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ISRAEL'S 25th ANNIVERSARY YEAR

Last year was marked the 2,500th anniversary of the establishment of the Second Jewish Commonwealth with the co-operation of Cyrus the Great. This year, 5733, we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the modern State of Israel.

These first 25 years were occupied with winning the war with the Arabs ("Building with one hand and wielding a [defensive] weapon with the other hand"). The next 25 years must be dedicated to winning the peace. But if Israel finds it difficult to make peace with the Arabs, she should nonetheless take the initiative in implementing a peaceful regime for the Middle East, perhaps on the following lines:

- (1) The Middle East (Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan and Kuwait) forms one geo-political and historical unit to be cemented together by means of a confederation of states, each one recognising the sovereignty of the other.
- (2) The Middle East is not an Arab enclave and all the nationalities of the region, the Kurds and others, must get an opportunity for self-expression.
- (3) A "Monroe" doctrine for the Middle East whereby no outside military interference will be allowed.
- (4) The immense natural wealth of the Middle East must be a source of prosperity for the whole region and not a means for subversion and strife. A regional board to plan development. (Even Syria is not happy with what it gets from oil royalties.)
- (5) Freedom to travel, reside and work for all citizens. This could be a basis to solve the refugee problem. A large number of Arabs already live in Israel and many visitors come

every year. This should be made reciprocal. It is intolerable that Arabia has banned Jews for 1,200 years and that Iraq should slowly banish its ancient Jewish community while clamouring for Palestinians to return to Israel.

- (6) Proper compensation to be paid to all refugees.

But what right has Israel to try and impose peace terms on its neighbours? Because these countries are still at war with Israel and have for the past 25 years waged a war not of Israel's making. At present they are involved in either financing or training terrorists; **THEY MUST ALL BE PARTIES TO ANY FINAL SETTLEMENT.**

In an age of Common Markets the Middle East cannot exist or survive in its present fragmentation and it is intolerable that a tiny but immensely rich country like Kuwait should have the freedom to use its wealth to destroy another State.

In the search for a *modus vivendi* in the Middle East the Oriental Jews will have an increasingly important part to play. We know that no hostility exists between the ordinary Jew and Arab and that it is only militant Arab leaders who have recklessly pushed the Middle East to the brink of ruin. Those who speak of Israeli expansionist intentions should realise that Israel does not need new lands and that no amount of expansion will be a good substitute for peace ●

THE ARABS AND ZIONISM

In a letter dated 3 March 1919 to the American Jewish leader, the late Justice Felix Frankfurter, the Emir Feisal (later king of Iraq) stated:

We Arabs . . . look with the deepest sympathy on the Zionist Movement. Our deputation here in Paris is fully acquainted with the proposals submitted yesterday by the Zionist Organisation to the Peace Conference, and we regard them as moderate and proper. We will do our best in so far as we are concerned, to help them through; we will wish the Jews a most hearty welcome home . . .

[The condition attached to co-operation with Zionism, namely, Arab independence was more than fulfilled and expressed through the 21 sovereign Arab states today; the Jewish state is the only expression of Jewish sovereignty in the world.—Ed.]

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THE U.N. & ISRAEL

by P. S. GOURGEY, M.B.E.

In this year marking the 25th anniversary of the United Nations' historic Palestine Partition resolution in 1947, it is fitting to review briefly some salient aspects of its influence in the Middle East conflict. These are:

- (1) the circumstances leading up to and following the crucial U.N. resolution of 29 November 1947,
- (2) the U.N.-sponsored Armistice Agreements of 1949 with the Palestine Conciliation Commission,
- (3) the setting up of the U.N. Emergency Force in 1957 after the Sinai Campaign,
- (4) the precipitate withdrawal of this Force in May 1967, resulting in the Six-Day War, and
- (5) the important U.N. Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967.

