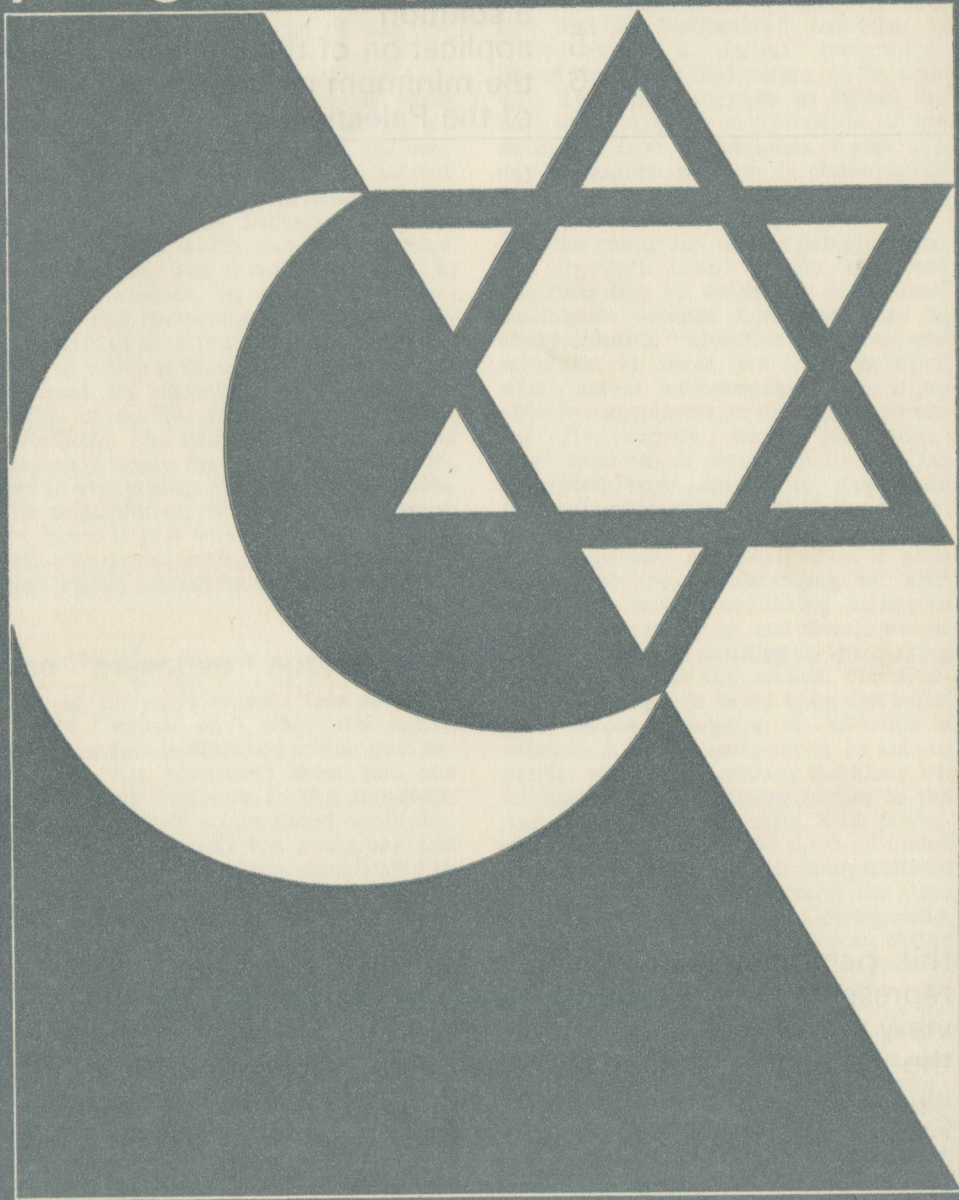


Middle East conflict : a tale of two peoples

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1. introduction

This pamphlet is divided into two distinct but related parts. The first four chapters analyse the basis of the Arab/Israel conflict by seeking to enter the minds of the two main protagonists (the Palestinian Arabs and the Israeli Jews) so as to understand the subjective dimensions of the conflict. The advantage of this approach is that it allows sense to be made of events and political positions which would otherwise remain mysterious, while at the same time avoiding the danger of the outside observer imposing his own preconceived ideas. Having thus analysed the "state of mind" of the two parties, it becomes possible to distinguish between those demands which must be regarded as irreducible, and those which may, in the final analysis, be amenable to persuasion and compromise. In this way the prospects of an ultimate solution, and the way in which it should be sought, can be assessed by examining the extent to which irreducible demands are also irreconcilable. The two final chapters of the pamphlet apply the analysis in some detail to events since June 1967, and outline the principles on which a solution must be based if it is to satisfy the minimum requirements of both peace and justice as seen by the conflicting parties themselves.

the "objective" approach

One of the main reasons that so many people "switch off" when the Arab/Israel conflict is discussed is that past experience has persuaded them that the greater their exposure to the argument, the greater their accumulated confusion. The "facts" appear too numerous and contradictory and far too complicated to be made sense of by anyone but the specialist. Consequently, if the layman is to subscribe to any view at all, it is likely to coincide with that of the most recent self ordained specialist who managed to corner him and bombard him with "the true facts." Alternatively (and this is equally commonplace) the layman will discover that he can ignore all the detailed complexities of the problem by accepting the offer of a simplistic analysis (whose bias may be in any one of a number of directions) whereby all available evidence,

past, present and future, is selected (perhaps unconsciously) in accordance with and in confirmation of his pre-determined conclusions. Whatever else may divide them, the "experts" appear to be in agreement that any analysis which is patently biased should not be taken seriously, and that an "objective" treatment is fundamental to a "correct" understanding of the causes and nature of the conflict. Thus each attempts to outbid the next in offering an interpretation of the issues free from all prejudice or bias, and any prescribed solution is consequently based on such "objective" detachment.

It is the contention of this pamphlet that any approach based on the traditional understanding of objectivity is of itself inadequate because first, there are as many different "objective" analyses and solutions as there are commentators, which rather indicates that there is no objective agreement on the applied meaning of objectivity; second, all "objective" solutions or partial solutions so far attempted have tended to exacerbate rather than lessen the conflict, and finally, and above all, the "objective" approach is conceptually mistaken since it adds nothing to the understanding of what causes the various conflicting parties to act in the way they do, and therefore is of doubtful value in assisting in the making of policy towards the conflict. The alternative approach is based upon the belief that, before attempting to advocate a solution, it is first necessary to be able to predict with some accuracy the likely behaviour of the conflicting parties to the introduction of new factors. Such prediction will, in turn, depend upon an understanding of the subjective interpretations by the parties involved towards the same set of "objective" facts. Consequently, the analyst will need to develop an ability to empathise with each party in turn, so that the various perceptions of the same "objective" realities may be fully understood. The main contrast of this approach with the more traditional method is that in the latter the analyst, in endeavouring to identify the "objective" realities himself, deliberately ignores the prejudices of the parties involved in the belief that such prejudices distort the "truth," and suc-

ceeds instead in introducing yet a third subjective interpretation (his own) determined largely by his own bias.

Any proposed solution based on such a method will lead to the imposition of an alien set of values on the parties actually involved in the conflict, causing a likely reinforcement of their already diverse perceptions; this will only aggravate the dispute still further. What should be provided, therefore, by parties not directly participating in the conflict, is action and word designed to erode the prejudices of the participants, in an endeavour to shorten the distance between the different perceptions. Of course, factors other than their respective perceptions also influence the responses of peoples and nation states to new conditions, perhaps the most powerful of these factors being their respective military capabilities. However, military might defines the potential for action, it does not explain the reason for the act itself; unless one should subscribe to the view that man, society and states are inherently aggressive and that the only constraint on aggression is military weakness. Such a view contrasts sharply with the other highly articulated belief that all peoples are peace loving but are occasionally provoked into taking up arms to ward off external aggression so that peace may be restored. How much validity there is in either of these views might be a matter for disagreement. However, they cannot both be true at the same time.

“peace with justice”

Nevertheless, both these theories (incorporating the inevitable inconsistencies) are especially prominent on the Arab/Israel scene. There is a widely held belief among Arabs and their supporters that Zionism is inherently aggressive and if allowed to develop unchecked will, by its very nature, cause the state of Israel to expand its borders, ultimately from the Nile to the Euphrates, with the consequent imprisonment (or worse) of the Arab masses. Minority organisations in Israel adhering to an expansionist policy are evidence of this intention. Other indications from Israel that they wish only to

live in peace with their neighbours within secure boundaries, are evidence of Zionist hypocrisy. On the other hand (and here the alternative theory is activated) the Arabs are, and always have been, a peace loving people who are being reluctantly provoked into taking up arms in order to ward off this external aggression. In response to the charge that if they allowed Israel to exist and ceased their attempts to work for its destruction and their threats to annihilate its people, peace would indeed ensue, comes the retort that the very creation of the state of Israel constituted an injustice to the Arab peoples and its continued existence threatens further injustices. Consequently, peace *per se* is insufficient; the battle cry is “peace with justice.”

Equally widely held among Israelis and their supporters is the belief that historically the world has at best tolerated its Jews, and at worst sought their annihilation. Arab hostility towards Israel is seen only as the current manifestation of this general antipathy towards the Jews, and the Arab foe is merely the most recent in an unbroken chain of enemies seeking their destruction. Arab sources calling for the annihilation of Israel are evidence of this intention. Other indications from the Arab world that they no longer seek the annihilation of either Israel or its people are evidence of Arab hypocrisy. This general view of world antagonism towards the Jewish people is further aggravated in this particular instance by being compounded with the philosophies of pan-Arabism and/or pan-Islam, which cause the foreign policies of the Arab states to be inherently aggressive and if allowed to develop unchecked will, by their very nature, cause the destruction of Israel, together with its Jewish inhabitants. On the other hand, (and here also the alternative theory is activated) the Jews are and always have been a peace loving people who seek only to live in harmony with their neighbours, but they are being reluctantly provoked into taking up arms in order to ward off this external aggression. In response to the charges that if they ceased to expand their territory at the expense of the Arabs, withdrew to their previous borders and

stopped performing the rôle of an alien occupying power, peace would indeed ensue, comes the retort that Arab policies are preventing them from altering their current posture. If they were to relax their vigilance at the present time, so the argument continues, their existence as a sovereign state would be seriously jeopardised, culminating, if not in annihilation, then in the virtual imprisonment of the Jewish masses and the consequent perpetration of further injustices towards the Jewish people. Consequently, peace *per se* is insufficient; the battle cry is "peace with justice."

Both the Arabs and the Israelis share the belief that the solution to their conflict lies in the establishment of "peace with justice." Different interpretations have been offered from time to time by different scholars as to what precisely is meant by the notion of peace; but these differences are at the margin of its definition and do not alter the fact that the word does have some objective meaning insofar as it conveys to us all much the same idea, which at the least is a means of describing a state of non-war. The real problem arises in trying to define justice, a concept which again may convey a similar notion to us all in the abstract; but which, in practice, is only seen to be done by all concerned when, by definition, it is perceived as justice by each party. Herein lies the heart of the problem. The Arabs' and the Jews' respective perceptions of justice, their perceptions of the words and deeds of each other and of third parties, are each determined by their past and present circumstances and the way in which each views them. Both parties are deeply steeped in their own respective histories, and consequently the present is interpreted in relation to their respective pasts. Any attempt, therefore, to understand the current behaviour and attitude of each party towards the other or towards third parties necessitates a knowledge of the histories of *both* peoples, and especially an understanding of the interpretation each people has of its own history. It is instructive in this respect to note that third parties who have an understanding of the history and present day perception of one of the peoples and not

the other, tend to side with that people in the conflict. This applies most obviously to Arabs living outside the Arab countries and to Jews living outside Israel.

a class analysis?

Understanding the Arab/Israel conflict "objectively" in a Marxist sense requires the application of a class analysis to the conflict. Such an approach can shed some light on certain aspects of the conflict, but if applied crudely and rigidly obscures the most critical aspects. For example, one prominent current approach views the conflict in the Middle East as a microcosm of the world conflict between the forces of imperialism and anti-imperialism, in which imperialism represents the foreign policies of the capitalist western powers headed by the United States of America. Zionism is seen as a particular manifestation of imperialism, and consequently Israel is merely a tool of western imperialism. The predominant rôle of Israel is said to be the suppression or diversion of Arab revolutionary fervour so that the imperialist powers may further exploit the indigenous populations.

Without entering into the polemical dialectics of this view, it must be pointed out that whether or not such an analysis is "objectively correct," it is a fact that the forces which line up on either side of the Arab/Israel divide tend to do so according to nationality, ethnicity or religion rather than class. The régimes of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, the new Union of Arab Emirates, Pakistan and other Moslem states do not have the interests of the working class uppermost in supporting the Arab cause. On the other hand, Jewish workers, within Israel or without, do not feel they are betraying working class interests in supporting the Israeli cause. Notwithstanding the rationalisations embodied in the concept of false consciousness, this particular "objective" approach cannot *usefully* explain why Arabs and Moslems tend to support the Arab cause, while Israelis and Jews tend to support the Israeli cause, as long as it ignores the dominant forces of national identity.

