

*A Digest of
Sabri Jiryis's*

THE ARABS
IN ISRAEL

INTRODUCTION

When the state of Israel was established in 1948 not all Palestinians became refugees. About 165,000 stayed behind, to become "non-Jewish" citizens in a Jewish state, "foreigners" in their own country.

Little was known about them, even in the Arab world, until the publication of Sabri Jiryis's remarkable study *The Arabs in Israel*. Israeli propaganda always claimed (and foreign visitors usually echoed the claim) that the Arabs in Israel were "better off" than the Arabs outside. Naturally enough, few visitors tried to see more than the authorities meant them to see. Sabri Jiryis's cool, factual study (documented from Hebrew sources) exposes the hypocrisy of Israel's claims, and the truth of Israel's treatment of its Arab minority. Zionism has never made an ideology of anti-Arabism or racial discrimination. It simply practises them.

The Arabs in Israel describes the network of hostile laws and military courts under which most Israeli Arabs live. To quote from *The Guardian* (December 12, 1968): "A scholarly work, it is a forthright and comprehensive study of the Arab minority in Israel. It contains the fullest and most vivid account yet published of the notorious Kafr Kassim affair in which Israeli soldiers systematically killed 49 Arab villagers as they returned home in ignorance of a curfew which had been imposed at short notice."

First published in Haifa in Hebrew in 1966, *The Arabs in Israel* was quickly suppressed by the Israeli authorities. A mimeographed Arabic version was produced by the Arab League Office in Jerusalem in 1966. In 1967 the Palestine Research Centre of Beirut published a second, more authoritative Arabic translation. Late in 1968 the Institute for Palestine Studies in Beirut published the first English translation, carefully checked and edited.

Little is known of the author except that he is a Christian Palestinian Arab lawyer who lives in Israel. It is hoped that the translation and publication of his book has not put him in jeopardy.

A French translation of *The Arabs in Israel* is available from the Palestine Research Centre, 606 Sadat St., Beirut.

The full English version, for which this digest is a poor substitute, can be obtained from the Institute for Palestine Studies, Ashqar Bldg., Clemenceau Street, Beirut, Lebanon.

THE FIFTH OF JUNE SOCIETY

P. O. Box 7037, Beirut, Lebanon

Fifth of June Society
May 1969

THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT

EVER SINCE the establishment of the State of Israel, large areas of that country (Galilee, the Triangle* and the Negev), have been ruled by a Military Government which has extensive powers and works through military courts.

These three areas each have a Military Governor appointed by the Ministry of Defence. In them 75 percent of the country's Arab inhabitants live. In the Northern Area, Galilee, there are about 130,000 Arabs living in 65 villages and small towns; the Central Area, the Triangle, has about 50,000 inhabitants living in 27 villages; and in the Southern Area, the Negev, there are about 20,000 Bedouin and nomads belonging to some 18 tribes.

The whole system owes its existence to the British Mandate Government's Defence Laws (State of Emergency) 1945, and the Israeli Defence Laws (Security Areas) 1949. Under the 1945 laws, the British carried out most of their operations against the terrorists of Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern Gang.

At that time the Jewish settlers violently opposed these laws. In February 1946, at a conference of Jewish lawyers in Tel Aviv, Dr. Dunkelbaum (later to become a Supreme Court Judge) said: "These laws contradict the most fundamental principles of law, justice and jurisprudence." Other leading Israeli figures who, then, opposed these laws include Dr. Bernard Joseph (as Dov Joseph he became Minister of Justice), and Mr. Ya'acov Shimshon Shapiro. A conference of Jewish lawyers passed a resolution which stated: "The community of Jewish lawyers in the land of Israel, assembled

* During the Mandate, the Triangle was the district enclosing Nablus, Tulkarm and Jenin. In the Rhodes agreement of 1949, half of the Triangle was incorporated by Israel. This Israeli Triangle, or the little Triangle as the Israelis call it, is about 25 miles to the east of Tel Aviv.

in Tel Aviv on 2 July 1946, hereby decide:

“(1) The powers granted to the authorities under the Emergency Laws deprive the Palestinian citizens (in the land of Israel) of the fundamental rights of man.

“(2) These laws undermine law and justice, constitute a grave danger to the life and liberty of the individual and establish a rule of violence without any judicial control. The conference demands the repeal of these laws...”

These lawyers seem to have forgotten their decisions; for it was they who became judges and legal advisors in the State of Israel. At its establishment that State did not repeal the laws but, with the exception of clauses concerning immigration and the acquisition of land, they left them on the Statute Books. Only one Jewish judge found himself unable in conscience to apply them—Judge Shalom Kassan.

These laws affect almost the whole range of a person's life. A person may be restricted in his movements and required to inform the police of them; he may have to appear at the nearest police station when required. Under these laws a person can be detained, for an unlimited period, without trial. He can be denied his possessions or refused access to them. A person's property can be destroyed if it is suspected that a bomb has been thrown or a shot fired from it. The government can banish a person permanently from the country. Curfews can be imposed and inhabitants can be required to provide food and lodgings for the military.

All cases under these laws are tried by Military Courts. There are two kinds of Military Court. The first, called plainly a Military Court, has a senior officer as president and two other officers. It can impose any penalty that the Central Court can impose, including life imprisonment and the death penalty. The other, a Summary Court, consists of one Israeli army officer. It is empowered to impose sentences of imprisonment for up to two years and fines of not more than I £ 3,000.

Until 1963 there could be no appeal to any other court against the sentences of the Military Courts. Now, when an appeal is made to the Supreme Court, that Court has made it a general rule not

to interfere with the Military Government when its actions are based on “security reasons.”

The Emergency Laws of 1949 impose the same restrictions as the Defence Laws of 1945, but they also give the Ministry of Defence very important powers of permanent eviction in “security areas” or “closed areas.” The Military Government can declare an area closed, which means that one may not travel in it or visit it without a military permit.

