital on Mt. Scopus will be an extension of the Hadassah University Hospital at Ein Karem — obviously a great boon to those who live in the vicinity of East Jerusalem, for they will have on their doorstep a medical institution of the highest caliber operating for healing, teaching and research."

Shortly after this interview, I paid a call on Avraham Harman, president of the Hebrew University and former Israeli Ambassador to the United

States From him I learned that the original buildings on Mt Scopus, which date from 1925, are being repaired and remodeled to supplement the University's present facilities, particularly in the scientific fields I also learned that the university has a student body of close to 13,000 — of whom 2,000 come from other countries, including the United States, that its faculty is truly international, that it has fine modern facilities, and that it offers degrees in fields ranging from English literature and business administration to social work and nuclear physics

President Harman was particularly enthusiastic about the increase of Arab students on the campus "We have a large and growing number of Arab students from Israel," he told me, "and the beginning of Arab students from the West Bank Just this past summer we began a special language course in Hebrew for overseas and Arab students It was quite a contingency — about 150 Arab students from the West Bank joined the course preparatory to entering the university "

Were Arab students given financial aid? "Yes," he replied, "if they need it In fact, we have some special funds for that purpose The Arab students are treated, of course, on the same level as all Israeli students — whether Jew, Arab, Christian or Moslem "

How, I asked, would he characterize the attitude of Jewish students and faculty toward the Arabs? "What we all want is peace with the Arabs, there is no hatred for Arabs During the Six Day War, the Arab students remained on this campus, nothing happened to them, they did nothing to anybody

"Since the war we've had additional Arabs from the new areas There are problems of adjustment, of course, but I don't think that we have any trace of political strife or national enmity "

The university, Harman continued, places strong emphasis on the teaching of Arabic culture, and, in fact, hopes to bring this subject to more and more Israelis through its countrywide adult education program "Our extension service has been organizing courses in spoken Arabic for Jewish students and for the population generally In fact," he elaborated, "one of our important schools has a program in which Middle Eastern subjects as well as the Arabic language and civilization form an essential part Interest in them has risen tremendously "

I raised the subject of student unrest on campuses throughout the world Did the Hebrew University have such problems? "No," the president said firmly "And I hope we won't have any I think one of the reasons is that the average student here has a basic sense of identity with the national

purpose — why Israel exists, its importance to itself and to the future of the Jewish people, and the fact that they are faced by threat and that this threat has to be warded off. As a result, we are under a common pressure.

“All our students have to spend three years in military service before they come to the university which means that our average freshman is twenty-one years old. He’s a man who has seen life and death. And a lot of them are in the military reserve, we don’t have peace yet. Then, of course, they have to work their way through college, and so they have this burden of responsibility. There is very good contact between the students and the faculty and I believe that’s part of the story, too.”

Before I left, Harman himself brought up what he considered to be one of the problems of higher education in Israel — namely, the pressure to expand. As he put it, “The appetite for university education has grown, and I think that this is probably the real mark of our times. University education has become democratized and the attempt is being made to make it available to anyone who wants it and is capable of benefiting from it. Your own country has been the great pioneer in this radical revolution in the university concept and structure. We are really following in your footsteps. We want to make it possible for everybody in this country who wants and can benefit from a university education to get one — regardless of his economic position, his race, creed or ethnic origin.”

While the university provides one meeting ground for Jews and Arabs, a novel Youth City exists which provides another. High in the Judaean hills, this teen-age center offers the usual facilities for sports, culture and social programs. What gives it special significance, however, is that its young members are both Jews and Arabs, and they run their center as a model city — with democratically elected officials and town council to make all decisions.

There I met Nira Haviv, a beautiful teen-aged Jewish girl, who is the mayor. Her aim, she told me, is to help bring the young people of East and West Jerusalem together. “I hope we’ll know how to live together even though there are differences, and to understand each other and to respect each other.”

