

the facts

ABOUT THE PALESTINE PROBLEM

A monthly bulletin produced by «The Arab Women's Information Committee»
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THE BACKGROUND

The 51st State of the United States

President Truman in 1946 said to four of his ambassadors in the Arab States : « I'm 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. »
(F.D.R. Meets Ibn Saud, by W. A. Eddy, p. 37).

«Bevin spoke out (in 1946) against President Truman at the Labour Party Conference : 'The Americans are supporting the demands of the Jews for the entry of one hundred thousand of them into Palestine because they, the Americans, have more than they want in New York'. He accused Truman of acting in favour of the Jews for electoral reasons».

(Michael Bar-Zohar, The Armed Prophet, p. 93).

Forrestal, U.S. Secretary of Defence (1947-49), in a conversation with Senator McGrath : «Forrestal repeated his arguments that 'one group in this country should not be permitted to influence our policy to the point where it could endanger our national security'. McGrath was not encouraging, he replied by saying that there were

Editor's note :

This is not a magazine, nor even a newsletter. No attempt will be made at long-winded analysis or description. It is literally a «factual» sheet.

FACTS will try to present the facts of the Palestine Problem. We think these will speak for themselves and need no comment or elaboration. It is this ignorance of the facts by the outside world that has been responsible for much of the human suffering that has taken place in Palestine. It is time that the facts were known. Only on their basis can disinterested and fair-minded people reach objective and intelligent conclusions. To help such people is our objective.

FACTS is produced by the Arab Women's Information Committee, a voluntary, non-professional, non-profit and private organization of Arab women living in Beirut, Lebanon, who have been appalled at the manner in which the Palestine Problem has been presented so far in the English-speaking press.

FACTS will be divided into two sections, the first dealing with background material, the second with current developments. It will appear on a monthly basis. We also hope to be able to publish supplements on specific issues as the occasion arises.

The background section will comprise quotations from Zionist writings to illustrate Zionist ideological and strategic thought, statistics pertaining to various aspects of the Palestine Problem, and summaries of the more important historical events and developments of the problem.

The selection of this material is necessarily arbitrary, but it is hoped that as much ground can be covered in successive issues of **FACTS** as space permits.

As to the section on current developments, it will focus attention on the developments that have taken place since 5 June 1967.

We shall endeavour throughout to give detailed references for all the material that we publish. We hope that our efforts will contribute, however modestly, to a better understanding of the Arab point of view on the Palestine Problem.

FACTS welcomes all comments, suggestions and inquiries by its readers.

two or three pivotal states that could not be carried without the support of the people who were deeply interested in the Palestine question. Forrestal derived several points from McGrath's conversation. In the first place Jewish sources were responsible for a substantial part of the contributions to the Democratic National Committee and many of these contributions were made with the distinct idea on the part of the givers that they will have an opportunity to express their views and have them seriously considered on such questions as the present Palestine Question'.»

(The Forrestal Diaries, Edited by Walter Milles, p. 330).

« At the end of the lunch, Hannegan (U.S. Postmaster General) brought up the question of the President's making a statement on Palestine, particularly with reference to the entrance of a hundred and fifty thousand Jews into Palestine. He said he did not want to press for a decision one way or the other, but simply wanted to point out that such a statement would have a very great influence and great effect on the raising of funds for the Democratic National Committee. He said very large sums were obtained a year ago from Jewish contributors and that this would be influenced in either giving or with-holding by what the President did on Palestine.»

(The Forrestal Diaries, p. 299).

« I (Forrestal) asked Byrnes (U.S. Secretary of State) what he thought of the possibility of getting Republican leaders to agree with the Democrats to have Palestine placed on a nonpolitical basis. He wasn't particularly optimistic about the success of this effort because of the fact that Rabbi Silver was one of Taft's closest associates and because Taft followed Silver on the Palestine-Haifa question. *I said I thought it was a most disastrous and regrettable fact that the foreign policy of this country was determined by contributions a particular bloc of special interests might make to the party funds.* »

(The Forrestal Diaries, p. 332).