In theory, the Defence Laws of 1945 are enforced throughout the country, but, in fact, they are only enforced in those areas under Military Government. In practice they are only enforced with their full rigour against the Arabs.

The restriction of movement is often used as a threat and invoked against Arabs who have linked themselves with political organisations not approved of by the Military Government. When it fails to subjugate Arab citizens by restricting their movements, it employs fiercer measures such as expulsion from their home areas and police supervision.

Expulsion requires that a person should reside in a remote area where he has no house of his own and no means of providing a living for himself or his family. He may also be required to report to a distant police station at least twice a day. Villagers in the Triangle have been banished to Upper Galilee and told to report twice a day to a police station, 20 kilometres from their place of exile. Others have been told to report to police stations, 15 kilometres away from their villages. Two villagers in the Triangle were ordered to remain in their homes all night (from one hour after sunset until sunrise), and report twice a day to a police station, eight kilometres from their homes. A particularly cruel and “amusing” case is that of Ahmad Hassan, a Bedouin of the Al-Wadi tribe. He was ordered to sit every day for six months, from sunrise to sunset, under a large carob tree. There are innumerable similar cases.

In addition to this, the Military Government has made much use of its power to enforce detentions. In 1956-1957, 315 detention orders were issued. The villages of the Triangle were put under

curfew for 14 years. The curfew was not finally raised until February 1962.

What is the real purpose of the Military Government? All classes of the Arab population of Israel regard the Military Government as an institution which was established to achieve the following three fundamental objectives.

(1) To facilitate the expropriation of Arab land by the authorities.

(2) To interfere in elections to the Knesset and municipal councils, in the interests of the Mapai Party and a group of hypocritical Arabs who do what they are told by this party.

(3) To prevent the formation of any Arab political movement which is either independent, or linked with any political movement other than the Mapai.

LAND EXPROPRIATION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JEWISH COLONIES

The acquisition of land in Israel has been one of the central aims of the Zionist movement ever since its foundation. The establishment of Israel eliminated many of the obstacles in the way of Jewish attempts to acquire land and the system of Military Government provided Israel with one of the means of doing this.

At first, in 1948, the Israeli military forces simply drove the Arab inhabitants over the armistice lines or to another part of the country. This, however, was too flagrant a way of doing things with so much world attention on the refugees. Therefore Israel passed a series of amended articles and orders to justify the expropriation that had already been carried out, and give the authorities additional powers to seize further Arab lands. From that time two complementary methods have been used for the acquisition of land – forcible expropriation and the invocation of these laws to justify it.

Under Article 125 of the Defence Laws, the Military Government can declare certain areas closed areas. Inhabitants can be refused entry to their own villages, expelled from them, or, if they were expelled during hostilities, prevented from returning.

The inhabitants of Rama were evacuated from their village on November 5, 1948; then on November 15 the Arab population of Kafr Bar'am was evacuated. Three months later, the inhabitants of Anan were expelled from their village; half of them were forced to cross the armistice lines. Three years later the villagers applied to the Supreme Court to be allowed to return to their village. All the houses were blown up by the Israeli Defence Army.

On February 28, 1949, 700 refugees were expelled from the village of Kafr Yasif. Most of them were put in trucks and taken to the frontier, which they were forced to cross. In June 1949, the Israeli army and police surrounded the villages of Hisam, Qatiya and Jaunch and expelled the inhabitants.

The villagers of Ghabisiya were given two days notice to leave their homes on 24 January, 1950. Later they appealed to the Supreme Court, which ruled that the order was not valid until it was published in the Official Gazette. The authorities refused to allow the villagers to return, and the order declaring it a closed area was published.

At the beginning of 1950, the inhabitants of Batat were expelled from their village. On 17 August, the villagers of Mijdal received an expulsion order, and the first group of them was taken to the Gaza Strip. The expulsion was completed in three weeks. Thirteen villages in Wadi Ara were evacuated and the inhabitants taken across the Israeli frontier in February 1951.

In November 1951, a military detachment surrounded the village of Buwaisat, expelled the inhabitants and dynamited their houses.

In September 1953, the inhabitants of Umm al-Faraj were expelled from their village, which was blown up immediately afterwards. In October of the same year, seven families were expelled from Rihaniya, despite a Supreme Court judgement that the expulsion was illegal. The Baqqar tribe, which lived in the north

of the country, was forced to cross the frontier into Syria on 30 October, 1953.

In 1948 the Israeli Defence Army occupied the village of Aqrat in Western Galilee. Six days later the villagers received an order to leave their village for two weeks until military operations in the area were concluded. Much more than two weeks passed. They appealed to the Supreme Court in 1951, which declared that there was no legal impediment to their returning to their village.

The villagers, then, asked the Military Governor to allow them to return. He referred them back to the Minister of Defence who referred them back to the Military Governor. They were ordered to leave again. They appealed to the Appeals Committee and from there to the Supreme Court. But on Christmas Day, a month and a half before the day the Supreme Court assigned to hear the case, all the houses of this Catholic Christian village were blown up.

A similar incident concerns the village of Hasas, in Upper Galilee, near the Israeli-Syrian border. The population was expelled from this village in 1949. They stayed away until 1952, when they appealed to the Supreme Court to be allowed to return. The Court ordered that they be allowed to return, but the authorities immediately served "removal orders" on them. The Court then decided that it had no power to interfere with the authorities who had given the "removal orders" as they "were absolute in so far as they were connected with security matters."

*The above list of villages by no means includes all the Arab villages whose inhabitants have been expelled. Nearly all these areas have been given to Jewish colonies to cultivate.**

The links between the Military Government and the Israeli Lands Directorate can be seen from the fact that Military Governors and their representatives are readily employed by the Lands Directorate when their services are terminated. Although they are not specialists in land affairs, their experience during their years as

* Our italics. F. J. S.

Military Governors is extremely useful to the Israeli Lands Directorate.

Alongside the methods of expropriation and expulsion, Israel uses other means of acquiring land. One of the most notorious is the Law on the Acquisition of Absentees' Property of 1950. It first appeared in the form of emergency articles for absentee property until this law replaced it.

