



A LETTER TO THE HOLY SEES

Michael
Hornia
1970

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LETTER
TO
THE HOLY SEES



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FOREWORD

For many centuries the children of the three divine faiths, Islam, Christianity and Judaism, lived amicably together, each group performing its own religious rites in full freedom. Peace prevailed throughout the whole of the Middle East, and the area, particularly Palestine, the birthplace of Christ, was frequented by people from all over the world. Then Herzl, author of *The Jewish State*, conceived the idea of Zionism which was taken up by a group of Jewish youths who believed in national conglomeration rather than religious faith.

Herzel's claim for a national home for the Jews did not insist on Palestine, since he realized that the country was small and already over-populated for his dreams, and he foresaw trouble for the Jews there. Perhaps he also recalled what befell the Jews when under Joshua the son of Nun they first invaded Palestine, and later their fate at the hands of the Romans.

He therefore requested the British Government to provide a national home for the Jews in an uninhabited area in Uganda. Failing this, he asked for a home in Brazil or in Sinai. But the diehards amongst the Zionists, to whom no ethical considerations mattered, insisted on establishing a homeland for themselves in Palestine—that is in a land already inhabited and at the expense of another people who were to be expelled from their homes and land to make room for the influx of immigrants from all over the world.

When World War I broke out, the Zionists, under Weizmann, were able to extract the Balfour Declaration,

a declaration that had no legal or moral validity since Balfour had no right to promise a land that did not belong to him or, for that matter, to Britain. However, the Balfour Declaration stipulated that the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine should in no way jeopardize the interests of the country's indigenous population.

As a result of the Balfour Declaration, waves of Jewish immigrants started pouring into the Holy Land. Zionist organisations and gangs, having failed to convince enough Arab landowners to sell their lands, spared no effort in driving out the Palestinian Arabs by violence and trickery so as to take over their villages and towns. From 1948 to 1967 three wars broke out in the area, resulting in massacres of whole Arab villages, with the result that a million and a half Palestinians fled their homes into the neighbouring countries. Having lost their homes, property, farms, they now live on charity in tents and huts.

Despite all the resolutions adopted by the United Nations and its Security Council, Israel has neither allowed a single Palestinian back, nor has she paid compensation to any Palestinian for his losses. On the contrary, the Israelis are still hard at work demolishing the homes of the Arabs and driving away as many as they can. They have even gone a step further by profaning churches and mosques, as the text of the ensuing letter proves.

In Solomon's day, the Jews committed evil in the sight of the Lord and consequently He ordered them out of the Holy Land. Now, again, they commit evil in the sight of the Lord, not only by showing disrespect to places of worship, but equally by discarding all human values in their treatment of the Palestinian Arabs.

Not until the Palestinian refugees are accorded their full dues can there be any hope of peace in the Middle East.

The text which follows is a translation from the French (the original is reproduced on pp. 16-19) of a letter which has been submitted by Archbishop Diodoros of Hierapolis and Eastern Jordan, Archbishop Assaaf of Philadelphia (Amman) and Bishop Neemeh Simaan of Amman and Vicar General of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem to His Holiness Pope Paul VI in the Vatican and to His Holiness the Patriarch Athenagoras in Constantinople.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M.B.Sharif", with a horizontal line underneath it.

Mohammed Badi Sharif



RAPHAEL'S
"VIRGIN AND CHILD"
National Gallery,
London.

"Collage"
by an Israeli
soldier - exhibited
in Tel-Aviv
at the "Gallery
220" and
reproduced in
The "Jerusalem
Post Week-End
Magazine"
of 1 March 1968.



Amman, 27 September 1969

**HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI
- THE VATICAN**

**HIS HOLINESS THE PATRIARCH
ATHENAGORAS - CONSTANTINOPLE**

Your Holinesses,

We address this letter to your Holinesses with the deepest respect and veneration and the most faithful confidence in the knowledge that the question of World Peace interests Your Holinesses in the highest degree.

Your Holinesses have also always shared the sorrows and misfortunes of all those who are suffering in the world. We, too, are suffering here in Jordan; we have had recourse, therefore, to call upon your solicitude and the sympathy which you have always had for this Holy Land.