On the adoption of an amendment by the U.S. Senate deploring restrictions on the use of international waterways, in 1960, Senator Fulbright, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, said : « The principal reason the amendment was offered was not because of the overwhelming good of the United States, but because of the existence of a pressure group in the United States which seeks to inject the Arab-Israeli dispute into domestic politics.. This amendment and the recent economic coercion to prevent the loading of an Arab ship in New York are part of a pattern which I find disastrous in the functioning of our constitutional system...»

(Moshe Menuhin, The Decadence of Judaism in Our Time, p. 225).

« By 1965, when Israel was declared by the American Government to be no longer a developing country, the little state had been granted 820 million dollars in aid, this despite the Eisenhower interlude and the coolness toward Israel ensuing from the Middle East policies of John Foster Dulles. Such support was usually reserved for countries of political or strategic importance to America, but Israel was never in danger of moving into the communist camp. *It was recognition of the strength of American Jewry.*»

(B. Litvinoff, A Peculiar People, quoted in the Observer, 2 March 1969).

« When we ask for arms from America we are told that we shouldn't need them as the Sixth Fleet is there to protect us. My answer is that it is possible that a war should break out when the Sixth Fleet is not near enough. »

(Levi Eshkol, Interview with Maariv, 30 April 1967).

« For the emergence of Israel as a world-power-in-miniscule meant that the Jewish question in America was no longer a purely domestic minority problem growing out of the old immigrant status tradition. *A great proportion of American Jews began to function in America as an organic part of a distant nation state.* »

(Howard Cruze. *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, p. 480 - 481).

Statistics

Whose Jerusalem ?

« ...Jerusalem, the majority of which has been Jews throughout the past 100 years... »

(*Benson Soffer in a letter to the Economist, 8 June 1968*).

The Survey of Palestine, which was prepared by the Government of Palestine for the information of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry in 1946, includes the following facts :

According to the census of 1922, the total population of Jerusalem was 91,272, of which 34,431 were Jews and 56,345 were Arabs. (p. 149, Table 7c)

According to the census of 1931, the total population of Jerusalem was 132,661, of which 54,538 were Jews and 78,071 were Arabs, (p. 149, Table 7c).

The total settled population of Jerusalem by the end of 1944 was 240,880, of which 100,200 were Jews and 140,532 were Arabs. (p. 152 Table 8c).

But Valentine's Jewish Encyclopedia (London, 1938) reports the census of 1931 in Jerusalem (mentioned above) as follows :