She in turn introduced me to John Taban, also a teen-ager and the deputy mayor of Youth City, who lives among his fellow Arabs on the

Mount of Olives In his opinion, the differences Nira spoke of can definitely be overcome "Our aim," he said, "and our hope is that in the future there will be a good friendship between Arab and Jewish youth Even now it is not uncommon for them to visit each other's homes "

I told them I regretted the fact that, due to other commitments, our meeting had to be short In turn, both of them expressed to me their fervent hope that American teenagers would visit Israel — "to see what kind of friendship there is going to be between Jewish and Arab youth "

Still another activity that is bringing Arab and Jewish youth together is folk dancing, a popular pastime among both peoples Under the auspices of Histadrut, an Arab dance group called "Star of Jerusalem" and an Israeli dance group called "The Horah" have been performing on the same programs throughout Israel

I attended a rehearsal of the Arab group, and talked with Ayalah Goren, the Israeli dance director and choreographer for the twin companies A petite, chic and energetic woman with natural dark blond hair, Mrs Goren (her husband is a college professor) has devoted her life to teaching and developing Israeli dance Now the world of Arabic dance is proving fertile soil for her talents to work in

Mrs Goren told me that the Arab group, whose members are from seventeen to twenty-one years old, was organized at the beginning of March 1968 They gave their first performance that same month

I remarked on the general style of the dancing, which is quite different from the European-type circle and couple dances of the Israelis She explained that "almost all the Arab dances are called *debka* That is a hard and stiff dance on the ground which is common through all the Middle Eastern Arabic countries There is a tremendous variety of *debka* in almost every village The common thing is they dance in a line We Israelis thought it was for men only — but we found out when we came in contact with East Jerusalem people that in some places it is fairly common for girls to participate "

The two groups were getting ready for a trip to Europe They were going to perform at youth camps and hostels as one group — the Dance Group of United Jerusalem Mrs Goren radiated enthusiasm when she discussed the forthcoming trip Clearly she was deriving enormous satisfaction from her work, and from helping young Arabs and Jews to know each other and each other's culture



Part of the vast audience at the Verdi "Requiem" concert in Bethlehem.



The Dome of the Rock and the plaza in front of it — a spot in the Old City of Jerusalem sacred to both Moslems and Jews.

Wide World Photos

Chapter 6

The Christians in Israel

In the town of Bethlehem, standing a few yards from the spot where Jesus was born, I listened to a performance of one of the great choral works, Verdi's *Requiem*. There, in the great square before the Church of the Nativity, not too far from the burial place of the biblical matriarch Rachel, the Indian-born conductor, Zubin Mehta, led the all-Jewish Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, the Tel Aviv Philharmonic Choir and four world-renowned soloists: Richard Tucker, Shirley Verrett, Martina Arroyo and Bonaldo Giaiotti.

For the singers — black and white, Jew and Christian — to be performing that particular music in that particular place was a thrilling experience. But they were not alone in their reaction. Arabs, Jews and Christians, from all parts of the globe, stood shoulder to shoulder in that holy place and, as one, were uplifted by the grandeur of the music and the drama of the occasion. For all present, the experience pointed up Israel's role as a spiritual center for three of the great religions.

Though Bethlehem contains important shrines for Christians and Jews, Jerusalem is the true center of religious activity in the country. With a population similar to that of Tulsa, Oklahoma, Jerusalem probably contains the highest concentration in the world of religious institutions of all faiths. The Christian community, for example, numbers fewer than 15,000 — but this small group represents the entire spectrum of Christian belief. Not a denomination, sect or sub-sect is missing.

The division of the city resulting from the Arab-Jewish fighting of 1948 left Jews completely cut off from their most holy place — the Western (Wailing) Wall of Solomon's and Herod's temples, on the same site as the Moslem Dome of the Rock. In unabashed violation of guarantees made to the U.N. in 1948, Jordan denied the Jews access to the Wall and other sacred Jewish places.

Even the Christians, who had had almost complete freedom in the practice of their rites and the administration of their holy places, were not immune to restrictions. In 1966, under King Hussein, all Christian

institutions in the Old City lost the right to acquire additional properties either by purchase or by gift Christian clergymen passing from the Old City to the New City were regularly stopped and examined by Arab guards

Since the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967, the Christian holy places are within the State of Israel, but enjoy complete freedom and independence of operation

My first interview, designed to find out more information about the status of Christians in the Holy Land was with Father John Roger, head of the Convent of Notre Dame de France in West Jerusalem and a recognized expert on all the sacred shrines in the Holy Land A big heavy-set man, probably no more than 40, he wore a large cassock, spoke fluent English and obviously spoke other languages as well — including Hebrew He led me through the long empty halls of the monastery (situated on what before the war was the innermost border dividing the Arabs from Israel) into a very tiny room with two sofas Shabby and very old, they lent themselves to the generally darkened atmosphere in the room, the heavy drapes on the windows that kept the hot sunshine from pouring in made the room delightfully cool Father John sat on a stiff-back chair and I on one of the sofas