Now for a quarter of a century our compatriots, Christians and Moslems, have suffered death as a result of the inhuman tortures they have been subjected to by the Zionist Jews. Hundreds of thousands of men, women and children are living today in huts or tents, driven from their homes by the terror of the Zionist army. They fill the countryside of our unfortunate Jordanian territory.

The Jews have shown a lack of respect for the Holy Places, whether by stealing or profaning the following different Churches:

- (a) The Church of the Holy Sepulchre where they stole the Crown of the Holy Virgin, Our Lady of Calvary.
- (b) The *collage* stuck on a picture of the Virgin Mary where the Holy Virgin was covered by the figure of an immodest artist and over which they had left the words “Ave Mater Christi”.
- (c) The Greek Orthodox Church of St. Elie on the Jerusalem-Bethlehem road, when two days after the conflict of 1967 the sacred vases, icons, religious pictures were stolen and were sold either in Tel Aviv or thrown under the trees, and in particular the “Ciboire du St. Sacrement” which they had profaned.
- (d) The Greek Orthodox Church at Ain Karim which they twice converted into public toilets after it had been repaired following 1967.

There is yet another method of causing suffering which the Zionists inflict on their Arab prisoners. In their terrible prisons the Jews use many methods of torture on their Arab prisoners, both men and women, so that many of their prisoners die during or as a result of this horrible treatment.

The Jews have just invented another method of exterminating the population; they put a complete blockade for whole weeks around towns and villages, even around Arab encampments, forbidding anyone to leave his house or even communicate with the outside, thus causing the death of women and children within their own homes which become their graves. Hebron (El Khalil), Beit-Sahour and their surroundings are still surrounded today.

In addition, the Zionist Jews continue to mock the



The burning of El Aqsa, 21 August 1969

U.N., the Security Council and their decisions which notify them of the order to leave the occupied Arab countries, which forbid them to make any change in the status of Jerusalem whose character as a holy and ancient city they have changed, and to allow the refugees whom they have expelled from their homes to return.

These Zionist Jews proclaim in advance their rejection of any decisions to be taken by the Four Great Powers which would not suit them.

And in spite of the decisions of the U.N., the Security Council and U Thant, in spite of the many condemnations directed by the Security Council against the unjustified and inhuman Zionist air raids on towns and villages, these Zionist Jews continue to destroy the houses even in Jerusalem, to drive out the inhabitants and commit all sorts of crimes against the Arab population. It is well established now that on the part of the Jews it is not a war against the Arabs; it is an occupation, extermination and expansion.

The Jews have made the life of the Arab population almost impossible in the occupied territory, so much so that our Christians are constantly emigrating from there in large numbers, and thus the day will come when our Holy Places will lie dead without any Christian life or followers of the faith. So the Christian and Moslem Holy Places will soon become museums and tourist attractions.

Indeed there is no limit to their audacity and provocation; they have set fire to the El Aqsa Mosque, the second Moslem Holy Place after Mecca. Naturally they have claimed that the man responsible for the fire is an Austra-