Total population : 90,503

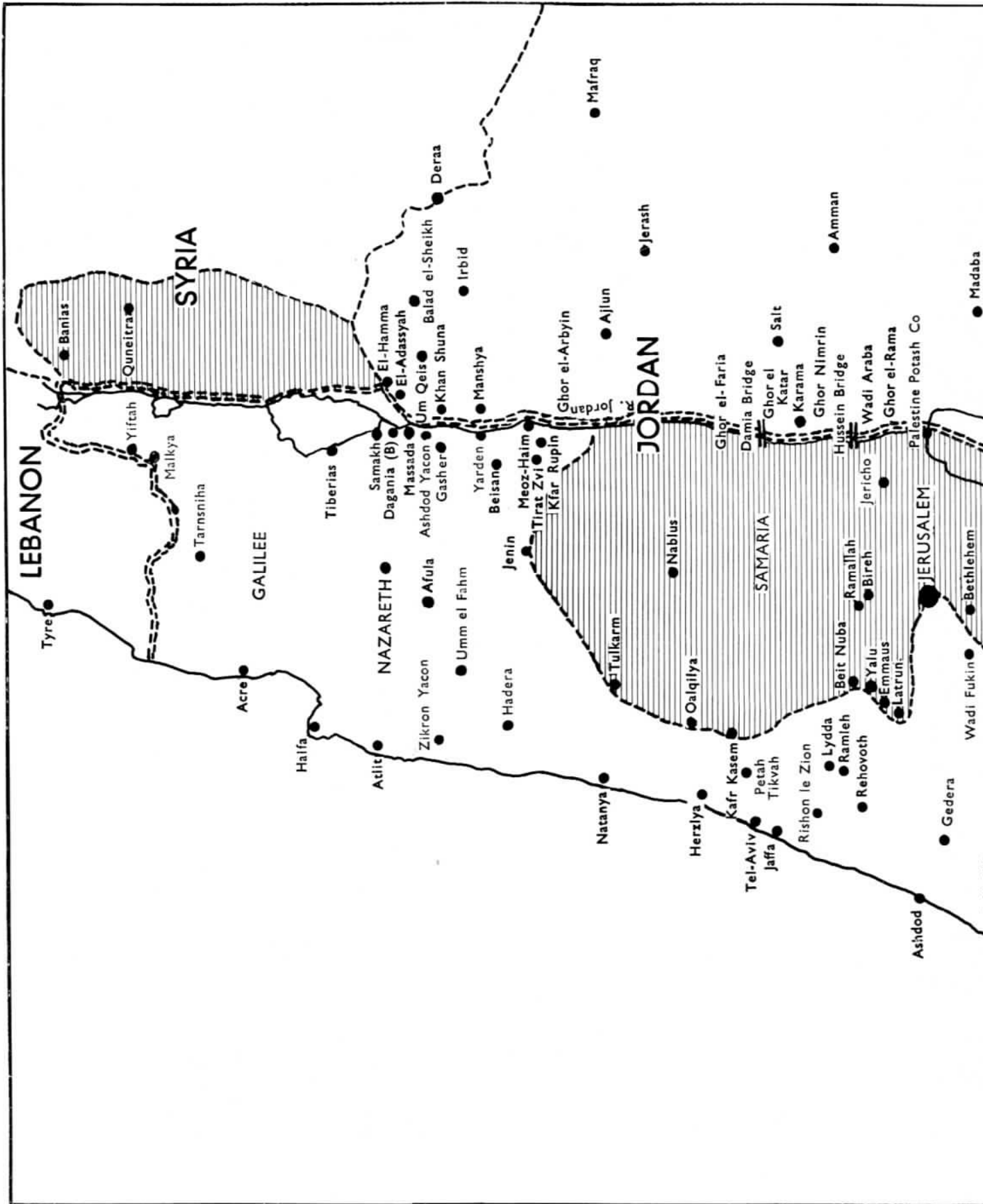
Jews : 51,222

Arabs : 39,229

« Our Jerusalem »



PALES



RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Peace with the Arabs

LEVI ESHKOL'S INTERVIEW IN NEWSWEEK
17 FEBRUARY 1969.

A joke circulating in the Arab world goes like this : « General Dayan is asked at a press conference : 'General, is it true that all you want is peace with the Arabs ?' — 'Yes, of course, why does no one believe us when we say this ? Gentlemen, let me say it clearly and categorically, once and for all — *all* we want is a piece of Syria, a piece of Egypt and a piece of Jordan.»

But the joke is a sinister one...

In an interview with *Newsweek* on 17 February 1969, the late Mr Levi Eshkol, then Prime Minister of Israel, turns this joke into a sinister reality.

1. The flexibility of Mr. Eshkol

«We are flexible on everything».

But in the same interview, Mr. Eshkol also says :

«As for the Golan Heights, we will quite simply never give them up... Every time I look at the map I shake my head because there is no possible way to compromise on Jerusalem. It is the very heart of our state.»

More flexibility and magnanimity.

« We don't insist on anything. Try us out and you will be surprised . . . »
« We have agreed over the years to the return of 40,000 refugees ».

But :

According to the UNRWA Newsletter of Dec. 1967, the total number of Arab refugees — both new and old — is approximately 1,589,500. Thus the « magnanimous » figure of 40,000 refugees represents only 1/40th of the total refugee population. Moreover, considering the fact that Jewish immigration into Palestine between 1948-1968 reached a total of 1,094,600*, for every Arab refugee whom Mr. Eshkol would have allowed to return, approximately 25 Jews were allowed into the country.

