



THE LINK

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ARAB-ISRAELI ENCOUNTER IN JAFFA

The intensity of the emotions that surround the Arab-Zionist conflict makes for strong partisanship. Normally balanced persons come to champion one side as entirely right, seeing only intransigent evil on the other.

At the same time, there are observers who feel that both Palestinians and Israelis are equally human, equally Semitic and equally the victims of circumstances that have pitted them against each other in ways that the average citizen on either side would never have chosen. It is this view that the following modest tale trends to corroborate.

Just south of the mosque on Hassan Bey Street in the Manshiya section of Jaffa bordering on Tel Aviv is a gracious middle class house. Up until early 1948, when events preceding the establishment of Israel precipitated their flight, it was the home of the Cherifs, including 12-year-old Abdullah.

Twenty-one years later a strange set of circumstances permitted Abdullah, now a successful executive in an international firm in Bahrein, to re-visit his childhood home. His wife's people live in a West Bank town occupied by the Israelis since June, 1967. She was granted permission in 1969 to go back for a brief reunion and bring her family. That included Abdullah and the children, for all of whom she also negotiated a police permit to drive down to Jaffa.

Naturally, the first place they went to there was the house on Hassan Bey Street, a little run down but otherwise unchanged.

They entered the front gate and mounted the steps. Abdullah knocked and the Jewish lady now residing there opened the door. He explained in Arabic that he wanted his family to see where he had spent his childhood. Immediately, also in Arabic, she invited them in. She said she had grown up in Beirut, remembered the good neighborliness between Jew and Arab there and welcomed the chance for an old-style conversation.

She brought Arab coffee for the adults and juice for the children. When the little boy asked to go to the bathroom she offered to take him.

"That won't be necessary", said Abdullah. "I know the way—down the hall and to the left."

It was this last simple incident that seemed most of all to make her aware of conflicting claims of ownership.

"It's a fine house", she said, complimenting his forebears. "Well built, too. And they say that it's good luck to

live here. The two families that preceded us both moved to better places."

"When my folks left, we had only charity tents to go to,—out in the desert," Abdullah observed. "But perhaps a little bit of luck was with us, too. My older brother Mohammed won a scholarship to the University of Syracuse. By working nights, week ends and vacations he was able to bring the next brother, Yusuf, then me, to the States for an education. We all have good jobs now. But we still think of this house as home. I do wish it could be refurbished the way it used to be."

"You can never make the old new," she replied. "And friends who have become enemies can never be friends again."

Abdullah was puzzled. She had seemed so genuinely friendly herself. Was she simply quoting some old adage? If so, he wishes he had left her with one of many other adages, Muslim or Jewish, that bespeak the importance of renewal of friendship.

He'd like to return and talk to her again. However, though his wife can get a permit to re-visit, he can't. Neither can most Palestinians.

I've changed names in this story simply to protect the privacy of the "Cherifs" and to avoid exposing them to any misunderstanding. But the story is true. Perhaps the changing of names makes it truer, for it suggests that the crux of the Palestine tragedy includes others like them and like the present resident of their former home—decent, neighborly folk with conflicting claims to the same land.

There's one important aspect of this story, however, which is regrettably not typical. Unable to return to his original home, Abdullah still has a home of his own to go to. This is not the case with hundreds of thousands of other refugees (particularly those from agricultural communities) now scattered in slums, tents, caves and shacks in surrounding countries. And the present lady resident, if she were required to leave the house on Hassan Bey St., could still return to Beirut's prosperous Jewish community and chat again in Arabic with her Christian, Muslim and Jewish friends. This would not be true of many Jews if forced to leave land officially registered with the U.N. in the names of Palestinian owners. No matter who are given the right to stay on, the needs of the others displaced will be a challenge to the ingenuity—and the generosity—of the rest of the world.

—L. H. W.

REPORTS ARAB/ISRAELI YOUTH CRAVE PEACE

The International Students' Cultural Organization is planning to send an international youth delegation to the Middle East later this year to continue to study the complexities of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Due to the uniqueness of this group—as a truly international student community—it is believed that its members have more than average information and insight for formulating reasonable and creative suggestions for the improvement of Arab-Israeli relations.

Motivated by these ideas, Sudhangshu B. Karmakar, Chairman of ISCO, has just visited some of the Middle Eastern countries briefly to make contacts with the different youth organizations there and seek their cooperation for the projected tour of ten ISCO leaders.

In Cairo he was welcomed by members of the General Union of the Students of the U.A.R., who showed their enthusiasm by their willingness to arrange meetings between ISCO's delegation and high dignitaries in Egypt, both inside and outside the government. He also met with Dr. Safieddin Abul Ezz, Minister of Youth of the U.A.R., who also promised help and cooperation.