2. the Arab perspective

The history of Palestine is a history of conquest. Throughout the ages the great powers of the time have vied with each other for control of the territory and consequently the subjugation of the indigenous population. Until the Moslem Arab conquest of AD 637, Palestine had been inhabited and/or ruled by the Canaanites and Philistines, from whom some Palestinians claim descent; the Israelites (approximately 1050 to 586 BC) during which time the land was split into the Kingdom of Israel in the north and the Kingdom of Judah in the south; the Babylonians (586 to 538 BC); the Persians (538 to 332 BC); the Greeks (332 to 166 BC); the Maccabean Kingdom of the Jews (166 to 63 BC); the pagan Romans (63 BC to AD 323); the Christian Romans (AD 323 to 614); the Persians again (AD 614 to 628); the Byzantine Romans (AD 628 to 637); and then the Moslem Arabs until 1072, when the territory was conquered by the Moslem Turks and reconquered by the Arabs in 1092. The Christian Crusaders gained Jerusalem and its environs in 1099, and in the year 1100 established the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem (incorporating the whole of ancient Palestine) which survived until 1187 when Saladin, the Sultan of Egypt, recovered Palestine for the Arabs. In 1229, the city of Jerusalem was ceded by treaty to Frederick II the Christian, who held it until 1239, when Arab rule was revived and continued until 1517. From 1517 to 1917 the Ottoman Turks ruled Palestine, and, after their defeat in the first world war, the newly formed League of Nations granted the mandate to Britain.

1917 was not, however, the beginning of European penetration and suzerainty over Arab lands. Direct colonisation began in 1830 when the French took Algiers, and in 1839 when the British took Aden. Tunisia was colonised in 1881, Egypt in 1882, the Sudan in 1899, Libya and Morocco in 1912. European colonisation brought in its wake two contradictory factors. On the one hand, the Arab populations suffered domination and humiliation, and, on the other, were introduced to new forms of political structure, whereby ordinary citizens could have a say in the government of their affairs and

could receive the degree of education necessary. The remainder of the Arab lands were still ruled by the Ottomans until 1917. The imperial powers vied with each other for Arab support, which was believed to be a factor of some consequence in determining the outcome of the 1914-18 war; and the Arabs themselves were torn between the desire to free themselves from Ottoman rule and the struggle against European imperialism.

On 24 October, 1915, Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Cairo wrote, on behalf of the British government, to Hussein Ibn Ali, the Sharif of Mecca, pledging British support for the independence of the Arabs in all Arab lands with a small number of specified exceptions. In return for this pledge Hussein led the Arab revolt against Ottoman rule on 5 June, 1916. In the following year the Ottoman Turks were finally defeated by the western powers. While negotiations were taking place between McMahon and Hussein, a second set of letters was secretly being exchanged between Sir Mark Sykes, acting on behalf of the British government, and Charles Georges-Picot acting on behalf of the French government. The arrangements contained in the letters, and also approved in principle by Tsarist Russia, drew up a plan for the post war division of the Middle East, which was in direct contradiction to the promises of independence contained in the McMahon letter. The Sykes/Picot arrangements were finally agreed in an exchange of letters between Sir Edward Gray and Paul Cambon on 15 and 16 May, 1916. The hypocrisy and double dealings of the western powers were further evidenced in the eyes of the Arabs when, on 2 November, 1917, Arthur James Balfour, the British foreign secretary, wrote to Lord Rothschild of the Zionist movement, offering the British government's support for "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." (This letter became known as the Balfour Declaration.)

While the western world continued to barter the future of Arab lands, the Arabs themselves began to plan for their own independence. In July 1919, the Syrian

National Congress met in Damascus and claimed independence for a united Syrian state (incorporating what is now Syria, the Lebanon, Jordan and Israel). French and Zionist claims were rejected, as also was the mandate system. In March 1920 a group of Iraqi nationalists claimed independence for Iraq. On 5 May, 1920, however, the allied powers met at San Remo, and without even waiting for the League of Nations officially to "bestow" the mandates, shared them out amongst themselves, whereby two separate states of Syria and Lebanon were to be created and placed under French tutelage, while Iraq and Palestine (including Transjordan) were to come under British mandate, with a clause inserted providing for the application of the Balfour Declaration. The San Remo decisions were, of course, paramount and, with scorn for the Damascus and Iraq declarations, were implemented with small modifications during 1920. Transjordan was separated from the rest of Palestine, Lebanon was separated from Syria and the state of Greater Lebanon was officially created on 1 September, 1920. The rest of "French" Syria was subdivided into three states: Damascus, Aleppo and the Alawi territory. In addition, two separate administrative areas were created. In 1925 Damascus joined Aleppo to form the new state of Syria.

Meanwhile the Arab struggle, not entirely subdued, continued elsewhere. Egypt rebelled against Britain in 1919 and claimed independence. Britain recognised Egypt as a sovereign nation on 28 February, 1922. Nevertheless, Europe continued to dominate Arab lands: Libya remained Italian; Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia (the Maghreb) remained French; and the Sudan, to all intents and purposes, remained under British colonial administration. In 1930 Ibn Saud had himself crowned King of Hejaz and Nejd (later to be called Saudi Arabia) and, as with King Farouk of Egypt, maintained friendly relations with Britain. The Arab emirates of the Arabian (Persian) Gulf remained under British influence. Arab resistance to foreign rule took the form of strikes, demonstrations and riots. There was serious rioting in Palestine in 1920, 1921 and 1929, and major insurrections

broke out in Syria in 1925 and 1927, and in Palestine in 1936. A revolt in Morocco lasted from 1921 to 1926. After Britain's recognition of Egypt's independence, the struggle had intensified and the goal of independence for all Arab countries had become increasingly realised. The colonial powers finally granted independence to all the eastern Arab countries under mandate or protectorate, except Palestine. After independence the powers signed treaties of alliance with Iraq in 1922 and 1932, with Transjordan in 1928, and with Egypt in 1936. France made the Lebanon an "independent" republic in 1926, and in 1936 signed a treaty with Syria (which the French senate refused to ratify). The French protectorate in the Lebanon ended in 1943 and in Syria in 1945. On 22 March, 1945 the founding charter of the Arab League was signed in Cairo.

From 1922 three conflicting tendencies had been at work: the attempts by the British and French to consolidate their positions in the Middle East; the struggle of the Arabs for independence; and the desire of the Jews to increase immigration into Palestine, with a view to establishing a Jewish homeland or state. In all countries, with the single exception of Palestine, the Arabs' essential struggle was against foreign rule, with the belief that time must ultimately be on their side. In Palestine the struggle was far more serious, since increasing Zionist immigration meant that in this case time was not an Arab ally. The goal of independence for all Arab countries was already within reach, except in Palestine, where the continuation of Jewish immigration acted as a direct affront to Arab nationalism, to Islam and to anti-colonialism.

the Palestinian Arab speaks

The subjective interpretation of the Palestinian Arab of these and current events might be typified by the following narrative. "While our brothers were fighting for national independence and the restoration of human dignity against European domination in all other Arab lands, we were being over run in our own country by a massive wave of Jewish im-

TABLE I
PALESTINIAN REFUGEES AS AT 30 JUNE, 1967

CATEGORY R				CATEGORY S		CATEGORY N	
members of families registered on the list of those entitled to rations.							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
receiving full rations	receiving half rations	babes in arms and children receiving welfare	total (1+2+3)	persons receiving no rations	members of families receiving education or medical services	members of families receiving neither rations nor services	overall total (4+5+6+7)
854,625	15,326	311,466	1,172,417	40,019	25,297	106,843	1,344,576

Notes: 1) The overall total of 1,344,576 represents the number of refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) on the eve of the June war, 1967. 2) The total number of refugees in agency camps was 532,990 or about 40 per cent of the total. 3) According to the agency, 8 per cent of the refugees (in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Gaza) possess adequate means and receive no UNRWA aid. 4) According to the definition given by the agency, a refugee is "a person having lived in Palestine for at least two years at the time the conflict of 1948 broke out, who has lost his home and means of subsistence as a result of that conflict." The figures also include their children and dependents. 5) Owing to the difficulties in recording all deaths, the accuracy of these figures cannot be guaranteed.

Source: Report of the General Commissariat of UNRWA (1 July, 1966 to 30 June, 1967).

TABLE II
NUMBER OF REFUGEES REGISTERED ON 31 MAY, 1967 CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE

OVERALL TOTAL		NUMBER OF REFUGEES IN AGENCY CAMPS		
country	total	number of camps	number of persons	percentage of refugee population
Jordan	722,687	25	232,686	32.2
Gaza	316,776	8	201,828	63.7
Lebanon	160,723	15	75,316	46.9
Syria	144,390	6	23,160	16.0
TOTAL	1,344,576	54	532,990	39.6

Note: Jordan is the only country to have granted citizenship to the refugees.

Source: United Nations.

migration, whose avowed intention was to replace the Arab Palestinian population with alien settlers committed to the establishment of a Zionist, racist state. The methods of the Zionists were as varied as they were ruthless. They courted the favour of the great powers, they settled in our best lands, they purchased Arab properties from absentee landlords at derisory prices, they terrorised our people as witnessed in the village of Deir Yassin, where they undertook a deliberate and unprovoked massacre of almost the entire unarmed Arab civilian population on 9 April, 1948. They were aided and abetted by international Jewish finance, and they were unhesitant in using the Jewish people in the western capitals to employ political blackmail on their respective governments to support Zionism.

“The United Nations, acting as a mouth-piece for western imperialism and representing Zionist interests, forced through an illegal partition of our homeland and ‘gave’ the best land to the Zionists. Their unquenchable thirst for Arab land far from satisfied, the Zionists immediately imposed a vicious reign of terror on those of us trapped under Zionist rule, causing many to flee in advance of the expulsion of most of the rest. The armies of the newly independent Arab countries, seeing the injustices being perpetrated upon their fellow Arabs, and realising the ultimate Zionist intention of expanding into all Arab lands, bravely entered the battlefield in a vain attempt to ward off the Zionist aggression. Weak and demoralised after years of European domination, they were no match for the advancing Zionist marauders backed by imperialist arms and capital. Having conquered a great deal more of our land than even the partition ‘plan’ awarded them, including the seizure of much of the Arab city of Jerusalem in open defiance of their UN resolution, the Zionists finally accepted a cease fire so that they might consolidate their most recent ill gotten gains before embarking upon further expansion.

“The aggression of these few months saw the realisation of yet another Zionist aim : the forced removal of nearly one million of our people from our homeland

now under Zionist rule. Those who were not physically expelled, fled through fear of being victims of a massacre of Deir Yassin proportions. Having used the United Nations to their own ends, the Zionists at this stage displayed their utter hypocrisy by contemptuously defying a United Nations resolution to repatriate our people, thereafter left to fester on the borders of the Zionist state in refugee camps (for details see tables I and II, opposite) with only one thought forever uppermost in our minds ; return to our rightful homes. Betrayed by the world community, we were forced to embark on the only course available to us ; the formation of guerilla bands and the armed liberation of our country. As we were beginning to make some advance, employing the Sinai Desert as our base, the Zionists (as we had predicted to a blind world years before) pounced again (in 1956). This time they took up arms in conjunction with the imperialist powers of Britain and France. The Zionists occupied the entire desert, where they undoubtedly would have remained, had it not been for the fact that America, fearful for its oil interests in the Arab states, felt obliged to force its client state to withdraw.

“After eleven more years of consolidating its hold on Arab land and having built up a powerful economic and military machine through massive injections of aid from the western world, the Zionist state of Israel was inevitably ready to strike again. Aware of the inevitable, the leaders of the Arab states began to confer with a view to co-ordinating a defensive strategy. Anticipating that their expansionist aims might be thwarted by Arab strength and determination, the Zionists struck quickly and without warning on 5 June, 1967 and within six ruthless days grabbed more Arab territory from Egypt, Jordan and Syria. The occupation of the west bank of the Jordan and the illegal and immoral annexation of the whole of Jerusalem, accompanied by the usual Zionist tactics of intimidation and terror, caused hundreds of thousands more of our people to flee from the aggressors’ path, thus creating a further batch of refugees of whom only derisory numbers (and that only for pro-

paganda purposes) were allowed to return to what is now Zionist occupied land. Even today the inherently expansionist nature of Zionism is once again manifesting itself as it prepares for a new aggression, and its insatiable appetite for territory will not be exhausted until it is in occupation of all Arab land from the Nile to the Euphrates, as has always been the Zionist dream.

“Sick of waiting for so called world justice to fight for our just cause, and disillusioned even with the prevarications of our brothers in the Arab states, we, the Palestinians, are determined to fight for the inalienable right of all peoples ; self determination in our own land. Only when this is achieved and the Zionist racist character of Israel is destroyed, so that those Jews who wish to remain in an Arab Palestine may do so as equal citizens, will our rights and dignity be restored to us. Until that time we will fight the Zionist enemy and all those who support her with any and every means at our disposal. We have no alternative.”

subjective propaganda ?