2. What about the Euphrates, Mr. Eshkol ?

Q. « President Nasser charges that your objective is a greater Israel, from the Nile to the Euphrates. What can you say that would convince him this is not so ? »

A. « . . . The 'river of Egypt' referred to in the Old Testament is not the Nile but the El-Arish river — a muddy stream a few miles inside Sinai. »

* Even after the June War 1967, as reported by the Observer, 17 December 1967, Israel refused « to take back all but 14,000 of the 165,000 people who fled to the East Bank of the Jordan and applied to the Red Cross to return to their homes. The total of these old and 'new' refugees or expelles has since swollen to 245,000. Even in the... limited repatriation scheme... out of 4,000 applications only 24 had been approved... and only 7 people actually crossed the Jordan back to their homes».

3. The value of a pledge

« I can pledge my word to Nasser that greater Israel never has been and never will be our policy. »

In fact, Mr. Eshkol coined the term 'Greater Israel'.

On 29 October 1967, « Premier Levi Eshkol spoke of a 'Greater Israel' including the occupied parts of Jordan, Syria and the United Arab Republic, in a new call for Jewish settlers from abroad. 'In greater Israel today' he said 'we have...' »

(New York Herald Tribune, 30 October 1967).

4. Ignorance or Deceit ?

«What are Palestinians ? When I came here there were 250,000 non-Jews. »

The Encyclopedia Britannica of 1966 states that the population of Palestine in 1919 was 700,000. of whom 642,000 were Arabs and 58,000 were Jews.

5. What is nothing ?

«It (Palestine) was desert — more than underdeveloped. Nothing.»

In 1920, when the Arabs formed 92% of the population, the arable land in Palestine covered a total of 8,904,500 dunums, of which the Arabs were cultivating 5,515,400 dunums or 62%.

(Statistical Abstract of Palestine, 1929).

In 1912-1913 alone, the Arabs were exporting to Europe 1,608,570 cases of the Jaffa oranges which Israel later appropriated.

(Luke and Keith-Roach, Handbook of Palestine and Transjordan, 1930).

6. Whose travesty of justice ?

When asked whether Israel would be willing to join (as President Nasser had suggested) meetings with the Arabs in mixed armistice commissions under U.N. chairmanship, Eshkol said that «the U. N. observer nearly always said he never saw what happened. The arrangement had become a mockery, a travesty of justice. »

Three high U.N. officials have written lengthy books describing 'what happened' : Commander Elmo Hutchison, Chief of the Mixed Armistice Commission, in **Violent Truce**; Lt-Gen E.L.M. Burns, Chief of Staff of UNTSO, in **Between Arab and Israeli**; Maj.-Gen. Carl Von Horn, Chief of Staff of UNTSO, in **Soldiering for Peace**. They all arrived at the same conclusion.

The following are typical quotations on relations between the U.N. and Israel :

Commander Hutchison wrote about an arms-smuggling incident : « Israel was guilty of falsifying records submitted to the U.N.; Israel was guilty of attempted smuggling and had revealed to the world it was contravening the Mount Scopus Agreement; Israel had broken the General Armistice Agreement by ordering troops into no-man's land. »

(Violent Truce, p. 29).

Major-General Von Horn wrote: «Their flat statement 'You are either for or against us' explained why — having dared to be entirely objective — I had now been branded as irrevocably 'against'. Even nastier was an Israeli tendency to immediately brand objectivity

as anti-semitic; a convenient label which would be smeared on to any U.N. soldier whose impartial report did not weigh down in favour of the Israelis.»

(Soldiering for Peace, p. 282).

**7. «Some are more equal than others»
(George Orwell)**

Eshkol : « The refugees are an international problem. We need land and water for them. We are a small nation with only 7,720* square miles of land and an annual water flow of 1.5 billion cubic meters. »

But :

« In September 1967, the Israeli Ambassador in London, in a message to the Jewish community of Great Britain, urged the need for 'a million new Olim (immigrants) from the Western countries in the next five years'. At the same time the Israeli Chief-of-Staff told delegates to the European Zionist Assembly in Basle, that 'when we have four of five million Jews in Israel, nothing will be able to injure our State or cast doubt on its existence!' If the Government of Israel can hopefully envisage a population (in Israel alone, not in the whole of Palestine) of four or five million, and feels confident of absorbing a million new immigrants in the next five years, there is plainly none but a political objection to the readmission into Palestine of the native-born Palestinians who in 1968 are living in unhappy exile. »

(Chaos or Rebirth by Michael Adams, p. 134, pub. BBC, London 1968).

