

Letters

continued from page 6

writer, Arthur Koestler, who described it as a document in which "one nation promised a second the country of a third".

As to the American role, let me remind Mr. Barzelai of what Mr. Sumner Welles, U.S. Undersecretary of State, said describing the U.S. role in forcing the passage of the U.N. Partition Resolution in 1947:

"By direct order of the White House, every form of pressure, direct or indirect, was brought to bear by American officials upon those countries, outside the Muslim world, that were known to be either uncertain or opposed to partition".

As to Truman and Jewish electors, let Mr. Truman speak for himself. It was he who, addressing U.S. ambassadors in the M.E. who opposed his policy on Palestine, as detrimental to American national interests, said:

"I am sorry, gentlemen, but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are anxious for the success of Zionism; I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents."

The U.S. Government has since then granted Israel massive financial, military and political aid of unprecedented magnitude and consistency, without which, surely, Israel could not have been maintained. Unlike Mr. Barzelai, the American taxpayers, I am sure, do not consider this aid insignificant.

2) Mr. Barzelai maintains that Jewish contact with Palestine is not only a resurrection of a 2000 year legacy but also a constant living tie both physically and spiritually. The Palestinians' ties, however, with Palestine go back thousands of years before the Jews arrived in

Palestine as invaders and were ultimately evicted. Besides the spiritual ties, the Palestinians have not only maintained longer physical ties but **continuously and uninteruptedly** held their own country as an **overwhelming majority**, and not a mere tiny minority as in the case of the Jews. Professor Maxime Rodinson, a Jewish historian of the Sorbonne stresses that:

"The Arab population of Palestine was native in all the senses of the word, and their roots in Palestine can be traced back to at least 40 centuries".

H.G. Wells, the British writer and historian, wrote on this:

"If it is proper to "reconstitute" a Jewish state which has not existed for 2000 years, why not go back another 1000 years and reconstitute the Canaanite state? The Canaanites, unlike the Jews, are still there."

3) Mr. Barzelai says that the Jews came to Palestine to escape persecution in their countries of origin. The persecution of the Jews was at the hands of the Europeans and **not** the Palestinians. Are we now told that the Palestinians should be subjected to eviction and persecution to atone for the guilt of the Europeans? In reference to this persecution of the Palestinians by the Zionists, Professor Arnold Toynbee in his "A Study of History" write this:

"In 1948 the Jews knew, from personal experience, what they were doing. It was their supreme tragedy that the lesson learned by them from their encounter with Nazi German gentiles should have been not to eschew, but to imitate some of the evils that the Nazis had committed against the Jews."

4) Mr. Barzelai tells us that the

Jews accepted in 1947 the U.N. Partition Scheme of Palestine while the Arabs refused. He is perfectly right, but is that surprising? This reminds me of the story of King Solomon and the two women claiming the motherhood of one baby. When he proposed to partition the baby, the false mother accepted and the true mother refused. The U.N. did not have the wisdom of Solomon who handed the baby to its true mother. In 1947 the Jews constituted one third of the population of Palestine and owned 5.6% of its land, yet they were allotted by the U.N. for their Jewish state, 56% of the country. Of course the Jews accepted; it gave them something they did not own. The Arabs naturally rejected this for it gave away the bulk of their country to aliens, mostly recent immigrants. Though the Zionists accepted this, they planned to take more. Mr. Ben Gurion, the founding father of the state of Israel, declared:

"To maintain the status quo will not do. We have set up a dynamic state bent upon expansion . . . Israel has been established in only a portion of the land of Israel".

and sure enough by the end of 1948, Israel had occupied half of the territory allotted by the U.N. for the Arab state and leaving the Arabs with only 22% of their country (i.e. what is now called the West Bank and the Gaza Strip). This, too, the Israelis attacked and occupied in 1967 and Mr. Menachem Begin describes that now as "liberated territory".

5) I am then asked to look at Gaza. The Palestinian refugees are "subsisting on U.N. handouts" because the Israelis are living in the homes and on the farms of these refugees. They would not need anyone's charity if the Israelis would only comply with U.N. resolutions and allow them to return

to their homes. As to the myth, created by Western media, of Israel's liberal occupation, I will let an Israeli answer that. Professor Israel Shahak, of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and Chairman of the Israeli League of Human and Civil Rights, and who himself suffered at the hands of the Nazis in Belsen, stated:

"The Israeli occupation regime in the conquered territories is not only not a liberal one, it is one of the most cruel and repressive regimes in modern times."

He knew what he was talking about. The catalogue of eviction, destruction of homes, expropriation and systematic torture, in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, is well documented for those who care to see. Mr. Barzelai specifically mentions Gaza. Mr. Michael Adams, a British journalist writing in "The Guardian" after visiting Gaza said this:

"I had my ups and downs during 4 years as a P.O.W. in Nazi Germany, but the Germans never treated me as harshly as the Israelis are treating the Arabs of Gaza Strip, the majority of whom are women and children."

6) Mr. Barzelai, in the comfort of his home in Halifax, asks me to examine the situation more objectively. I lived through all this; I saw my people massacred and evicted from their homes. I saw my own home and town bulldozed and erased from the face of the earth. I saw my own family evicted and on our farms live today Jewish immigrants from all corners of the earth. Yes, let us all be objective. I am simply asking for the right, for me and all Palestinians, to return to our homes. Is this too much?

Yours faithfully,
Ismail Zayid,
[Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University].

The Hermitage Restaurant

103. South Park St., Somerset Place, Halifax

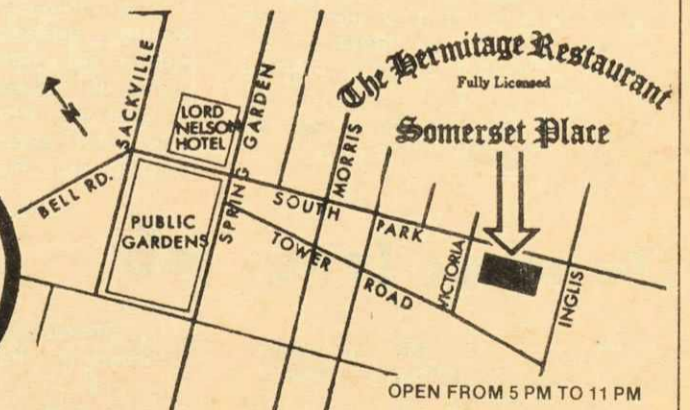
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