This Palestinian view of the Arab/Israel conflict is normally dismissed by the Israeli or Israeli sympathiser as mere Arab propaganda. The same view comes under heavy patronising criticism from the third party as totally lacking in objectivity. Yet what is objectivity ? To the Palestinian author, the view was perfectly objective. It was an accurate description of a course of events whose interpretation (if any were required) is self evident. The fact that his subjective view coincides with the objective truth is merely a reflection of the accuracy of his understanding of the situation, and if other opinions are different that is evidence only of the power and influence of the Zionist propaganda machine. An understanding of this perspective enables the third party (and the Israeli) to appreciate why the Palestinian guerilla organisations rejected security council resolution 242 of November 1967, which failed to accommodate what they see as their legitimate national aspirations. The resolution

catered only for international action in solving the “refugee” problem ; but the Palestinians do not see it as a “refugee” problem. It equally explains why they rejected the Roger’s Plan and all similar peace making efforts ; why the Israeli policy of retaliation is at best only a short term expedient, while reinforcing the Palestinian perception of the Israeli as a terrorising aggressor ; why the Jordanian clampdown on “diversionary” guerilla activity is also a short term expedient, only reinforcing the Palestinian perception of world indifference in general and Arab betrayal in particular, and leading several Palestinian guerilla organisations to call for the overthrow of at least some Arab régimes before the final showdown with Israel. The actions and proclamations of Israel and her allies, as well as those of the Palestinians’ own ostensible allies, tend, at the end of the day, to reinforce the Palestinian view of the world attitude towards their plight leading to a still further hardening of attitude and single mindedness of aim.

What we are up against here is the power of the “self fulfilling prophecy.” This notion surely goes a long way towards explaining the all round hardening of attitudes in the Middle East during the course of the conflict. Just how far may not be immediately clear ; but it is worth spelling out, because the self fulfilling prophecy rebounds on both sides with equal and compelling force. Take, for the moment, the effect on the Palestinians of Israeli activities. The actions the Israelis take, or feel forced to take, reinforce the view which the Palestinians have of Israeli and world attitudes towards them. Consequently, the actions and statements of the Israelis and their allies often result in the Palestinians doing the very thing the Israelis are trying to prevent, but believe will happen if they do not try to prevent it. The point to be grasped here is that frequently the belief that a party will act in such and such a way, and that we must therefore do so and so to prevent it, will itself cause the other party to perform just that act which our own steps were intended to forestall. Unless and until this vicious circle is broken, the spiral will be never ending.

3. the Israeli perspective

The “true facts” of the situation as seen by the Palestinians are unrecognisable when observed by the Israeli (and, of course, *vice versa*). The present day perception of the Israeli is largely determined by the history of the Jewish people and the way in which the Jew interprets his history. It is only in the context of the historical perspective of the Jew, that the Israeli perception of the current conflict can be properly understood. What then is this historical perspective ?

The history of the Jews is a history of persecution. The first conscious thought that most Jews have of their history (and Jewish people generally tend to have a high level of historical consciousness) is to be found in the Biblical reference: “and the Jews were slaves unto Pharaoh in Egypt.” Under the guidance of a courageous and skilful leadership, the Jews finally succeeded in throwing off their chains of bondage and fled from Egypt into the desert wilderness of Sinai, where they dwelt for a period of 40 years before arriving in the promised land of Israel in about 1050 BC. There, after defeating the Canaanites, they settled and established themselves as an independent and free people. For nearly 500 years they remained masters of their own destiny until, in 586 BC, the Babylonians conquered the territory and exiled the Jewish inhabitants to the interior of the Babylonian empire. In 538 BC the Babylonians were conquered by the Persians and the Jews were allowed to return to the land of Israel, an opportunity which many of them quickly and gratefully grasped, even though they were quite free to stay in the more prosperous Babylon. They returned because of a religious affection for Jerusalem and the promised land of Israel. This same basic attitude persisted throughout the subsequent 2,500 years, though in many cases religious reasons had been replaced by folk law.

Throughout the ages and in all four corners of the earth, Jewish prayers, recited several times a day by the more orthodox, looked forward to the end of the exile and the return of the “children of Israel” (the phrase used in Jewish prayers to refer to the Jewish people) to the land of

Israel. During the act of worship Jews, whichever part of the world they happened to have found themselves in, have always stood and faced in the direction of Jerusalem. The separation of the Jews from their promised land was rarely more than physical ; regardless of the span of time, spiritually, emotionally and by self reference they remained the “children of Israel” and prayed for their physical return. Whether religious fervour or folklore, the desire to return was shared by the orthodox, reformist and atheist alike. It was not for religious reasons only that lorries running the Arab blockade of Jerusalem in 1948 had these words chalked on their sides: “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning” (*Psalms* 137:5).

The Persians ruled over the territory from 538 to 332 BC, during which time the previously destroyed Jewish temple was restored and rededicated and a period of relative tranquility reigned with the Jews of Judea (formerly Judah) permitted to exercise a degree of autonomy. (It was during the Persian rule that, according to Jewish tradition, Haman, the chief minister of the Persian empire, attempted to implement his design to annihilate the entire Jewish population. The plan was discovered and reported by the Jewess Esther to her emperor husband, who foiled the scheme shortly before its proposed execution. The annual festival of Purim has been celebrated ever since to commemorate the deliverance from destruction, and many centuries later Adolf Hitler is often referred to as Haman’s modern equivalent.)

Persian rule gave way to the Greeks (332 to 166 BC), which at first had no serious effect on the daily lives of the Jews. In 198BC, however, the Greek Ptolemy V was defeated in battle by Antiochus the Great, who in turn was allowed to keep his throne by the expanding Romans on condition that he paid them an enormous indemnity. The money was raised by plundering the Jewish temple treasuries which led to a half century of Jewish unrest. The Greeks finally came to the conclusion that the only way to curb the unrest was totally to suppress Judaism and impose a uniform Hellenistic pattern

on all their subjects. Far from meeting with success, this policy led to a full scale revolt resulting in the re-establishment of Jewish rule (the Maccabean Kingdom) from 166 to 63 BC, in which year Judea joined the rest of the neighbouring territories by falling to the pagan Romans, a rule which lasted until 323 AD. This was followed by Christian Roman rule, which in turn came to an end in the year 614 AD.

The Jews did not, however, give up their land to the Romans without a struggle. The advancing Romans caused the Jews to retreat to two main centres ; Jerusalem and the small mountain of Masada above the Dead Sea. Bloody battles ensued in both places. 65,000 Roman soldiers marched on Jerusalem and standing before the walls of the rebuilt temple, called on the Jewish defenders to surrender. The call was rejected, the temple was gutted by fire and destroyed, and after a siege lasting 139 days, the Roman army took the whole city. It took the Romans another two years, however, to wipe out the last pockets of resistance. A small and determined band of Jewish resistance fighters, men, women and children, held out in the besieged fortress of Masada, surviving by wit and grit. The Jewish tactic of rolling boulders down the hills to keep the advancing soldiers at bay, was cruelly combated by the Romans, who employed Jewish hostages as their first line of defence. The Roman advance still remained slow. Using Jewish slave labour, they took two years to construct a road at the rear side of the mountain, for its slope was far more gentle. The finally triumphant Romans arrived at the top of Masada to find that the will of the Jews not to surrender remained resolute to the bitter end ; those Jews who were still living on the final day took their own lives, so that not one remained to surrender. In the re-born state of Israel, Masada stands today unspoilt since that fateful day of 16 April, 73 as a tribute to Jewish courage and martyrdom.

Thousands of Jews were sold as slaves throughout the Roman Empire, from which new Jewish communities were ultimately formed heralding the beginning of the Jewish dispersion (*Diaspora*), although

many Jews still continued to live in *Eretz Yisrael* (the Land of Israel) and Judea remained a centre of Jewish learning. (Several Jewish communities had voluntarily existed outside *Eretz Yisrael* for a few centuries before this time. The forced expulsion during this period was, however, the major reason for their subsequent proliferation.) At the beginning of the second century AD, the Roman emperor Hadrian decided to build a new temple on the site of the old, to be dedicated to Jupiter. This naturally infuriated the Jews and unrest threatened to break out again. Convinced that the final enemy was Judaism, and that Jewish minorities would continue to be a constant source of trouble until he suppressed their religion, he rashly forbade circumcision and all other Jewish practices. The people rose again in a desperate resistance. Their initial victories were soon turned into defeats and withdrawal. Some Jews fled to Babylon and Galilee, the remnants retreated into the single fortress of Bethar, south-west of Jerusalem. There they held out for two years. With their final destruction the names Judea and Jerusalem were blotted from the Roman language.

The country was renamed *Palestina* ; and *Aelia Capitolina*, which no Jew might enter, rose as a Roman city on the ruins of Jerusalem. (Many centuries later the Jews were again denied access to the holy places of Jerusalem when the Jordanians annexed the eastern half of the city in 1948. The prohibition of Jewish pilgrimages to their holiest of all shrines, the Wailing Wall [the remaining western wall of the destroyed temple], inflamed their passions to a new pitch ; 19 years later the entire city was in Israeli hands.)

When the Roman Empire became Christian in the fourth century, the position of the Jews worsened everywhere. The two parts of the empire, Rome and Constantinople, vied with each other in anti-Jewish legislation, and the centre of Jewish learning moved from *Palestina* to Babylon. Jews continued to inhabit the Land of Israel but persecution gradually made them an ever dwindling minority through assimilation, conversion (forced or otherwise), expulsion or annihilation.

After the fall of the Christian Romans in 614 AD, the city of Jerusalem and *Eretz Yisrael* were ruled consecutively by the Persians, the Byzantine Romans, the Moslem Arabs, the Moslem Turks, the Arabs again, the Christian Crusaders, the Arabs, the Christian Crusaders, the Arabs, the Ottoman Turks, the British under mandate from the League of Nations, and since 1948 the ancient territory has been divided between the Jews and the Arabs.

the Israeli Jew speaks

The history of the Jews, however, from the time of the Christian Romans to 1948 is essentially the history of the *Diaspora*, and the subjective interpretation of the Israeli Jew of past and current events might be typified by the following narrative. "While the peoples and countries of the rest of the world were separately fighting each other for land and glory, they each took turns in fighting us Jews; a people dispossessed of rights, a minority in every land, the obvious scapegoat as and when one was required. Periodically there was a change in the fortunes of the empires with one great power replacing another which, at first, sometimes led to a reversal of Jewish persecution. For example, the Christian Kingdom of Spain produced an incomparable collection of anti-Jewish laws, which became increasingly savage and ridiculous as Jews refused to accept conversion. The tide was reversed at the beginning of the eighth century when the Christian rulers were replaced by the Moslem armies; but the return of the Christians in the eleventh century heralded an unprecedented wave of anti-Semitism, culminating in the terrors of the Spanish Inquisition and the expulsion of our people in 1492.

"Our ancestors had of course inhabited Europe before Christianity took root and lived with their neighbours, sometimes encountering good will sometimes ill will, as was quite normal among different communities. Into this normal situation came the abnormality of the Christian theological concept of Jews as men set apart from other people by our 'crime of decide,' and our consequent deposition

from the supposedly divinely ordained status of a 'chosen people.' It was abnormal in the sense that this special standing Christianity gave us was not based upon the evidence of contemporary facts, but upon the Christian version of our past history in the Bible. It is in this abnormality that anti-Semitism has its origin and becomes distinct from the ordinary rough and tumble of relations between peoples. (This explanation is offered by James Parkes in *A history of the Jewish people*.) Expelled from their own land and forced to live in foreign lands, the lot of our ancestors grew steadily worse as one country after another bid for the distinction of introducing the most pernicious anti-Jewish legislation: the practice of our religion was often restricted or forbidden; synagogues were looted, desecrated and burnt to the ground; special taxes and fines were levied and we were subjected to every form of degradation and humiliation. Yet we survived with comparatively little actual bodily harm until religious excitement reached a new fervour with the beginning of the Crusades in the twelfth century.

"While the Christian and Moslem armies battled against one another for hegemony over Jerusalem, there was a tacit understanding that the Jew was common game, and our people were accordingly subjected to gruesome massacres by both armies *en route* to and from Jerusalem. Nor were the massacres confined to the environs of Jerusalem. A band of 'poor men' stirred up by the rabble rouser Peter the Hermit and two other priests, suddenly raised the cry in Normandy that it was preposterous to adventure their lives in crossing half the world to rescue the Tomb of Christ, while his 'murderers' lived in wealthy ease in their midst. So began in Rouen the appalling record of popular massacre, which was to stain many future centuries of European history. At first the motive was purely religious; those of our people who accepted baptism were spared; but greed soon came to supplement religious fervour and it was enough that a baptised Jew escaped with his life. His property was looted and his house burned by the crusading mob

(but not necessarily by his Christian neighbour who often tried to hide or protect him). Massacre proceeded all through northern France and the Rhineland, wherever the 'poor men' passed. In Trèves, Worms, Mainz, Cologne and elsewhere, ancient and prosperous communities were utterly destroyed. During the third Crusade, at the end of the twelfth century, the Jews of England shared the fate of their brethren of the Rhineland.