The function of this law was to define the legal status of property of absentees who had left the country. Their property was transferred to the Custodian of Absentee Property, who was appointed by virtue of the law. However, it defines "absentee" to mean any person who was a citizen of the Land of Israel and left his residence in the country after 29 November 1948 to: (a) a place outside Israel before 1 September 1948 or (b) a place inside Israel that was then occupied by forces hostile to Israel.

By this law people who had left their villages or had been driven out of them by the Israelis—even if they remained in areas that were Israeli-controlled—were prevented from returning to their villages, and their lands were confiscated from them. An Arab who visited a neighboring land at any time before 1 September 1948 would have his land expropriated, even if he returned to his village before Israel occupied it. If he changed his residence during this period, his land could also be confiscated.

Aharon Cohen, in his book 'Israel and the Arab World' says: "Inasmuch as the Law for Absentees' Property has been enforced in the mixed towns where the majority of the population were forced to change their place of residence, this means, in practice, that all Arab property is regarded as "absentees" property, unless the contrary can be proved. It is by no means unusual for an Arab who has moved from one quarter in the same town to another to be forced to pay the Custodian of Absentees' Property rent for the house he has moved to, while, at the same time, he receives no rent for his former house, in which others are living, and paying rent to the Custodian."

The law empowers the Custodian to decide what persons are absentees on no further evidence than the testimony of a Mukhtar (head of a village) or a collaborator. He may not be

questioned about the information sources which led him to a decision, so that he is protected from future attacks in the courts. No deal made by the Custodian in connection with property he believed to be absentee property may be invalidated, even if it is later proved that such property was not absentee property.

This law is enforced against villages that were annexed under the armistice agreement between Israel and Jordan on 3 April 1949, despite the fact that its enforcement is in direct contradiction to that agreement, which says: "Whenever villages are affected as a result of the armistice demarcation line the inhabitants of such villages shall be entitled to keep their rights—these rights being protected by the law—as regards their places of residence, their property and their freedom. . . ." When some villagers appealed against the Custodian to the Supreme Court, it informed them that the armistice agreement was not in the competence of the Court and that it was up to the states concerned to enforce it.

This law is also enforced against Islamic Waqf property. According to the religious laws of Islam, Waqf property is considered as belonging to God, income from such property being devoted to the members of the Islamic community to charitable projects or to the purpose for which the property was mortmained in Waqf. This property has been transferred to the Custodian of Absentees Property, on the assumption, perhaps, that God also is an absentee by virtue of this law.

The value of Islamic Waqf property was enormous. Today it is impossible to find out how much it contributes to the State of Israel, the matter being left to the discretion of the Custodian.

Despite frequent attempts by the Islamic community to secure its release and restoration to the control of the community, the reverse has happened; for a proposal was submitted in 1964 and approved in 1965, which transfers this property to the government once and for all.

The income from Waqf property is estimated in tens of millions of pounds, yet in the financial year 1963-1964 only I £ 700,000 were allocated to Islamic education, social affairs, holy places, mosques, etc.

Another law the Israelis use to expropriate land is the

Emergency Articles for the Exploitation of Uncultivated Lands. They claim that the object of this is to encourage people to cultivate their land, by giving the Ministry of Agriculture power to take it from them if they don't.

Its real object, however, is to help in the expropriation of land. The Military Government declares a certain area closed and allows nobody to enter it without permits. For "security reasons" it is unable to give the owners of the land in the closed areas permits. Soon their land becomes "uncultivated" and the Ministry of Agriculture can step in to ensure its cultivation by "handing it over to another party to cultivate it." The "other party" is always the neighbouring Jewish colonies.

Despite all these laws, the Arabs still managed to hold on to some of their land. So the Israeli Government promulgated the Law for the Requisitioning of Land in Times of Emergency. This law gives the government the right to take over land "for the defence of the State and the security of the people, to safeguard essential provisions or essential public services or to absorb immigrants, or retired soldiers, or men disabled while on active service." At first the land could only be retained for three years. But then it was extended to six and again further until 1 August 1958. Lands retained after this date are regarded as having been expropriated by the State!

Most of these laws spoke of 'transfer', 'requisitioning' or 'usufruct'; they did not mention 'ownership'. From a legal point of view the ownership of the land still remained with the original owners. Moreover most of the laws were subject to the existence of a state of emergency in the country. (A state of emergency was declared four days after the establishment of the State and is still in existence today.*) These temporary measures had to be made permanent. To do this the Law for the Acquisition of Land (Operations and Compensations) was passed in 1953.

This law enables the Minister of Finance to transfer lands expropriated under previous laws into the possession of the State of Israel. The Ministry issues certificates for property subject to

* The State of Emergency was repealed in December 1966, but after the June 1967 war the treatment of Arabs by the Israeli authorities again hardened.

three conditions: (1) That such property was not at the disposal of its owner on 1 April 1952. (2) That between 14 May 1948 and 1 April 1952 such property was employed for essential purposes of development, or (Jewish) settlement or security. (All previous laws for expropriation had been passed before 1 April 1952, and the object of most of them was the expropriation of land for purposes of development, settlement or security.) (3) That the property is still needed for the purposes mentioned. All this property the law transferred to the ownership of the Development Authority which had the right to take immediate possession of it.

Seven months after this law, the Minister of Finance issued certificates providing for the expropriation of 250 Arab villages. Most of these villages belonged to absentees—those who had left their homes and property and crossed the frontier during the war. But the certificates also covered large portions of land belonging to Arab citizens who are still living in Israel.

The land of absentees was transferred without any payment on the grounds that there was no one to pay. For the Arabs who remained the compensation was so trifling as to be a cover for expropriation of Arab lands without payment.

The law makes 1 January 1950 as the date of expropriation for the purposes of assessing compensation. The law was passed in 1953—why make the date 1950? In 1950 there were very few land sales so that the price of land was low. Moreover then the Israeli pound was equivalent to the pound sterling, while in 1953 it was only worth 20 percent of the pound sterling. I £ 12 million was paid for 104,000 dunums* of land—that is about I £ 140 per dunum. In 1961, similar compensation was paid for 20,000 dunums, although the price of land in the free market had risen to hundreds, and sometimes thousands of pounds per dunum.