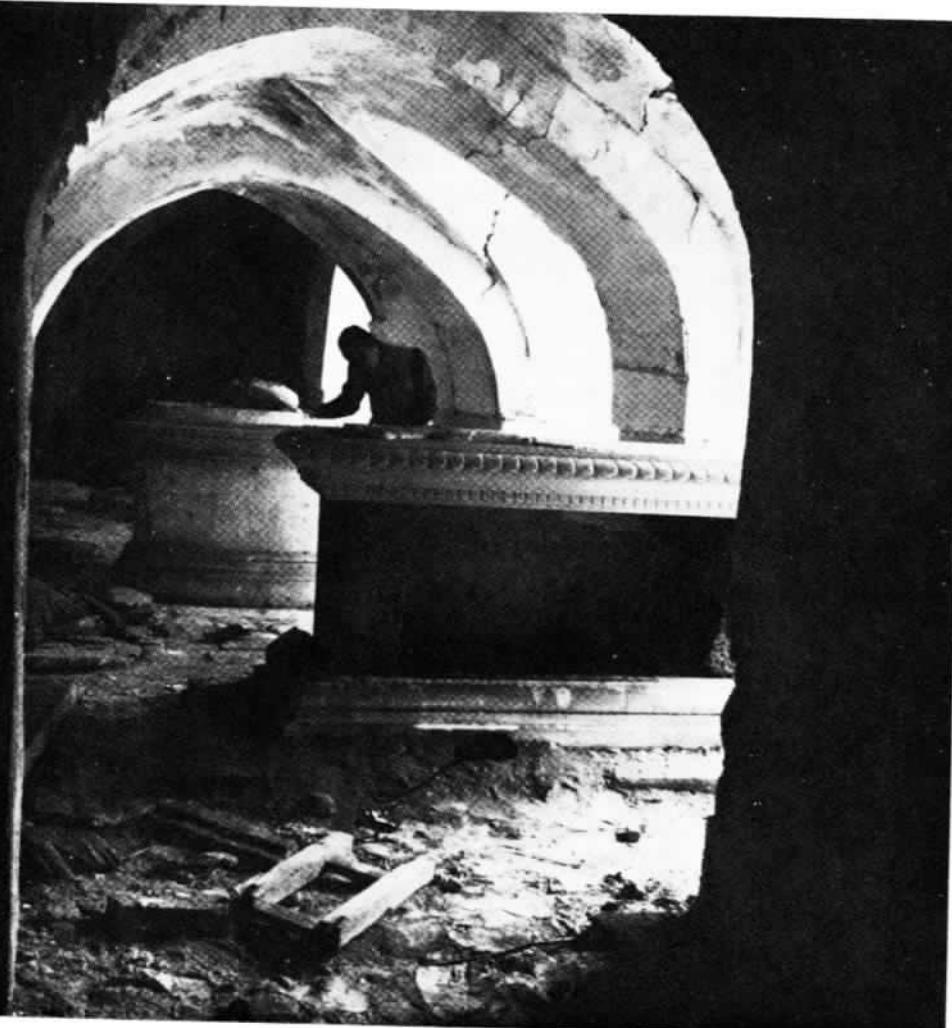
The Greek Orthodox cemetery and the smashed tombs.

lian Christian. We fear today that they may do the same to the Church and the Grotto of the Nativity at Bethlehem and to the Basilica of the Resurrection at Jerusalem. This fire at El Aqsa has roused the Moslem world, who for the first time in history are holding today a Pan Islamic congress of Moslem States at Rabat (Morocco) to examine the conduct of the Zionist Jews as regards the city of Jerusalem, its Holy Places and the fire of the El Aqsa mosque.

Thus the Palestine Problem is changing its character; it is becoming Arab-Islamic against Zionist-Jew. What will the outcome be? What will become of us? God knows.

However, what we note with sorrow is that the Christian world, to a certain extent everywhere, has allowed itself to be deceived by Jewish propaganda and has done nothing to raise its voice against the Jews who are working feverishly to change the city of Jerusalem into an entirely Jewish city. This Christian world no longer even cares either about the suffering of the Christian and Moslem population of our country, or about the fact that the Holy Places are profaned and even in danger of being annihilated.

That is why we have found it necessary, Your Holinesses, both to inform Your Holinesses of our sad situation and to speak to you and beg you to draw the attention of the Christian countries, governments and peoples, in order to bring to an end the horrors which the Jews are committing in our unfortunate country. Our Holy Places, our hundreds of thousands of refugees, our thousands of prisoners, our families which are being split up, our



*Several of the tombs of the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem,
desecrated by the Israeli army.*

thousands of wounded in the hospitals, our dead who fill the graves, our towns and villages which are in a state of siege, in a most inhuman manner unknown until now—all these people beg Your Holinesses, through us, to do what is necessary to restore peace and justice in our country of Jordan which you know and love so well.

We beg you, Your Holinesses, to listen to our voices, bless us and trust in our everlasting love for and profound veneration of Christ Jesus and His Holy Mother.