"The alleged reason for hatred of our people frequently changed from religious, to economic, to social, to political, to racial and back to religious, as did also the form of oppression or Jew baiting. Eastern Europe under Tsarist domination, for example, made its unique contribution to the story of persecution by herding its Jews into ghettos, whose iron gates were locked at sunset, to be opened only at the pleasure of the Cossacks whose sporting instinct would suddenly and arbitrarily be vented through the unleashing of a *pogrom* (usually with the approval, if not on the instructions, of the authorities), whose stakes were rape, loot and murder; man, woman and child. It was in fact from the depths of despair and misery of the Russian and Polish ghettos that the seed of hope for the future began to emerge; a future in which a Jew could live as a normal human being undertaking normal human tasks, free from fear and persecution; a hope which promised self fulfilment; spiritually, emotionally and physically. The slogan was national liberation for the Jews; and the political philosophy was called Zionism, a philosophy which demanded for Jews the same right as all people claim for themselves; national self determination.

"Zionism was first expounded as a coherent political philosophy by Theodor Herzl in a brief book called *The Jewish State*, which he wrote in 1896 at the age of 36. Herzl was an assimilated, socialist, Viennese Jew who first knowingly encountered anti-Jewish sentiment when the editor of the paper on which he worked suggested he change his name so as not to upset the readership. Herzl reacted strongly against the suggestion, but was only jolted out of his belief that the

'Jewish problem' had been solved when covering the trial of the French Jewish Captain Dreyfus and witnessing the French mob screaming '*à bas les Juifs*' at his degradation. He devoted the remainder of his life to nurturing and canvassing the notion of a Jewish homeland.

"Having originally been driven from their homeland by force of arms and scattered round the world, our ancestors were degraded and humiliated wherever they went and could not escape from their rôle as the universal scapegoat; an easily identifiable, defenceless minority. The world created a 'Jewish problem' and then attempted to impose many and varied solutions: forced conversion or perish by the sword; ghettos and *pogroms*; barred from a multitude of occupations, forced into others such as money-lending because of Catholic laws against charging interest, and then persecuted for being lecherous usurers; expulsion from one country and then another; laws against the practice of our religion. Finally, when some of our own communities voluntarily opted for a physically painless solution; inter-marriage and assimilation, such as was proceeding at an unprecedented rate in Germany in the first thirty years of the twentieth century, the world, affronted by such presumption, produced its own 'final solution' in the form of Adolf Hitler and his Nazi Party. Their early acts of racialist legislation; the obligatory wearing of yellow stars, the abrupt denial of all political, legal and civil rights, the Jewish literature bonfire nights, were soon surpassed by a declaration of war on our entire people, defenceless and weary. The terrifying knock in the middle of the night, the cattle trucks, the gas ovens. The systematic slaughter of six million of our people whose only crime was to be born Jewish, or to have a Jewish parent, or grand-parent—even until the third generation."

"The war over, and genocide not quite accomplished, there were hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees liberated from concentration camps. The countries of the world shamefacedly declared that they had their own problems, and regretfully could not absorb our remnants. Besides,

we were not altogether keen to rebuild our lives in the blood soaked continent of Europe. After so many had trotted like sheep into a fiery death, with less than half of the Jewish population of the world remaining, the Jewish psyche suddenly and irrevocably changed; there was to be no begging. Our cry was a simple 'never again,' and so it remains. There was no place left to go, but we had no intention of sinking into the sea, with or without the aid of British gunboats. The final realisation had dawned that there was only one salvation; national liberation and self determination. The world has never protected us, nor will it ever. After all why should it? No one protects other peoples, they stand and defend themselves, as we will. We shall fight for the restoration of our national rights in our former homeland and woe betide anyone who tries to stop us. We are a desperate people, we have no choice.

"The British tried to stop us, we kicked them out. The Arabs terrorised our people, we used counter-terror. However, the shocking massacre at Deir Yassin (although no worse than the Arab massacre of Jews in Hebron in 1929) was uncharacteristic and condemned by the Jewish authorities at the time. We were prepared to live in peace with them; but the Arabs, under the leadership of the extremely anti-Semitic Mufti of Jerusalem, that most loyal ally of Adolf Hitler, refused to accept any peaceful accommodation. Partition was our one and only remaining chance of survival.

"The UN overwhelmingly supported the re-establishment of the state of Israel, the Arab league tried to squeeze us to death at birth. Hopelessly outnumbered, we defeated the combined force of six invading Arab armies. They were fighting for more land and enhanced prestige. We fought for our very existence. The Palestinians are Arabs, or so they insist. Yet there is so much Arab land, uninhabited, uncultivated. They could be resettled over night, as Israel has settled over a million Jewish refugees who fled from Arab countries, but the Arab states allow them to fester in refugee camps on our borders to be used as political pawns against us.

There is only one Jewish state, it is small, it is new, but it is ours. If the world wants to rob us of it, the world will suffer with us before we finally succumb. No longer will we be herded like sheep according to the whims of the world.

"Having voted us into existence in 1947, the world stood by in 1948 expecting us to perish. We survived, and not by the grace of anyone else. 20 years later Nasser evicted the UN peace keeping troops from Sinai. The UN accepted the eviction. Nasser closed the Straits of Tiran to our shipping; Britain and America promised all and then stood by and watched. Arab leaders flew in and out of each others' capitals signing war pacts. The only thing they can agree on is our destruction. President Nasser of Egypt (the land of our ancient taskmasters) proclaimed a *Jihad* (holy war). Ahmed Shukairy, leader of the Palestine liberation organisation, promised to 'drive the Jews into the sea.' Even a broadcast by the supposedly moderate King Hussein included some most immoderate words. 'Kill the Jews wherever you find them. Kill them with your hands, with your nails and teeth.' The world still stood by urging us to ignore the Arab threats, but we ignored similar threats in the 'thirties and we have learned our lesson. So we struck, as we had to. No one was going to help us, no-one ever has, and we cannot fight a war on our densely populated territory. The Arabs can lose hundreds of wars. We cannot afford to lose one and hope to survive to tell the tale.

"The war was swift, civilian casualties low, and we, the victors, immediately sued for peace. Yet we were proclaimed the aggressors, and the Arabs would not negotiate with aggressors, and the blind world appears to support them in that view. Well the world can think what it likes; each country has its own vested interest, they are not guided by the justice of each case. We were given no choice. Had we been driven into the sea, the world would have wept a crocodile tear and the liberal conscience of the West would have been salved by an annual epitaph. So sorry not to oblige. We withdrew in 1956 and look where that got us!

No peace, no withdrawal, it is as simple as that ; who would act differently? World public opinion will not let you perish, we were told ; but opinion keeps changing. Three times we have had to fight in our defence and each time we have had different support. In 1948, France, America and the Soviet Union for us, Britain against. In 1956, France and Britain with us, America and the Soviet Union against. In 1967, America for us, France and the Soviet Union against, while Britain could not decide. We have learned after 2,500 years of wandering ; we can not rely on the outside world, only on ourselves. If ever they change, so too will we.

“ Even with the re-establishment of our state of Israel, anti-Semitism still lurks beneath the surface in the form of deeply instilled prejudices, and breaks out quite openly from time to time, even though its form is sometimes disguised. This is true not only for the Arab lands and the western states ; but even for those countries under communist administration, witness the Polish régime’s campaign against Zionists in 1967. These Zionists were invariably loyal and long standing communists of Jewish birth who, robbed of their jobs, their party membership and their livelihood, were finally forced to leave the country to settle ; not in Israel in most cases, but in Scandinavia ! Of 3 million Jews in Poland before the second world war, Hitler got rid of over 99 per cent ; Gomulka and Moczar between them got rid of the rest. Only Israel stands between us and annihilation. We will fight to the last man if necessary for her survival. We have no alternative.”

subjective propaganda ?

This Jewish view of the conflict is normally dismissed by the Arab or Arab sympathiser as Zionist propaganda, and criticised by the third party as totally lacking in objectivity. Yet, rightly or wrongly, this is the perspective in which the conflict is viewed, and appears quite objective to the Israeli. “ The facts are true, all of them, show me one which is wrong ! ” If other opinions are different then either the holder of them is anti-

Semitic and favours the destruction of the Jews, or he is indifferent to their survival, or he is ignorant, or he is influenced by Arab oil and the sheer weight of numbers of the Arab countries and people, or he is a victim of the power and influence of the Arab propaganda machine.

An understanding of this perspective enables the third party (and the Arab) to appreciate why the Israeli Jew is today passionately jealous and proud of his independence and self determination, and why so many non-Israeli Jews support the Israeli cause ; not only because for the first time there is a voice in world affairs willing and able to speak out against attacks on Jews (as Jews) wherever they may occur, but in particular because they view the current conflict from a historical perspective similar to the Israelis’ with whom they can most closely identify.

It equally explains why Israelis will not accept an Arab majority in that part of Palestine which is now Israel, and why they deny the right of return to the Arab refugees who, it is believed, will form a “ fifth column ” unless and until a peace treaty, recognising the existence and rights of Israel, is signed and sealed. “ Recognition ” to the Israelis means full and frank discussions among equals, that is, “ face to face negotiations,” leading to normal inter-state relations including trade agreements and ultimately the establishment of full diplomatic relations. It also explains why anti-Zionism is often interpreted by the Israeli Jew as anti-Semitism ; since by Zionism he means national liberation for the Jews, and since the world (and notably the left) claims to support national liberation (whether it be in southern Africa or Black Africa, in Latin America or Europe, in Asia or the Arab lands) then why not in Israel for the Jews? On what criteria, he asks, do other peoples support Arab nationalism and Palestinian nationalism, but not Jewish nationalism? “ If you support self determination for everyone else, why single the Jews out for special treatment? unless you hate the Jews! unless you are anti-Semitic? ” Should the countries of the world increasingly line up against Israel, whatever their different political reasons, then this

Israeli perception is likely to be reinforced. Rather than being impressed into altering her posture by an increasing weight of unfriendly world opinion, a hardening of attitude and greater single mindedness of aim are the likely consequences.

As with the Palestinian position, so also in the Israeli case, the rôle of the self fulfilling prophecy must be appreciated. Regardless of their sincerity and their zeal, the words and deeds of the Arabs and the Palestinian guerillas serve only to reinforce the Israeli perception and are consequently often responsible for Israelis doing the very thing the Arabs are trying to prevent, but believe will happen anyway, if they do not try to prevent them. So the spiral continues . . .

an illustration

Part of the doctrine of the early Jewish pioneers in Palestine was to employ only Jewish labour. To the Arab this was a clear case of racialism on the part of the Jews, and understandably so; but to the socialist Zionist it was the very opposite. Armed with the belief that the cause of economic anti-Semitism was that Jews had been prevented from seeking many working class jobs, and had thus been forced into middle class occupations such as trading and finance, the early Zionists set out to re-create a Jewish proletariat which would join with the working class movements of other nations in revolutionary struggle against the international bourgeoisie. Since anti-Semitism denied this opportunity in Europe by creating Jewish solidarity to the exclusion of any prospect of class solidarity, the left wing Zionists left for Palestine with the intention of creating a Jewish socialist nation. To prevent a repetition of the class relations they left behind, they were determined to prevent themselves from emerging as the exploiting class by becoming the employer with their Arab neighbour providing the labour. Thus they steadfastly refused to employ any but Jewish labour. (The early kibbutzim employed no labour at all, but as they expanded this policy had to be modified.)

To the socialist Zionist, therefore, the policy of employing only Jewish labour was adopted to combat racialism. To the Arab, however, it was a definite act of racialism. The answer to the question "is this policy racialist?" is not as obvious and uncontentious as, superficially, it would appear. However, the issues which the question raises can be brought to light and investigated if the two perspectives are first understood. Such a case history illustrates the importance of understanding these perspectives.

British objectives

British governments, whether Labour or Conservative, regularly assert that Britain's interests are best served by peace and stability in the Middle East. This cannot be achieved with any permanence as long as any party to the conflict is prepared to use its effective veto to prevent a peaceful solution. As long as a proposed solution fails to accommodate the minimum requirements of any party which can wield a veto, the prospects for peace must remain remote. In order to attempt a basic understanding of the minimum requirements of each party, there is no value in the British simply listening sympathetically, while each case is espoused in turn, and then casting moral judgments on the relative merits and de-merits of each case in accordance with traditional British values, as if those values were universal and not culturally biased. Rather, an empathetic understanding of each case is required; for, without it, moral judgments are pointless.

TABLE III
PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN 1968

refugees on the east bank present Jordan) on 5 June, 1967	292,586
refugees displaced from the west bank and from Gaza, now on the east bank	185,783
refugees now on the west bank	269,065
refugees now in Gaza	307,864
refugees in the Lebanon	168,927
refugees in Syria	151,730
TOTAL	1,375,955

4. from the perspectives towards a solution

Attempts to "impose" a solution from outside the arena have often been suggested, and occasionally encouraged by some Arab states, especially since 1967 ; but both the Palestinians and the Israelis have invariably outbid each other in rejecting all such proposals. No doubt the combined forces of the outside world could dictate terms which each party would unwillingly be forced to recognise as facts ; but such an imposition would deal with the symptoms only, and whereas it is possible that this could have positive feed back effects, it is more likely that the failure to deal with the fundamental causes would exacerbate and lengthen the conflict, leading, at best, to the postponement of a genuine and agreed solution and, at worst, to an ultimate and more powerful explosion with world wide consequences. Unlike so many other conflicts the problem is not simply about territorial issues: the return of occupied territories captured in the 1967 episode ; the right to use the Jordan river water for irrigation ; the control of shipping through the Gulf of Aquaba ; the administration of just any disputed city ; and land and money to resettle refugees.

