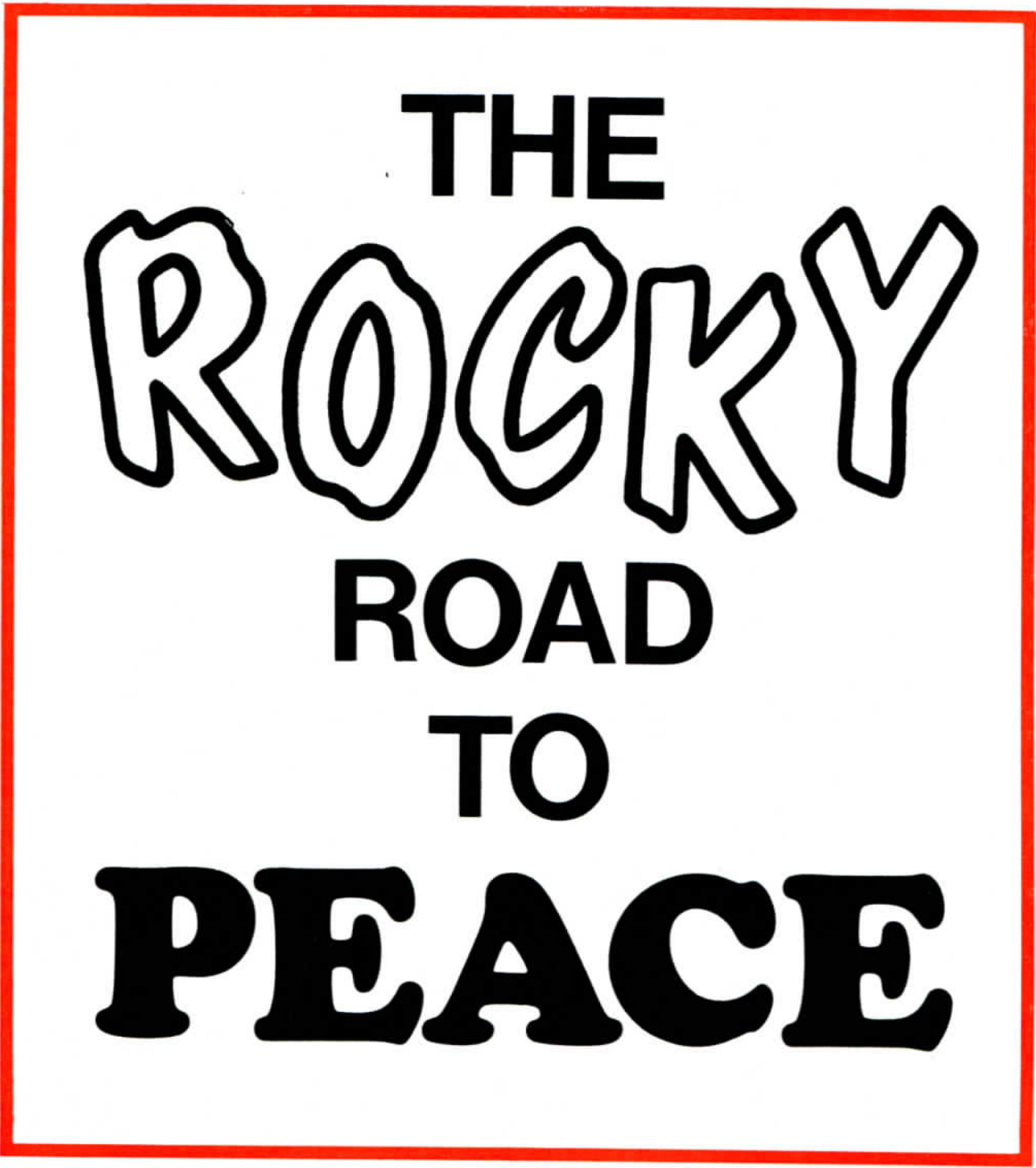


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THE ROCKY ROAD TO PEACE

EDITORIAL

Israel's Choice..

Short-Term Conquest or Long-Term Peace

In responding to the US initiative Israel has made her first tentative steps in 23 years away from the role of conqueror and toward acceptance of the Arab as a neighbor. The step is symbolized by the resignation of right-wing extremists from the Meir Government.

There is a tendency to euphoria among most people who hope for peace in the Middle East. There was a similar atmosphere in the United States when the Paris talks on Vietnam began. It is a mistake to believe that peoples will jump from war to peace at the first opportunity. Many will not do so at the sacrifice of certain principles. They prefer to go on sacrificing their lives rather than to accept injustices.

President Nasser and King Hussain are not going to sell out the Palestinians. They cannot do so and live. That being the case, there will be no peace in the Middle East without recognition and admission by Israel that an injustice has been done the Palestinians, that they exist just as do the Israelis, that they will be given similar

rights and opportunities as the Israelis to survive and prosper. Some 3,000,000 Palestinians and 120,000,000 Arabic-speaking peoples in the Middle East and North Africa are convinced beyond any persuasion that a grave injustice has been perpetrated upon the Palestinians by the Western world and Israel. Until these injustices have been clearly redressed Palestinians and many other Arabs will choose war over peace.

The men pictured opposite are in the forefront of a growing and dynamic drive for Palestinian nationalism. The key to peace in the Middle East is in Israel's hands. She must unlock the door by making concessions which for over twenty years she has vowed would never be made. If Israel does make them, the door to peace will have been opened. It will then be Yassir Arafat, George Habash, Na'if Hawatma and other leaders of Palestine in revolution who will persuade their people that they should or should not pass through the door to peace. Know these men well, they will be much noted in the months, even years ahead.

Leaders Among Palestinian Militants

The most important Palestinian leader today is Yassir Arafat (his guerrilla name is Abu Ammar) head of Al-Fatah and of the Unified Command for Palestinian Resistance into which the main *fedayeen* organizations have grouped themselves.

Arafat is forty years of age. He lived in Cairo as a youth and studied engineering at the University there. He was an officer in the Egyptian Army during the Suez War in 1956 and was active in the newly formed Palestine Students Federation, which today has branches in many university cities of the world. He was also active in the formation of Al-Fatah which began operations against Israel in 1965. After the 1967 battle, Arafat remained in hiding in the Israeli-occupied West Bank area of Jordan, but was forced to remove to Amman to avoid capture by the Israelis.