The U.N. was established three years before the State of Israel came into existence as a result of the historical Partition resolution of November 1947, secured mainly through agreement of both super-powers, the United States and the Soviet Union. A precedent for U.N. influence was created by its predecessor-organisation, the League of Nations, in 1922. Because of Britain's issuance of the 1917 Balfour Declaration, it appointed Britain the Mandatory Power to administer Palestine—"THE TERRITORY LYING ON BOTH SIDES OF THE RIVER JORDAN liberated from Ottoman Turkish rule in 1917-18". The preamble to the Mandate stated that "it gave recognition to the Jewish connection with Palestine and to the grounds for reconstituting the Jewish National Home in that country". IN SEPTEMBER 1922 THE COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS APPROVED A MEMORANDUM FROM THE BRITISH COLONIAL OFFICE IN EFFECT SETTING UP A SEPARATE MANDATORY REGIME FOR THE AREA EAST OF JORDAN (TRANS-JORDAN, IN 1946 MADE THE KINGDOM OF JORDAN). THUS IN 1922 THERE OCCURRED THE FIRST PARTITION OF PALESTINE AND 50 YEARS AGO THE JORDANIANS OF TODAY WERE PALESTINIANS!

U.N. RESOLUTION

It was on 18 February 1947 that the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Ernest Bevin, announced the British Government's intention to submit the Palestine problem to the U.N., the Government having "no power, under the terms of the Mandate, to award the country either to the Jews or to the Arabs or even to partition it". The failure of successive British governments to curb the unrest in Palestine resulting from conflicting Arab-Jewish claims over sovereignty, the unrest reaching its climax after the Second World War, was the reason lying behind the decision to surrender the Mandate to the U.N. Had the 1937 Royal Commission of Inquiry, headed by

Lord Peel, been successful in obtaining acceptance of its Partition proposals, then presumably the British Government would have secured League of Nations approval to partition the country at the time, as it had done in 1922.

Following the surrender of the Mandate, the U.N. General Assembly appointed an 11-Power Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to examine the situation and make recommendations. UNSCOP, after visiting Palestine and taking evidence, reported on 31st August 1947, the majority recommending the partition of Palestine into a Jewish State and an Arab State with economic union between both. While the Jewish Agency accepted the report on behalf of the Jews of Palestine and the World Zionist Organisation, the Arab delegates, including the Palestine Arab Higher Committee, totally rejected the Report, and this rejection was the genesis of the ensuing conflict. The Partition proposals were based on those areas in which Arabs and Jews respectively formed the majority community. It should be noted that large areas of Palestine were completely uninhabited when the early Zionist pioneers arrived at the turn of the century.

Following the termination of the Mandate and the withdrawal of the British forces from Palestine on 14 May 1948, the armies of the neighbouring Arab states invaded the State of Israel which was proclaimed on that date. The fighting between the new Defence Army of Israel and the Arab armies continued intermittently until January 1949, when the Acting Mediator, Dr. Ralph Bunche, succeeded in bringing about negotiations at Rhodes.

ARMISTICE AGREEMENTS

These negotiations resulted in the Armistice Agreements in 1949 concluded separately at Rhodes by Israel with Egypt on 24 February, with Lebanon on 24 March, with Jordan on 3 April, and with Syria on 20 July. It was envisaged that these Agreements would lead to permanent peace settlements but frustration in this respect was due to persistent Arab refusal to negotiate after Rhodes.

Before dealing with the armistice situation, it is essential to note that on 11 December 1948, about a month before the end of hostilities, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution, the main provisions of which were,

- (a) the establishment of a Palestine Conciliation Commission (P.C.C.) with a membership of three (France, the United States and Turkey were appointed in 1949) to take over the functions of the Mediator,
- (b) an instruction to the P.C.C. to assist the governments and authorities concerned to achieve a settlement of all outstanding problems,
- (c) Jerusalem to be placed under effective U.N. control, and
- (d) refugees "willing to live at peace with Israel" (*italics mine*) to have the right to return to their homes if they so wished, or to compensation if they did not. (At no time have the Arab refugees or their representatives

THE SIX-DAY WAR

indicated their desire to live at peace with their neighbours which is an essential pre-requisite to the implementation of this resolution. On the aspect of compensation, which may arise at a future date, it is relevant to observe that account also has to be taken of the property of over 600,000 Jewish refugees from the Arab states—*vide* Israel Foreign Minister Sharett's statement to the Knesset of 15 March 1951, *Divrei Haknesset*.)

An analysis of the provision of the Armistice Agreements demonstrates that they were intended to remain in force during a short transitory period between war and peace. They were bilateral undertakings which imposed binding obligations upon the signatories, and were based on the principle of non-violence in the settlement of disputes (*Preface to Peace* by David Brooks, Public Affairs Press, Washington, 1964).