The next in the series of laws concerning the confiscation of Arab property is the Law of Prescription. Besides civil matters this law also contains provisions which help in the acquisition of much land in Galilee.

The Ottoman Land Law of 1858 and the Mandate Land Law

* 1 acre = 2.5 dunums.

of 1928 stipulate that anyone who controls and exploits land for ten consecutive years is entitled, at the end of these ten years, to ask for the land to be registered in his name.

The draft of the Israeli law changed this period to fifty years. This immediately brought a storm of Arab protest and the period was then fixed for land at 15 years and for other property at seven. However, if a man started to cultivate land after 1 March 1943, the first five years from that date were not to be taken into account, so that for such people the period was, in effect, twenty years. But before 1 March 1963 all lands became subject to survey so that these people had no chance of occupying the land for the twenty years required.

In one dispute over the period of occupation of land, the government representative produced an aerial photograph with the number 45 written at the bottom of it. He said that it was an aerial photograph of the land taken in 1945 and showed that the land was not being cultivated. The Supreme Court accepted this and the Arab lost this land although no proof was given that this photograph had, in fact, been taken in 1945.

Owing to the conflicting figures from various government departments, no exact figures can be given for the total area of land of the Arabs living in Israel that has been expropriated, but the estimate of one million dunums seems reasonably accurate.

In 1960 the Israeli Government made another attempt, unsuccessful this time to dispossess the Arabs of further land. In order to concentrate government land in one area, the government intended to exchange land in one area for land in another or, if there was no land for exchange, to offer "compensation".

This time the Arabs resisted. 13 Arab municipal councils adopted resolutions demanding the withdrawal of the draft. Meetings and conferences were held. Strikes and demonstrations were organised in several Arab villages.

As a result of such opposition, it was decided not to submit the draft law to the Knesset. This was the first time that a government conspiracy against the Arab population was defeated by organised mass action.

There are two further expropriation laws which the authorities have used after they had exploited, to the full, most of the powers granted to them by laws already mentioned.

The first of these is the Forest Law. According to this law the government can declare forest lands which were previously registered for the use of villages as Government forests. The villagers are forbidden to enter these areas. This is merely the prelude to reclassification of the land to change it from common land to government owned land. Many villages have lost thousands of dunums of land by the operation of this law.

The second of these two laws is the Law for the Acquisition of Land in the Public Interest. By this law the government, the municipal authorities or public institutions may expropriate any land they require. So far this law's use has been rare; the most important occasion being when it was used to acquire 1,200 dunums of the best land in Nazareth. The Supreme Court rejected an appeal against this because it was satisfied that the land was needed for the building of government offices. However, when the land was acquired, it was used for building houses for newly arrived Jewish immigrants, and for spinning and weaving and chocolate factories. The aim of the authorities seems to be to establish a new Jewish Colony, called Upper Nazareth, in the heart of Nazareth, in order to strangle the Arab city.

The expropriation of Arab lands is the most painful chapter of the Arabs of Israel. One of the first results of the expropriation of land was the removal of some 20,000 Arabs from their villages. They have become refugees, living only a few kilometres from their villages, which are now used as Jewish settlements. They can only enter lands that were their own as paid labourers for the new "owners" of their lands. Israel Hertz, in an article in 'Al-Hamishar', writes: "mostly (they) live in humble houses of tin, sacking or wood, that have been erected on the outskirts of their villages, the authorities regarding them as temporary residents. Very few of them are rich enough to have succeeded in buying a plot of land on which to build a house in the villages they live in, or in renting a house in one of these villages. In some, but not all, of the villages of these refugees new immigrants have settled, while most, though not all, of the cultivable land has been annexed to already existing

Jewish colonies to meet their land requirements or granted to new colonies.

"The great majority of these refugees—nearly all of them—ask to be allowed to return to their villages, refusing to sell their rights to their land, in spite of their unfavourable material conditions. They do not become absorbed by other villages, firmly maintaining their positions."

Until 1952 they received aid from the U.N., but then the U.N. decided that they were "property owners" in Israel and stopped the aid. After ignoring them for so long, in 1958 the Israeli Government announced a plan to settle them and provide loans for them. But when the majority of these refugees discovered that this plan was conditional on their giving up their rights, they refused.

Every Arab village has had some of its land expropriated. This has done great harm to Arab agriculture and brought into existence a new generation of unemployed, men who were formerly agricultural workers, and have not been able to learn another trade since they have been dispossessed of their lands.

The vast majority of Arab landowners refuse to accept compensation—which is extremely small. Nor will they take compensation in the form of land belonging to "absentees," either still living in Israel or living abroad as refugees. To encourage the Arabs to accept compensation, it was raised by 15 percent. But even this "generous" proposal was not accepted by the Arabs.

The Arabs continually demand the return of their land and will accept nothing in its place. The efforts made by the authorities to expropriate Arab lands constitute a danger to the very existence of the Arabs in Israel.

Israel is determined to smash Arab control of two areas in Israel, Galilee and the Triangle, in both of which the Arabs are in the majority. To do this it expropriates Arab lands and builds Jewish settlements.

Most of the confiscated land is situated in areas which, by virtue of the resolutions of the United Nations of 1947, belong to the Arab State of Palestine. The Israelis are afraid that there might come a time, should there ever be peace talks between Israel and

the Arab countries, when the Arabs, who are a majority in these areas, might ask to be attached to such Arab or Palestinian state as might be established, on the grounds that there is an Arab majority in these areas.

That is why the Israeli Government is hastening to settle Jews in these areas, thus transforming the Arab population everywhere into a minority, and confronting the Arabs, both inside and outside Israel, with a fait accompli.