Father John was quick to assure me that there was no government interference with the holy places “All these places are self-administered,” he began, “as they always have been under the Hashemite regime, before that under the British Mandate and before that under the Turkish regime They were always autonomous administrations, and the State of Israel respects this autonomy ”

He next told me what the Israel government is doing about Christian property that was damaged during the fighting “The government has paid, the normal bureaucratic inefficiency aside, for quite a number of the sanctuaries which have been damaged I’m thinking mainly about the Dormition Abbey on Mount Zion, the Armenian Church, the Greek Orthodox Church and also about our own building, Notre Dame, which was quite damaged during the wars of 1948 and 1967 ”

I asked him whether the Israelis paid only for what their own troops had damaged “They make no distinction,” he replied, “the government pays according to the damage ”

Father John reminded me in the course of our talk that, in Israel, Mass is said in Hebrew Since the Ecumenical Council, Catholic prayers are being said almost everywhere in the language of the country I confessed to him that, as a Jew, the thought of a Roman Catholic Mass being chanted

in the language of the Bible, in the Land of the Bible, fascinated me He smiled, and we parted on the most amicable terms

At the Church of the Holy Sepulchre where, historians say, Jesus was laid to rest after the Crucifixion, my guide was Father Francis, a Kansas-born Franciscan monk assigned by the Vatican to superintend this holy place A gentle, small, though not diminutive man with a soft-spoken voice, he spoke with almost a sense of diffidence — as if to apologize for his very presence He started by telling me about the vast restoration of the building

“The work started in 1960 when the three officiating communities — the Greek Orthodox, the Armenian Orthodox, and for the Latin Rite, the Franciscans — got together to try to rebuild the whole church Part of the church foundation dates back to Constantine, in 327 The Persians first destroyed the church in 614 The present church was built more or less by the Crusaders in about 1100 We had an earthquake in 1928, and they were afraid the whole church would collapse Then in 1934, under the British Mandate, the church was reinforced with wood and iron to try to hold it up In the past year, the church has taken on a new face because we have been tapping in all the old stones and replacing them with new ones When a person enters today, it feels like a church, not like a boxed-up old ruin

“The greater part of the church belongs to the Greek Orthodox, but we have our own chapel As a joint restoration, the costs are being divided among the three rites ”

Like his colleague, Father Roger, Father Francis spoke positively about relations with the Israel government

“We have no restrictions The Israeli government has encouraged us to carry out our work and to rebuild this monument We have the greatest cooperation from the Israeli government in all of our shrines There is freedom of worship In the hours set aside for services, they limit Israeli visitors coming in so that they do not disturb us ”

In my talks with both men, I remember being impressed by their devotion, not only to their own orders and to their respective responsibilities, but to the broader task of improving Christian-Jewish relations I mentioned this briefly to Father Francis, and then went on to discuss a news report that the Israeli envoy to the Vatican (who was leaving his post) had been received with his wife and children by Pope Paul According to Father

Francis, the Holy Father showed, "by welcoming the envoy with his family, that his heart is open in trying to get a peaceful settlement in the Middle East "

At another point in our meeting, Father Francis asked me to convey the following important message to Christian and Jewish Americans "You are all welcome in the Holy Land This is the center of humanity I think everybody should try to come here at least once "

This comment reminded me of Father John Roger's closing statement to me earlier that day "Eighteen years ago," he had said, "in a special training course in Rome, I was received with others by Pope Pius XII He asked each of us what was going to be our field of action When I told him I was going to be sent to Jerusalem, he closed his eyes a moment and then he said, 'Your main task, my son, is going to be to work for better understanding between Christian and Jew ' He then gave me his blessings

"You know," Father Roger continued, "that throughout the years, I have acquired considerable knowledge of the Bible, archaeology, and the Hebrew language — in order to help me find the roots of our faith And if I were to sum up the meaning of my life's work, I would do it this way

"You can't love somebody whom you don't know Some of my friends here and I started to learn Judaism from the inside — from its history, philosophy, mysticism, Talmud, and so on Little by little, we are not only discovering knowledge, but an internal feeling that we are able to communicate to the rest of the Catholic world I do that by traveling around the world on lecture tours, by writing articles from time to time, and also by speaking to the people who come here I try to explain what is the real value, the real ideal of Judaism, what is the meaning of the State of Israel for Judaism after the Holocaust of World War II "