8. The benevolent Israeli occupation of Gaza

Eshkol : « I would point out that for twenty years Gaza was occupied by the Egyptians . . . The Palestinian refugees in Gaza resisted the Egyptians just as strongly as they resist us. »

Gaza's reactions to Egyptian Repression, 1957

When the Egyptians came back to Gaza after 5 months of Israeli occupation in 1956-57, *New York Times* reported the following :

« U.N. troops were forced to use tear gas and fire over the heads of Arab demonstrators who had been demanding the immediate return of an Egyptian administration since the Israelis withdrew. »

(The New York Times, 11 March 1957).

And later described as follows the reception extended to the Egyptians by the starved inhabitants of Gaza :

« Egyptian civil administration entered Gaza later today. Despite a downpour of rain, thousands of residents greeted the arrival of Maj-Gen. Hassan Abdul-Latif. »

(The New York Times, 15 March 1957)

«A rejoicing crowd welcomed today the first food train to enter the Gaza strip from Egypt.»

(The New York Times, 20 March 1957).

* «Facts about Israel» (an Israeli Foreign Ministry Publication, 1967) gives the area of Israel on p. 33 as 7,992 sq. miles Does Mr. Eshkol wish people to forget the hundreds of square miles occupied by Israel in the demilitarized zones between 1949-1967?

The pattern is repeated in 1967

Samuel Seguev in his book. *The Six Days War*, describes a later event that would throw light on the reason for this «rejoicing.» He says, «Sergeant Nahmuni says of the conquest of a position at Khan Yunis: 'The Egyptian officer who commanded the post told us, 'Now that we are in your hands we ask you to behave toward us according to the rules of the Geneva Convention', 'We took them. While searching the post, we found great quantities of food. We took it all'.»

(Samuel Seguev. *Six Days War*, p. 193).

Gaza under Israeli liberation, 1957

Lt. Gen. E.L.M. Burns who was head of the United Nations Observer team describes this «liberation» best in his book *Between Arab and Israeli*. He says : «The Israelis had a record of getting rid of the Arabs whose lands they desired. That this is not a slander on the Israeli Defence Force is, unfortunately, too well attested by three separate incidents in which they took severe repressive measures against Arab civilians, killing large numbers of them. »

(Burns, p. 191).

He then cites these incidents, of which two had taken place in the Gaza Strip. The first one refers to the Khan Yunis incident on 3 November, 1956 in which 275 refugees were killed (*Ibid*, p. 304). The second refers to the Rafah incident in which Israeli forces opened fire on the refugees they had gathered together for a screening operation on 12 November 1956. 111 people were killed. (*Ibid*, p. 304).

Moreover, evidence reaching the Arab countries lately provides additional proof to the fact that the Israelis are behaving no better, but probably worse, than they did in 1957. Maybe Mr. Eshkol had not heard of the mass grave reported by David Ho'den in the *Sunday Times*, 19 November 1967 :

« In Gaza, according to UNRWA sources that I believed to be reliable, 144 inhabited houses in a refugee camp were bulldozed in a single night, and a recent communal grave in the camp that was excavated under UNRWA supervision contained 23 bodies. »

9. The welfare of the Arab farmer is uppermost in Mr. Eshkol's mind.

« Go talk to the Arab farmers on the West Bank and they will tell you what we have done for them. »

In a letter to Michael Adams, Dr. Ismail Zayid wrote :

« On 5 June, in the village of Beit Nuba (on the West Bank) where I was born and brought up, there were no Arab troops and no fighting took place during the war. My mother, sisters and old uncle lived there in their home on the land which they and their forefathers had owned and cultivated for hundreds of years. Israeli occupation took place and they were driven out for no good reason to Ramallah, except for the old uncle who was immobile with longstanding arthritis. On about 15 June the Israeli soldiers told him to get out, but when he refused he saw before his own eyes part of his house blown up — on top of him — if he stayed. In the same way the entire village was systematically blown up and later bulldozed, as was Yalu and Imwas (Emmaus)... My sister who still lives in Beit Liqwa (a nearby village) recently described to me how she and her children were beaten up when attempting to pick the fruit of the trees they themselves had planted. »

(Chaos or Rebirth by Michael Adams, pp. 165, 166).