THE STRONG-ARM POLICY

The names of Deir Yassin and Kafr Qasim* are landmarks in the history of the Arabs in Israel. Deir Yassin's frightful massacre, when 250 of the Arab inhabitants, men, women and children, were butchered by armed members of Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern Gang, has become notorious throughout the world.

It achieved its object, which was to terrorize the Arabs out of the country. However, for those Arabs who remained behind, despite the fact that they had become citizens of Israel, there was still some danger.

On 29 October 1956, 49 innocent Arab citizens in the Israeli village of Kafr Qasim were killed. It was the eve of the British-French-Israeli aggression against Egypt. A curfew was put on the village—but the villagers out in their fields had not been informed. As they returned to their homes in little groups, they were stopped and shot down by Israeli Frontier Guards. Those killed included women and children.

At first Ben Gurion, in the Knesset, described the incident vaguely, referring to some people being injured. But eventually the public outcry became so great that there was an investigation and the men responsible were brought to trial. They received sentences of imprisonment. However, these sentences were drasti-

* A full description of this incident as well as its legal sequences can be found in the complete edition of *The Arabs in Israel* (Institute for Palestine Studies) pp 91-118.

cally reduced and the last of these guilty men, the two officers, came out of prison in 1960 after serving only 3 ½ years.

Moreover in 1960, Joubrael Dahan, the Lieutenant in charge, who was convicted of killing 43 Arabs in an hour, was engaged by the municipality of Rama as the "Officer responsible for Arab affairs in the city."

POLITICS AND SOCIETY

The second aim of the Military Government is the strengthening of the Mapai rule among the Arab population. In this way it does harm to all other political circles in the State, both left and right, both Jewish and Arab. All other circles, whatever their political aims and opinions, are unacceptable to the Military Government and cooperation with them is liable to lead to a violent clash with it.

For this it has the support of the Special Operations Department of the Israeli police and the Internal Security Organisation, and its agents in all classes of Arab society. Through enormous efforts of pressure, threats, bribery and exploitation of every point of weakness in Arab society, it has succeeded in creating a large number of collaborators, especially among the older generation.

In addition to these forms of collaboration, it uses the regular weekly reports of the Arab Mukhtars (the heads of villages). Originally Turkish, then adopted by the British, the Mukhtar system includes the most reactionary elements of the Arab population. Apart from the 18 Mukhtars of the Bedouin tribes, there are only three other officially recognized Mukhtars, but the Military Government recognizes 100 Mukhtars in about 80 villages in Galilee and the Triangle.

Thanks to the Military Government, most of the municipal authorities in Arab villages are instruments in its service. When the time comes for elections to these councils, it prepares careful lists of candidates, forcibly opposing any list it does not approve.

However, when the Minister of the Interior has been a member

of Achdut Haavoda or the General Zionist Party, there have been clashes between the ministry and the Military Governor. In 1958 the Supreme Court was convinced that a number of the actions of the Military Governor in the Triangle proceeded from a desire to induce people to change their minds over the election of a president for the Tira Village Council, and that expulsion orders were issued in order to diminish the influence of the people expelled.

During elections to the Knesset, interference by the Military Government is more extensive and forceful. The Mapai Party wins all elections to the Knesset. Four or five Arab members of Mapai are elected. Their sole function is to support Mapai and draw their monthly stipends. These Arab members voted against the abolition of the Military Government.

A typical example of Military Government interference in parliamentary elections took place in a village in Galilee three days before elections to the Fifth Knesset. At a meeting called by all the heads of clans of the village, the representative of the Military Governor told the villagers whom the government had decided they should vote for. He went on to say that, in order to enforce this, the villagers were to be divided into small groups of 15-20, a supervisor for each group being appointed by the Military Governor. They were not to use the printed ballot papers but special sheets of white paper, on which they were to write the letter to indicate the list of candidates they chose in a special way; one group was to write in Arabic at the head of the paper, another in Hebrew at the head of the paper, another in Arabic at the bottom, another in Hebrew on the right and so on. This would ensure that the government knew the names of those who refused to cooperate and their infringement of these instructions would not be viewed favourably.

As a result of such pressure a higher percentage of Arabs than Jews go to the polling stations and they duly elect the Mapai representatives.

Other Israeli political parties have tried to combat this hold the Mapai has on the Arab electorate. The General Zionist Party and Achdut Haavoda have both attempted to put up Arab candidates, but have failed at the elections. The Mapam Party

(United Labour Party) has also tried. Although unsuccessful at the polls, this party has won some support from some of the younger Arabs. Its position is somewhat contradictory; for while it supports movements of national liberation and self-determination outside Israel, it does not apply them to the Arabs of Palestine. Nevertheless the Mapam has done much for the Arabs in many fields. Many young Arabs have found work for long periods in its kibbutzim and other projects, when they could find no other work. The ministries that have been entrusted to Mapam members, particularly the Ministry of Health, have made considerable efforts to improve the conditions of the Arabs.

The Israeli Communist Party is the only party with a high proportion of Arab members. It has played a unique role in the history of the Arabs in Israel. By going into opposition shortly after the establishment of the state, it became the principal defender of the rights of the Arabs. The party has been supported by Arab circles who have cooperated with it, because it was only through it that they could oppose the conspiracies of the authorities.

The party's influence on Arab society increased to the point that in the year 1956-1957 it became the virtual spokesman of the Arabs in Israel. At that time any Arab who refused to submit to the government was dubbed a "Communist."

Between 1954-1958 the Communists, both in Israel and the Arab world, supported the Arab struggle without reserve. In 1958 the Israeli Communist Party, along with various Arab leaders, formed the Arab Front, called the Popular Front.

Cooperation with the Communist Party continued for six months. Then an open split occurred between Arab nationalism and the communist parties in the Arab world. Within a few months the Popular Front had split into two groups. The first group, only three or four members, continued to cooperate with the Communist Party. The second group decided to continue its activities separately.

It immediately founded the organisation known as Al-Ard and issued its own programme. It submitted an application for a licence to publish a weekly newspaper in Arabic called 'Al-Ard.' Publication started at once, pending the granting of a licence.