In Beirut, he was introduced to the Palestinian Student's Organization by PLO officials. He also exchanged views with the Palestinian students who had previously taken over the Jordanian Embassy. They, too, showed an interest in his proposed role of youth in developing a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli problem.

In Jerusalem he stayed at the Hebrew University where he met with members of the National Council of Students and discussed the necessity of promoting understanding between the young people of Israel and the Arab countries. The students in Tel-Aviv and Haifa shared this view, and further requested that ISCO exert its influence to arrange direct meetings with all the parties involved.

"I cannot begin to communicate the depth of anguish felt on both sides," he tells us. "I had hoped to discover—if not an outright optimism—at least a mutual desire to exchange ideas and thus work towards a common understanding of all grievances and all hopes. I have been encouraged by the sincere interest I encountered, and the total commitment by all to cooperate with us in this endeavour.

"There is a trend in thinking in Egypt that any attempt to destroy Israel may invite more misery to the people, the country and the Arab world in general. There exists a longing for peace and justice. My impressions of the Palestinian students is that they may seem to be distrustful of all suggestions that the Israelis are willing to live in peace, limit the size of their state, and refrain from further enlarging their borders.

"On the Israeli side, the strength of Israel was identified with personal security and with the survival of the Jewish people. Any proposed change in policy which could be interpreted as weakening the military capacity of Israel was resisted by many as an invitation to suicide.

"Each side is filled with what seems to be an absolute distrust of the other. The Israelis fear that the Arabs do not accept their existence, will not make peace with Israel and could not be trusted to keep the peace if one were

agreed on. The Arabs fear that the Israelis will not relinquish any of the Arab lands now occupied and in the future will demand more.

"At the heart of the peace-making problem is the challenge to erase these two great fears."

EASTERN ORTHODOX YOUTH GROUP SETS NEXT ASSEMBLY IN U.S.A.

The Executive Committee of Syndesmos (the World Alliance of Orthodox Youth Organizations) has voted to hold its next assembly in mid-July, 1971 in Boston, Massachusetts. Some 120 participants are expected, and applications for membership from a number of American movements will underline the increasingly international character of Syndesmos.

ECUMENICAL APPOINTEE HAS SERVED IN JERUSALEM

The first joint faculty appointment by a Protestant Divinity School and a Catholic Divinity School has been made by Union Theological Seminary, the largest interdenominational seminary in America, and Woodstock College, the oldest Jesuit theological seminary in America. This announcement has been made public by the presidents of the two schools. The Reverend Raymond E. Brown, S.S., a distinguished Catholic scholar in the field of New Testament and one of the first Roman Catholics active in ecumenical dialogue with the World Council of Churches, is beginning his full duties as Professor of Biblical Studies in both faculties next July.

The work to be done by the joint professor each year will be determined as a result of consultation between the biblical departments of the two schools. Students of both institutions will have access to all of Father Brown's classes with the approval of their respective deans. He will share all benefits accruing to professors at Union and Woodstock. The inter-institutional nature of the appointment is further illustrated by the fact that the funds for Union's share in the joint appointment are contributed by Auburn Theological Seminary, a Presbyterian institution which became associated with the interdenominational Union Seminary in 1939.

Father Brown was Fellow of the American Schools of Oriental Research in 1958-59 when he was sent to the Arab sector of Jerusalem to prepare a concordance of the unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls at the Palestine Museum. In the past he has served as Honorary Trustee of the American Schools of Oriental Research and as Vice President of the Catholic Biblical Association. As an ecumenical leader, he was the Catholic biblical speaker at the Protestant-Roman Catholic Colloquium at Harvard in 1963. He addressed a plenary session of the Fourth World Conference of Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches (Montreal, 1963)—the first Catholic ever to be invited to do so. He has been appointed by the American Bishops to be one of the ten Catholics in the National Lutheran-Catholic Dialogues that began in 1965. He is also one of the three editors of *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*—the first major modern Catholic commentary on the whole Bible in English.

CHURCH STATISTICS FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

We are so frequently asked about the number of Christians in the Middle East that we wish we could say that our own "guesstimate" of 12,534,000 is an indisputable head count. There are many factors which could lead others to come up with an entirely different figure, however.

What, for instance, is the *extent* of the Middle East? Does it include Ethiopia? In terms of church history and doctrine, yes! The Ethiopic Church, whose sovereign is called "the Lion of Judah," is part of the historic "non-Chalcedonian Church" once headed up in Antioch and Alexandria. We therefore include Ethiopia in our count, but similar reasoning could also bring into the picture other areas we've omitted, chiefly Greece, Iran and North Africa West of Egypt.

And who is "in the Middle East"? Our figures include Lebanese and Syrians who reside elsewhere ("in Diaspora") but still own property, and have the vote, in their native heath. They also include Palestinians who wish to return to their homes but cannot.