If problems such as these were really the crux of the conflict, it would be a matter of when and not if a solution could be found. It has been suggested that the core of the problem is, on the one hand, Arab dignity and pride, and, on the other, Jewish survival. (See, "Is peace in the Middle East possible?" by Walter Laquer in *The Israel/Arab reader*.) Superficially, the former can only be fully satisfied with the elimination of Israel ; but attempts at this have succeeded only in aggravating Israeli fears, leading to a greater vigilance and single mindedness on the part of Israel, whose subsequent military victories have caused an even deeper wounding of Arab dignity. So the mutually nourishing fears have continued to fuel the spiral in wider, never ending circles. The conflict is charged with emotion, a factor which many commentators choose to ignore because of a facile belief that the rigours of objectivity require rational factors only to be considered ; that emotion should play no part. The fact remains, however, that emotion plays

a highly significant part and no amount of economic, military or diplomatic aid can eliminate it. By strengthening the respective military and propaganda machines, such aid may indeed only aggravate the emotional factors by reinforcing the perceived threat of the other party.

In the more recent past, however, events have caused the Palestinians to perceive their fear in rather different terms from that of their Arab brethren. Pride and dignity might continue to be the prime motivating forces of the other Arabs, but the not altogether unsuccessful attempt of the Jordanian authorities to eliminate the Palestinian resistance movement in September 1970, while the other Arab states did little more than murmur disapproval, has bred in the Palestinians a much greater fear. It would be more accurate to say, therefore, that while the other Arabs continue to fear for their dignity and pride, the Palestinians, like the Israelis, fear for their very survival. Any proposed solution should take full account of these major fears and of the fact that both the Palestinians and the Israelis quite genuinely believe they "have no alternative."

two branches of the same tree

In assessing the prospects of an ultimate solution, or at least initially a *modus vivendi*, it must first be decided whether the conflict is zero sum or, in other words, whether the satisfaction of the minimum objectives of one party is necessarily exclusive of the satisfaction of the minimum objectives of the other. Superficially, the two fears appear irreconcilable. That was probably more true, paradoxically, in 1948 than at present. The objectives of the invading Arab armies in 1948 were at least partly territorial gain.

With the overthrow of most of the Arab monarchies (except in Jordan and Saudi Arabia) in the 'fifties, and the establishment of new régimes, together with defeat in three successive wars, the primary objective of the Arab states today appears to be the restoration of Arab dignity which, as a minimum, requires the

TABLE IV
REFUGEES IN AGENCY CAMPS ON
30 JUNE, 1968 BY COUNTRY OF
RESIDENCE

country	camps	persons	% refugee population
eastern			
Jordan	5	89,681	31.2
west bank	20	66,497	24.6
Gaza	8	195,879	62.4
Lebanon	15	78,449	47.2
Syria	6	23,726	15.9
TOTAL	54	454,232	33.3

Notes: 1) This table does not include displaced persons and registered refugees living in tented camps (see TABLE V). 2) In general, refugees living outside the UNRWA camps reside in the towns and villages of the host country and receive the same services as those in the camps, with the exception of sanitary services. Economically speaking, they are hardly any differently off from the refugees living in camps. 3) This table takes account of all registered refugees living in camps and housed by the agency, whatever the welfare they receive. 4) No account is taken of refugees living in camps who, while benefiting from sanitation services, are not housed by the agency. Source: United Nations.

TABLE V
DISPLACED PERSONS AND REGISTERED REFUGEES IN TENTED CAMPS ON 30 JUNE, 1968

country	camps	persons
eastern Jordan	6	78,400
Syria	4	7,746
TOTAL	10	86,146

Note: There are two types of camps in Jordan at the present time: those of 1948 and those of 1967. About 50 per cent of the persons displaced after 1967 came from camps on the west bank of the Jordan, while the other half were in employment and did not live in the camps. In legal terms, therefore, there are two classes: refugees, and displaced persons, the latter (about 280,000 persons) being the responsibility of the Jordanians. Source: United Nations.

acquisition of national rights by the Palestinian Arabs in (if not all) some of the land of Palestine. Such an objective, which would satisfy the minimum Palestinian aspiration, does not in itself exclude a similar minimum objective of the Israelis, namely the continuation of the national rights of the Jewish people in (if not all) some of the land of Israel. The major causes and the minimum objectives of Palestinian nationalism (the self determination of the Palestinian people on Palestinian soil), and Zionism or Jewish nationalism (the self determination of the Jewish people on the soil of Zion) are the essential factors of their similarity; and this is the greatest irony of all.

Palestinian nationalism was born of dispersion; a people who fled from invading armies. Some scattered to different parts of the world, a much larger number settled in the Arab *diaspora*, rarely losing the desire or belief that they would return "home." This phenomenon of the Palestinian wandering from one Arab land to another, assuming positions of responsibility but rarely feeling nor given cause to feel that he is a full citizen with the same rights as the indigenous population (this is especially true of Kuwait and the coastal provinces of the Arabian peninsula), has led, with apparent irony, to his being compared with the "wandering Jew," and to his national aspirations being referred to as "Palestinian Zionism." The majority, however, were settled in refugee camps on the outskirts of their former land (see tables IV and V opposite and others) and it was amidst their misery and despair that a new unity and a new hope began to flourish. The indifference of the world, the impotence of their Arab brothers, the sharing of a common adversary, created a sense of national identification different from and greater than that which had existed previously. Circumstances had also created a new Palestinian psyche; a desire to fight for themselves and rely on no one else, although help from any quarter would naturally not be rejected. It was the miserable refugees in the camps who formed the spearhead of this new conviction and its subsequent movement. The ruthlessness and single mindedness of

some of their actions (from the terrorisation of civilians to the reckless hijacking of western Boeings) reflected only a new found freedom and hope of a desperate people, who, in the last analysis, see no reliable allies but themselves, and whose minimum desires will remain unfulfilled until they have established their own state in their own land.

Zionism, or Jewish nationalism, was born of dispersion. A people who fled from invading armies and scattered to different parts of the world but mostly settled in the European *diaspora*, rarely losing the desire or belief that they would return "home." Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the majority were settled in ghettos in eastern Europe, and it was amidst their misery and despair that a new unity and a new hope began to flourish. The indifference of the world, the impotence of those who tried to help, the sharing of the common adversary of anti-Semitism, created a sense of national identification different from and greater than that which had existed previously. The aftermath of the concentration camps created a new Jewish psyche; a desire to fight for themselves and rely on no one else, although help from any quarter would naturally not be rejected. It was the miserable refugees from the ghettos and the camps who formed the spearhead of this new conviction and its movement. The ruthlessness and single mindedness of some of their actions (from the bombing of the King David Hotel, the British headquarters during the British mandate, to the refusal to allow the bulk of the Palestinian refugees to return in 1948 or 1967) reflected only a new found freedom and hope of a desperate people who, in the last analysis, see no reliable allies but themselves, and whose minimum desires will remain unfulfilled until their Arab neighbours recognise their established right to their own state in their own land.

the enemy is the devil

These common features go entirely unnoticed by most Palestinians and Israelis; and this is not altogether surprising since each perceives his enemy as standing for

the denial of his own cause. In the very limited sense of territorial aspiration there is a large, although not insuperable, element of truth in this belief. In the ideological sense of common perceived causes and answers to their problems, however, their natural relationship is one of alliance, not enmity. In pouring scorn on the national aspirations of its adversary, each party denies the legitimacy of the other's cause in much the same vein. "They are not a nation anyway, they are a religion/race/nomads." "Our opposition to their struggle is not just for our benefit, but for their's as well." "It is we who have to live with, and in daily fear of, them. We, and we alone, really understand them and know how to deal with them." "They receive support from other countries by means of the economic and political blackmail they exert." "Liberal critics from the West must realise that superficial humanitarian considerations are of secondary importance to our prime concern for liberation/survival." "Our struggle is for peace coupled with justice; the enemy opposes both." These statements, and others like them, are frequently to be heard from each side in reference to the other, and are denied with similar ferocity by both. A representative of one side called to speak on behalf of the other, would find himself having to make minimal alterations to his script.

the way forward

The causes, the aspirations, the respective perceptions of themselves of each other and of third parties, appear to have sufficient in common for both the Palestinian Arabs and the Jewish Israelis to indicate that herein lies the basis upon which a solution has the greatest prospect of emerging. Neither party would find difficulty in understanding the perspective of the other if it were to appreciate that its own case is less unique than it imagines. Ultimately, a solution (if it is to be genuinely acceptable to both parties) can be accomplished only through agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis themselves. No one knows better than they that the outside world is **only ever a fair weather friend.**

5. application of the analysis

In international politics in particular, the attempt to analyse conflict situations in terms of some abstract code of morality is a highly dubious, not to say wholly unhelpful, exercise. This is far from suggesting however, that third parties should be unconcerned (if only for the reason that local conflicts are bound to have repercussions outside the locality) nor that they should refrain from expressing an opinion and formulating a policy towards the conflict. They should, in fact, first seek an empathetic understanding of the reasons that cause each party to act and react in the way it does, so that policy may be responsible for helping to resolve rather than to exacerbate the conflict. Seen in this way it is more easily understood why suspicions are aroused when attempts are made from outside the area to offer a definitive blue print for a solution. If it emanates from supposed pro-Israeli quarters, it is seen by the Arabs as an unhelpful intrusion by Israeli apologists. If it emanates from supposed pro-Arab quarters, it is seen by the Israelis as an unhelpful intrusion by Arab apologists. If it emanates from genuinely neutral quarters, both parties are prone to suspect that it is designed with the interests of the third country or countries uppermost, and each party may then fear that its own vital interests are likely to be compromised. Thus, there is a real danger that policy formulation by third parties involving a definitive blue print may be counter-productive.

security council resolution 242

Although rejected by the Palestinian guerrilla organisations and originally by Syria, the three countries mainly involved in the six day war (Egypt, Jordan and Israel) each accepted resolution 242, which was adopted by the security council on 22 November, 1967 (see figure 1, opposite). In so doing, however, each country selected those parts of the resolution which were most favourable to itself as constituting the major priority and requiring prior implementation. Thus Egypt and Jordan, in stressing the clause "emphasising the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war," lay emphasis on the prin-

FIGURE 1. RESOLUTION 242 OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF 22 NOVEMBER, 1967.

CONCERNING THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

The security council, (1) expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East, (2) emphasising the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every state in the area can live in security, (3) emphasising further that all member states in their acceptance of the charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with article 2 of the charter,

1. Affirms that the fulfilment of charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles: (i) withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict; (ii) termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries free from threats or acts of force;
 2. Affirms further the necessity (A) for guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area; (B) for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem; (C) for guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every state in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarised zones;
 3. Requests the secretary general to designate a special representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contact with the states concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this resolution;
 4. Requests the secretary general to report to the security council on the progress of the efforts of the special representative as soon as possible.
-

ciple which requires the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict," after the accomplishment of which they have indicated their preparedness to consider the implementation of the other clauses. Israel, on the other hand, lays emphasis on other provisions, such as the "termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries free from threats or acts of force;" and ". . . freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area."

Israel maintains that the nominal acceptance of the resolution by two of the Arab belligerents is hardly a sufficient guarantee that they, or other Arab parties, will not again seek the destruction of Israel if she should unilaterally withdraw to her previous insecure and not easily defended boundaries. In support of this claim, Israel cites the declaration, supported by all Arab states who participated in the Khartoum conference on 1 September, 1967 (including Egypt and Jordan), which pledged "no recognition, no negotiation, no peace," a pledge which has never since been repudiated and which was apparently confirmed on the occasion of the foundation of the Egyptian/Syrian/Libyan tripartite federation on 17 April, 1971. They point also to President Nasser's commitment to the Palestine National Council (made on 1 February, 1969) that although Egypt's immediate priority is to secure Israel's withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967, nonetheless it continues to "offer unlimited moral and material support to the Palestinian resistance . . . without reservation or conditions." A commitment which is interpreted by the Israelis as meaning nothing short of the *Fedayeen's* own objective of "liberating the whole of Palestine," and which requires the elimination of Israel. President Sadat's insistence on the "restoration of Palestinian rights" (speech to the Egyptian national assembly on 4 February, 1971, and the tripartite federation declaration, among others) is not seen by the Israelis as a meaningful

retreat from Nasser's position, but merely as a propaganda device to deceive world opinion into thinking that the Arabs no longer seek the elimination of Israel. Thus the Israelis see the Arab demand for a unilateral withdrawal of Israeli troops to the vulnerable pre-June 1967 boundaries as a ruse, which would be followed by a concerted attempt at Israeli's final destruction. The Israelis point further to the notorious instability of the Arab governments, which means that a peace pledge today, even if sincere, can be reversed by a new régime on the morrow. They point out, finally, that resolution 242 required them to withdraw from "territories occupied" and not from *the* territories occupied, an omission which, they maintain, was quite deliberate and is evidence that the security council recognised the insecure nature of their previous boundaries. (This issue is not helped any by the discrepancy between the English and French translations; the French translation *does* include the definite article!) That being the case, the Israelis argue, the extent and precise details of their withdrawal must be a matter for negotiation between themselves and the Arab states as must also the implementation of all the other provisions of the resolution, leading to a binding and irrevocable peace treaty.