The armistice machinery for lessening tension, largely similar to that used earlier by the U.N. in Kashmir and Indonesia, consisted of two elements,

- (a) the Mixed Armistice Commissions, and
- (b) the U.N. Truce Supervisory Organisation, and the office of Chief of Staff was one of the main links between the U.N. and the armistice regime.

Other links were represented by the Observer Corps functioning under the command of the Chief of Staff and the right of appeal to the Security Council. The Armistice Agreements, which provided the only means of direct contact between the opposing parties, functioned in spite of violations occasioned by Arab refusal to negotiate, until the Suez crisis erupted in October 1956.

"SUEZ" AND U.N.E.F.

In less than a week, the Israel armed forces captured the entire Sinai Peninsula, halting their victorious advance ten miles from the Suez Canal as a result of the separate Anglo-French military action which was undertaken against Egypt because of her nationalisation of the Canal in the summer of 1956. Prime Minister Ben-Gurion declared in the Knesset that the armistice agreement with Egypt was ended.

The reasons for Israel launching her pre-emptive strike across the Sinai Peninsula were three-fold,

- (a) to prevent Egyptian fedayeen groups conducting their 18 month campaign of terror against Israelis in border raids;
- (b) to forestall the impending Arab attack implied in the unification of the military commands of Jordan, Syria and Egypt completed a fortnight before, and
- (c) to free the Gulf of Elath for trade with the East and Africa and in view of Egypt's blockade of the Suez Canal against Israeli shipping in flagrant violation of a Security Council resolution in 1951.

On 4 November 1956 the Assembly adopted a resolution providing for the establishment of a U.N. Emergency Force (UNEF). It was agreed that UNEF would be stationed in strategic areas in the Sinai Peninsula to protect Israeli shipping proceeding to the Red-Sea. It was further agreed that UNEF would be deployed in the Gaza Strip (and not in Israeli territory as mentioned in Arab propagandist claims) and along the Egyptian/Israeli demarcation line in order to supervise the cease-fire. The UNEF functioned effectively to achieve these objectives until its withdrawal was demanded and obtained by President Nasser in May 1967.

The events leading up to the historic Six-Day War and over which the U.N. could exercise little or no control began with the signing of the Defence Pact between Syria and Egypt in November 1966, in furtherance of the increased hostility manifested towards Israel by the new and militant government in Syria which seized power in February of that year. On 7 April 1967 Israel shot down four Syrian MiG fighter planes in retaliatory action. A fortnight later the then Egyptian Prime Minister began to discuss military arrangements in Damascus under the Defence Pact, and on 15 May the Syrians and Egyptians signed a treaty to finalise these arrangements. On 17 May nearly 100,000 Egyptian troops and 1,000 tanks sped across the Sinai Peninsula to the Gaza Strip, 500 Egyptian planes were brought to a state of readiness and the demand for withdrawal of UNEF was made. It was complied with on 19 May by the U.N. Secretary-General. Though the political wisdom of such swift compliance could be questioned, it would appear that the Secretary-General had the legal authority to withdraw the Force after consultation with the Advisory Committee.

On 30 May, King Hussein and President Nasser concluded a Military Pact in Cairo. On 4 June, Iraq acceded to this Pact. At the outbreak of hostilities on 5 June, Israel's Prime Minister, the late Mr. Levi Eshkol appealed to King Hussein, through the U.N. Chief of Staff in Jerusalem, to refrain from entering the conflict which was with Egypt and which he had done at the launching of the Sinai Campaign in November 1956. Hussein's reply was to start shelling Jewish Jerusalem and this extension of the war resulted in the total expulsion of Jordanian forces from Jerusalem and the West Bank. By 10 June, Israel had driven Egyptian forces out of the Sinai Peninsula, including Sharm-el-Sheikh, to the west of the Suez Canal, and Syrian forces from the Golan Heights overlooking Israeli kibbutzim in Galilee. The U.N. Security Council called for, and established, cease-fire lines along the new borders. A special session of the General Assembly, convened at the request of Soviet Premier Kosygin failed in its aim of securing Israel's immediate and unilateral withdrawal from the territories which fell under her administration.