Again, *what* is a "Christian"? In the Middle East, the *millet* system calls any one by that name if he was born into a Christian community. Other figures, on the other hand, count only budget-subscribing, church-supporting members as active Christians. Also there are, as in the rural sections of the Nile valley, churchless Christian groups for whom statistics are all but impossible to secure.

The following round numbers (arranged more or less geographically) mostly strike an average between high and low claims. Even the lowest figures (about 25% less than these) indicate a sizeable body of believers, and other tables go as much as 50% higher than the following. The parentheses indicate the major regions of concentration:

Ethiopic Orthodox (Ethiopia)	5,000,000
Coptic Orthodox (Egypt)	4,000,000
Coptic Catholic (Egypt)	75,000
Syrian Orthodox (throughout M.E.) . . .	70,000
Syrian Catholic (throughout M.E.) . . .	90,000
Maronite (Lebanon and Diaspora)	885,000
Nestorian (Iraq and Diaspora)	160,000
Chaldean (Iraq and Diaspora)	170,000
Greek or Eastern Orthodox	583,000
Melkite or Greek Catholic (including Diaspora)	333,000
Armenian Orthodox (including Diaspora)	760,000
Armenian Catholic (including Diaspora)	175,000
"Latin" Roman Catholic (incl. 50,000 in Ethiopia)	98,000
Protestant (resident communicants) . . .	135,000
Total of "Christians" in "Middle East"	12,534,000

The casualness of the Orthodox churches toward quantitative measurements of religious strength is a handicap in trying to compile tables like the above in any significant way. At the same time, the two-fold roots of this casualness have their inspiring aspects.

First of all, to the Orthodox the true strength of the church is not quantitative but qualitative. It rests not in the *numbers* of the faithful but in their relationship with one another and with God—in the degree of their *sobornost'*, or harmonious total fellowship in the Spirit.

Secondly, Orthodox worship stresses oneness with those whose earthly life has ended (yet who constitute a present "cloud of witnesses") and with generations yet unborn (who, as Father Alexis Khomiakov expresses it, are in God's care, even though "He has not yet called them out of non-existence into existence.") Hence Christians who are now alive on earth are only a tiny portion of the Church's eternal membership and today's statistics thus lack sufficient over-all significance for top-priority research.

Book Added to AMEU's List

THE EVASIVE PEACE, by John H. Davis,
140 pp. New World Press, New York. \$2.50.
Our Price \$2.10.

FIVE-YEAR OIL-ACCORD SUMMARY

Twenty-three oil companies and six oil producing countries in the Persian Gulf signed a five-year agreement in Teheran on February 14 which stabilizes the financial arrangements and the supply of crude oil from the Gulf until the end of 1975 and will yield the countries an estimated additional revenue of nearly \$12 billion for the period. The states who signed the agreement are Abu Dhabi, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The negotiations and conclusions were covered by the news media daily and at length. We think, however, you may find the following summary helpful.

Principal provisions of the agreement are:

- Stabilization of the tax rate for the Gulf crude exports at 55%.
- A uniform increase of 35¢ per barrel in the posted price* of all crudes exported from Gulf terminals.
- An upward inflation adjustment in the posted price of 2½% effective June 1, 1971 and on the first of each of the years 1973 through 1975.
- A further 5¢ per barrel increase in the posted price on these same four dates.
- Establishment of a new system for fixing the posted prices of Gulf crudes between 40° and 30° API gravity, with each present posted price increased ½¢ per barrel for each degree such crude is less than 40° API.
- The elimination of the OPEC allowances and the ½¢ per barrel marketing allowance.

As a result of the Teheran agreement, the per barrel revenues to the Middle East signatory governments will rise about 30 cents above the 95 cents per barrel take achieved in the November 1970 agreement, bringing total additional revenues to the six Gulf states of some \$1.4 billion. This compares with estimated total oil revenues in 1970 for these states of about \$4.0 billion. By 1975, the additional government take increases to 50 cents per barrel, resulting in a total average per barrel take of \$1.45 and generating additional revenues in that year of about \$3.5 billion.

Prior to the agreement, the demands for higher revenues by the various governments of OPEC (Organiza-

tion of Petroleum Exporting Countries, including Abu Dhabi, Algeria, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela) had been escalating. Demands and settlements in one OPEC country encouraged further claims by that country or demands by other OPEC members. At the December 1970 meeting of OPEC, the organization passed resolutions calling for a general increase in the posted price, a minimum tax rate of 55% and the initiation of negotiations with the companies by January 12, 1971. Some countries raised threats of oil embargoes if their demands were not met. In subsequent negotiations in Teheran, the oil companies sought to establish long-term financial stabilization and security of supply, assurances which were provided in the February 14 agreement.