After 13 issues the paper was closed and six of its editorial staff prosecuted. A short time later Al-Ard applied for the registration of a printing and publishing company. At first this was refused, but later this decision was rescinded.

However, when it applied for permission to publish an Arabic weekly, its application was refused. In this situation there was no alternative to comparatively silent action.

Early in 1964 the group decided to register its association with the Journalists' League, under the name of the Al-Ard Movement, and sent a statement to this effect, containing the movement's constitution, to the authorities. The authorities replied that the Al-Ard Movement was illegal because it had been established with the aim of prejudicing the security of the very existence of the State of Israel. The group appealed to the Supreme Court.

They stated that their aims were: to raise the educational, health, economic and political standards of all its members; to achieve complete equality and social justice for all classes of people in Israel; to find a just solution of the Palestine problem as a whole, as an indivisible unit—a solution that would restore their political entity to the Palestine people, who were an indivisible part of the Arab nation; to support liberation, unionist and socialist movements in the Arab world by all legitimate means; to work for peace in the Middle East in particular, and the world in general; to support all progressive movements in all parts of the world, to oppose imperialism and to support people who wish to liberate themselves from it.

The Supreme Court rejected Al-Ard's application on the grounds that its objectives were utterly destructive to the State of Israel; that it was against recognition of the State of Israel and that any state had the right to protect itself from the establishment of a fifth column within itself.

The Communist newspaper, 'Al-Ittihad,' pointed out that Al-Ard had recognized the State of Israel by making one of its objectives the achievement of the complete equality and social justice of all classes of people within Israel. It regarded the Court's decision as political, rather than legal, and said that it was aimed at depriving a group of citizens in the State of the right to engage in

political activity and to work in a clear and legitimate manner for entirely constitutional objectives.

A few days after this judgement, certain of Al-Ard's leaders were arrested and a search was carried out of most of its centres. A week later, invoking the Defence Laws (State of Emergency) 1945, the Minister of Defence declared that the Al-Ard movement was an illegal association. The result of this statement was that every member of this group, who allowed himself to engage in any activity whatsoever, became liable to ten years imprisonment.

The Government of Israel has not hesitated to interfere in religious matters. It has succeeded because it has "bought" the greater part of the religious leaders, whether Moslem, Christian or Druse.

As far as the Christians are concerned, Israel's interference has not been so great because the spiritual centres of these communities are in countries whose aid Israel still requires. However, certain fanatically religious Jewish elements do engage in hostile activities against Christian missions in Israel.

The Moslem community has suffered more than any other in Israel; the majority of Islamic Waqf possessions have been confiscated so that financial resources available for religious purposes are extremely meagre. Under the British Mandate, the Moslem religious community used to enjoy almost complete liberty, and the Higher Moslem Council supervised religious affairs. The Israel Government has abolished this council and formed a committee (three, at least, of whom must be non-Moslems) to appoint Qadis (judges in the religious courts) in Israel. However, Islam does not recognize judges appointed by non-Moslems so that chaos reigns in Moslem circles. Islamic funds have been squandered by committees appointed by the government, often with government help and encouragement.

The sanctity of a number of Moslem holy places, such as mosques and tombs, has been violated in a most regrettable manner. One of the reasons for this hostile attitude is the widely held Israeli idea that Islam is linked with Arab nationalism.

The Israeli treatment of the Druses is quite different. This

is a result of an Israeli attempt to weaken the position of the Druses in Arab countries and to separate them from the Arab community. The Israelis put forward the idea that the Druses are not Arabs. In Israel today, Jews often differentiate between Arabs and Druses. They even tried to show a marriage relationship between the prophet Shu'aib, whom the Druses hold in particular veneration, and the prophet Moses. They claimed that he married Shu'aib's daughter and before that Shu'aib had married an Israelite woman. This claim does not conform with the religious tenets of the Druses, according to which Shu'aib never married,

In fact the Druses are an Arab religious sect—founded at the end of the tenth century A.D. Ethnically this community is an indivisible part of the Arab nation. It should be emphasized that the great majority of educated and younger Druses are strongly opposed to the creation of this new nationalism, and are proud of belonging to the Arab nation. In any case the myth of "Druse nationalism" has not protected the Druses from the expropriation of their land in just the same way as the other Palestinian Arabs.

EDUCATION

The number of Arab pupils studying in Arab elementary schools has increased, but in comparison with the figures in Jewish schools this increase is inconsiderable; more than a third of Arab children of school age are still not in schools. Even then there is an extensive network of confessional and missionary schools providing elementary education, which receive little help from the Ministry of Education.

The educational standards in the Arab schools are extremely low in comparison not only with Jewish schools in Israel, but also with present standards all over the Middle East and with the standards prevailing in Palestine under the Mandate. There are many reasons for these low standards: Arab schools in Israel suffer from a grave shortage of buildings, equipment, furniture, books and professional teachers, and the teaching curricula are liable to be changed at any time.

There has been a shortage of teachers ever since the establishment of the state when most of the best teachers left the country and their places were taken by untrained teachers. As the numbers of Arab schools have increased, the teaching staff has been increased by teachers who have completed their secondary education. These teachers are chosen, not for their qualifications but because the Military Government or the Ministry of Defence approve of their appointment, or because of nepotism.

In 1962 the Israeli Government was "gracious" enough to open an Arab Teachers' Training College in Jaffa, for both men and women teachers. But this college can only train fifty teachers a year. Half of these are unable to find employment after they graduate. All Arab teachers in Israel are constantly intimidated by threat of dismissal.

The Government has been responsible for the deplorable situation in Arab education because it has appointed dozens of untrained teachers to Arab schools and kept them at their posts for years without giving them a chance to obtain teaching diplomas. It has been responsible for the dismissal of dozens of trained teachers for political reasons and has ignored the urgent requests of Arab schools for trained teachers.

Another reason for the low educational standard in Arab schools is the absence of clear and permanent curricula, as these are being constantly changed by the Ministry of Education, sometimes just before the Secondary Certificate Examination.