Al-Fatah's strength is estimated at about 25,000 men, of which some 10,000 are trained guerrilla fighters and the balance form a military reserve.

Arafat impresses Western interviewers (his English

is quite good) as a capable and determined leader, but, unfortunately, he has not acquired the charismatic character of President Nasser or a Fidel Castro or Che Guevara. His advisers on strategy are a group of shrewd and highly educated Palestinians, the majority of whom hold Ph.D. degrees from American or British universities. One of these strategic planners was at one time a practicing physician in Washington, D.C.

Arafat is a strong proponent of the view, now endorsed by most of the principal Palestinian resistance groups, that the solution of the Arab-Israeli problem lies in the creation of a pluralistic state in Palestine in which Christians, Jews and Muslims would live as equals in a democratic, non-sectarian society.

The Al-Fatah leader is the moderate among militant Palestinian revolutionaries and in that role receives impressive moral and financial support across the entire spectrum of government leadership in the Arab world from the conservative regimes in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf area to socialist Egypt and revolutionary Libya and Algeria.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine is headed by a 44-year old Christian, Dr. George Habash, from Lydda. After earning his medical degree from the American University of Beirut, he set up a clinic in Amman but his heart drew him to the politics of liberation of his homeland.

His PFLP adheres to Marxist-Lenin ideology. Habash disclaims being Communist, but he and his followers lump what they call "the imperialist Powers and neo-Colonialists" with Zionists, Israel and reactionary Arab Governments into one category as "enemies."

The PFLP is much more of an underground operation than Al-Fatah. As *Fortune*, in its issue for July 1970, puts it, "In some ways it is an Arab counterpart of the Jewish terrorist organization Irgun Zvai Leumi." The PFLP boasts openly of its exploits including the hijacking of a TWA airliner bound from Athens to Tel Aviv and attacks on El Al (Israeli Airlines) planes at airports in Athens and Zurich.

Habash's organization is much smaller than Al-Fatah and is thought to comprise only about 1,000 men, but these are highly trained experts in destruction within Israeli-held territory and abroad... wherever they can find their enemies, "imperialists," Zionists or Israelis being less than ever-alert.

The PDFLP — End of Line To Left

Na'if Hawatmeh, a 35 year old Jordanian by origin, is the leader of the extreme left-wing Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP). Hawatmeh is also a graduate of the American University of Beirut, with a degree in philosophy and social sciences.

Born of peasant parents, Hawatmeh soon became attracted to the Arab National Movement. By the time he was 23 he was under sentence of death in Iraq for his alleged part in an anti-government plot there. After the fall of General Kassim, Hawatmeh returned to Iraq in 1963 to again narrowly escape execution for political activities. In his homeland, too, he was condemned to death in absentia by the Jordanian High Court, but received a reprieve in the General Royal Amnesty following the June 1967 war with Israel.

The PDFLP is a splinter group which broke away from Habash's PFLP. The differences were bitter and led to bloodshed in machine gun battles between the two groups in Amman in February 1969. Hawatmeh describes his PDFLP as "Marxist-Leninist standing at the extreme end of the line to the left." He has been described as "a radical Leftist" and as a "Maoist." The dogma of his group is that the only way to liberate Palestine is through a protracted "people's war" and by turning the Middle East into a second Vietnam.



Yassir Arafat with Prime Minister Rifai of Jordan, also of Palestinian background.



Dr. George Habash of PFLP



Na'if Hawatmeh of PDFLP

PEACE WITH THE ARABS IS POSSIBLE:

The Viewpoint of an Israeli Columnist and Satirist... Amos Kenan

The knights of the Greater Israel who call Israel a Power, who, in their imagination, have stormed not only Cairo and Damascus but watered their horses on the banks of the Euphrates, for whom the Arabs almost no longer exist as a factor to be taken into account, who speak in the language of "Realpolitik" about "Lebensraum"—all these have suddenly begun to twitter like fledgeling doves left behind in an abandoned nest. They suddenly remember that they are the vanguard of the free world's defence. They want the USA to remember their childhood sweethearts, to help, support, threaten and deter for them. All those who for three years have been conducting American policy without consulting the Americans who don't understand anything about policy anyway—they have already forgotten that they are a great and mighty Power. They crawl on all fours now, wet their diapers and whimper sadly and piteously.

If it weren't so awful it would be laughable. And if we remember that all these heroes call others defeatists, Ghetto Jews with a Diaspora mentality, it becomes impossible not to laugh when you see all these terrible heroes going to beg favours from the lord of the manor. They are even trying to remind the lord of the manor that we are his ideological vanguard—as if policy were a matter of ideological considerations—and Minister Dolcin wishes President Nixon success in Columbia; Minister Hosef Sapir says that we are defending not only our existence but that of the free world as well; Gahal M.K. S.Z. Abramov proposes the establishment of an American base in the Sinai. In brief—all that's lacking now is Shalom Aleichem to write a play about Menahem Mendel the Strategist and Sheine Sheindel his wife who manage the entire globe.

Today the chance of getting the Russians out of the Middle East is about as good as returning the newborn babe to his mother's womb. Whoever did not want the baby should have thought twice before having it.

Israel Responsible for Soviet Involvement

Soviet involvement in the Middle East is the ripening fruit of Israeli policy since 1956. True—one should not accuse the Soviets of dancing to our tune and following our initiatives. They have aspirations of their own—but they have found us a most faithful ally.

The Government of Israel has erected an extraordinarily logical edifice in which nothing is wrong—except the basic premise itself. Israel's basic assumption is: peace with the Arabs is impossible. In other words: they are not prepared to recognize our existence, thus it is not a question of territories. Therefore they don't want any negotiations. And even if they do sign a peace agreement with us, it will be valueless since they will use the breathing spell afforded them by peace to prepare their next attack against us. Therefore only one choice is left: to hold out, to go on existing while continuing to fortify our positions. That is the philosophy common to practically everyone in the Government.