The Secretary-General of the U.N., U Thant, had two alternatives to withdrawal of the UNEF—a special Assembly session or increasing the remaining UNEF contingents. Since UNEF was set up by the authority of the General Assembly in 1956, it should not have been withdrawn without obtaining the Assembly's prior consent on such a vital issue. Some Indian troops in the UNEF contingent were shot as they were "in the line of fire" when the June war started, despite the Indian Government's request of 26 May 1967, and because of U Thant's insistence that he had his time-table of withdrawal! U Thant could have asked those governments with contingents in the UNEF to increase their number if India and Yugoslavia did in fact carry out their threat of withdrawing their contingents. The precipitate withdrawal of UNEF on President Nasser's



2568 YEARS AGO THE PROPHET JEREMIAH SENT US THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO BABYLON: THESE ARE THE WORDS OF THE LORD OF HOSTS THE GOD OF ISRAEL, "TO ALL THE EXILES WHOM I HAVE CARRIED OFF FROM JERUSALEM TO BABYLON: BUILD HOUSES AND LIVE IN THEM; PLANT GARDENS AND EAT THEIR PRODUCE. MARRY WIVES AND BEGET SONS AND DAUGHTERS . . . AND SEEK THE WELFARE OF ANY CITY TO WHICH I HAVE CARRIED YOU OFF AND PRAY TO THE LORD FOR IT FOR IN ITS PEACE WILL YOU HAVE PEACE."

AS WE EMBARK ON THE SECOND LEG OF OUR EXILE, THIS MESSAGE STILL HOLDS GOOD. WE TAKE THE AUSPICIOUS OCCASION OF THE ROYAL SILVER WEDDING ANNIVERSARY TO SEND TO HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH AND H.R.H. THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH SINCERE WISHES FOR HAPPINESS AND LONG LIFE, PROSPERITY AND PEACE.

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demand and his blockade of the Straits of Tiran—a *casus belli* as Israel had warned in 1957—contrary to his undertakings to the former Secretary-General Hammarskjöld and in his correspondence with President Eisenhower in 1957 led to the Six-Day War. The only way of "liquidating" the consequences of the war is for the Great Powers to persuade the Arabs directly to negotiate a settlement with Israel which would appear to be the aim of Dr. Jarring's present mission.

SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242

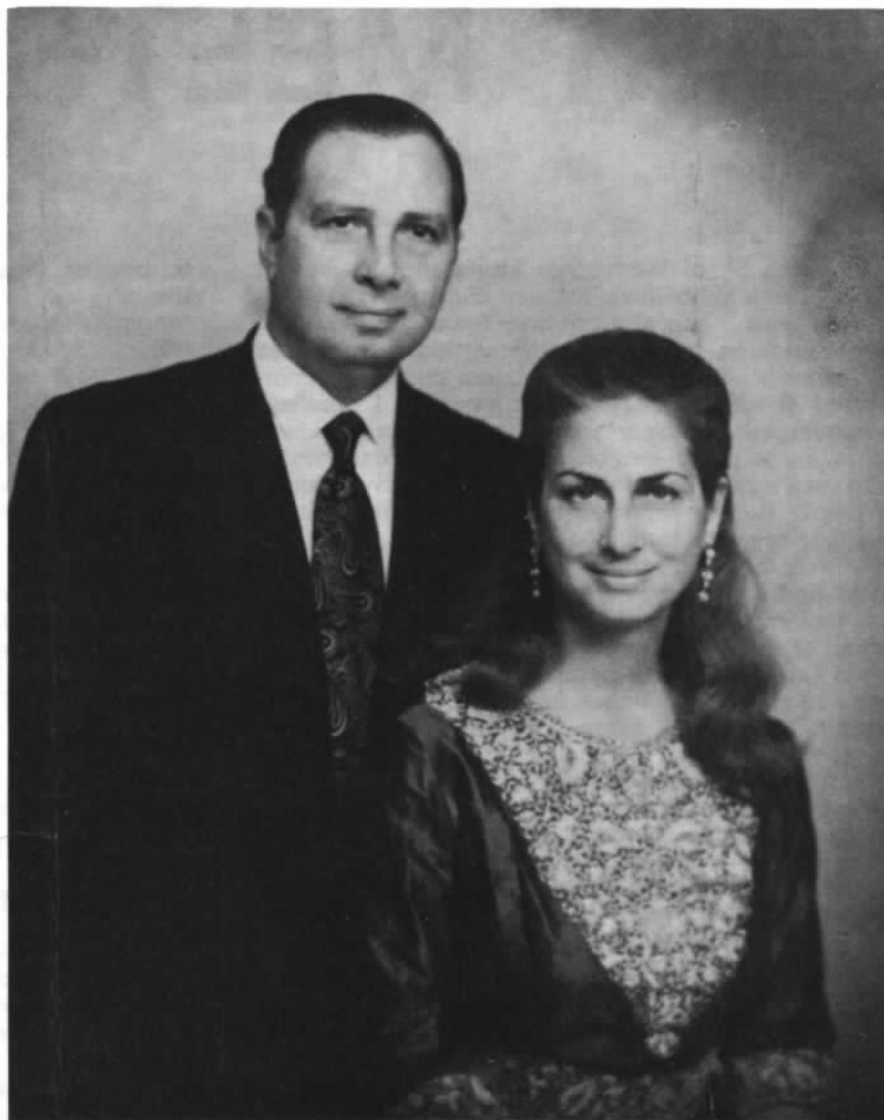
Following the Six-Day War, there were special sessions of the U.N. General Assembly on 19 June and subsequently. After protracted and heated debates, the Security Council adopted the British-sponsored Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967 unanimously. It was also accepted by Israel as well as Egypt and Jordan as a basis of settlement. Briefly,