Like the Roman Catholics, the Greek Orthodox Church maintains complete autonomy over its institutions and shrines in Israel Before the Six Day War, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate was situated in different areas of the Holy Land — Jordan, Egypt, Israel, the Gaza Strip Since June 1967, the Patriarchate has found itself largely within the State of Israel To learn more about how this change has affected the Church, I went to see Archbishop Bassilius, chief secretary to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate A well-built, stolid kind of man, who spoke in a magnificent voice, full of assurance and manliness, and in fluent English, the Arch-

bishop soon made clear both his general sophistication and his tremendous competence and experience in his post. He told me that "our relations with the authorities here are always very good. Israel has respected the holy places and we have been helped by the authorities in the performance of our duties. There is free access to every holy place."

The distinguished archbishop seemed to have few doubts about the ability of his Church to weather the vicissitudes of war and political upheaval. "The Patriarchate was established by a decision of an ecumenical council of the fourth or fifth century. The Patriarchate has lived through many different rulers, has survived and overcome all the difficulties that occurred during these many centuries." (I learned from him, incidentally, that of the more than two hundred and fifty million Greek Orthodox in the world, over a hundred thousand are in the Holy Land.)

The Patriarchate, it transpires, lives at ease with Israel and with the Arabs. It runs tuition-free schools in Jordan as well as in Israel — and sends clergymen to study at Israeli universities. It is also, the Archbishop informed me, "doing its best to beautify the churches, the convents, and monasteries in our jurisdiction, thereby contributing to the beautification of the country. Like other Christian groups, the Greek Orthodox have been receiving compensation payments from the State of Israel to help repair war damage, regardless of how it was done or which side did it."

The last in this series of most informative interviews was with a leader of the Protestant community, Dr. G. Douglas Young. Founder and president of the American Institute of Holy Land Studies, he is a blond-haired, outgoing man in his mid-fifties, and his affability of manner did nothing to belie the fact that he is very serious about his work. Talking to Dr. Young in his office at the Institute, I felt for the first time that I was back in the United States.

Dr. Young's school is situated only yards from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Moslem Dome of the Rock. During the June 1967 war, he informed me, he watched shells exploding all around him — and emerged unharmed.

In discussing the war with him, his indignation at accounts that appeared in some American Protestant journals criticizing Israel's occupation of the Old City was soon made manifest. Specifically, he talked about the bombing of the Augusta Victoria Hospital near Mt. Scopus.

// "The military of Israel bombed it during the Six Day War. There is no question that a lot of damage was done, and so this is used as 'case number one' of how the Jews are careless about Christian holy places. But in the reports that I have read coming back to us here from the United States, I have not yet seen mentioned that just behind Augusta Victoria Hospital were some of Jordan's heaviest gun emplacements, that the hospital tower was used as an Arab observation post, that the compound was full of trenches, that up to the day before war broke out there were some thousands of Jordanian soldiers there. The Israelis, of course, knew this. Unfortunately, they did not know that the soldiers had pulled out.

"But the government of Israel has paid somewhere up to seven hundred thousand pounds to repair all the damage. When the paratroopers took the hospital, it was found to be without water for the patients, including children. In the midst of the battle, the paratroopers took off their water canteens and left them there. They also sent down to one of their base hospitals for antibiotics and other medication when they found the hospital without them.

"The whole story makes a very different picture, and it's unfortunate that people are propagating only a part of it."

While his wife — as American as he — came to offer us some refreshing drinks, Dr. Young expressed to me his strong opposition to proposals for the internationalization of Jerusalem. "The people who are arguing for it never protested when the Jews were denied access to the Western Wall in spite of the armistice agreement back in 1948, nor did they protest when the Arabs of Israel were denied access to the Mosque. I think it's a grave insult to a sovereign nation to assume that it will not do what it has pledged to do."

Did he think, I asked, that Moslem, Protestant and Catholic holy places had ample protection under the Israel authorities? "I haven't seen any evidence to the contrary," he replied. "We have a law that makes anyone who desecrates a holy place subject to seven years in jail. There is another law, even more stringent, that if someone upsets a person worshipping in a holy place, he's liable to five years in jail. These laws will be strictly enforced."

Dr. Young did not need much prodding from me to talk about the Institute of Holy Land Studies that he directs.