In other words: the Jewish-Arab conflict is insoluble. Therefore we must search for a security guarantee for the existence of Israel. The guarantee can be of one type only—American. The question is how to get the Americans to give us that guarantee. This is the calculated risk the Government of Israel took in forcing escalation in Egypt.

Escalation has its own laws. What may appear as a regrettable error to one side may be the lever of a fateful decision to the other side. We may view the Abu Zabal incident as an error, but Nasser cannot afford another Abu Zabal, just as we can't allow another Kiryat Shemona. In concurrence with the Russians we have managed to put Nasser under the Russian yoke.

Faulty Assumptions

All this is in obedience to the basic assumption that peace with the Arabs is impossible. This is an unbelievably stupid assumption since it is based on the unwillingness and inability to understand the motives of the conflict. Only a conflict lacking in motives cannot be settled. To look at Israeli behaviour one would think that the conflict is its own motive. The conflict exists because it exists and that's that. It's the same with the Israeli peace plans: there'll be peace when there's peace and that's that.

Now, of course, the Soviet involvement in Egypt has grown and *the Israeli cry of alarm is intended to get the USA to carry out a Vietnamization of the Middle East*. The trouble is that it is still too early, as far as the Americans are concerned. They still have Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait and some little influence in Libya. Of course, absolute Soviet domination of Egypt may lead to domination of the remaining Western strongholds in the Middle East. *The naive Israeli assumption is as follows: if all the Western strongholds fall and only Israel remains, the Americans will have no choice but to give Israel unrestricted support as in the case of the Saigon government.*

The trouble is that until this happens—and the Americans will do everything to prevent it from happening, including pressuring Israel to retreat—that Greater Israel whose temporary greatness they want to enshrine, will have ceased to exist. The idea was absurd to begin with.

Israel Will Have To Retreat

The bitter truth has to be told, however painful: in the near future Israel will have to retreat, in obedience to a far-reaching political decision accepting some kind of settlement—whether it is the settlement of the Rogers Plan, of the Security Council Resolution or of any new decision taken by the Great Powers.

Such a retreat is, I'm sorry to say, the better eventuality. There exists the possibility of the worse eventuality: an Israel, that did not want to accept an imposed political settlement, will be compelled to fold up. It has already happened in history that greater powers than Israel have had to fold up.

Whoever said that we would hold the armistice lines ten, twenty and even thirty years, till the Arabs agreed to meet with us for negotiations without preliminary conditions, looks ridiculous now.

Whoever thought that it would be possible to extend the frontiers of the Greater Israel even further—to conquer additional territories and to hold parades in Arab capitals to force a peace on our conditions, looks ridiculous now.

The present situation can't go on—it's beyond our power. Massada? There are still some sane people left here who won't allow that to happen. Folding up is preferable to committing suicide. Should there be anyone who calls upon the people to repeat the Massada exploit, we may hope he will find himself outside the circle of power and influence.

Israel's Policy of Negation

One thing should be clear: During the past three years we have held fast to a policy of holding lines without doing anything at all, in the hope that this inaction would budge the Arabs from their stubborn stand. This hope has not proved illusory—it has gone bankrupt. It is dead. What's left now is only either/or.

Nasser himself isn't happy, as we can see from his latest political declarations (toward which Israel has reacted with its characteristic silence). He has said clearly that he is ready for a political settlement and has undoubtedly broken some of the "No's" of Khartoum when he said: either absorption of the 1948 refugees or compensation. We have even foregone putting him to the test, to see whether he speaks the truth or lies. We are not prepared to save him from the clutches of the Soviets. We have already made up our mind that this is final. The truth is that Soviet involvement is still tentative. If we have a Government capable of offering Nasser a political alternative as well, it may still be possible to get the Soviets out of the Middle East.

There is a kind of policy that means doing everything wrong all at the same time: don't recognize the Palestinians, don't take the Americans' advice, don't submit to the Security Council Resolution, don't reply to Egyptian feelers, don't heed Russian warnings, don't consider the interests of the West.

Whoever believes that peace with the Arabs is impossible, creates the very conditions that make this peace impossible. Whoever has brought the Soviets into this region and does not know how to get them out brings disaster upon the coming generations, a disaster which, at best, will mean that Israel will not disappear from the map, but that there will be no peace between us and our neighbours as long as a foreign body is present in the area. Whoever wants this, condemns us to the fate of Saigon. And whoever consoles himself with the thought that after all the Soviets have no interest in annihilating us—let him remember that the Americans have no interest in annihilating the Vietnamese people either. Yet the Vietnamese people is being destroyed before our very eyes without anyone really having a stake in that.

Ha'aretz, June 17, 1970, and reprinted in
Tadmit Newsletter: Facts and Views from Israel

Morocco's offer to the Jews

In an interview granted to the editor of the French weekly "Le Nouvel Observateur," King Hassan of Morocco said that his country was ready to welcome back the Moroccan Jews who left to settle in Israel. He declared:

"If any Moroccan Jews living at present in Israel are sorry to have left their homeland, let them know that they are welcome to return to our midst."

The King also added that Morocco was ready to settle the hundreds of Jews who had left Poland and are living now in Denmark.

REACTIONS TO THE CEASEFIRE

The semi-official newspaper "Al Ahram" hailed the 90-day Israel-Arab ceasefire as a "victory for the Egyptian policy of steadfastness and refusal to surrender."

"Israel has accepted what it has been stubbornly rejecting for the past three years," Al Ahram said in an editorial, "But this achievement still needs to be solidified and implemented."

Syria denounced the American peace initiative, but despite its public opposition to the peace moves, Damascus is believed to be taking a more moderate line in private contacts with Cairo and Amman.

The Algiers semi-official daily "El Moudjahid" wrote that the implementation of the Rogers plan would have serious repercussions, not only for Palestine but also for the whole Arab world.

The recognition of a Zionist colony in the Middle East amounted to the negation of a Palestinian state, it said, the Palestinian people were therefore condemned to be for ever a people of refugees in the care of international charity, the newspaper added.

It recalled that Algeria advocated armed struggle, not for the sake of armed struggle but, because she wished the Palestinians a peace based on the right for freedom, dignity and land.