Egypt and Jordan, on the other hand, argue that their main bargaining counter lies in their non-recognition of Israel and all that that implies. Should they agree to face to face negotiations with the Israelis before withdrawal this would imply a *de facto* recognition of the legitimacy of the state, and any subsequent discussions would take place from a position of inherent weakness. They further point out that although official Israeli sources continue to maintain that "everything is negotiable," various senior cabinet ministers have stated, from time to time, that the Golan Heights in Syria will never be returned, that Sharm el-Sheikh in the Sinai Desert must remain in Israeli hands together with, at the least, a "corridor" running from Eilat to Sharm, that the Gaza Strip was never Egyptian anyway, that the west bank of the Jordan must continue to be patrolled by the Israeli armed forces, even if Israel officially with-

draws from that territory. On top of this the eastern section of Jerusalem has already been annexed (shortly after the war) and completely integrated into Israel, in defiance of general assembly resolutions 2253 and 2254 of July 1967, and security council resolution 252 of May 1968. They point also to the Israeli policy of establishing Jewish settlements on the west bank, the Golan Heights and in Sharm el-Sheikh; a practice which, they maintain, can hardly encourage the belief that the Israelis have any serious intention of withdrawing. The Egyptians and Jordanians thus ask in rhetorical fashion what there is to negotiate about.

However, resolution 242 remains as an excellent piece of diplomacy on the part of the then Labour government and in particular the foreign secretary, George Brown, and the permanent UN representative, Lord Caradon, who were responsible for drafting it and securing its acceptance. It achieved what it set out to do, to provide a comprehensive scheme which apparently incorporated all the major points of conflict and which proved acceptable, not only to the five permanent members of the security council, but also to the three main belligerent countries. Yet over five years and several Jarring missions later, resolution 242 looks in danger of being judged by history as being just another "piece of paper." After the initial enthusiasm which greeted its speedy preparation and early acceptance, why is it no nearer implementation now than then? Indeed, it could be argued with some force that these five years have witnessed an increasing polarisation, such that today the prospects of a peaceful settlement are more remote than ever.

The simple answer, preferred by both the Israelis and the Arabs, is that the other party has persistently refused to accept the requirements of the resolution. Although the Arabs and the Israelis in turn admit to being occasionally disillusioned with the United Nations, both maintain that at heart they are internationalists and, although not happy with each and every clause, they accepted the resolution *in toto*, because that was the wish of the world body and they were willing to com-

promise in the name of peace. The other party, however, has proved by its wilful action (or lack of action) that it refuses to co-operate in the implementation of the resolution's provisions. Each in turn is clearly an unsatisfactory explanation, except to those blindly committed to one side or the other. Each party has, in fact, selected that clause which it considers vital to its own interests as being the essential ingredient, and has given the other party little reason to believe that the remaining clauses will be adhered to. That such evasion proved possible can conceivably be blamed upon the resolution itself, which laid down no order of priorities for the implementation of its provisions. Had such an order been included, there would have been no room for ambiguity and therefore no excuse for evasion. In defence of its authors, however, it must be said that any attempt to impose an order of priorities was bound to be unacceptable to either the Arabs or the Israelis (depending on the order) and accordingly would almost certainly have been vetoed by either the Soviet Union or the USA. Thus the inclusion of an order of priorities for the implementation of its several clauses was not a genuine option.

The resolution in its final form was thus the best that could have been achieved in the circumstances. Furthermore, no criticism can be levelled at the authors or the resolution, given the parameters to which they were working and the immediate and most urgent task that faced them, namely general acceptability of what appeared to be the major ingredients necessary for a peaceful and agreed settlement. Had either Egypt, Jordan or Israel refused to accept the resolution, the world would have found the culprit to be the "aggressor," and the appropriate sanctions might then have been applied in the hope that the state in question would finally submit to the wishes of the world body. Although such an outcome was always unlikely, since either of the two superpowers would have been prepared to use its veto rather than see its ally so openly embarrassed, nevertheless, in the improbable event, the issues would at least have been clearer and so too would have been the action necessary. As it turned out, the resolution

and its subsequent acceptance by the main protagonists have proved to be of dubious value. By making their gestures of good faith and shifting the responsibility for its implementation onto the shoulders of Gunnar Jarring, the secretary general's special representative, the belligerents found themselves with a ready made excuse for not coming to terms.

The Israelis feel justified in not giving an inch until their security can be guaranteed with at least the same degree of certainty as they can now guarantee it for themselves. They maintain that no other country in an equivalent situation would act differently, and any who demands that they do so is guilty of gross hypocrisy. The Egyptians, Jordanians and Syrians feel that nothing can really be gained by conceding anything at all to Israel, as long as she remains in occupation of their lands. Thus, by doing little more than outlining most of the major elements necessary for a solution and designating a representative to supervise it, the embryonic blue print contained in resolution 242 has been instrumental in polarising the conflict in the five years since its adoption, and in this sense has proved to be counter-productive. This should not be interpreted as a criticism of the resolution itself since, and the point needs emphasis, it is doubtful whether the United Nations, by virtue of its structure and its institutionalised vested interests (in particular the veto arrangements of the security council) could have accomplished anything more concrete. Rather, it is a criticism of the approach to the conflict that the United Nations, by its very nature, is bound to take, and in particular its inability to accommodate the needs of one of the major protagonists (the Palestinians) without whose consent a peaceful and lasting settlement in the Middle East is doubtful.

the Palestinian refugees and guerillas

Resolution 242 refers to "achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem." The Palestinians, like the Jews prior to 1948, see themselves as a nation without a home, a people without a government. The United Nations (a body composed of

de jure governments) sees them as refugees, in much the same way as it saw the Jewish remnants of Hitler's concentration camps as refugees, until they fought for and finally won their own home and their own government. In like manner, the Palestinians do not consider themselves a "refugee problem" to be given handouts by international charity or scattered and absorbed into neighbouring countries in accordance with the benevolent whims of local rulers. It does not take the wisdom of a Solomon to understand why the Palestinian guerillas rejected resolution 242, and why they chose the path of armed struggle as their only feasible course of action. The power they amassed after June 1967 was hardly sufficient to achieve the solution they wanted, but it was sufficient to prevent the achievement of the solution they did not want. On the occupied west bank, in Gaza and in Israel proper their frequent raids combined with their terrorist tactics proved to be of high nuisance value as well as a source of fear, and must have been instrumental (as was the intention) in casting grave doubt in the Israeli mind about the prospects of a peaceful solution, as envisaged in the security council resolution. The guerillas' popularity in the Kingdom of Jordan, in Egypt, in Syria and in the Lebanon, combined with their not inconsiderable military strength, made it increasingly dangerous, personally and politically, for the heads of each state to take concrete steps towards the implementation of most of the resolution's provisions, even if they wanted to. Thus the Palestinian guerillas earned for themselves an effective veto in the implementation of these or any other proposals. It is this factor, above any other, which is responsible for the non-implementation of the security council resolution, and the reason that it hardly stood a chance right from the very outset.

The security council need not attempt to revise its resolution to incorporate this defect, however, since that is beyond the realm of short term practicability, and in any case is not likely to achieve very much of itself. However, the recognition of this defect by independent sovereign countries, such as the United Kingdom, should lead to a reorientation in their diplomacy.

6. the minimum requirements of the Palestinians

The real strength of the Palestinian guerillas lies in the passive, if not active, support of the Palestinian people as a whole. As long as the people are prepared to give tacit approval to the efforts of the guerillas by providing food, shelter and other forms of aid, the guerilla movements will continue to feature as a major force. No doubt they will continue to suffer set backs as when, for example, Israeli retaliation takes the form of blowing up the houses of those suspected of giving shelter to the guerillas, in an attempt to intimidate the local population into ending their collaboration; or as when (more severely) King Hussein launched his military campaign, in September 1970, to "mop up" those challenging his authority. The ruthlessness with which his Bedouin army carried out his orders culminated in the death of hundreds of guerillas and in the ironic spectacle of scores of them choosing to cross the River Jordan and surrender to the Israeli army, rather than fall into the hands of the Jordanian forces. The events of September 1970, and the mopping up thereafter, provided the *Fedayeen* with a shattering military setback and are often represented by the guerillas' foes as evidence of their final and ultimate defeat. Yet there is no reason to suppose that they will not re-emerge in full strength next year, or five or ten years hence, since their military resources, financial backing and, in particular, their manpower continue to exist in potential form.

Whether or not that potential is again realised depends largely on the attitudes of the Palestinian Arabs as a whole, which in turn will be determined by the alternatives open to them. It is in the interests, not only of the Palestinians themselves, but also of Israel, and all countries which have an interest in peace and stability in the Middle East, for practical alternatives to be provided, which are genuinely acceptable to the Palestinian Arabs. By seeking to understand the Palestinian case in the context of their subjective historical perspective, it may be concluded that the Palestinians will not accept piecemeal "refugee type" solutions, since they ignore what the

Palestinians consider to be their national rights. Their minimum desires will remain unfulfilled until they achieve self determination in their own land and take what they consider to be their rightful place among the family of nations.

The most recent attempt at describing a solution approximately in these terms is incorporated in King Hussein's plan for a federated kingdom, whereby the west bank and "any other Palestinian territories which are liberated and whose inhabitants desire to join it" (to be known as the Palestinian region, with Jerusalem as the regional capital) would form one of the two semi-autonomous regions of the United Arab Kingdom. Whether a modified form of self determination, short of full nationhood, will ultimately prove to be acceptable to the Palestinians is a matter for discussion and negotiation, primarily amongst the Palestinians themselves, although it must be doubted whether they will again accept Hashemite hegemony, after the experiences they have suffered at the hands of King Hussein. A more meritorious proposal along these lines, but one which is hardly likely to receive enthusiastic support from the king himself, would involve a replacement of the present monarchical absolutism with a system of representative government, either within a republican framework or with the dynasty being retained as a constitutional monarchy only.

The area known as Palestine, for which Britain assumed the mandatory responsibility shortly after the 1914-18 war, encompassed what is now Israel and the whole of the present kingdom of Jordan, including all its territory to the east of the river Jordan as well as the west bank. Shortly after assuming the mandate, Britain separated that part of Palestine lying to the east of the river Jordan from the rest, and re-named it Transjordan. Emir Abdullah of the Hashemite dynasty (whose father and elder brother ruled over the Hejaz on the Arabian peninsula until the Saudi conquest in 1925) left Arabia for Amman in 1921 and took over the effective administration of Transjordan, unopposed by the British, who shortly thereafter granted recognition to

his government. In this manner the Hashemite dynasty was grafted on to a country, which itself was artificially created by the British and which encompassed two culturally distinct Arab populations; the mostly nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples of the south, who spoke the dialect of the Arabian peninsula, and the mostly settled population of the north, who spoke the Syrian dialect and whose opposition to King Abdullah (he was proclaimed king in 1946 when his country achieved independence) was no less implacable than it is to his grandson today.

After the Arab/Israel war of 1948-1949, Abdullah granted full citizenship to both residents and refugees of the west bank (which was incorporated into Transjordan), and from that time to the present the Palestinians have formed the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the re-named Kingdom of Jordan. In the capital city of Amman alone (on the east bank), about three quarters of the 500,000 inhabitants are of Palestinian stock, there having been a steady migration of refugees from the west to the east bank over the last two decades. Consequently, the east bank is no longer identifiably Transjordanian in the political, social and economic connotation of a largely nomadic and semi-nomadic society with few and only small urban communities. The west bank, on the other hand, has tended to keep its Palestinian purity.

If Jordan had been ruled by a representative assembly and government, the Palestinian proportion of the population would have been reflected in the legislature and the executive. As it was (and still is), sovereignty resided exclusively with the monarch whose absolute power was exercised in the interests of the dynasty first and foremost, which inevitably led to increasingly violent clashes with the majority of the population, whose major pre-occupation remained the conflict with Israel. Periodically, quasi-democratic reforms were introduced in an attempt by Hussein to refashion the royal absolutism of Abdullah (who was assassinated in 1951 by a Palestinian) to fit evolving realities. Such reforms were, however, invariably accompanied by plots to over-

throw the monarchy, leading to the reimposition of martial law, including such measures as the proroguing of parliament, abolition of political parties, suspension of the constitution, and tightening of press censorship. The absolutism of Abdullah, who monopolised all political power while the British controlled Arab Legion retained military power, has been surpassed by his initially under rated grandson, who has effectively combined both established sources of power under his personal and direct control. The officer corps of the vastly expanded Jordanian armed forces is composed almost exclusively of loyalist southern east bank tribesmen. Since the foundation of the dynasty to the present day, political reliability has remained the overriding criterion for the army career establishment, a qualification which most Palestinians have proudly failed to obtain.