the resolution "expressing the Security Council's continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East", dealt with five factors in this situation,

- (a) withdrawal from territories,
- (b) the fixing of "secure and recognised boundaries free from threats or acts of force",
- (c) freedom of navigation through international waterways,
- (d) a just settlement of the refugee problem, and
- (e) guarantee of the territorial inviolability and political independence of any State in the area.

It also provided for the appointment of a Special Representative "to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement". The day following the adoption of this resolution the U.N. Secretary-General appointed a Swedish diplomat, Dr. Gunnar Jarring, as Special Representative. Despite conflicting interpretations of this resolution, the British Government, which sponsored it, interpreted it to signify agree-

Mr. and Mrs. Dangoor celebrate their silver wedding anniversary. Their wedding in November 1947 in Baghdad was one of the last social gatherings of the Community. The Palestine Partition resolution of 29 November 1947 started the chain of events which led to the emigration of the whole community from its ancient homeland with the exception of only about 400 now left in Iraq.



Lenare

ment being achieved on all factors involved before any withdrawal of Israel forces took place. Such agreement was to be promoted by the contacts established by the Special Representative.

The talks between the Four Powers, the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and France, which began in New York in March 1969, aimed at promoting a peaceful settlement of the conflict ruling out "an imposed solution". As such they sought to strengthen the efforts of Dr. Jarring. His mission, however, was suspended when President Nasser repudiated the 1967 cease-fire lines and in July 1969 declared "a war of attrition" against Israel. Nevertheless patient and painstaking diplomacy could provide a solution as was done by the U.N. in the Congo, in Cyprus and in Korea. The three-month cease-fire agreed on 8 August 1970 in acceptance of the American peace proposals provided another opportunity for a peaceful settlement.

CONCLUSION

A summary of the positive achievements by the U.N. in favour of Israel would include,

- (1) the Partition Resolution of 29 November 1947,
- (2) the 1949 Armistice Agreements between Israel and her Arab neighbours and the organisational set-up, and
- (3) the UNEF which kept the peace between Israel and Egypt for ten years.

The U.N. admitted Israel as the 59th member-state on 9 May 1949. However, it has also adopted attitudes and resolutions adverse to Israel which would account for the peculiar love/hate attitude Israel has had towards the U.N. in its 25-year-old relationship ●

EAST MEETS WEST

by OLGA SOMECH PHILLIPS

It would be of interest to know the number of Baghdadians who have married Europeans, British or otherwise. I can account only for a small nucleus of such unions. It is strange that within recent times the average Westerner has been curiously uninformed about the Baghdad community. I recollect a conversation, a few years ago, with some lady belonging to a well-established Anglo-Jewish family, who was a member of the West London Synagogue in Upper Berkeley Street, asking me quite politely whether my late father had been black. In answer to my somewhat strong denial, she replied, "But Sir Philip Sassoon was black!"

I remember someone from an entirely different strata of Anglo-Jewry appearing a little surprised when I mentioned my paternal origin. Informing my late husband, also English for some generations, he replied, "Haven't these people heard of the Sassoons?"