The only acceptable peace settlement is one which "consecrates the right of the Palestinian people to their own land in freedom and dignity," the paper said in the first official Algerian comment following the ceasefire agreement.

"The Rogers plan seeks to maintain for all time the security of the Zionist enclave on Palestinian soil, at the expense of the Palestinian people who are thus deprived of their most legitimate rights."

"Le Figaro", Paris, said the speed of the agreement, coming only 15 days after Egypt's acceptance of the American peace proposals and 8 days after Israel's was a success for the diplomacy of Ambassador Jarring.

The newspaper said: "It is clear that the two camps, even if they set out on the negotiating path with hesitation, reserves and fears, have decided to play the game."

But it warned: "It is however evident that this progress is limited, and that the situation remains heavy with threats."

RIGHT-WING EXTREMISTS IN ISRAEL

Menachem Begin's Record Recalled

The withdrawal of the extreme right-wing Gahal party from Israel's coalition government in protest against acceptance of the American peace proposal has brought the name of the leader of that party, Menachem Begin, into world prominence. It is not the first time that Mr. Begin has been featured in the press, particularly in the USA. In the fall of 1948, Begin's exploits as leader of the terrorist Irgun Zvai Leumi in pre-Israel Palestine caused pro-Zionists to attempt to portray him as a hero and to lionize him during a fund raising tour of the United States. The story of that attempt is well presented in Alfred Lilienthal's book *What Price Israel*. The account of Begin's exploits is available in his own book, *The Revolt: Story of the Irgun*. Both should be read by anyone interested in knowing how the Zionists present their case and how the American public is so frequently misled in regard to the Zionist cause.

Boastful Terrorist

Begin had publicly claimed responsibility for such terrorist acts as the blowing up of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem in July 1946 when nearly 100 Jews, Arabs and British were killed, placing a time bomb in the British Colonial office in London, the kidnapping and cold-blooded hanging in July 1947 of two British sergeants in Palestine and the atrocity at Deir Yassin where 254 men, women and children were massacred by the Irgunists on April 10, 1948. A few months later Begin visited the United States.

Alfred Lilienthal relates that a Reception Committee was organized to provide Begin with a hero's welcome. Louis Bromfield, Ben Hecht and Senator Guy Gillette were the leaders on the Committee. Others involved were "Senators Arthur Capper of Kansas, Theodore Green of Rhode Island, Herbert O'Connor of Maryland, a score of Governors, men of letters and clergymen of all faiths . . . These more or less celebrated names emblazoned a huge advertisement in the *New York Times* under the headline: 'The Man Who Defied an Empire and Gained Glory for Israel—Menachem Begin, former Irgun Commander-in-Chief, arrives on Good-Will Mission Today.' The usual Waldorf-Astoria Dinner was to follow, also an official welcome at City Hall. The main object of his visit was to obtain funds for electing Begin as Prime Minister of Israel. His political platform called for the incorporation of most of Jordan and other adjacent territories into Israel so that the new State would include the original boundaries of Canaan (or Eretz Israel)."

U.S. Visa Refused

Lilienthal goes on to relate that the State Department, knowing well the Begin record, rejected his visa application, but President Truman intervened and the visa was granted. "Some of the violence and lawlessness during the last months of the British Mandate was at least emotionally understandable, but the premeditated hanging of two British Sergeants could justify no con-

ceivable defense. Yet the arrival in the United States of the man who planned this crime . . . was exuberantly heralded by U.S. officialdom. It was only some time after Dr. Henry Coffin, Father John La Farge and Rabbi Morris Lazaron had publicly warned the duped U.S. politicians and called for the repudiation of Begin that the Welcoming Committee disintegrated."

John F. Kennedy Withdraws Support

President John F. Kennedy at the time was a young Congressman. He had been induced to join the reception committee, but in the nick of time he wired Louis Bromfield: "Belatedly and for the record I wish to withdraw my name from the reception committee for Menachem Begin, former Irgun Commander. When accepting your invitation, I was ignorant of the true nature of his activities and I wish to be disassociated from them completely."

Lilienthal's account of how various Congressmen and others "... could not recall later whether they, or their office, had ever authorized the use of their names" in connection with the attempted lionization of Begin is interesting. It may also be revealing as to how so many prominent names frequently appear in advertisements such as the Zionist enthusiasts placed in the American press during the Begin visit of 1948. In 1970, did each of the 73 Senators who are said to have signed the recent letter to President Nixon urging more Phantoms for Israel, actually endorse the move or were some included simply because "some one in their office" authorized the use of their name?

THE GAHAL PARTY

"Gahal" stands for the Alliance of Herut and Liberals. These two right-wing groups are determined that Israel should fill the role of conqueror by retaining every inch of the lands seized from the Arabs in 1967.

The Gahalists hold 25 seats in a Knesset of 120. Six of the members held ministries in Mrs. Meir's cabinet of 24.

Herut is the old Irgun Zvai Leumi, branded by even the Israelis as terrorists. Its leader, Menachem Begin, a Polish Jew, allegedly deserted from the Polish Army and served as a Soviet agent before going to Palestine. He is scholarly and well-mannered in the presence of the elite, but a mob-rouser with his inflammatory oratory.

Another prominent member of the Gahal is General Ezer Weizman, nephew of Israel's first president, Chaim Weizmann. The nephew is numbered among Israel's super-hawks and, like Menachem Begin, has ambitions to become Prime Minister of Israel. The rightist are a powerful bloc and their extremist leaders will be an influence on the course of any peace negotiations.



World attention in the present peace drive is focused on the Suez Canal and the threat of an American-Russian confrontation there. The real issue, as has been the case for twenty-two years, is the Palestinian exiles, such as these children of refugees in a Gaza camp. There can be no peace in the Middle East while they are prevented from returning to their homeland.

ISRAEL'S PRECARIOUS ECONOMY

Military Spending Nearly \$1 Billion In 1969

As military costs soar and foreign exchange reserves dwindle, Israel faces an economic crisis that is bound to affect not only the Israeli consumer but also the less-privileged Arabs in the occupied territories who try desperately to make ends meet and whose purchasing power in some districts has fallen to near-starvation levels.