Leading the negotiating team for the oil companies were George Piercy of Jersey Standard and Lord Strathalmond of BP. Negotiations began in Teheran on January 19 and were concluded on February 14 with the signing. Separate negotiations are expected to take place soon

between the companies and the OPEC countries exporting crude from the Mediterranean. —D. L. S.

* Posted price—the price on which the oil companies pay taxes, not necessarily the price for which the oil sells.

TOWARD ISLAMIC UNDERSTANDING

Few Westerners have any basic appreciation of either the Muslims or their Islamic contributions to modern culture. Esso Libya has newly produced two helps toward overcoming this ignorance. One is a 38-page booklet entitled *The Islamic Heritage*. 57 illustrations, mostly in color, deal with Muslim pioneering in architecture, engineering, navigation, astronomy, medicine, horticulture, crafts, metallurgy, calligraphy, literature, music and philosophy. A 23-minute sound-and-color film, *Gift of Islam*, deals entertainingly and informatively with the same themes. For information on their availability without charge, contact Esso Middle East, Room 2001, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10020 or Telephone (212) 974-2378.

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aims at maintaining contacts among Americans who believe that friendship with the people of the Middle East is essential to world peace, who would contribute to this goal by spreading understanding of the history, values, religions, culture and economic conditions of the Middle East, and who would—in this context—press for greater fairness, consistency and integrity in the U.S. policy toward that area.

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John V. Chapple, Ph.D. Candidate, Columbia University—(v.p.)

Bertram C. Cooper, Editor and freelance writer;

John H. Davis, Former Commissioner General UNRWA; International Consultant;

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John M. Sutton, Executive Director;

Mrs. D. Siddall, Administrative Assistant.

All correspondence should be addressed to Room 538, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York 10027.

BOOKS AT A DISCOUNT

Uri Avnery, *Israel, without Zionists: A Plea for Peace in the Middle East*. 215 pp. \$5.95. Macmillan. A remarkable description of Israeli politics and a forceful statement of Avnery's conviction that the Jewish state must become a pluralistic and secular one if it is to achieve reconciliation with the Arabs. **Our price \$3.70.**

John S. Badeau, *The American Approach to the Arab World*. 204 pp. \$2.95 (paperback). Harper and Row. By a former ambassador to the U.A.R.: an examination of American interests in the Middle East and an appeal for a more consistent and realistic foreign policy in that area. **Our price \$2.10.**

Henry Cattán, *Palestine, the Arabs, and Israel*. 281 pp. £2.0.0. sterling. Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd. A Palestinian, now practising international law in London, tells what happened to the Palestinian Arabs and what they think about it. **Our price \$3.25.**

John H. Davis, *The Evasive Peace*. 140 pp. Paperback. \$2.50. New World Press, New York. This book provides a factual background and possible key to the deadlock in the Middle East by a writer of authority and international experience. **Our price \$2.10.**

Elisabeth Elliot, *Furnace of the Lord: Reflections on the Redemption of the Holy City*. 129 pp. \$4.95. Doubleday. A well-known author of books on religious subjects, Mrs. Elliot was commissioned to report on conditions in Jerusalem. The questions she put to Arabs and Israelis are probing, the answers revealing. **Our price \$2.90.**

Epp, Frank H. *Whose Land is Palestine? The Middle East Problem in Historical Perspective*. 283 pp., 18 tables, 13 maps. \$6.95. William B. Eerdmans Co., Grand Rapids. A dozen claims to Palestine are surveyed in this handbook to the Palestine Problem. **Our price \$4.40.**

Majdia D. Khadduri, compiler, *The Arab-Israeli Impasse*. 223 pp. \$4.95. Robert B. Luce. Essays by Western authorities: Arnold Toynbee, Jean Lacouture, Quincy Wright, Sir John Glubb, Ambassador Charles Yost, Rabbi Elmer Berger and others. **Our price \$3.20.**

Fred J. Khouri, *The Arab-Israeli Dilemma*. 435 pp. \$4.25. Syracuse Univ. Press. A scholarly, impartial and objective criticism of the politics of the Arab states, Israel, the United States and Russia. **Our price \$3.00.**

Kennett Love, *Suez, the Twice Fought War*. 640 pp. \$10.00. McGraw-Hill. The author, a former correspondent of the *New York Times*, not only provides additional insights into the crisis of 1956, but also goes into many other matters—notably the suppression, and distortion of news by the Press. **Our price \$6.25.**

United States Interests in the Middle East. 132 pp. \$3.00. American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. A composite study of the deterioration of our relations with the Middle East, and the effect this deterioration has had on our strategic, economic and cultural interests. **Our price \$2.00.**

Moshe Menuhin, *The Decadence of Judaism In Our Time, with Postscript*. 589 pp. \$5.00 paperback. The Institute of Palestine Studies. A protest against the identification of Judaism with Zionism. **Our price \$3.50.**