Stating the above purely as a matter of sociological interest, let me now quote the mixed marriages of my knowledge. It is possibly well known that a sister of Mrs. Leopold Rothschild (née Perugia) married Arthur Sassoon whose dates were 1840-1912. The Perugias hailed from Austria and were women noted for their charm.

Marcus Ezekiel* whose sister married Reuben Sassoon was perhaps the greatest porcelain collector in England. He married into a highly distinguished Anglo-Jewish family, his wife being a daughter of Louis Behrens and her mother (née Beddington) being a grand-daughter of Charles Kensington Solomon, the noted composer of Synagogue and Church music.

In my early days spent at Southport owing to my Father's business being at Manchester, I remember Mr. Joel David who had married into the Schloss family who were connected with the Waleys—a member of which was Arthur Waley, the great authority on Chinese poetry. The name Schloss became translated into Castle.

One of the Sopher family married a lady much esteemed, a gentile who became Jewish, bringing up her sons in the faith of her husband. I have some recollection of an attractive looking girl half a century ago—Eileen Michael, whose father, a Baghdadian, had married a nurse of Irish nationality.

Memory comes too from this period of a Mr. Aboudi living in Marseilles who had a non-Jewish wife to whom he was deeply attached. I imagine she was French, but here I know no details beyond that she appeared on good terms with members of the Marseilles Jewish community.

My Father came to England in the 1890s and I remember him telling me that he and a Mr. Ezra were introduced by Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler to various Anglo-Jewish families. My Mother belonged

to one of these, her Father, George Bendon (although his Father, Moise Bendalan, came from Mogador, Morocco), had himself been born in the Isle of Ely and brought up in Norwich during his early life. A stone's throw from my Mother's family in Warrington Crescent, Maida Vale, lived Alice Pinto, whose family was an old Anglo-Jewish one. She married Mr. Josh Gubbay from Calcutta.

The late Sylvia Judah (née Sylvia Frank) whose Father was Austrian and her Mother of an old Anglo-Jewish family called Lumley, married Edward (Bob) Judah, also from one of the Baghdad families settled in India.

Let me end this chronicle by recalling the marriage of the late David Solomon Sassoon to Selina Prinz whose origin was Dutch. There must be many further examples of Baghdadians marrying foreigners ●

* Son of David Hay Ezekiel Abraham Masliyah who emigrated to Poona.

A REPLY TO MORAL RE-ARMAMENT

Thank you for your letter and for the article by Miss Phyllis Konstam showing her interest in your Movement. I note that she is Jewish.

I can quote an even higher authority. Jesus himself was a Jew. And so were all his disciples as well as the vast majority of the early Christians. Later, Gentile Christianity developed anti-Semitism as a pillar of the Christian faith on the erroneous notion that all Jews must be converted. But while Christianity (and Islam) fly their balloons, the role of Judaism is to hold down the anchor of the Kingdom of God.

The martyrdom of Jesus at the hands of the Romans was only one instance of the continuous martyrdom of the Jewish people in the cause of God's Kingdom. Seen in this light, Jewish suffering is the price paid for guiding the human race into the Messianic Age.

Unfortunately, Christianity continues to have a vested interest in anti-Semitism and therefore in the Black September movement, and in the destruction of Israel. The crux of the Christian advice to the Jews is inevitably: Think also of your enemies and forgive them—so that they can start killing you all over again. Until Christianity reverses its anti-Jewish attitude there is no place for me in your Movement.

[M.R.A. is an extension of the Oxford Group—an international Christian movement founded by Dr. Frank Buchman in 1921. Buchman manifested pro-Nazi sympathies during the War.] ●

Places that succumb to the Bedouins are quickly ruined—

by the Arab historian IBN KHALDUN (1332-1406)

The reason for this is that the Bedouins are a savage nation, fully accustomed to savagery and the things that cause it. Savagery has become their character and nature. They enjoy it because it means freedom from authority and no subservience to leadership. Such a natural disposition is the negation of civilisation. The wanderings of the Bedouins are the antithesis of stationariness, which produces civilisation. For instance, they need stones to set them up as supports for their cooking pots. So, they take them from buildings which they tear down to get the stones, and use them for that purpose. Wood, too, is needed by them for props for their tents. So, they tear down roofs to get the wood for that purpose. The very nature of their existence is the negation of building, which is the basis of civilisation.