Last year Israel's foreign exchange reserves, which had reached 900 million dollars after the June 1967 war, slumped from 663 million dollars to 400 million dollars—100 million dollars below the 500 million level which the Bank of Israel describes as "comfortable" but is, in fact, only enough to pay for three months' imports. Consequently the Israeli Ministry of Commerce and Industry continues to introduce anti-inflationary measures such as ordering importers to deposit in advance 50 per cent of the value of many imported goods. A few months ago the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Yosef Saphir, told reporters that the most acute situation was the growth of imports. "If this kind of growth continues," he said, "Israel will come to a catastrophe."

The annual report for 1969 of the Bank of Israel, which contains statistics to corroborate Saphir's remarks, stated in one paragraph:

The developments in 1969, which resulted in a big increase in the import surplus, the depletion of foreign exchange reserves and a rise in the external debt, underline the central problem of the Israeli economy—the inability to finance a mounting import surplus over time from unilateral transfers and long-term loans from abroad.

The Director of the Bank of Israel, David Horowitz, warned that "there is a serious danger that our foreign payments deficit will worsen this year for the second time."

Since January 1970, Israelis and Arabs in occupied territories have felt the pinch in price rises of 4 to 5 per cent on everything from furniture to cinema tickets.

(Continued on page 11)

SOVIET POLICY IMAGE CHANGES

From David Bonavia in Moscow

Since President Nasser's acceptance of the Rogers peace plan, which is widely believed to have been urged on him by the Soviet leaders, the image of Russian Middle East policy has changed.

Viewed only two months ago as a sinister and reckless conspirator, the Kremlin is now basking in the approval of many people who sincerely seek peace and political settlement in the Middle East.

The Israelis are more cynical about Russian motives, and less willing to believe the leopard can change its spots. In fact Russia's present policy is perfectly consistent with her previous one, and is a logical development from it.

Her long-term aim is to weaken the West's political, economic, and strategic positions in the Middle East, by discrediting it in the eyes of Arab governments. The issue of Israel has simply been the most convenient way of doing this.

The Politburo itself has probably not yet decided how far it is going to exploit its growing prestige with the Arabs. Many dubious ventures, such as expulsion of western oil interests, and the acquisition of naval and air facilities on the Mediterranean, must be recommending themselves for consideration. But this is for the future.

The priorities just now are to avoid a direct clash with the United States, and to consolidate the political gains already made in Soviet-Arab relations.

Middle East Chaos Not Wanted

Moscow never wanted chaos or permanent war in the Middle East. It wanted and still wants stable, responsible Arab governments to deal with, as safe from right-wing coups as from the influence of extreme left-wing radicals. It is afraid of a larger war, because that might lead to world war or bring more humiliations for the Arabs.

Nor does Russia want a political settlement totally acceptable to both sides (an impossible dream in any case.) The likely form of a settlement—a package of uneasy territorial and political compromises—will help Russian policy by keeping the Arabs wary and hostile towards Israel even in peace time.

Russia has gained much from her Middle East adventure, and her winning streak is not running out yet. But she has had to make sacrifices too. She has lost the respect of many of the Palestine guerrillas, and some of the Arab governments, by cooperating with America in the search for a settlement.

This is upsetting for the Russians but not tragic. They knew that they could not go on indefinitely being all things to all Arabs. They had to choose the strongest, most responsible and most promising ally—which they identified as moderate Arab opinion led by President Nasser.

No Support For Arab Extremists

The alternative would have been to start supporting the extremist positions of the guerrillas, such as the demand for destruction of the Israeli state and the overthrow of moderate Arab governments. This would have been too glaring a volte-face, even for Moscow, and too dangerous because of America's commitment to Israel.

In other words, the Russians have pre-empted the growth of guerrilla influence by drawing the moderate Arabs into active peace moves, which are at least as popular as the demand for a holy war against Israel.

With the wisdom of hindsight, one can see that Russia's alarming military build-up in Egypt this year was essentially a political move to strengthen President Nasser's bargaining position at the negotiations which they knew must come.

Russia never intended to risk a Cuban-type confrontation in the Middle East. By June this year, the United States Administration was showing so much alarm about the situation

here that the Russians must have felt they had pushed the Americans far enough. Since Cuba, Moscow knows it must allow a safe margin of error in calculating the speed and scale of American reactions.

So Russia's apparent "change of heart" in the Middle East was actually a well-planned move, timed to head off more guerrilla influence in the Arab world, and to cool the military confrontation some way short of the danger point. Her overall aims in the Middle East remain the same as before.

These aims, however, are of secondary importance in Soviet world strategy, whose chief preoccupations remain the strategic arms balance, European security, and China.

Conciliatory Moves In Europe

Russia is engaged in a number of unexpectedly conciliatory moves in Europe, highlighted by the arrival here of Herr Willy Brandt to sign the new Soviet-West German treaty. She is also, apparently, coming close to agreement with the Americans on strategic arms limitation, and is probably prepared to talk more seriously about Berlin.

Concern Over China

Soviet policy towards the West has thawed on a wide front this year, which suggests continued and even deepening concern at the failure to pacify the Chinese. Chinese progress in development of nuclear weapons and delivery systems is putting time limits on Russia's patience in dealing with her.

In other words, Russia seems to be seeking a wide-ranging détente with the West (providing it does not affect her control of Eastern Europe), in order to free her hands for action against China if that becomes necessary.

Apart from the inner dynamics of the Middle East situation itself, it is desirable for Moscow to ease the confrontation there in the interests of a wider East-West détente. The Russians would consider progress in strategic arms limitation, or a political settlement in Europe, to be of considerably greater importance than any fruits their Middle East venture may bear.

The Times, London, Aug. 12

LIGHT AT LAST?

The article by F. Turki on the opposite and succeeding page appeared in *The International Herald Tribune* in its edition of August 10 [Editor's note: to the incredulous surprise of many IHT readers in the Middle East]. The fact that the IHT gave so much space to the young Palestinian's story may indicate that at long last some sections of the American press are coming to realize that justice for the Palestinian exiles is the core of the problem in the Middle East.