"We are, as you may know, a school of higher education for American graduate students, chartered under the State of Minnesota and operating here in Israel with the cooperation and blessing of the Hebrew University,

the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Religious Affairs We use teachers from the Hebrew University and the University of Tel Aviv I think there are only two of us Christians — all the rest are members of the local Jewish community

“Our students are all Christians studying, technically, the history of Palestine They study archaeology, the history of Christianity, the history of the Jews in this area from the ancient past to the present, and, of course, the Hebrew language ”

Since the Six Day War, he went on, the Institute has admitted Roman Catholic students as well as Protestants With Jerusalem a unified city, and other areas of religious interest now easily accessible, it is much simpler for students to undertake archaeological field trips and, in general, to get a broad view of the biblical world

Like the Catholics I met in Israel, Dr Young was deeply involved in strengthening Christian-Jewish dialogue He told me about “Rainbow,” a fraternal group made up of eight Jewish and eight Christian scholars who meet to discuss problems of difference and problems of understanding “It’s on a very high academic level — a sort of ecumenical movement between Jews and Christians, and the Christians themselves are ecumenical,” he said “There are Dominicans, Benedictines, Latin and Greek Catholics, Anglicans and Protestants

“Within the Christian community itself,” he continued after a pause, “there is an Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity which discusses what the significance may be for Christianity of the reestablishment of the State of Israel, and what the relationship of the Christian Church should be toward the people of this nation ”

Clearly enthusiastic about the work of the Christian Community in Israel, Dr Young emphasized in his last words to me his concern about American attitudes to Israel “I would like to tell the Christian community,” he said, “that perhaps they shouldn’t believe all that they have read, that we are enjoying ourselves here, that we are enjoying cooperation with the people of Israel, and that if this area has ever had a chance for peace, we feel it has it now ”



Abie Nathan (center, wearing white T-shirt) distributing toys and food in Biafra.



Dr. Frederick Krop (front, extreme left) lighting the Yizkor (Memorial) candle in the memorial hall of the Yad Vashem.

A Postscript

Two Men For All Mankind

"He who saves one life, it is as if he saved the entire world"

These words from the Talmud might well be applied to two men whom I was privileged to meet in Israel. One was an Israeli Jew who owns a restaurant in Tel Aviv, the other a Christian doctor whose home is in Holland. What they had in common — though chances are they will never meet — and what made each of them singular, was a passionate concern for human life.

Abie Nathan lives in Tel Aviv. In 1966, Pope Paul presented him with a peace medal. Abie Nathan believes every human being should have enough to eat, a place to rest his head and a life free of war and killing. Abie won the attention of the world a few years ago when he climbed into a rickety old monoplane and, without permission, took off from Israel and landed in Egypt — a dangerous flight. He made it to symbolize man's hunger for peace, and to startle the Middle East into greater efforts to achieve it.

Today, despite the troubles in his own country pressing in on all sides, he cannot ignore the incredible suffering of the people of Biafra, who are fighting their own war of independence, and he cries out to the conscience of the world to help the starving Biafrans. In fact, he hitched an airplane ride to Biafra to see for himself, and to bring back to his own countrymen and to others who would listen, word of the spreading death.

While in Tel Aviv, I talked with Abie, and asked him about his famous flight to Egypt.

"The first time I flew into Egypt," he said, "was on the 28th of February, in 1966. I flew there with the support of 100,000 Israelis who had signed a peace petition and who had supported the flight, which was meant mainly as a gesture of good will to the Arabs, to convince them that the man in the street in Israel wants peace. I think it served its purpose.

"I was received by the Egyptian authorities and was very well treated. I was there for two days and I was given a message to bring back to Israel which said it was not enough that I made a gesture of good will, I was to ask my government to make a gesture."

From what he went on to tell me, it is clear that Abie believes his countrymen share his attitude towards peace. "I know that the people in Israel would like peace. The question is how much we are willing to pay for it, because we're going to have to pay for it."

A fighter pilot with the R A F in World War II, who subsequently became a commercial pilot, Abie has had fifteen years of flying experience and now owns his own small plane. This skill came in handy when he decided to go to Biafra.

What led to his interest in that country? I asked. He seemed almost surprised by my question. "Looking at pictures in magazines and newspapers about what was happening in Biafra," he replied. "Then several people came to me and said something should be done to help the Biafrans. We felt a certain comparison between the plight of the Biafrans and the plight of the Jewish people of only thirty years ago. Back at that time we Jews were about to be destroyed — and the whole world stood by and did nothing. They said it was an internal problem, a German problem, while our people were being killed. Now the world is silent again while Biafrans die of hunger at the rate of 1,200 every day."

