

Snow has fallen

A letter from Jerusalem

Mike Greenfield, a former associate editor of the Gazette sends this opinion from Jerusalem, where he is presently studying.

by Mike Greenfield

This winter, for the first time, snow is swirling groundward onto the ancient stones of Jerusalem. It is under this winter sky that man and time are moving toward obtuse futures. The human leaders of center stage countries are attempting to grasp destiny with their own hands, before resorting to the easy trick that supports their majesty: weaponry.

Shiekh, dictators, and Prime Ministers are dancing in small circles, strewing so many catchy phrases into the atmosphere. It is difficult to understand the meaning behind the dancing or discover the real words behind the phrases. Are the small circles about to be broken? Will someone finally move in a straight line? Is all this real or is it just newsprint? Is peace possible?

In the case of the Middle East the absence of fighting does not imply a tolerable situation. From the Israeli point of view, the fear that the achievements of the Zionist movement could be nullified instantaneously by a lifetime's concentrate of hate flooding over the border from all sides, mocks the justification for the revived Jewish State. For the Arab neighbors that today proclaim their drive for peace also admit of their readiness to resume the fighting.

One may, with certain justice, point out that the war the Arab leaders are speaking of would be a limited, territory recovering venture; not a total war of annihilation. But despite all the debatable points it remains a fact that not one of Israel's neighbors has formally recognized her existence. However one might press on that, with all, this is the time for less conservative moves in order to obtain a peace, it is not quite so easy for the one who may be sitting in the cat-bird seat.

Remember, it is just a few short months since the half-century old democracy in Lebanon was

liquidated within a relatively short space of time, pillaged by the very extreme forces that threaten Israel: Syria and the PLO.

However much of these fears may promote a conservative Israeli policy there are growing numbers who

Escape from the political quagmire necessitates imagination and skill. Diplomatic maneuvering is called for. This puts Israel at a disadvantage on a couple of points. While Arab leaders can and do proclaim one thing and mean

another). Except for the city of Jerusalem the conquered possessions have only defensive military value. If the Israelis feel that the Arabs are earnest in their desire for peace then at least the possibility for accommodation exists. And if the PLO is brought to supporting a Jordanian-Palestinian West Bank territory then chances for agreement on this point are also possible.

The key issue is whether or not the Arabs are willing to accept the Jewish State into the Middle East. Those who argue that justice for the Palestinians is the core issue are mistaken or are willing to see the dissolution of Israel. Justice for the Palestinians is certainly a necessity, but as any elemental political philosopher will tell you the concept of justice is created only after people agree that they will live together, and not before. The community of nations must agree on some type of social contract before peace can prevail. The establishment of a Palestinian State as a negation to and not a neighbor of Israel will lead to more war and not peace.

For an answer to the question of Arab-Jewish co-existence one can first look at the situation inside Israel. Many Arabs feel that they have profited from peaceful co-existence and show allegiance to the Israeli state. However, all Arabs are placed in the dilemma of dual allegiance. One Israeli Arab declared in a discussion that he was in full support of a Palestinian State but that he himself would not feel obliged to go and live there. How can the Israeli Arab ever fully feel part of the state if the Arab Nations have conducted a pan-Arab war against Israel for the past 30 years. The solution to this problem is peace.

The blunt arbitration of the club has failed. Neither side can enforce peace with arms.

Rain and slush wash down the streets of Jerusalem. A cold damp wind sweeps through the hills and the valleys, around the ancient walls and the modern hotels. Thousands of miles away, undergoing similar weather conditions, lies Halifax. But how different the climates really are!



Jerusalem in snow,

view this policy as negligent intransigence, a pitfall toward positive diplomacy. The times call for opportunism, and a sluggish Israeli Cabinet, burdened by the legacy of its own stiff backed irresolution, is having difficulty living up to the times.

Statements of seeming moderation from Sadat are going unparried by an Israeli response. Although Sadat's declarations are perhaps not as moderate as they at first seem, their public relations effect is good. Meanwhile, the Israeli image is accentuated as one of obduracy and hawkishness. The danger is in the appearance of an Arab peace offensive and an Israel no-peace defensive.

Israel needs the peace. While older Israelis may feel that peace is not possible in their lifetimes such a prospect to the young is intolerable. Of the more pessimistic youth are many contributors to the significant number that emigrate from this country every year. Some see little future under a lifetime of constant pressure.

another in Israel this sort of equivocation is not considered proper. One feels that each statement made by an Israeli official must be able to withstand the scrutiny of the Parliament and ultimately the vote of the people, an electorate which has always been assumed to be somewhat conservative.

The accurate mood of the electorate was reflected more precisely in a recent survey taken of Hebrew University students. The ruling, Labour Party was not included among the two most popular. Most support went either to the hawkish right wing party of Menachem Begin and Likud, or the newly formed reform party headed by famed archeologist Yigal Yadin, the Democratic Movement for Change. So the center ground of moderation and vacillation received little confidence. Reality reflected this situation when the government just recently dissolved itself, pushing ahead elections to sometime this spring.

Soon all the warring sides will meet at Geneva (in some form or

Israel provides arms to Chile and South Africa

Liberation News Service

Israel, which in recent years has been the largest recipient of U.S. military aid, has in turn sprouted a booming arms export industry.

Israel exported an estimated \$500 million worth of sophisticated arms to over 20 countries in 1976. Aviation Week, citing U.S. sources, expects the figure will rise over the \$1 billion mark in 1977. This represents a percentage of the Israeli Gross National Product (GNP) that exceeds the arms export percentage of the GNP of the U.S., the world's leading arms exporter.

The arms industry provides Israel with badly needed foreign exchange revenues. In addition, it gives Israel a way to expand its arms producing facilities, thereby lessening its dependence on the U.S. for armaments. In 1976 Israel received over \$2.2 billion in military aid from the U.S.

Much of the Israeli arms trade is surrounded by secrecy. As an Israeli Defense Ministry official explained to a New York Times reporter: "We never discuss who the countries are. Our customers have the privilege of anonymity."

According to press disclosures, Israel has found a lucrative world market, especially among U.S. supported countries which in some instances find it difficult to receive arms directly from the U.S.

South Africa has been the most prominent and controversial example of this practice. In a recently negotiated deal, Israel sold South Africa six long-range gunboats equipped with surface-to-surface missiles. The deal was worth \$150 million. Two dozen Israeli-built Kfir jet fighter planes are also slated for possible future delivery.

Israeli supporters claim that the country's arms trade with South Africa is small compared to arms sales to the apartheid regime by European countries.

However, the Israeli gunboat deal comes close to rivaling the total French arms sale to South Africa from 1965 to 1974, which totalled \$224 million. France has been South Africa's largest arms supplier.

Jennifer Davis, a researcher at the American Committee on Africa, explains that at a time of increasing international isolation of South Africa, Israel has rapidly expanded its trade ties with the apartheid regime, allowing South Africa access to sophisticated technology. Trade between the countries could potentially include Israeli nuclear technology and South Africa has indicated it will supply Israel with uranium in the future.

Israel has also sent army advisers to South Africa to give instruction in counterinsurgency techniques. An Israeli arms producer recently opened a subsidiary in South Africa, and South Africa last year indicated that it will invest in the expansion of the arms industry in Israel.

Both the U.S. and Israeli governments are reluctant to comment on the political significance of the Israeli arms trade. A staff member at the Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP), however, describes Israel as playing the role of supplier to countries such as South Africa and Chile which the U.S. "cannot supply" "visibly, easily and openly" without receiving public flak.



Peg Averill