Maxime Rodinson, *Israel and the Arabs*. 239 pp. \$5.95. Pantheon. The author, a well-known contributor to *Le Monde* and professor of Oriental languages, is Jewish and has had long and extensive contact with the Arab world; he is therefore able to write critically, yet sympathetically, of both sides. **Our price \$3.25.**

Taylor, Alan and Tetlie, Richard, editors, *Palestine, A Search for Truth: Approaches to the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. 284 pp. \$6.00. Public Affairs Press, Washington, D.C. A compilation of essays of outstanding value dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict. **Our price \$3.90.**

Major General Carl von Horn, *Soldiering for Peace*. 410 pp. \$6.95. David McKay. The author describes both United Nations successes and the problems that beset him as Commander of U.N. forces in Palestine, the Congo, and Yemen. **Our price \$1.35.**

EXODUS OF CHRISTIANS FROM HOLY LAND

The following is a portion of the year-end message of the Melkite Archbishop of Galilee.

In his allocution delivered to the College of Cardinals and to the Roman Curia on the 15th of December, 1969, His Holiness Pope Paul VI expressed a deep concern about the exodus of Christians from the Holy Land. "The number of the faithful of Jesus has diminished, and is still diminishing, every day from the land which was sanctified by His preaching and His Sacrifice. This situation makes us wonder whether these majestic and beautiful religious edifices which evoke the events of the life of Christ on the very spot where they have happened will not be deprived one day of the living presence of their own ecclesial communities."

Since the time of that allocution, His Holiness Pope Paul has repeated on several occasions his anxiety, which should be the concern of every Christian.

The emigration of the Christians from the Holy Land is at a critical point today. But it is not a new phenomenon. At the end of the 19th century some Christians emigrated to Latin America. At the beginning of this century, some young people who had studied at the English-speaking missionary schools in the Holy Land were attracted by America or England. At the outbreak of the First World War, many young people, in order to escape the Turkish military service, emigrated to America, but after the war many returned and built beautiful homes and small businesses in their village. This financial success created in others the desire to emigrate. They left behind wife and children to go to America to seek their fortune and to come back and build homes and businesses also.

From 1936 to 1948 the tempo of emigration became alarming. This time the emigration was caused by the social and political upheavals and by the conflicts between Jews and Arabs . . . violent strikes, sabotage, killing and destruction. In Palestine, it was real internal revolution that spread panic, especially among the minority Christian population. People sought refuge anywhere but always with the intention of returning—once peace was restored.

It is therefore right to say that emigration has been a social phenomenon in Palestine for the past seventy or eighty years, long before the establishment of the State of Israel. Why now, then, the sudden alarm? God forbid that we be led by any political manoeuvre. Rather it is my perfect loyalty to the Israeli government and it is my love for this country and its people, Jew and Arab, that induce me to study the problem. What I am so anxious to see in the Holy Land is peace and love that would unite Arabs and Jews and make them one nation, under God, indivisible, with security and happiness for all. If I must mention some errors or flagrant injustices on the part of our government, or on the part of my Catholic Church, I do it in order to draw the attention to what I consider an evil. This is the anxious appeal and the heartfelt cry of the shepherd who sees his flock scattered in sacrifice. On several occasions, I have made this cry and this appeal to the officials in our Israeli government. I have told them and I shall repeat it for all to hear, that the emigration of yesterday was an event, spontaneous,

joyous, and full of hope for a brighter future. Today, it is rather a fatality, a disease that is eating at the heart of a whole people. It is a distressing stampede without hope or joy.

I know very well that the Christians in Israel enjoy an incomparable, undreamed-of economic prosperity, much superior to that of any of our neighboring countries. Everyone works — everyone saves. This prosperity is illusory and without a future. If Arab hands are necessary for certain works today, tomorrow they will be surplus and unusable when all the young come back from the army, or if Jewish immigration increases. The future is the same for the limited number of Arab students admitted to Israel universities. Only a few fields of study are open to them; however, if the foreseen depression should come, with its resulting unemployment, large groups of Christians will emigrate immediately. They are getting ready for that move.

After this brief indication of the simple fact of emigration from the Holy Land, let us try to analyze the state of mind of these Christians which presses them to despair and to mass exodus. Such an exodus, if it eventually does occur, will make of the local, original Church in the Holy Land, a ghost church of the past, only a memory, as happened to the Church of North Africa.

Three fundamental causes are making the exodus of the Christians from the Holy Land a real disaster: the bitterness of defeat, the situation of the refugees, and the failure of the Church.

Bitterness of Defeat

From the very beginning of the establishment of Israel, the Christians of the Holy Land identified themselves with the "Arab cause", (whatever this cause is). The successive defeats of the Arab countries were in their hearts as much a humiliation and a bitter taste as they were for the defeated themselves. These Christians considered themselves beaten and conquered. Hopes and dreams of freedom from foreign domination ebbed and flowed and finally were crushed by the reality of the facts. These bitter successive disappointments were anchored further in their souls by the refugees' problems.