There is a serious shortage of books in secondary schools. This shortage applies also to books in general. Up until April 1964 only 270 books in the Arabic language had been published, 45 of them written by authors resident in the country, the remainder reprints of books first published in Arab countries. Even the Educational and Cultural Committee of the Histadrut (the General Federation of Jewish Labour) has called upon the Ministry of Education to overcome this shortage of Arabic books, to which it attributes the low standard of education among the Arabs in Israel.

The shortage of maps and laboratory equipment is also acute.

Most of the school buildings are not fit to be used as schools. They are old constructions with small, dark rooms and few sanitary amenities. In the course of five financial years the state allocated I £ 3 million for the improvement of Arab schools. This is an extremely small proportion of the Ministry of Education's budget, which totals tens of millions of pounds.

Needless to say the failure rates of Arab pupils who sit for the secondary certificate examination is higher than 85 percent. These results have disastrous effects on Arab society and they have caused widespread unemployment and despair among younger educated Arabs. Only 171 Arab students out of a total population of a quarter of a million are receiving university education, as against 14,000 Jews. So it is hardly surprising that the Arab population of Israel are now nearly all labourers or small tradesmen.

The neglect by the Israeli Government of Arab education is a studied plan to keep the Arabs in ignorance and diminish national consciousness among them. A large percentage of those who leave Arab elementary schools can only read and write Arabic with difficulty, although they come from Arab stock. Many passages from famous Arabic poems and prose are omitted from the curricula, being replaced by weak and banal passages drawn from obscure authors. In Arab secondary schools, the study of the Old Testament is compulsory, while the Islamic and Christian religions are not studied at all.

The whole attitude of the Ministry of Education is to distort and misrepresent Arab history and glorify Jewish history. Much more time, too, must be spent on the study of Jewish history. In the secondary examination there are never questions about the Prophet Muhammad, the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, the Omayyad Caliph Muawiya, or Saladin, who were some of the greatest men in Arab history.

The whole aim is to judaize the rising generation of Arabs.

AGRICULTURE

Under the British Mandate, and since the establishment of Israel, Arab society in Israel has been essentially agricultural. There have been many obstacles put in the way of Arab agricultural development and tens of thousands of the best Arab agricultural land has been expropriated.

The prices of Arab agricultural produce are fixed at a much lower level than the prices of Jewish produce. This is particularly so with their principal crops, tobacco and olive oil. Arab farmers are obliged to sell their tobacco crop at a very low price to Jewish monopoly companies, whereas other private companies purchase equivalent quantities of Jewish-grown crops at higher prices. The Jewish monopoly company withholds one third of the Arab tobacco crops for any one year until the farmer undertakes to sell it in his following year's crop and so on.

The prices of olive oil produced by Arabs were subject to direct government control until 1955. This injustice applies in the case of all other crops. For example in 1961-1962 a ton of Arab-grown barley was sold for I £ 215, while Jewish grown barley was sold for I £ 225 per ton.

Arab farmers who want to buy modern machinery frequently have their requests for loans ignored and delayed for long periods. Jewish agriculture, however, is very highly mechanised.

The combination of these factors—lack of machinery, lower prices, less irrigation (43.9 percent of Jewish land is irrigated compared with 3.6 percent of Arab land) have resulted in a very great difference in the yield per dunum between Arab and Jewish land. Added to this is the fact that most of the best Arab land is now in Jewish hands and two-thirds of all presently-held Arab land lies in mountainous and rocky areas that are difficult to cultivate. It is not surprising, therefore, that the yield from Jewish land is nearly 400 percent greater than from Arab land.

Behind this treatment of the Arabs is the desire that more and more of them should leave the land so that Jews can take it over.

LABOUR

Arab labour was not fully organised under the British Mandate. Whenever any organisations that there were became general and comprehensive, they were dissolved. However, the Jewish labour organisations, especially the Histadrut (the General Federation of Jewish Labour), grew yearly stronger. The only Arab Labour organisation left in 1948 ceased to exist shortly after the establishment of the State.

Thus Arab workers had been easily exploited by Arab capitalists and feudalists. Now the Zionist Movement, in the form of the Labour organisations attached to it, joined this attack on Arab workers under the racialist slogan "Jewish Labour." After the establishment of the State hundreds of Arab workers were driven from their jobs, and special penalties were inflicted on any Jews who gave them jobs.

There was no organisation to defend Arab rights and they were opposed by the Histadrut. They were forced to sell their labour on the black market, where they had to accept much lower wages than those paid to Jewish workers for the same work, and they were liable to dismissal on the grounds that they were "not organised." At certain periods when there was a high level of Jewish unemployment, dismissal of Arab workers became a daily event.

Sometimes Arab workers received less than half the wages paid to Jews for the same work. For example, in 1952, the unskilled Arab workers used to be paid one Israeli pound for a day's work for the Public Works Department, whereas a Jewish worker doing the same work, in the same grade, used to receive I £ 2.63. Similarly a skilled Arab labourer received I £ 2.50 per day, his Jewish counterpart was paid I £ 3.14. It was the government that enforced this discrimination against Arab workers. The same was true in education. In 1952 an unmarried Jewish teacher, holding a Secondary Teachers' Training College Certificate, was paid I £ 69 per month, while an Arab with the same qualifications was paid I £ 41.

The Jewish writer Aharon Cohen, in his book 'Israel and the

Arab World', has described the lot of Arab workers and employees as follows: "The Arab worker who managed to find a job in the first ten years after the establishment of Israel was restricted to unpleasant jobs that Jewish workers would not accept, like in sewage or building. The wages paid to Arab workers never equalled those paid to Jews, even if the Arab was doing the same work. In practice many jobs were closed to Arab workers and employees. The Arab worker who found a temporary job in a remote Jewish colony could be dismissed on the grounds that he was 'not organised.'"