DIODOROS The Orthodox
Archbishop of Hierapolis
and Eastern Jordan

M. ASSAAF
The Greek Melkite
Archbishop of Philadelphia
(Amman)

NEEMEH SIMAAN
Assistant Bishop and
Vicar General

P.S. We do not forget the bombs thrown by the Zionist Jews against our Church, our presbytery and our school at Aqaba, and the serious damage caused. P. Cure Georges Dumont was also seriously hurt.

Text of
The Original Letter

Ammen, ce 27 Septembre 1969

SA SAINTETE LE PAPE PAUL VI - LE VATICAN

SA SAINTETE LE PATRIARCHE ATHENAGORAS - CONSTANTINOPLE

SAINTETES,

C'est avec la plus profonde vénération et la plus fidèle confiance que nous adressons cette lettre à vos Saintetés, sachant que la question de la Paix dans le monde intéresse au plus haut degré vos Saintetés.

Vos Saintetés ont aussi toujours partagé les peines et les douleurs de tous ceux qui souffrent dans le monde. Nous aussi, nous souffrons aujourd'hui en Jordanie; nous avons donc recours à votre sollicitude et à la sympathie que vous avez toujours eue pour cette Terre Sainte.

Voilà maintenant près d'un quart de siècle que nos compatriotes Chrétiens et Musulmans, souffrent la mort par suite des persécutions inhumaines dont ils sont l'objet de la part des Juifs Sionistes. Des centaines de milliers hommes, femmes et enfants vivent aujourd'hui dans des baraqués ou sous les tentes, chassés de leurs foyers par la terreur de l'armée sioniste. Ils remplissent les campagnes de notre malheureuse Transjordanie.

Les juifs ont manqué de respect aux Lieux Saints, soit en volant soit en profanant les différentes Eglises suivantes:

a) L'Eglise du St. Sépulchre, lorsqu'ils ont volé la couronne de la Ste. Vierge, Notre Dame du Calvaire.

b) Le collage commis sur un tableau de la Ste. Vierge, là où la Ste. Vierge a été remplacée par la figure d'une immodeste artiste et au-dessus de laquelle on avait retenu les paroles " Ave Mater Christi".

c) L'Eglise de St.Elie des Grecs Orthodoxes sur la route de Jérusalem-Béthléem, lorsqu'en lui a volé, deux jours après le conflit de 1967, les vases sacrés,les icônes, les tableaux religieux qu'ils avaient vendu, soit à Tel-Aviv, soit jeté sous les arbres, et surtout le CIBOIRE du ST.SACREMENT qu'ils avaient profané.

d) L'Eglise des Grecs Orthodoxes à Ain Karem qu'ils avaient transformée en TOILETTES PUBLIQUES à deux reprises,après qu'elle fut réparée après 1967.

Encore un autre genre de souffrance que ces Sionistes infligent à leurs prisonniers arabes. Dans les terribles prisons sionistes, ces juifs emploient contre leurs prisonniers, hommes et femmes, mille genres de souffrances tellement que beaucoup de leurs prisonniers meurent sous les coups, ou par suite des horribles traitements.

Les juifs viennent d'inventer un autre genre d'extermination de la population: ils mettent le ELOCUS complet, durant des semaines entières,autour des villes et des villages, autour même des camps arabes, interdisant toute sortie des maisons et même tout rapport avec l'extérieur, pour faire mourir les femmes et les enfants à l'intérieur de leurs foyers qui deviennent leurs tombeaux. Hébron(El Khalil),Beit Sahour,leurs environs sont encore aujourd'hui cernés.

Bien plus, les juifs sionistes continuent à se moquer de l'ONU,du CONSEIL de SECURITE...et de leurs décisions qui leur intiment l'ordre de quitter les pays arabes occupés,qui leur interdisent de rien changer à la situation de Jérusalem dont ils changent la face comme Ville Sainte et ancienne, de faire rentrer les réfugiés qu'ils ont chassés de leurs foyers . Ces juifs-sionistes proclament à l'avance le rejet de toute décision que prendront les QUATRE GRANDES PUISSANCES et qui ne serait pas à leur convenance.