Furthermore, it is their nature to plunder whatever other people possess. Whenever their eyes fall upon some property, furnishings or utensils, they take them. When they acquire superiority, they have complete power to plunder as they please. There no longer exists any political power to protect property, and civilisation is ruined.

Furthermore, since they use force to make craftsmen do their work, they do not pay them for it. When labour is not appreciated, the hope for profit vanishes and no work is done. The sedentary population disperses and civilisation decays.

Furthermore, the Bedouins are not concerned with laws, or with deterring people from misdeeds. They care only for the property that they might take away from people through looting and imposts. Under the rule of Bedouins, their subjects live as in a state of anarchy, without law. Anarchy destroys mankind and ruins civilisation.

From THE MUQADDIMAH by
IBN KHALDUN (Routledge 1967)

[Bedouin is derived from the Arabic word "of the beddah" or open country.]

The above is a true analysis of the conditions that led to the decline of the Middle East. The development of agriculture in northern Iraq 10,000 years ago, obliged man to settle in villages and this is generally considered the start of civilisation. However, like a building that always needs protection against the weather, civilisation must be powerful enough to defend itself against the onslaught of the outside forces of barbarism.

But the flat and defenceless terrain of the Middle East, with its complex system of irrigation canals, was always exposed to infiltration and attacks from

the Arabian desert and, in moments of weakness, the desert often prevailed, levelling off the work of many centuries.

It was in such a moment of weakness, 1,300 years ago, that both the Persian and Byzantine empires in the Middle East were defeated by the Arabs. When Caliph Mansur chose Baghdad as the site of his new capital (which, incidentally, was designed by the Iraqi-Jewish mathematician and astrologer Mashallah and the Persian astronomer An-Naubakht) all towns in Iraq were stripped of portable building material; Babylon and Ctesiphon were levied upon for quotas of bricks. Wasit had to surrender her five famous wrought iron gates traditionally said to have been built by demons to the order of King Solomon. Mansur even started to demolish the celebrated White Palace of the Persian kings at Ctesiphon in spite of the efforts made to preserve it by his Persian minister Khalid al-Barmaki, the first of the afterwards famous Barmaki family.

The Arabians took an active part in the destruction of the First and Second Temples and in the general looting that followed. In 259 CE Pappa and his wife Zenobia, the Arab rulers of Palmyra, destroyed our university complex at Nehardea which had been established for 800 years, since the time of King Jehoiachin.

We remember only too well how, at the time of Rashid Ali and other upheavals, the Shrougiyya Arabs were always ready to murder and rape, loot and pillage. And, as Ibn Khaldun points out, the useful elements of the population has, over the years, dispersed from the Middle East.

The struggle of Israel is against the desert—against the desert mentality and the forces of destruction, which will resist to the utmost the building of a new civilisation in the region. THERE CAN BE NO LASTING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST UNLESS THIS STRUGGLE IS RESOLVED, ONE WAY OR THE OTHER ●

LIBYAN JUSTICE

The government of Libya has introduced new laws (based on the Koran and similar to those in force in Saudi Arabia) for punishing robbers and thieves by cutting off a hand and a foot, and this form of punishment might be extended to cover other "crimes". Are the poor and illiterate people of Libya to be reduced to a nation of cripples?

Crime and poverty can only be cured by eradicating their causes and by education. Libya receives nearly £1,000 million every year from oil revenues alone and that should be sufficient to provide the 2 million Libyans with enough income to retire on! If some Libyans have to resort to highway robbery it is because Gaddafi and Co. keep most of the money for power adventures and for training terrorists. Perhaps one day the Libyan nation will give its rulers a taste of their own justice ●

Letters to the Editor

From Mr. Jack Levy, London

Quite recently an issue of *The Scribe* fell my way and its avid perusal invoked sparks of pride in me and enhanced my hitherto subdued feelings as a Jew of this calibre. For a long time the need of a literary organ—the mouthpiece of those ancient descendants of our people and the Sephardic Community in particular—was felt strongly by rank and file of its sturdy devotees. The profound and breath-taking history of our people in adhering to the true faith of God is no doubt unrivalled.

Today, as never before, the descendants of Babylonian Jewry and their Sephardic counterparts the world over have jointly shared the stigma of oblivion and receded to far less inferior roles amongst the Jewish Community as a whole. But our spiritual and idealistic embers can never be extinguished and it can soon fan the flame of revival through the dissemination of its voices and thus bring about a colossal mustering of past glory and honour.