10. An Outpost of Western Imperialism

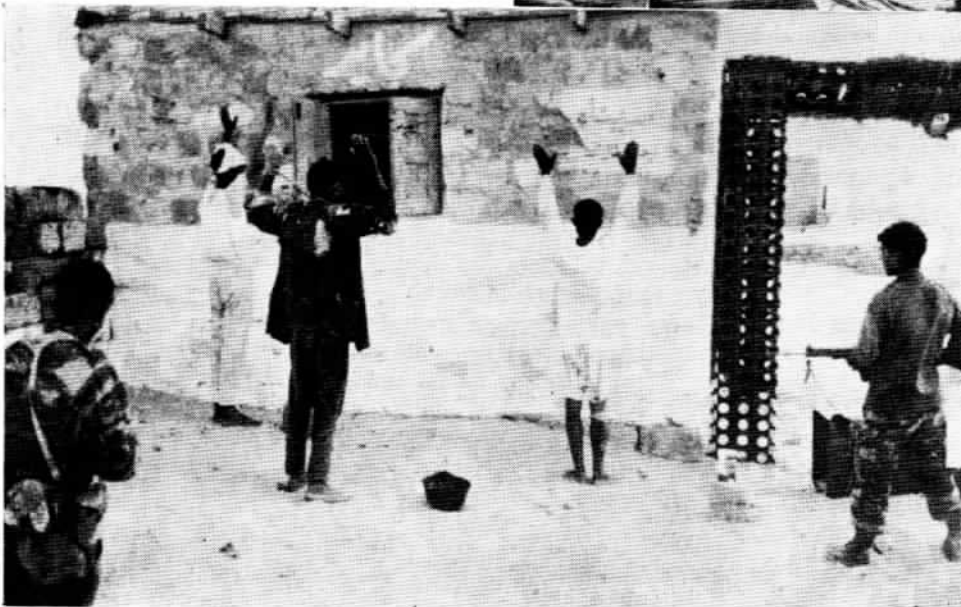
Concluding his interview with *Newsweek*, Mr. Eshkol said :

« The value of Israel to the West in this part of the world will be out of all proportion to its size. »

Mr. ESHKOL'S GAZA



The Egyptians did not starve them.



Nor did they destroy their houses. ↑
(the sign on the left says : « Doctor's clinic »)

← *Nor catch their men and shoot them, « When we caught him with his hands up, we just put him up against the wall » [A 22 year-old Israeli reservist in the **Observer**, 30 March, 1969]*

ISRAELI CABINET CRISIS

However even the blatant militancy of Mr. Eshkol was found unsatisfactory to some of his colleagues in the Israeli cabinet.

« The Israeli coalition government was severely shaken today over Mr. Eshkol's statement (to Newsweek) that Israel does not want to keep populated areas of Jordan *won* in the Middle East war. The rightist Free Center party put forward a motion of no-confidence in Mr. Eshkol, which will be debated in the Knesset tomorrow.

But the biggest threat came from the rightist Gahal party, which is supported by about one-fourth of the electorate ».

(Herald Tribune, 11 February 1969).

« A spokesman for the Gahal faction of the government coalition said : '...I express the majority of the nation when I say that Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) are part and parcel of our state. They are our security.' »

(Herald Tribune, 12 February 1969).

« Samuel Tamir, leader of the opposition Free Center Bloc party and author of the non-confidence motion, said : 'We've shown our cards before negotiations even began. We've told the world *what we are willing to cede*' ».

(Herald Tribune, 12 February 1969).

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