Et malgré les décisions de l'ONU, du CONSEIL de SECURITE et de U THANT, malgré les multiples condamnations lancées par le Conseil de Sécurité contre les RAIDES injustifiés et inhumains de l'aviation sioniste contre les villes, les villages... Ces juifs-sionistes continuent à détruire les maisons, même à Jérusalem, à chasser les habitants et à commettre toutes sortes de crimes contre la population arabe. Il est bien avéré maintenant que, de la part des juifs, ce n'est pas une guerre contre les Arabes, c'est une OCCUPATION, une EXTERMINATION et une EXTENSION.

Les juifs ont rendu la vie presqu'impossible pour la population arabe en territoire occupé, si bien que nos chrétiens en émigrent en grand nombre continuellement, et alors arrivera un jour que nos Lieux Saints resteront morts, sans vie chrétienne et sans fidèles. Ainsi les LIEUX SAINTS chrétiens et musulmans deviendront bientôt des MUSEES et des LIEUX de TOURISME.

Enfin leur audace et leurs provocations ne connaissent plus de borne, ils ont mis le feu à la Mosquée EL AKSA, le second lieu saint musulman après la Mecque. Naturellement ils ont prétendu que celui qui y a mis le feu est un CHRETIEN australien. Nous craignons aujourd'hui qu'ils ne fassent de même bientôt pour l'Eglise et la Grotte de la Nativité à Bethléem et pour la Basilique de la Résurrection à Jérusalem. Cet incendie d'EL AKSA a soulevé le monde musulman qui, pour la première fois dans l'histoire, tient aujourd'hui un Congrès Pan-Islamique des Etats Musulmans à Rabat (Maroc) pour examiner la conduite des Sionistes à l'égard de la ville de Jérusalem, de ses Lieux Saints et de l'incendie de la Mosquée d'El Aksa.

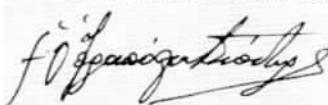
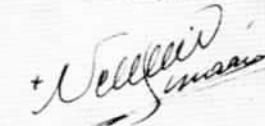
Ainsi le Problème Palestinien change de face; il devient Arabo-Islamique contre juif-sioniste. Qu'est ce qu'il en sortira ? Que deviendrons-nous ? Dieu le sait.

Cependant ce que nous constatons avec peine, c'est que le monde chrétien, un peu partout, s'est laissé trompé par la

propagande juive et n'a rien fait pour élever la voix contre les juifs qui travaillent fièvreusement à changer la ville de Jérusalem en ville entièrement JUIVE. Ce monde chrétien ne se soucie guère non plus, ni des souffrances de la population chrétienne et musulmane de notre pays, ni de ce fait que les Lieux Saints sont profanés et même exposés à être anéantis.

C'est pourquoi nous avons trouvé nécessaire, SAINTETES, soit de mettre vos Saintetés au courant de notre triste situation, soit de Vous parler et de Vous prier d'attirer l'attention des Pays Chrétiens, Gouvernements et Peuples, pour mettre un terme aux horreurs que commettent les juifs dans notre malheureux pays. Nos Lieux Saints, nos centaines de milliers de réfugiés, nos milliers de prisonniers, nos familles qui se déclinent, nos milliers de blessés dans les hôpitaux, nos morts qui peuplent les tombeaux, nos villes et nos villages bloqués d'une façon inhumaine, inconnue jusqu'ici, tout ce monde prie vos SAINTETES par notre bouche, pour que vous fassiez le nécessaire pour remettre la paix et la justice dans notre pays de Jordanie que vous connaissez et que tant vous aimez.

Veuillez, Saintetés, écouter nos voix, nous bénir et croire à notre perpétuel attachement et à notre profonde vénération dans le Christ Jésus et Sa Sainte Mère.

 + M. ASSAAF 
BIDOROS
Archévêque Orthodoxe
d'Hierapolis et Jordanië Orientale

M. ASSAAF
Archévêque grec
melkite de Philadelphie (Amman)

NEEMEH SIMAAN
Evêque Auxiliaire
et Vicaire Général.

P. S. Nous n'oubliions pas les bombes jetées par les Sionistes Juifs contre notre église, notre presbytère et notre école à Acaba et les dommages graves qu'elles y ont causés. Le P. Curé Georges Dumont a été aussi sérieusement blessé.

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