Refugees Abroad

The years 1948-49 and 1950 were the heaviest in emigration. Some Christians were taken by force and literally thrown beyond the borders of Israel. Some were asked by officials of the government to leave for a few days with the promise to come back after a short absence. They were never permitted back.

There are also those who left the country of their own free choice. These were the rich, the professionals, the intellectuals and all those who had the means to travel and go abroad. Thus the Church was deprived of her elite and the Christians "beheaded" from their leaders. Many churches and the best schools had to be abandoned or sold. These emigrants, and others of lesser status who left, made a successful and comfortable living. They appeared to those left behind, the poor and uneducated, as an attraction and an example to follow. Thus from the Greek Catholic diocese alone, 28,000 Christians (the

figure is a tentative one) left for good and more and more are ready to follow them. From Ramallah, a village near Jerusalem, 10,000 people comprising entire families left for the United States of America. More yet are preparing to leave.

Refugees In Israel

There are refugees also in Israel itself. These are of two kinds. During the shooting and bombing and the attacks of war, people left their homes for underground shelters or for some other villages in less danger. But they never left the country itself. These people were considered, as the official expression was coined for them, "Absent-Present". Since they had left their proper premises, they were dispossessed of their homes, of their lands and any properties. Unjust and cunning laws promulgated under the reason (or pretext) of "state security" between 1948 and 1962 made possible, at any time, expropriation in favor of Jewish immigrants, or the army, or the State. Compensation has been and is still offered to the dispossessed, but it is so unjust and humiliating that people refuse it and prefer to starve than to subject themselves to its degrading conditions. There are others too who were later on dispossessed for no other reason than the fallacy of "security". For instance, the two villages of Ikreth and Kafar Birem were completely dynamited and plowed for no reason. The Supreme Court of Justice of Israel studied and discussed their cases and gave back to the people the right to return. But the court injunction was completely ignored by the government, which still has possession of these two villages.

Others were also dispossessed in favour either of Jewish immigrants or of some future kibbutzim; for instance, Ma'alia, Shafa Amr, Boka'ia and many others. Almost every village was diminished of its territories for some reason: "beautification", "later expansion", or "military installations". The displaced were more than 30,000, of whom more than 4,000 are Catholics. (The numbers are tentative).

People who were thus unjustly dispossessed cannot even bury their dead in their own cemeteries. Every time they have a funeral it becomes a tragedy because the villages where these refugees are living have hardly enough space for their own.

Social Implications

The social aspect is the most depressing. Until 1948, Haifa had a population of 40,000 Christians. Now, they are hardly 8,000. The rich, the intellectuals and most of the middle-class people emigrated with no hope of return. Their houses and properties belong now to immigrant Jews or to the government. But now they have made good somewhere else. Those left in Haifa, in Nazareth and in other villages from the original dwellers, mostly middle or old-aged, are considering rejoining their families somewhere else abroad. The new-comers to Haifa from the villages are also dreaming of greener pastures.

These poor, evicted and dispossessed had to find a place to live. Some moved in with relatives, others found a shack in a garden or built some shack behind an alley or found a dry well which they transformed into a dwelling. Many villagers in search of work moved to town. They made the already crowded conditions worse.

Years went by and many children were born in these

places, making crowded conditions still more inhuman. I have seen rooms, eight metres by five, where fifteen people dwell together, grand-parents, parents, the son-in-law, and the sisters-in-law with babies, the brothers and the sisters of all ages. The cooking, washing, sleeping, studying and loving is done always under the most impossible conditions.

The Israeli government is continually building houses and apartments for the Jewish people. In comparison, almost none have been built yet for any Christian in the entire length and breadth of Galilee. If some have been built in Nazareth, it was thanks to the personal efforts of the Greek Catholic Archbishop of Galilee, the former Archbishop G. Hakim. We can understand that such a social situation is not encouraging the young to stay in the country.

Young people, boys and girls of school age, rebel, and their bitterness against society, Church and government grows every day. They feel choked. They are always waiting for the occasion to pack and leave for anywhere. With a little help or some imagination, they think that any country would be ideal for their freedom and normal development.

What further increases the dissatisfaction of the youth and their desire to leave the country is that there are no recreational activities available to them. Then when they see the "normal" lives of the Jewish youth who enjoy several clubs while they have none, they become frustrated and their natural drives and energies are prostituted into destruction, thievery, or into "escape mechanisms", either drinking or drugs. Consequently, they see the only apparent solution as leaving the country. This is mainly achieved by going away to study. Once out of the country, there is little desire to return. Not one of those who have already left the country in this way has come back.

