

into a new edition of Beirut or Teheran. That is the cruel choice which faces us today.

There is criticism at times of Israel's handling of the maintenance of law and order, and nowhere more pointedly than in Israel, in the Knesset or in the media. However, I have yet to see other countries facing similar situations without the use of force. What more effective methods should we use? Those used by our neighbours including, for instance, the killing of 30,000 people in the Syrian town of Hama by President Assad, or the killing of 500 demonstrators in two days in Algeria last summer? Or should we adopt the methods using during the riots in the inner cities of Britain, or in Northern Ireland, or in the streets of Western Europe, or those that were used once in Watts or Detroit or Kent State?

What other armed forces in the world than ours would exercise more restraint in coping with a society that cynically and cruelly sends its children to carry out acts of violence endangering life on both societies? Remember, a mother burnt alive together with her three children in a civilian bus are no less tragically dead because the perpetrators who threw the molotov cocktail were youngsters. A society's strength is tested by its ability to face crises. I believe that given all the difficulties and with all our shortcomings our society has shown as much maturity and humanity as any other society in similar circumstances. As Golda Meir once said she cannot forgive the Arabs not so much because they kill our children but because they force our children to kill theirs.

Looking around us, how can we ignore the thunderous silence of the world as the city of Beirut has been, and is being, pounded mercilessly by Syrian artillery day in day out, night in night out, as the Christian refugees trying in small boats to reach ferries offshore to take them to safety in Cyprus, are shelled indiscriminately, as the Lebanese nation is slowly destroyed, as the Christian community of Lebanon largely ignored by the rest of the Christian world, is slowly being decimated and is in dire danger for its very existence? How can we ignore the apathy of the world in the face of this cruel destruction of a nation? Surely the lesson for us must be obvious.

Already 25,000 refugees from Beirut—Christians and Muslims—have crowded into the security zone adjacent to our northern border, instinctively coming to Israel for protection and security.

My friends, all of this is going on at the moment, and has aroused little reaction in the civilized world. In the cruel, distorted, prejudiced coverage by the media of events in the Middle East, the slaughter in Beirut does not warrant the coverage given to children throwing stones in some West Bank village.

We are a free society facing a dilemma. Is it not understandable that Israeli society is torn by doubts and hesitations, and that there is no small degree of scepticism coupled with a legitimate debate in our society on the PLO's real intentions?

In the past few months, the Government of Israel formulated a plan for the movement forward in the peace process in the Middle East. The plan consists of four parts:

- 1) Reaffirming the Camp David Agreement;
- 2) A call for the Arab countries to join in the peace process and recognize Israel;
- 3) That an international effort be mounted to solve the festering problem of the Arab refugees in Gaza and Judea;
- 4) Elections in the Judea and Samaria Districts of the West Bank and in Gaza, whereby the Palestinian Arabs residents of these areas will elect in secret ballot their own representatives. These representatives will be thereby empowered to enter into negotiations with Israel in order to establish self-rule for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

Under this self-rule, which is envisaged for a five-year period, the Palestinian Arabs in the territories will rule themselves and will be responsible for everything but foreign affairs and defence.

After a period of three years, negotiations will open with the Palestinians who have been elected, in order to achieve a final settlement.

Unfortunately the situation on the Arab side is not at all clear. Their protestations to the contrary, a large proportion of the Palestinians living in the territories administered by us would accept the Government of Israel's proposal. But since the official PLO line so far has been to set out conditions which in effect negate the spirit and the essence of the Israeli proposals, no Palestinian in the Judea and Samaria district of the West Bank and Gaza will dare risk being lynched or a bullet in