Although now Arabs have been admitted into the Histadrut on an equal basis (by the end of 1962 there were 36,000 Arab members), the general situation of Arab workers has not improved. Many still do not belong to any labour organisation and are obliged to find work by their own efforts, having no protection from dismissal and unemployment.

Arab workers have to travel great distances to their places of work; many of them are only able to return home once a week, or once a month. Out of 54,000 workers, 27,000 are itinerant.

The number of non-agricultural workers is increasing. The reasons for this include the lack of Arab agricultural land, the increase in Arab population and the small income they derive from Arab agriculture. But behind all this is the fundamental Israeli plan to sever relations between the basically agricultural society of the Arabs of Israel and mechanised agriculture, in order to facilitate the acquisition of Arab land. So all sorts of obstacles are placed in the way of Arab agricultural development and the Arab village in general, and the drift to the towns has been encouraged in such a way as to ensure the complete success of the policy.

DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES

At first the Ministry of the Interior did not permit elections to Arab municipalities. Eventually, with the utmost reluctance, it started to permit some activity in this field. Between 1950-1953

it allowed the formation of eleven local councils, between 1953-1959 another nine, and a further ten between 1959-1963. In 1961 in nearly 57 percent of the areas inhabited by Arabs, where 38 percent of the total Arab population live, there was no municipal representation at all.

Such a situation is bound to impede the progress of the Arab village and paralyse its development. Many local councils are appointed by the Ministry of the Interior, without prior consultation with the local inhabitants.

The absence of any local authorities in many villages stands in the way of building and construction operations in these villages, for it is impossible to demarcate boundaries or survey building sites. It is quite normal for the villages to wait a whole year before receiving replies to their requests for building permits. As a result nearly 4,000 houses have been built in Arab villages without permits and the authorities are now threatening to demolish them.

Electricity has so far been installed in only a few Arab villages. The Arab village of Tayyiba in the Triangle was the first to have electricity in 1955. By 1961 lines had been laid to five more villages and during the last few years a few more have received electricity supplies.

The standards of the postal services are on a par with the electricity service. There is only one post office, one branch office and fifteen sub-divisions amongst all the Arab villages. There are telephone services in 26 Arab villages—one quarter of all the Arab villages in the country.

Although the Health Service in the Arab villages has somewhat improved, the standard of the health service provided to Arabs is by no means as high as is the case with the Jews. Many Arab villages have no dispensaries, and sometimes there is no doctor, nurse or pharmacist within easy reach. No medical services are provided for mothers in 46 Arab villages. In 5 villages in the Acre area the villagers have not been vaccinated and in the year 1963-1964 no doctor or nurse visited 17 villages in the Acre area, although the medical services are supposed to cover these villages.

Despite the fact that the government has ordered the Ministry

of Health to provide medical services for 82 of the Arab villages, this has not been done. This helps to explain the high infant mortality rate—for example, in 1964, 15 infants died of measles in the Arab village of Kisra in Galilee.

Arab standards only approach those of the Jews in the prison services. There are many more Arab prisoners than Jewish prisoners; this is particularly so with offenders against the Defence and Emergency Laws.

CONCLUSION

It has become clear that the policy of Israel towards the Arabs in Israel is nothing less than a policy of racial discrimination and repression. David Ben Gurion is one of the men who devised the nervous system of the State of Israel, basing it on a concept that has long been dear to him and which is dear to many of today's Israeli leaders—hatred of the Arabs and all things Arab.

On April 30, 1958, the newspaper, 'Haritz', published a report which revealed Ben Gurion's real attitude to the Arabs. "Ben Gurion," it stated, "refused the identity card issued to him because it was written in Arabic as well as Hebrew." Commenting on this report in the periodical, 'Haolam Hazeh', Uri Avneri wrote: "Ben Gurion has always been utterly reactionary in his opposition to anything Arab. The Prime Minister has never visited an Arab town or village since the establishment of the State. (In July 1959 he visited the Druse village of Julis in a helicopter.) When he visited the Jewish town of Upper Nazareth, he refused to visit Arab Nazareth, only a few hundred metres away from the Jewish town. In the first ten years after the establishment of the State, Ben Gurion did not receive a single delegation of Arab citizens, though under party pressure he did condescend to receive the Arab members of the Knesset, who were subservient to the Mapai; though this was his only meeting with Arabs, and during it he made them insincere promises."

When he visited Negev, he insisted on the immediate removal

of a signpost bearing the Arabic name, Ain Ghadban, saying that he found this Arabic name disagreeable.

It cannot be said that Ben Gurion bears the responsibility for Israel's anti-Arab policy alone; he has advisors, assistants and directors who are even more extremist in their views, which they hold to this day, and it is they who have been directing Israel's policy since Ben Gurion retired. But it was he who switched on the green light and no one has turned it off.

Further evidence of Israel's racial discrimination can be found in the Nationality Law passed in 1952. Jews are granted Israeli citizenship automatically, by virtue of the Return Law of 1950, but an Arab is considered to be an Israeli citizen only if (a) he was registered as a resident in Israel on 1 March 1952, (b) he was resident in Israel on 1 April 1952, and (c) he was from the date of the establishment of the State and until 1 April 1952 in Israel or in an area that was attached to Israel after the establishment of the State and until 1952 or had entered Israel legally during that period. On the basis of these provisions the Ministry of the Interior has refused to recognize the nationality of thousands of Arabs, who, on the eve of the establishment of Israel, happened to be in areas which were at that time outside its frontiers, but were later occupied by Israeli forces or annexed. In 1961 an inhabitant of the village of Ana attacked these provisions in the Supreme Court and received judgement in his favour. This was the first and only occasion in which Arabs prevailed over a repressive law that had been enacted to persecute them.

In the Knesset debate on the Citizenship Law of 1950, Moshe Shapira, then Minister of the Interior, referred to the important rights granted to the Arabs when "the State granted automatic Israeli citizenship to '63,000 foreigners' who were registered on November 30, 1948." These "foreigners" had been born in a country where they and their ancestors had lived for hundreds of years before the establishment of the State of Israel.

Beirut
May, 1969