As well, the present political situation and the state of war in which the country finds itself is not conducive to remaining in the country. The communications media of the State of Israel, radios, television and the daily papers, always speak about the "Arabs" and they refer to them as "our killers", "Arab Fatah", "Arab saboteurs". In fact the Christians carry in their pockets at all times their own condemnation: their identity card is stamped "Arab". When they have to produce it to policemen, employers, and house-renters, it is like producing the Star of David which our brothers, the Jews, had to carry on their backs during the last World War, creating in the Christians a "complex of guilt", or of being despised and suspected, because they cannot deny their cultural background as Arabs. After the bombing of the El Al plane in Munich, Weizman, the Minister of Transportation, had no comment except scorn and disdain for the "Arabs". His conclusion was: "What happened in Munich demonstrates that Arabs are still Arabs!" (Reported in *Al Mirsal*, February 19, 1970.) His reaction is typical of all uneducated and irresponsible Jewish people in Israel. Is it any wonder that our Christian Arabs feel the discrimination and the suspicion of the Jews towards them?

For twenty years Galilee did not know cases of sabotage or destruction. Now unfortunately there are a few cases. Tell the most innocent man and repeat it in his ear that he is a "killer", he will become one. These complexes are created not with bad intentions, but with short-

sightedness, and carelessness. "I cannot live here any longer, I am choking, help me to leave the country," a young bank employee told me. "Wherever a Jew is killed, here or on the border, I feel as badly as if he were my brother. But at the bank, all Jewish employees and employers look at me, and voice opinions as if I were the killer. Now I wish they were all killed and dead. I want to go away!" "Publicly, openly, without hesitation they make us feel unwanted," another told me.

When incidents of bombing and sabotage occur, every Arab Christian is a suspect for the Jews and lives in the fear of being arrested. In fact, so many have been arrested with no reason other than being Arab. I have seen mothers with babies in their arms, and four to six tots trailing behind them, arrested and questioned all night long. A bomb had exploded in Haifa near a Japanese circus they were attending with their children.

Spying

There are other reasons that demoralize the young and old alike. Because of their desire for position within the government, and promises of a better future, many Arab young men are inducted into a spy system for the Jews against their own families. Consequently, the young people are suspicious of one another, fearful of government reprisal, and crushed in both mind and spirit. The resulting isolation from and independence of other members of the community is a subtle force which cannot be supported for long. They crave freedom to speak, to live openly, without fear or suspicion. The only place where they imagine themselves as normal human beings is outside the country.

Decaying Religious Situation

Furthermore, the situation of the Christian Church is not of any encouragement. The Church or churches, seem to be a hindrance rather than a help to induce the Christians to remain in this country. If their attitude to the social order is that of opposition and hatred, their attitude to the Church is turning into disappointment, resentment, and gall. In olden times the native Christians knew an effective intervention of the Church with civil authorities. They were accustomed to being upheld in their recriminations for justice by the Church and through her influence. Foreign missionaries had a word to say to the representatives of their respective governments, and through them obtained help. With the existence of Israel as an independent country, naturally foreign intervention has no place any more.

The only voice the Christians hear loud and clear, if it be in the Knesset of Israel or in the daily papers, is the Communist voice. They are disappointed in the Church and they turn towards those who seem to be taking their cause to heart. Their hopes of a better social order are now in Communism.

Where only a few years ago the word Communism was hardly heard or known, today cells are being organized in almost every village. In many local administrative municipalities, communists are gaining in representation and membership. In Nazareth, for instance, the government of Israel last year had to postpone the city election for fear of a Communist take-over. In one completely Christian village, "Abileen", people have seen with horror the cross trampled under foot by some com-

munists as a symbol of "slavery and miserable weakness and surrender to injustice." (sic).

What a suffering and humiliation for the old and for the faithful young. Incidents like that make them a laughing-stock to the Moslems. They would rather flee to another Christian country where they think their religious feelings would not be thus insulted and downgraded.

—Joseph M. Raya

CORRECTION

On page 2 of our January/February issue we quoted the report that had been widely published in reputable circles that Billy Graham's son "served with support forces for Israel during the June, 1967, war." Having been informed by a knowledgeable source that this is a false rumor we have asked for an opportunity to see Dr. Graham to clarify this and kindred concerns.

ECUMENICAL STRAWS IN THE MIDDLE EAST WIND

Ecumenically minded pilgrims to the Middle East today are finding significant expressions of Christian unity in the lands that gave us both the Bible and the Church.

As in other regions, the special weeks for united prayer each January are widely observed with union services. Many of these are impressive for their sustained large attendances. Between times, working relationships, planning groups and informal fellowships attest to the continuing vitality and warmth underlying the larger public demonstrations.