He then described his first visit to Biafra. "I went without any papers. I flew with some of the pilots that make the run — pilots I flew with in 1948. When I got there I just said, I'm an Israeli, I've come here to help and to see for myself. No matter where I turned I saw starving children. I couldn't even tell the difference between a dead child and a living one. Once, when I was taking photographs of a child I thought was sleeping, the father came over to me and, when I had finished, said that she was his little girl and that she had died an hour ago. There were many such cases. Little children whose hair turned from black to red because of starvation. Their legs were swollen and their bellies bloated. If you want to lose faith in people, you should go to Biafra."

But Abie Nathan *hasn't* lost his faith. He has been traveling to countries throughout the world (including the United States) organizing relief missions — trying to make people everywhere care and help.

Dr. Frederick Jean Krop lives today in Rotterdam with his wife and two teen-age children. In 1941 when the Nazis took over Holland, Dr. Krop (he was then in his middle twenties) tried to save as many Jews as he could from being rounded up and killed. By day he hid Jewish friends, and strangers too, at night he moved them, always risking his own life by defying the Nazi invaders. Though only a comparative handful of Holland's 140,000 Jews were saved, Dr. Krop played no small role in this rescue mission — a role which finally cost him several years in the Dachau concentration camp. Twenty-seven years later, in the summer of 1968, Dr. Krop visited Israel as an honored guest of the Israel government. He took part in a special service that was held at *Yad Vashem*, a shrine in memory of the dead of the Hitler era, on a rocky hilltop outside Jerusalem.

The upper half of the shrine is a plain, square, windowless building of solid concrete. The lower half is built of immense rust-colored boulders brought to Jerusalem from the volcanic slopes above the Sea of Galilee. Inside, a broad gray concrete walk rims a sunken courtyard of gray-black mosaic in which is set a huge copper oil lamp whose flame lights the inscribed names of the twenty Nazi concentration camps of Central and Eastern Europe. It was there that memorial services were held and tributes paid to Frederick Krop and others like him.

Dr. Krop told me what it was like when the Nazis invaded his homeland in 1941. "The Nazis," he said, "were taking good friends of mine away — just because their names were Abraham and Miriam. In the first week, I was glad I wasn't Jewish. But then I came more and more to realize that I didn't want my children to grow up in a world where people were taken away because their names were those of the Holy People. So I decided I wanted to do something to help, and contacted the Jewish community of Rotterdam."

Was he ever afraid of the dangerous work he undertook? "Yes," he said, "I was."

On his trip to Israel, Dr. Krop met several of the people he had helped to save. But that, he intimated, was only partial comfort. "My regret," he murmured, shaking his head, "is that we did too little, too many people turned their faces away. I cannot blame them, I have a little of their guilt in myself. Perhaps their eyes were filled with tears when they turned away, but they lived in safety this way. How sad it is that of 140,000 Jews who lived in Holland during the Second World War, only a few thousand came back alive after the war!"

Dr. Krop was struck by the difference between the Jews of Israel and the Jews he had known in Holland during the war. "The Jews here don't seem like victims. And it is evident that, with the State of Israel in existence, an Auschwitz concentration camp will never again be erected. If the whole world turns against the Jews of Israel, they will fight to the last man, just like they did in the old Roman times. They will never permit themselves to be slaughtered again without a fight, never permit another World War II slaughter."

The Jews of Holland, faced with extermination, had a friend in Dr. Krop, a man who went ahead in spite of fear and did what he knew was right. The black men of Biafra, faced with extermination, have a friend in Abie Nathan, a man who does what he believes must be done.

Surely there is hope for the human race if it can produce men such as these!

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Arnold Forster is General Counsel to the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and has been with the agency more than a quarter of a century. He has devoted his personal and professional life to the fight against racial and religious prejudice. An attorney, author of many books, and the man responsible for the League's civil rights activities, he is an outstanding authority on human and constitutional rights.

In 1963, Mr. Forster was one of a group of Americans reporting from Jerusalem on the historic Adolf Eichmann trial.

During the summers of 1967 and 1968, he toured the Middle East to observe the Israel-Arab situation at first hand and prepare two excellent radio series, both widely broadcast not only throughout the United States, but also across Europe and Africa. These reports — ranging from personal observations through interviews with Israeli government and army officials, analyses of health, education and economic conditions, discussions on Jewish and non-Jewish holy places to talks with Arabs on Israeli-held soil — have been hailed as adding new dimensions to an understanding of the strife-torn Middle East.