I wish to congratulate this singular literary attempt in showing its beacon and would likewise wish to see it spread and heard, read and admired for its type of titillating contributions. May this unique periodical spread its wings loftily to greater aspirations ●

From Mrs. S. Peress, Montreal

I have just finished reading No. 7 of *The Scribe*. I applaud each and every one who is giving time to a very worthy deed towards the continuation of Judaism and especially the Sephardi Community. I must say that in each and every issue of *The Scribe* I was taught and inspired by one article or another ●

Mr. Ben-Jacob writes from Jerusalem:

With further reference to Mr. Albert Hayim's letter regarding the Bilios family, I wish to add that Sima Bilios, wife of Raphael Emmanuel Bilios, was Simha, daughter of David Joseph Ezra Baher who died in 1882. This was a well-known Babylonian family that occupied a distinguished position in the Calcutta community and elsewhere. The Baher family is better known outside Iraq by the name of "Ezra".

[Historical note: David Joseph Ezra Joseph Khalifa was the first Baghdadi to sail to India and settle there (in 1821; he was followed by the Gubbays, Sassoons and Ezekiels). For this exploit he was surnamed "Baher" (The Sea) by the Turkish Vali of Baghdad. Sheikh Khalifa was the head of the Community in Diwaniyah and treasurer to the local governor. He was attached to the Nasi of Baghdad, R. Moshe Mordecai Shindookh (d. 1744) who was treasurer to the governor of Baghdad, Ahmed Pasha, and was the last hereditary Nasi of the Community. Khalifa's father, Yosef Horesh, came to Baghdad around 1710 and his ancestors originally came from Spain via Vienna and Athens. Khalifa had another son, Saleh, whose sons were: Rabbi Eliezer, ancestor of the present Horesh family; Setty; Masry; and Peress.—N.D.] ●

Comments and articles welcomed. The views of individual contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the journal.

All correspondence to:

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Claims of Jews from Arab Countries

In his letter published in the last issue of *The Scribe*, Mr. Comay, Israel Ambassador, dismisses the lost assets of Jews from Arab countries by simply saying that they "also have a claim for property abandoned or confiscated in their countries of origin"; presumably, against those countries.

But if Israel recognises, as is emphasised by Mr. Comay, that there has in fact been an "unplanned exchange of minorities", a "two-way migration", then surely there is a strong case for a set-off of claims? In fact as long ago as 1951, the Israel Government subscribed to this view when the late Mr. Sharett declared at the Knesset that "the value of Jewish property frozen in Iraq will be taken into account with regard to the compensation we have undertaken to pay Arabs who have abandoned property in Israel". There is still no prospect in sight of any compensation being offered by Arab governments. On the other hand, Israel is planning to pay Jerusalem Arabs up to \$300 million in the form of 15-year bonds bearing interest at 5½ per cent per annum. Now is the time to link both claims and whatever funds Israel is willing to earmark for compensation should be allocated to both Jews and Arabs equitably. In the name of one million Jews from Arab countries, we request and require the Israeli Government to abstain from paying the Arabs until the matter has been thoroughly reconsidered.

It is true that Jerusalem Arabs are now Israeli citizens but so are Jews from Arab countries who came to Israel. At least a token payment, also in the form of 15-year bonds, should be made to Jews from Arab countries, whose losses have recently been estimated by a Knesset Member, Mr. Ben-Porat, in billions of dollars. And since, in the final count, all Palestinian Arabs would qualify for compensation regardless of their country of destination or residence, then all Jews from Arab countries—those in Israel as well as those who reside elsewhere—should equally qualify for consideration. The Custodian holds enough Arab property to make this possible and this gesture would be most appropriate in 5733, the year of Israel's Silver Jubilee. We have already waited 25 years, a quarter of a century, a whole generation in human life; should we wait any longer? ●

BESIMANTOV

Cupid has been busy in our community last month which resulted in a number of engagements or unions. We extend heartiest congratulations and best wishes to:

JAMIL	and	VIVIEN
RONNIE	and	SONIA
BENJAMIN	and	TIKVA
ELIAS	and	SUAD
JOE	and	STELLA
FRANK	and	REBECCA

and we hope that this will be the beginning of a new wave of happy marriages.