If King Hussein's recent proposals were to be re-drafted so as to rectify these structural short comings, their chances of success would be greatly improved! In the meantime, whatever the outcome of his present plan (which so far has been greeted with unanimous condemnation by the Palestinian guerillas, by Israel and by all the other Arab states, including the severing of diplomatic relations by Egypt), unless and until other nations accept the principle of Palestinian self determination, the Palestinians themselves will continue to look to the guerillas to prevent the imposition of any solution which does not fully take into account their national rights.

the "democratic Palestinian state" solution

Among the plethora of organisations pledged to the "liberation" of Palestine by armed struggle, there are many different and often contradictory views on the nature and form a "liberated" Palestine should take, and in particular on what should be done with the resident Jews. There are, however, two points on which there is unanimous agreement. First, Israel as an entity must be destroyed, and the necessarily violent struggle can only be successfully waged by an internal

guerilla movement, since Israel is bound to win in a conventional war ; and second, the new Palestinian entity, regardless of its political and social structure, must be Arab in character and be a full and equal member of the wider Arab nation. Inherent in both these points and stated explicitly by all the guerilla movements is the assertion that the Jews are a religion and possibly also a culture, but definitely not a nation and therefore not entitled to national rights within their own country.

The ideologies of the guerilla movements range, on the conventional political spectrum, from the most prominent El Fatah on the right (who avoid describing in any detail the nature of a liberated Palestine until "after the successful conclusion of the armed struggle") to the Marxist Leninist Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (one of several breakaway groups from George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) on the left, whose vision of the future Palestine will be of the nature of a "popular democracy" and "will be an organic part of an Arab federal state in this region." Several of the dozen or so liberation movements, including both El Fatah and the democratic front, while subscribing to the Palestinian national covenant which stipulates the right of self determination to the Palestinian Arab people, also adhere to the notion of a "democratic Palestinian state" which will enable "Palestinian Christians and Moslems to live with Jews, with equal rights and duties."

This notion of a "democratic state," as an alternative to the state of Israel, is often a source of genuine puzzlement to those who are acquainted with the political and social structure of Israel. The confusion is extended when the slogan is prefaced by the word "secular," which implies that Israel, as constituted, is a non-secular state. It is a fact that the religious authorities have a powerful and disproportionate say in determining such laws as those which regulate the provision of public transport on the Jewish sabbath, or those concerned with granting marriage licences, and this is a source of real grievance to the clear majority of the popula-

tion. This power is wielded because the National Religious Party holds the balance of power, with about 9 per cent of the parliamentary seats, in the coalition government. (By far the largest party in the coalition is "Mapai" (the Labour Party), with about 38 per cent of the national vote. Israel uses the proportional vote/party list system for parliamentary elections and every adult citizen, regardless of race or religion, is entitled to one vote.) Should the National Religious Party's political fortunes decline (as well they might if the pending proposals for electoral reform are passed) so too will the theocratic element in government.

Thus the source of power of the religious authorities is party political and not derived from any special status within the state, nor is its power inherent in the notion of a Jewish state, unless one mistakenly believes that the Jews of Israel share a mere religious identity rather than a national identity. Consequently, it does not require the dismantling of the state of Israel for the country to be governed on entirely secular lines. In fact, within the context of the Middle East, and to the dismay of the more orthodox Jews, Israel must rank as among the most secular states in the region. In the light of this, and according to the "one man, one vote" version of democracy, Israel as presently constituted could indeed qualify as a "secular democratic state." The meat of the issue is not, therefore, really about democracy or secularity, but rather about whether that part of Palestine which has been Israel since the armistice agreements of 1949 should contain a Jewish majority or an Arab majority.

In fact, amongst the liberation movements themselves, the notion of a "democratic state" has almost as many interpretations as it has supporters and there is also disagreement as to whether its use is essentially a tactical device (in propaganda terms it has been well received internationally as a shift from the previous position, espoused by Ahmed Shukairy, the former leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, who vowed to "drive the Jews into the sea"), or as an ultimate objective. Even as an ultimate

objective, whatever its envisaged form, it should not be confused with the once prominent idea of a bi-national state, since the guerilla movements do not recognise the Israeli Jews as constituting a nation. To the Democratic Front, the size of the Jewish population, in proportion to that of the Arabs, does not present an insurmountable problem, since their concept of democracy is not that of "one man, one vote," but rather one involving a "people's democratic régime." This, allegedly, will represent the "true" will of the people (eliminating the "bourgeois" practice of holding elections), and will avoid apprehension about the number of Jews, because numbers will not determine policy. (The Democratic Front appears ready to go further than any other movement to recognise the Jews to be a nation; but only within an Arab state. See *The Palestinian resistance* by Gerard Chaliand.) To El Fatah, the problem of relative numbers is a greater obstacle, but all appear to share the doubtful belief that there is a strong desire among Israeli Jews, especially those who originate from Arab countries, to return to their countries of origin having been misguided by Zionist deceit in the first place and coerced to remain. While, on the other hand, there will be a massive influx of Palestinian exiles from all corners of the earth after liberation is achieved.

One cannot help but conclude that this extremely naïve and optimistic hope of the liberation movements is mere wishful thinking. There is no evidence to suggest that there is anything resembling a mass movement among Israeli Jews to emigrate, and if there were, they would leave now, as they are quite free to do; they do not need to wait until the "liberation." While Israeli citizens are under no compulsion to remain in Israel, if any did indeed wish to return to their Arab countries of origin it is highly unlikely that they would be made welcome. Even the Israeli "black panthers" (a small but growing movement), who call for a fairer deal for Jews of oriental descent (a majority of the population), do not challenge the existence of the state or express any desire to leave it. Furthermore, the "country of origin" of nearly half of

TABLE IX
POPULATION OF ISRAEL BY POPULATION GROUPS. END OF 1970

Moslems	328,600
Christians	75,500
Druzes and others	35,900
total non-Jewish population	440,000
Jews	2,561,400
total population	3,001,400

Source: statistical abstract, 1968 and 1971.

TABLE X
JEWISH POPULATION OF ISRAEL BY CONTINENT OF BIRTH. 1970

place	number	%
Asia/Africa	674,600	26.3
Europe/Americas	704,100	27.5
total outside Israel	1,378,700	53.8
Israel	1,182,800	46.2

PLACE OF BIRTH OF THE FATHERS OF JEWS BORN IN ISRAEL

place	number	%
Asia/Africa	555,600	47.0
Europe/Americas	423,800	35.8
Israel	203,400	17.2
TOTAL	1,182,000	100.0

JEWS BORN OUTSIDE ISRAEL BY COUNTRY

<i>Asia/Africa:</i>	
Turkey	44,800
Iraq	114,500
Yemen and Southern Yemen	58,000
Iran	51,300
the Maghreb	288,400
Libya	30,900
Egypt	34,000
other	52,700
TOTAL	674,600

<i>Europe/Americas:</i>	
USSR, Poland and Romania	499,600
Bulgaria and Greece	42,800
other	161,700
TOTAL	704,100

Source: statistical abstract of Israel, 1971.

the two and a half million Israeli Jews is Israel itself, the place of their birth (see Table X opposite). The public retreat from their previous advocacy of what amounted to genocide, and its replacement with the bizarre belief that the problem of the size of the Jewish population will wither away of its own accord, are two sides of the same coin, which denies national self determination to the Jewish people of Israel but, latterly, will grant them the status of a tolerated minority within the Arab homeland with some form of cultural autonomy. Since the realisation of this vision requires the violent destruction of Israel as an entity and since the Jews of Israel will resist any such attempt, virtually to a man, its accomplishment will necessitate the annihilation of the overwhelming majority of the Jews of the area. Whether intended or not, the retreat from a genocidal solution is merely verbal.

However wide the gulf between them, the factor common to such Zionists as Golda Meir, the Israeli prime minister, and the Palestinian guerilla movements, is their persistent and blind refusal to acknowledge the national rights claimed by the other party; but both the Palestinian Arabs and the Israeli Jews, while denying the legitimacy of each other's claim, quite patently consider themselves to be a nation, to be entitled to nationhood and self determination, and will settle for nothing less.

the bi-national state

Prior to the decision of the general assembly of the UN, of 29 November, 1947, to partition Palestine (excluding Transjordan which was already independent) into a Jewish state and an Arab state (Jerusalem was to be administered by an international régime under the supervision of the UN), there had been a number of proposals which advocated the creation of a bi-national state. With the exception of a section of the Zionist left wing, however, all such proposals were rejected out of hand by Jews and Arabs alike. On 14 May, 1948 the British completed their withdrawal from Palestine,

thus finally ending the mandatory régime. On the same day David Ben Gurion (shortly to become prime minister) proclaimed Jewish Palestine to be the state of Israel, and almost immediately armies from the surrounding Arab countries entered the designated Arab Palestinian state, with the intention of invading and destroying the Jewish state. The fighting continued until the end of that year, and bilateral armistices were signed during the course of the next seven months between Israel on the one hand and Egypt, Transjordan, Lebanon and Syria on the other.

Although suffering military setbacks in the initial phases of the war, the Israelis resisted the invading Arab armies and then took the offensive. When hostilities ended, the Israelis had captured a total area of 6,400 square kilometres from what was to have been Arab Palestine, increasing the size of the Jewish state as proposed by the UN from 14,500 square kilometres to about 20,850 square kilometres and thus reducing the territory of the proposed Arab state from 11,800 square kilometres to about 5,450 square kilometres. A Palestinian Arab state never in fact came into existence. Of the remaining area, Transjordan annexed all the territory which lay on the west bank of the river Jordan, and, in April 1950, the kingdom changed its name to Jordan. The eastern section of Jerusalem was integrated into Jordan, while the western section was incorporated into Israel, with the armistice line being indicated by barbed wire which cut through built up areas, streets and even rooftops. That part of the proposed state situated on the Mediterranean coast and known as the Gaza Strip was never integrated into Egypt proper, but remained under Egyptian military administration for 19 years (except for the period from November 1956 to March 1957 when it was occupied by Israeli troops) until in June 1967 its administration was taken over by the Israeli military.

Since 1949 the world has witnessed on the one hand 23 years of Israeli nationhood, and on the other conditions facing the Palestinian Arabs which have caused

an even deeper feeling of national identity and yearning for national status. The chances, therefore, of either people being prepared to sacrifice their nationhood, or prospects thereof, in exchange for some vague notion of bi-nationality (and risk becoming another Cyprus or Northern Ireland) are even more remote today than they were in the 'forties. Nevertheless, the proposal for a bi-national state continues to crop up from time to time, usually espoused by well intentioned people in the West; but, as is so often the case with attempted compromise solutions, the proposal receives support from neither side and is anathema to both. Indeed, until the legitimacy of the struggles of both peoples for national status is finally and universally conceded, the prospects for social change within Israel, within Palestinian society and within the Middle East as a whole, will remain relatively remote.

an independent Arab Palestine

As long as the leaders of both nations are able successfully to urge their constituency to allow them to postpone the search for solutions to internal differences, potential domestic conflicts within each society will continue to stay submerged, and this is bound to subdue the dynamics of change. The respective calls to "close ranks" in the face of the threat to national existence, will go on paying the intended dividend until those threats finally cease. The proponents of a bi-national state would also do well to acknowledge that as an ultimate objective, their proposed solution would more likely be realised if, as a first step, independent nationhood were to be granted and universally recognised for each people. To this end a Palestinian Arab state should, in the first instance, be created next to Israel. (Without wishing to pronounce on its precise boundaries, such a state would be composed of the west bank and the Gaza Strip.) In the course of time, it may well be that initial mistrust and suspicion will be replaced by a confederal or even federal arrangement, which might ultimately give way to a bi-national state, should that become the true wish of the citizens of both states.

What is required, at this time, is a public declaration and genuine commitment, on the part of the Israeli government and other governments of the world, to recognise the national rights of the Palestinian Arabs and the will to co-operate with them in the establishment of a state of Palestine, truly independent of colonial and neo-colonial influence. Such a commitment by countries outside the area should explicitly include a declaration to the effect that such a move must in no way compromise the independence and sovereignty of the state of Israel, and neither need it. Until now, any proposal mentioning the national rights of the Palestinians has invariably met with a fear provoked blanket rejection in Israeli circles, since the implication is nearly always that Palestinian national rights are *ipso facto* exclusive of Jewish national rights and thus require Israel's elimination.

The Palestinians of the west bank have, through necessity, co-operated with the Israeli authorities in the provision of basic services and the like, so that everyday life may continue to function. Such co-operation has not, however, compromised their political independence from either the Israeli authorities or from both the *Fedayeen* and the Jordanian government, as was evidenced in their decision to reject the advice of the latter two parties by participating in the municipal elections which took place early in 1972. A combined international initiative, supervised by the UN, would guarantee for the Palestinians an honest hope for the future and would release them from the necessity of giving tacit support to the activities of the guerilla movements, whose methods and objectives are in effect a prescription for further squalor, misery and fear for all peoples of the Middle East. With the march of time and the increasing realisation of the concrete existence of an independent Palestinian state, the guerilla leadership, having gradually lost all trace of a following, would finally be forced to abandon its own version of the struggle and lend its support to the construction of the new state. The realisation of Palestinian nationhood and the disbanding of the guerilla movements (thus removing a major threat to the survival of the neigh-

bouring Arab governments) would leave Egypt, Jordan and Syria with the sole and unambiguous objective of recovering the lands lost to Israel in the 1967 war. The atmosphere of co-operation engendered in the building of a Palestinian state, together with the removal of a major threat to the existence of the state of Israel and to the survival of the neighbouring Arab governments, should create a climate in which outstanding territorial claims, divorced from the threat to national existence, could be more easily resolved. It would be unwise at this stage to attempt to describe the nuts and bolts of this kind of solution, since these are matters best discussed and decided upon by the peoples directly involved, once the principles have been firmly accepted. The nature of the relationship between the west bank and the Gaza Strip and whether there should be some territorial link between them; the nature of the relationship between the new Palestinian state and Jordan and Egypt on the one hand, and Israel on the other; the focal and particularly delicate issue of the status of Jerusalem; the political and social structure of the new state of Palestine itself; whether or not demilitarised zones should be established between any two states in the area and if so how these should be guaranteed; the precise details of the borders of each state; the use of the Jordan River water for irrigation purposes and rights of access to the sea through neighbouring countries; trading patterns, customs unions and the status of diplomatic relations: these and other issues all need to be resolved, but are best done through agreement among the people directly involved once the fundamental obstacles to seeking solutions on matters such as these are eliminated. That is, their resolution can only follow, not precede, the universal recognition and the implementation of the national rights of the two protagonists.

client states ?