Mass Meetings

Perhaps 1971's most spectacular ecumenical service will be in Teheran next autumn in connection with Iran's 2500th anniversary. Bishop Dehqani-Tafti, chairman of the interchurch committee charged with preparing for this event, says he hopes it will attract the faithful from other nations as well to join in the rejoicing over that country's Christian heritage that goes back (under the name of Persia) to the Old Testament roots and New Testament beginnings of Church history. As to participation by local Christians of every stripe, the momentum generated by past observances of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity forecasts a wide response to the spiritual aspects of this 25th centenary.

In Egypt each January that same Week of Prayer also finds remarkable mass expression, Cairo being outstanding. There again this year on successive nights, Anglican, Armenian Orthodox and Catholic cathedrals and spacious Evangelical, Coptic and Greek Orthodox sanctuaries were filled to capacity—sometimes to overflowing—with laity and clergy praying and praising together in Arabic, English and French.

In Beirut, which has a unique cross-section of major church bodies, ancient and modern, Eastern and Western, the first Sunday of 1971, as of other recent years, filled the UNESCO Palace with Christians—and some Muslims, too—in the annual opening of the Universal Week of Prayer for Peace. The disturbances on Lebanon's southern border naturally focussed attention on a just solution for the Palestine problem which underlies the Arab-Israeli conflict. Nonetheless there was also

strong emphasis on the need for greater Christian collaboration in establishing honorable peace world-wide.

More Intimate Gatherings

Still, impressive as such mass gatherings are, one's heart is even more warmed where smaller groups express in more personal relations the on-going Christian fellowship that extends across confessional lines. Egypt gives us a recent example:

When Father Jerome Hamer, secretary of the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity, and Father John Long of that body's office for liaison with Eastern churches stopped off in Cairo on their way back to Rome after the World Council of Churches' 1971 Central Committee meeting in Addis Ababa, the Apostolic Delegate invited some five dozen broadly representative Church leaders to a Nileside buffet dinner in their honor. Informal speeches there included solid testimonies to joint accomplishments that could never have been achieved separately. But even more eloquent—as pointed out midway by Melkite Father Xavier Eid—was the fact that the guests didn't cluster together with others of their own feather. Every single one of the fifteen tables for four, without pre-assignment, included people of two, three or four Christian heritages in cheery converse with one another.

This spontaneous mingling was a natural by-product of years of friendly association in joint labors, with pooled resources, in vocational training, 4-H type programs, kindergartens and kindred undertakings within the framework of E.A.C.C.S. (their Ecumenical Advisory Council for Church Services). The added ministrations required by 800,000 war-zone evacuees since June, 1967, have intensified the previous inter-church collaboration. The urgency for more frequent planning meetings to develop more skillful coordination has not only led to improved efficiency. It has heightened a feeling for the Church as a "community of the concerned."

Related Activities

On the intellectual level, especially among the clergy of Iran, awareness of belonging together in the Body of Christ has alternately stimulated, and been stimulated by, the public observances of the Week of Prayer for Chris-

tian Unity. Monthly in Teheran there are well-prepared full-day meetings which interweave two unifying approaches: They give representatives of each major Christian communion a chance to interpret their unique emphases and perspectives to serious fellow-churchmen. They also provide occasion for a better understanding of how Christian faith relates to current issues jointly faced.

In a rather different category, though with equal concern for Christian harmony in the pursuit of common goals, are the Catholic-Orthodox-Protestant G.O.P. (Groupe Oecuménique de Pastorale, operating out of Beirut) and ATENE (the Association for Theological Education in the Near East). G.O.P. has developed common Christian literature, an inter-confessional catechism for use in schools and four ecumenical commissions for the advancement of dialogue.

ATENE includes ten Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox seminaries in Lebanon, Turkey and the United Arab Republic. They work jointly, with help from the Theological Education Fund, to amplify and update libraries and develop courses in appreciation of each other's histories, achievements, teachings and practices. Who knows? Perhaps a generation of Christian leaders is in the making which will be able to combine on every level of church life an Orthodox depth of worship through all the senses, Protestant concepts of stewardship, Catholic institutional solidarity and the Armenian sense of Christian community identification.

Other interdenominational work—like that of the YM and YWCAs, the Bible societies, the World Student Christian federation and the coordinating committees for Palestinian refugee work—are so well known as to make detailed reference here unnecessary. They should not be by-passed, however, without appreciative mention.

The political tensions, social ferment, and hot and cold warfare that you read about daily are, of course, also very pressing aspects of modern Middle Eastern life. These, combined with inherited misunderstandings and out-moded religious rivalries, tend to complicate and impede fruitful ecumenical relationships. At the same time, they make one appreciate all the more the genuine achievements to date and the promise of greater things to come.

—L.H.W.



Americans for
Middle East Understanding, Inc.
Room 538, 475 Riverside Drive
New York, N.Y. 10027

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