AJME members in many parts of the USA report that, while the press generally continues to be overwhelmingly pro-Zionist, cracks are beginning to appear in the wall of partiality. Some discern a change on the part of more responsible publications. Facts about the Arab-Israeli contentions are appearing and these challenge myths and misconceptions of long standing.

'I Belong to No Nation, But Damn You All, I Belong to a People'

by F. Turki

This young Palestinian, a former refugee camp inmate himself, bares facts about his people in irresistible rhetoric. The facts are no revelation to those who know the Palestinian Arabs. However, they will surprise the misinformed and should challenge them to reconsider the myths so long accepted in regard to the Palestinian refugees.

We are sufficiently used by now to the news of continuous mayhem and fierce passions from the Middle East; and with the emergence over the last three years of the Palestinian guerrillas and people as a new entity and force to be reckoned with before a solution is sought and peace achieved, the world is suddenly reminded of an added complication and a great irony about the Arab-Israeli conflict: that the present state of tension stems exclusively from the plight that befell the Palestinian refugees 22 years ago. But up till 1967, the world chose to forget that the problem belonged to those people; that they were the ones whose lives were most devastatingly affected by it and to whom offers for a solution should have been addressed, not to the Syrians, the Egyptians and other Arabs. These latter had not lost their homelands, their territories, their dignity and been forced to live in refugee camps in abject poverty a few miles (in some cases a few yards) away from their towns, villages, orchards and all the intangible realities they once loved.

Yet whenever the question of or need for peace in the Middle East was raised, it was to Nasser and his fellow Arab

"So the world erroneously came to think of the Palestinian people as a semi-literate mass of poverty and disease-stricken peasants ..."

leaders the world turned; it was they the world tried to appease and it was they who used the "Palestine Problem" in a manner to enhance their political prestige and gain their mercenary ends. Only in the background would the issue of the million or so Arab refugees be considered.

So the world erroneously came to think of the Palestinian people as a semi-literate mass of poverty and disease-stricken peasants indistinguishable from the masses of Arabs who populated their host countries; a people infinitely less qualified technically, educationally, culturally and socially than their counterparts across the border in Israel, and impossible to absorb back into their homeland.

How do I delve into my consciousness, as a young Palestinian, and explain my problem and tell a world I could not solicit sympathy from who I am and who my people are? Do I say I am luckier than my father who died a refugee for the second time running in less than two decades (because I was not in the West Bank at the outbreak of hostilities and he was)? That I was never behind the microphone at the Voice of the Arabs radio in Cairo mouthing off obscenities about "driving them into the sea" and that I am not and have never felt inferior to any "nice Jewish boy," whether he comes from Haifa or N.Y. City?

Having lived as a stateless person for nearly all of my 26 years has given me enough hangups to come out of my ears and engulfed my very being, at times with lunatic extremes of hate and bitterness, and at others with frustrated resignation.

I belong to no nation, but damn you all, I belong to a people; a versatile and ingenious people who have the highest literacy rate in the Middle East, who have 64,000 university graduates, who are on the faculties of all the major universities in the region and who man the most sensitive positions in technology and the arts from Beirut to Dhahran and from Sanaa to Amman, and whose only sin was to refuse any

solution to their problem other than return to their homeland.

For a people who have lived in refugee camps for over twenty years, that is not a mean accomplishment; not less an accomplishment, at any rate, than the Israelis' purported conversion of "the desert into a garden." Why were we considered less qualified to do that in our own country had we been allowed to continue living there? Why should the world feel justified in solving the Jewish refugee problem in Europe by creating in me and a million of my fellow Palestinians another one?

My father, in his simple and at times simplistic way, would make bewildered gestures in the direction of Israel and say: "What are these Jews trying to do anyway? They are fighting and getting killed there and it is not even their country. How long do they hope to last in that fortress surrounded by millions of us and the sea?" and then switch onto Radio Cairo to listen to the impassioned rhetoric the Egyptians mouthed about "liberating Palestine" while they poison-gassed the Yeminis and mistreated the people in Gaza.

Well, if the Israelis are "fighting and getting killed there" it is not because Israel is not their country but because it is. It is also ours and we have as much right (I submit we have more right) to be there. The policy of the Palestinian people, as articulated by el-Fatah, contains a notable absence of threats to drive anyone into the sea and emphasizes the necessity of returning the refugees to their homeland, or fighting until such time as that end is achieved.

I find it repugnant that the people of Israel would consider themselves so ethnically and religiously elitist that they would carve out a society founded on these lines.

The Jewish dream (the return to Palestine and Jerusalem) does not surely have to be synonymous with the Zionist dream. The former could still be perpetuated with the repatriation of the refugees without loss to the identity and character of the Jewish people and their community. The latter is anathema to us. In a sense, we are now the Jewish people scattered all around in a mini diaspora of our own, and now never to forget thee, Jerusalem, either. For twenty years or more, we have adamantly refused to be integrated in our host countries, accept houses and monetary compensation offered by the UN and shouldered the most degrading forms of persecution (bureaucratic clerk at Ministry of Interior in Beirut to Palestinian: "To get a work permit you initially need to get a job." Pimpily-faced employer to Palestinian: "To get a job here you need a work permit." Street entertainer to his monkey: "Show the audience how a Palestinian picks up his UN food rations.")

Now we have taken the matter into our own hands and are going to fight and bargain as tenaciously as our fellow Semites (most of us would get lost in a temple!) across the border. And if every now and again George Habash's PLF bombs a school bus we will all shout "Shame. Dastardly act!",

"We are still breathing but doing well, and no longer sitting under a tree waiting for Godot."

but let us not hear a similar interjection from those Israelis who were once members of the Hagana (their attack on Deir Yassin, among other villages, in 1948, is already in the history books).

The Israeli government has continually refused to concede that we existed, that we breathed and yearned for our homes and dignity, that we suffered, that we were not going to be subjected to an indefinite reliance on the Arab states and that now, three years after emerging from the mud of DP camps, we are still breathing but doing well and no longer sitting under a tree waiting for Godot.

Reverting to the simplistic logic of my late father—how long can the Israelis hope to sustain an economy and a society perpetually poised for war, inside the walls of fortress Israel surrounded by masses of enemy, and continue to defy heavens and history?