To those who maintained that Egypt was no more than a puppet state of the Soviet Union, the expulsion of Soviet military advisers and personnel (estimated to number some 20,000) as of 17 July, 1972, came as

a bolt out of the blue. However, although the timing of the announcement and the method of expulsion could not have been foreseen, that the relationship the Soviet Union was increasingly imposing upon Egypt was foredoomed, was entirely predictable by those aware of the history of Arab resistance to colonialism. Until there is genuine peace, however, Egypt will need to continue to rely on Soviet support. Already some of the fences are being mended, but Egypt will certainly not allow a repeat of the previous Soviet domination.

In much the same way as Israel and her supporters often held the Soviet Union primarily responsible for what they consider to be Egyptian intransigence, so the Arabs and their allies often hold that Israel is a mere American client and that, consequently, the US could, if it wanted, force Israel to make any required concession. This is an equally mistaken representation of the Israel/America relationship. In fact, the ties between Israel and the US are even more tenuous than those between Egypt and the Soviet Union. Although prone to complain of its insufficiency from time to time, since the six day war Israel has received from the USA as much diplomatic and military support as it could have realistically hoped for. This military support has been confined to the supply of weaponry and combat aircraft, however, and although the US has been increasingly generous in the last two or three years in its response to requests for military hardware, the Israeli government has never asked for, nor has it received, an actual presence of American military personnel in its country; nor is Israel linked to the USA through any military alliance such as NATO or CENTO. There does not even exist between them the equivalent of the Egypt/Soviet 15 year treaty of friendship and co-operation (which was signed on 27 May, 1971 and which is still in force, despite the expulsion). Thus Israel has no treaty obligation towards the US, nor is the latter able to bring pressure to bear upon the Israeli government through the threat or organisation of internal opposition or subversion. In all these respects the Soviet Union was better placed towards Egypt.

What all this indicates is that, whereas both Egypt and Israel rely heavily upon the two superpowers for support in their respective policies, the influence each superpower has in restraining its ally is limited. Neither Egypt nor Israel will compromise on what each considers to be its vital national interest, merely because its powerful ally wishes it to, and if necessary each is prepared to sever links and look elsewhere for support, or go it alone, rather than sacrifice its hard earned independence. Once again the evidence leads to the conclusion that the search for a solution must lie in the Middle East itself, and not with the superpowers nor even with the United Nations. It is no less mistaken to think that the prospects of a settlement will be seriously affected because the US presidential election is over, than it was merely because the Russian military was expelled from Egypt. Although such countries can play an important catalytic rôle, they can only do so successfully if they recognise that they cannot impose a solution, and that any attempt to do so may prove counter-productive.

catastrophic alternatives

The alternatives to a solution based on the principles outlined earlier are, broadly, either the continuation of the *status quo* or an escalation of warlike activities. The consequences of the latter are self evident and are bound to lead to a repetition of hostilities at a later stage, and so on *ad infinitum*, unless infinity is preceded by a nuclear explosion, the effects of which are unlikely to respect territorial or even continental boundaries. A *status quo* solution also works against the interests of all peoples in the area. To Egypt, Jordan and Syria it means the continued humiliation, not to mention economic loss, of having large chunks of their territories occupied by a foreign power, an humiliation which is shared by all other Arab countries. To Israel it means maintaining a perpetually high level of vigilance, with the consequent strain upon the economy, on morale and particularly, on civilian labour (nearly all Israeli civilians are in the army reserve and, besides

having to be ready for active service at all times, they are each required to spend a minimum of four weeks every year with their platoon). Furthermore, in the absence of a settlement, Israel would finally have to decide whether to grant full civil and political rights to the one million Palestinian Arabs living on the west bank and the Gaza Strip. To do so would not only fundamentally alter the demographic structure of the state, but would also require the integration of these territories into Israel, which is hardly likely to improve the prospects for peace.

Conversely, were she to reject this course, Israel would be creating a permanent second class citizenship for the Palestinians, which would fundamentally alter the democratic nature of its social and political institutions, a consequence that would deny all that Israel has ever claimed to stand for. The *status quo* would mean that all countries concerned must continue to devote ridiculously high proportions of their annual budgets to defence expenditure, instead of increasing the proportions spent on developing their respective economies and providing badly needed social services; in the absence of which, social unrest is liable to spread, thus aggravating the problems still further. It would also require them to continue in a quasi-client status to the two superpowers (allowing for the occasional fluctuation in relationships) by having to bargain their sovereignty in exchange for military hardware. The perpetuation of the *status quo* will only perpetuate Palestinian despair.

Provided the initiative is not delayed for much longer (and King Hussein's plan could still be salvaged as a basis for discussion), the occupation by Israel of what, in 1947, was envisaged as being an "Arab Palestine State," may paradoxically be conducive to the achievement of the solution as outlined above. Prior to June 1967, knowledge of the other party was disseminated almost exclusively by the respective propaganda machines. The Israeli occupation of the west bank, and Jerusalem in particular, has forced Arabs and Jews to live, work, trade and even meet socially with one another in the normal course of every day activities.

Consequently, the balance of power between the propaganda machines and personal contact in influencing the attitudes of one people towards the other has been tilted more in favour of the latter. Having lived together for some time in relative harmony, the two major parties to the conflict are less likely today to see one another as vicious terrorisers of defenceless women and innocent babies, and are thus more liable to be receptive to the rights claimed by the other.

Munich and the letter bombs

From the beginning of the Israeli occupation of the west bank and Gaza, the aim of the military government to "normalise" life in the territories has been pursued through a policy mixture of the proverbial carrot and stick. That this policy has met with increasing success is beyond doubt and is evidenced by the fact that there has been a virtual halt in organised guerilla action in the west bank for about two years, and in the Gaza Strip for at least the last six months. This relative quiet is sometimes misrepresented as evidence that the Palestinians are quite happy with the way things are, but this certainly is not an interpretation which any Palestinian would offer. Rather, it is evidence of, on the one hand, the efficiency of the military government, and, on the other, a growing attitude in Palestinian circles that violence has got them nowhere in the past, and that, until their future is determined, violence should be suspended and other avenues explored.

This explanation may appear, on the surface, to be at odds with the murder of the Israeli athletes during the Olympic Games, and the start of a new era of violence by the Black September group which has continued with the spate of letter bombs being mailed to Israelis, Jewish organisations and individual Jews. It is important to recognise, however, that all these acts of violence are being perpetrated in Europe and not in the Middle East. It is a falsification of the evidence and the reasoning to suggest that the activities of Black September are an expression of the current desperation of

the Palestinian people. It may be that if and when the present uncertainty concerning their status is replaced by an attempted solution which they do not accept, they may again encourage acts of sabotage and other forms of guerilla activity in Israel and the occupied territories. However, the certain misery which was their fate from 1948 to 1967 has now been superseded by a situation of fluidity which could work to their advantage, and consequently it is a mistake to describe their present situation as more desperate than it was before 1967. The current acts of violence in Europe are more correctly explained as an act of desperation on the part of Black September, or any other group perpetrating them, precisely because they are losing ground among the mass of Palestinians in the occupied territories, who have suspended their support for violent resistance hoping alternative policies may prove more productive.

emerging Israeli divisions

The uncertainties and emerging divisions among the Palestinians have their counterpart in Israel. In the last year or so, differences of opinion among government ministers and among the population at large on the future of the occupied territories and related issues, have begun to come into the open. The debate is sharpening as the 1973 general election approaches, and while the succession to the premiership remains undetermined (Golda Meir has announced her intention to retire); other potentially divisive issues, which have remained submerged throughout Israel's history, have also recently appeared on the agenda for national debate for the first time. Perhaps the best example of this is the case of the Christian Arab villagers of Birit and Ikrim who were evacuated from their homes (on the border with Lebanon) during the 1948 fighting with the promise of being allowed to return at the end of the war.

Although the villagers have always been loyal Israeli citizens, the promise was not kept (allegedly for security reasons) and the issue was forgotten until they called upon the Israeli government to honour

their pledge in early 1972. The division of opinion in the cabinet was leaked to the press and was reflected sharply in the population as a whole. The demonstrations which followed defied traditional alliances and Israel witnessed the unprecedented spectacle of Jew, Christian and Moslem marching hand in hand in protest. One of the tragic consequences of the Munich massacre was that it revived the Jewish fear of genocide and put the embryonic Jewish/Arab civil rights movement into cold storage and dashed all hopes of success for the villagers. (That Black September dedicated the Munich operation to the villagers of Birat and Ikrim, who were among the first to condemn the massacre, was a sad irony.) Inevitably, however, issues of a similar nature are again coming to the fore and will remain alive at least until the general election is over.

the time is ripe

The *rapprochement* between China and America, the series of negotiations between America and the Soviet Union on a wide range of issues, the agreement between East and West Germany, the prospects of a negotiated peace settlement in Vietnam, the beginnings of a dialogue between North and South Korea with the declared intention of ultimate reunification, the pending European security conference, are all signs that the world is moving from an era of confrontation to an era of dialogue. There is a grave danger that in years to come, historians will reflect on this period and single out the Middle East as the one area which failed to seize the opportunity of *détente*. The international climate now is more propitious than it has ever been, and possibly than it will be again for some time, for the main protagonists of this conflict to sort out their differences in a peaceful way. Established positions are less entrenched in this period of fluidity and uncertainty than at any time in the last 25 years, and the time is ripe for the Israelis and the Palestinians mutually to recognise and implement the national rights claimed by both peoples, lest the opportunity should pass for all time.

TABLE VI
REFUGEES IN JORDAN (EAST BANK) IN 1968

refugees before 5 June, 1967	292,586
registered refugees on the west bank who have fled to the east	162,081
registered refugees in Gaza who have fled to the east bank	23,702
displaced persons from the west	222,108
displaced persons from Gaza Strip	25,353
TOTAL	725,830

Source: United Nations.

TABLE VII
PALESTINIANS NOT DEPENDENT ON AGENCY

Jordan	50,000
Lebanon	50,000
Kuwait	60,000
Iraq	10,000
Syria	10,000
UAR/Libya	20,000
TOTAL	200,000

Notes: 1) These figures are a minimum estimate and do not include Palestinians living in western Europe or North America. 2) A large number of these Palestinian expatriates occupy important positions in society, in business, trade and the liberal professions.

Source: *The Palestinian resistance*, Gerard Chaliand (Pelican Original, 1972).

TABLE VIII
POPULATION ESTIMATES OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP

west bank	610,300
Gaza Strip and North Sinai	372,400
TOTAL	982,700

Notes: 1) These figures are estimates for 31 December, 1970 and are based on the September 1967 census. 2) The figures exclude the population of the Sha'afat refugee camp since it falls under the jurisdiction of Jerusalem. 3) Population of East Jerusalem Arabs at end of 1967 was estimated at about 66,000.

Source: statistical abstract of Israel, 1971.

young fabian group

The Young Fabian Group exists to give socialists not over 30 years of age an opportunity to carry out research, discussion and propaganda. It aims to help its members publish the results of their research, and so make a more effective contribution to the work of the Labour movement. It therefore welcomes all those who have a thoughtful and radical approach to political matters.

The group is autonomous, electing its own committee. It co-operates closely with the Fabian Society which gives financial and clerical help. But the group is responsible for its own policy and activity, subject to the constitutional rule that it can have no declared political policy beyond that implied by its commitment to democratic socialism.

The group publishes pamphlets written by its members, arranges fortnightly meetings in London, and holds day and weekend schools.

Enquiries about membership should be sent to the Secretary, Young Fabian Group, 11 Dartmouth Street, London, SW1H 9BN; telephone 01-930 3077.

the author

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The sources and references he has used for this pamphlet include: *Palestine, the Arabs and Israel: the search for justice*, Henry Cattau, 1969. *Israel and the Arabs*, Maxime Rodinson, 1968. *A short history of the Middle East*, George E. Kirk, 1964. *A history of the Jewish people*, James Parkes, 1964. *The Israel/Arab reader*, edited by Walter Laquer, 1969. *The Palestinian resistance*, Gerard Chaliand, 1972. *Middle East politics: the military dimension*, J. C. Hurewitz, 1969. *Whose land?* A history of the peoples of Palestine, James Parkes, 1970. *Military review*, "Events of Jordanian Civil War, September 1970," Neville Brown, 1971. *Articles on the Arab slogan of a democratic state*, Y. Harkabi, 1970.

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