Our own record of persecution against the Jews prior to the inception of the Zionist dream is clean. Our traditions lack any overt tendency to discriminate against minorities that stems from prejudice of race or color. In fact at the first stages of the influx of Jewish immigrants into Palestine, there was a kind of sympathy shown by Arabs toward the Jews; and even in the thirties and well into the forties, after Mr. Balfour felt it the right of the British people to take from the Palestinian people, the two communities still managed to live side by side despite harassments and acts of terrorism.

We did not gas them in Germany, expel them from Spain, persecute them in Eastern Europe or mistreat them in Russia; nor did we, as their self-appointed enemies to the west of Sinai did in June, 1967, threaten to drive them into the sea and rape their women (rape in our culture is one of the most heinous of crimes. Witness the shooting of two men by el-Fatah for raping an American woman in Amman during the recent eruption in Jordan).

But the Western world, in a hurry to rid its mind of the abominable deeds it committed against the Jews and the tragedy of the concentration camps, opted to turn a blind eye to the plight of the refugees fleeing into the surrounding countries in 1948 and persisted from then on to inflict historical reality to suit the issues as viewed from the Zionist standpoint.

They could see only the image of Israel, enhanced by Zionist propaganda, where people lived the romance of the Kibbutz and the watch on the frontier, in a land where sun-tanned Sabras made the desert flower and Leon Uris was indeed on the ball.

And always the phrase: Tiny Israel! Tiny Israel surrounded by hordes of barbarians out for its blood; Tiny Israel threatened by the Egyptian Goliath; Tiny Israel denounced by masses of Arabs ruled by cruel and despotic heads of state and oil potentates; Tiny Israel whom the world owed a debt; to, the embodiment of the Jewish dream and the protection of which is therapy to the guilt of the West; Tiny Israel is to be saved, coveted, aided, kept viable economically and militarily and idealized on all levels.

And the Palestinian people in the fifties and sixties found themselves the pariah refugees par excellence, who, like the Jews in Europe before them, indulged the unpleasant offense of being different and remaining different. They spoke Arabic with a different accent from their Jordanian, Lebanese or Syrian hosts and were a burden on the absorptive capacity of their economies. They found employment only in the oil-rich states of Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf and starved to send their sons or brothers to universities. They were different culturally and socially but in those days of emotional

"We merely want to go back to our homeland."

crisis the placement of concerns was on education and the song *Falasteen ya Falasteen* (Palestine, Palestine).

At home we would cause great consternation if we talked about dropping out of school or not going to college, or affected a Lebanese or other accent. "How do you hope to get anywhere without a degree, hey?" or "What's wrong with the Palestinian people anyway, hey, you're too good for them or something?" There are just as many Jewish mothers on our side, you see, as on theirs.

We also had our characters, straight out of Mahmud's "The Fixer," forever bounded by the police for ID cards, employment cards, UNRWA cards and other badges to display to them our state of disgrace and torment.

And to the world of Europe and North America, when they bothered to write or read about us, we were the half starved, wild-eyed illiterate Bedouins roaming the desert or packed in ghettos. The tragedy of it is that the image we presented to the world in the fifties was partially correct. We were half starved and, if not wild-eyed, at least among the elderly, glazed-eyed. One was happy when the end of the month came, for with the UNRWA rations stored in the larder, there was always enough to eat for at least a week. And after that there were daily rations of milk that you

dipped big chunks of bread into, or onion sandwiches. The dexterous mistress of the mudhouse would make sure though that the supply of flour did not deplete before the new rations arrived, for one would be out of even bread.

Elderly people would sit together in the shade at local side street cafes and talk about the Turks, the British and the Israelis, burdened by memories of oppression and destitution.

We grew up with *Falasteen ya Falasteen* ringing in our heads; with the knowledge that we were different; that we wanted to remain different; that we could not enjoy the same privileges as others because we were aliens; that we should queue up obsequiously outside the UNRWA depots for our rations; that we could not afford to lose our ID cards; that the police are not kind and that you take it when they ask if you ever heard the one about the Palestinian who ... And above all, you go to school, boy, because you are out in the world, on your own, naked, without your degree.

A great many of us left the camps after the *déracinés* days of the fifties and rented comfortable houses outside the ghettos and waited out nearly all the decade of the sixties, buoyed and sustained by mendacities from Cairo and other Arab capitals about liberation of "usurped Palestine."

Now we are on the scene, and determined—to fight, to talk, to reason, to listen.

We merely want to go back to our homeland. We do not want a hodge-podge Palestine state carved out of the West Bank, nor do we want an absurd puppet state subservient to anyone.

I say we merely want to go back to our homeland. My father never made it. Maybe I won't make it either and my son will. But if he does not, I feel sure his son will make the pledge: Never to forget thee, Palestine.

BREAKING WITH NASSER

The Arabs now need a new set of Rogers proposals to restore peace to their ranks. While the American proposals may not bring peace to the Middle East they have apparently started war among the Arabs.

If anything, the break between President Nasser and the commandos has proved that the Palestinians are really and truly free of any patronage, whether Arab or foreign (the Soviet Union also came under their fire for having "colluded" with the United States). But being free of Egyptian patronage does not necessarily mean that the commandos can afford to break with Nasser. Both sides have the same supporters in the Arab World and it will be interesting to see who will keep the majority on his side ... whether he or the commandos emerge on top both sides will lose in the end ... it may prove very unwise to pick a fight with the Egyptian leader because winning battles against the Jordanian or Lebanese government is one thing and winning them against Nasser is another.

And in the current squabble, President Nasser may find himself pushed into doing things he had not originally planned. After all there is a very good chance that he is maneuvering and in this case he will need all the Arab support he can get.

But the commandos do not understand all this maneuvering business, and a look at the Middle East's modern history proves how right they may be. Arab leaders explained the armistice of 1948 as a maneuver and all Arab defeats since have been shrugged off on "strategy" basis.

The commandos have the right to reject the latest "maneuver."

Daily Star, Beirut

Israel's Economy (Cont.)

Pinch of Rising Prices

To keep pace with rising prices, many unions have been demanding much more than a wage hike of 5 per cent. The Nurses' Union, for example, demanded a 12 per cent wage increase which it got after paralyzing most Israeli hospitals for five days.

Poor economic planning and allocation of funds also resulted recently in electric power shortages and blackouts throughout Israel. "Kol Israel" announced that there would be quarter-hour electrical cut-offs on July 15 "due to technical difficulties." The next day the Government announced that it had received a Canadian loan of \$15 million for the purchase of equipment for a number of power stations and that the electricity stoppages would not last much longer.

1969 Defense Budget \$960 Million

The outline of the Government's budget proposals for this financial year make it clear that the fastest growing item on the debit side has been the category "Government Services"—which for the most part means war supplies and which accounts for the drain on the reserves. For 1969-70 the sum allocated for "defence spending" was 840 million dollars, but the Defense Ministry's annual review says that its actual defense budget totalled nearly 960 million dollars, a significant increase in the original figure which has raised military expenditure to more than 37 per cent of the whole budget. Military spending is officially and conservatively estimated to have accounted for 22 per cent of Israel's Gross National Product. In fact, the proportion is thought to be nearer one third. If Israel makes peace with her Arab neighbors and stops all purchase of military equipment, she could redeploy as much as one third of her G.N.P. in channels of peaceful development.

Only Foreign Contributions Make Israel Viable

Finance Minister Sapir has projected for 1970-71 a disbursement of one billion two hundred million dollars for "Government Services" which will account, he says, for over 40 per cent of the total budget. It will also use up at least three quarters of all tax revenues as well as capital appropriations coming from loans raised at home and abroad. These figures are rendered even more significant by the fact that development projects in Israel such as settling more foreign immigrants in the occupied territories (which elsewhere would be directly under government purview) are being financed more and more by Jewish institutions with funds from abroad.

In short, Israel's belatedness in pursuing peace subjects her economy to a strain which is liable to grow worse with time. Ironically it appears that Israel needs to perpetuate a crisis atmosphere in order to continue receiving from abroad the sort of financial assistance she needs to achieve the objectives of her internal policy. Until Israel finds a way out of this paradox, the Middle East is likely to remain in turmoil.

Stop Press

At press time for this *Newsletter*, there are ominous signs of Israeli efforts to delay peace talks. What are the reasons for this Israeli vacillation? Could it be that Jordan and Egypt genuinely seek peace whereas Israel does not? Could it be that a peace without Israeli conquest and occupation of Arab lands is a peace that Israel does not want?

Israel is already "slowing down" its contacts with Ambassador Jarring, in an effort to embarrass the United States over alleged missile site moves in the four hours immediately preceding the ceasefire and the four hours immediately thereafter. Israel claims to be a democracy and thus "justifies" its hesitation as being necessary to assuage its more hawkish citizens before taking steps toward peace. Nasser is head of the Egyptian state. But more importantly he is head of a nation, the Arab Nation. But, despite dissidence within that constituency over his acceptance of the American proposals, he and King Hussein have acted forthrightly in accepting them.

Is the Western world, after almost a quarter of a century, about to learn what many people have known for almost as long? Namely, that Zionist Israel has no interest in peace except in terms of "Eretz Israel," i.e. an area extending from the Suez Canal on the south to the Litani River in Lebanon on the north and beyond the Jordan River to the east.

AJME believes that the Rogers initiative and President Nasser's prompt acceptance of it have faced Israel with its "moment of truth." We cannot speak for Israel, but can speak for many concerned Americans.

Our conclusion is that Israel will do everything in its power to delay and deter any peace other than the one it has hoped for so long it could ruthlessly impose on the Arab peoples.

Israel is a contemporary pariah among the nations of the world. How can it hold two Algerian travelers, who happened to be brought to Israel by an unscheduled stop of a BOAC airliner, hostage and describe such action as qualitatively different from its own excoriation of Palestinian "terrorism"? Israel not only justifies its aggression as a matter of self-interest and security, but goes on to invoke "Old Testament fulfillment" for its naked ambitions. "To hell with peace and justice, Yahweh is on our side!"

"NOUS ACCUSONS!"

The Editors

AJME MEMBERS: You receive *two* copies of this issue of *The Newsletter*. Please pass one on to an acquaintance or to your Congressman. AJME does not mail copies to Senators or Congressman on advice that such publications from abroad seldom are delivered. Extra copies are available free to members who volunteer to mail them to Congressmen or others. Also, three introductory issues will be mailed free to any name and address supplied by members.

Interested persons are invited to join AJME. Simply airmail name, address and check for at least \$10 or the equivalent to AJME, **P.O. Box 4841**, Beirut, Lebanon. The annual dues of \$10 cover subscription to *The Middle East Newsletter* and mailing costs of other publications supplied to members during the year. **SUPPORT AJME'S FIGHT FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE IN THE MIDDLE EAST!**

AJME MEMBERS will shortly receive a bonus mailing of three reprints of outstandingly interesting studies and articles. These are going out by seaimail simultaneously with the mailing of this issue of the *Newsletter* and should reach recipients in October.

These reprints are: "Search for Peace in the Middle East," the report of the two-year Quaker study of the problem; "A Plan For Peace," by Lord Caradon, until quite recently Britain's representative at the United Nations; and "The Position of the Jews in Arab Lands," by Dr. Merlin Swartz.

Publication and distribution of these papers is in keeping with the AJME effort to provide members each year with interesting material in addition to its *Middle East Newsletter*.

Christmas is Coming !

And so are The Friends of Jerusalem Society greeting cards. A selection of eight beautiful cards is now available. The subjects are new. Five are by Middle Eastern artists of international repute, such as Jumana Husseini Bayazid and Paul Guiragossian. Despite higher quality cards than last year the price has been reduced from US .25 to US. 15 per card.

Unfortunately, AJME is unable to distribute sam-

ple brochures in color to members as was done last year, but they are available and will be airmailed to those who write AJME for same and enclose US. 25 cents in stamps to cover postage. Orders may then be placed with The Friends of Jerusalem Society distributors in the USA and Canada. Time is of an essence if delivery is to be effected in time for Christmas mailing.

P. O. B. 4841

Beirut, Lebanon

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