

Israel's Arab Policy Shows Bitter Fruits

By AL FINDLEY

The results of the April 12 election in the city of Nazareth, Israel, have embarrassed the Israeli government and focused attention on government policy with respect to the Arab territory.

Nazareth is a city of 21,000 people and is almost 100 per cent Arab. The Arab population is divided religiously between Christians and Moslems. As can be expected from the importance Nazareth has in the Christian story, the various churches have concentrated many institutions in this area. The city itself has been under the rule of the Israeli military since the end of the fighting five years ago.

Many parties participated in the elections. Some were political arms of the religious bodies and others were bona-fide political groupings. The results of the elections showed the Communist Party to be the largest single party, capturing six out of the 15 municipal council seats and getting 38 per cent of the vote.

Why are the Stalinists so strong in this, the largest center of Israeli Arabs, in contrast to their weakness (4 per cent) among Israeli Jews? There are, of

course, many reasons, the least of which is the relatively greater dynamism and activism of the Stalinists compared with the other Arab parties. While the Stalinists got out the vote, the other Arab politicians campaigned in the churches and cafes.

A more important reason is that the Stalinists received a strong grip on Arab labor organizations when the Mapam [the Stalinoid party of Israel, distinct from the CP] turned over their control and administration to the Arab Stalinists. This factor has declined somewhat with the entry of the Brith Poale Eretz Israel and now the Histadruth into the field of organizing the Arab workers.

The main and overwhelming reason for the CP's strength lies in the fact that Arabs voted Communist as a protest against the Israeli government's treatment of them. As in many other countries, the CP has succeeded in becoming the most vocal fighter for minority rights, thereby attracting dupes for its own political aims which have nothing in common with minority interests. All commentators agree that it was this policy which garnered the votes for the CP.

What have been the reactions to the Stalinist victory in Nazareth? A writer in the New York Jewish Day of April

24 says: "Does this mean that the Arabs have suddenly become Communist? No. It only means that they do not shrink from making common cause with those opposed to Israel even if they be Communist." The lesson: "Help dispel American illusions that the Arabs may eventually become members of the democratic community." Conclusions for Israel: none!

EMBARRASSED

The Israeli governments main reaction is one of acute embarrassment. Is it embarrassment because the election has revealed that it has failed to arouse any feelings of loyalty in the hearts of some members of its minority? No. They are interested only in what effect the election will have in the world capitals and how it will affect the flow of arms to Israel as against the Arab states, etc. They fear that since Nazareth was the only city having elections at this time, and the press spotlighted Nazareth in connection with Easter, the results may bring adverse reactions from the diplomats.

Their only solace is the fact that in the past national elections, the Arab Stalinists received 42 per cent of the Nazarene vote as compared with 38 per cent now.

What the government ignores is that all the Arab parties have now included in their platforms opposition to the Israeli treatment of its Arabs. The Nazareth Arabs chose between lesser and greater opposition. The Arab youth, labor and a sizable proportion of other groups voted for the most extreme critics of the government.

Is there any appreciation of the fact
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—N. Y. Times, May 2.

Israel's Arab Policy — —

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that the well-being of Israel depends on its relations with the Arabs both internally and externally? The effect the Nazareth results will have on such basic considerations are heard only on holiday or ceremonial occasions.

For years Zionists used to say: "We have no quarrel with the Arab people and they have none with us; the Arab worker and peasant will gain from our efforts, and in fact are on our side; it is only the feudal effendis who are against us; some ordinary Arabs may have been misled by hostile propaganda but the bulk are either actively or passively on our side."

Now, after six years of Israel's existence, the truth can be seen in Nazareth. There are no effendis there. There is no free field for hostile propaganda. The country's Arabs have seen the might of Israeli arms. Why have the ordinary Arabs turned against the government? Why is it that "progressive" and "socialist" Israel has failed to win the loyalty of even a section of the Arab masses?

HITTING THE ARABS

The answer is quite simple. They have been alienated by the harsh policies of the government. They live under military rule; they need passports to go from town to town. In many cases they need passports to go from their homes to their fields. Passports to go to town to get work are given to only a handful and are very restrictive as to the area in which the employment seeker is allowed to move. One result is contribution to the widespread unemployment.

Until this year Arab land had been seized and confiscated without legal procedures. Now Arab land can be requisitioned legally. The Arab peasant cannot contest the seizure; the only legal right he has is to haggle about compensation. Arab land can be seized not only for military and public uses but also can be requisitioned to be given to Jewish settlers.

The government recently took Arab land and gave it to the Bar-Am, a Hashomer kibbutz. What a field day Sneh and the Stalinists had in their press!

While the citizenship of Israeli Jews, even of recent immigrants, is guaranteed, the citizenship of Arabs born and raised in the villages where they live can be easily challenged on a number of technicalities.

Arab villages are subject to arbitrary search and their inhabitants are subject to seizure and expulsion at the whim of military authorities. Even villages loyal to Israel during the fighting are not exempt.

HORRIBLE EXAMPLE

The village of Abu Gush is one horrible example. The police suspected that a few "infiltrators" were hiding there. In true Gestapo style, all the men of the village were lined up, and, since the military were not able to pick out the culprits, they simply expelled every tenth man across the border to Jordan. *Abu Gush fought for Israel in the war.*

The Israeli government makes no real attempt to win the loyalty of its Arab subjects. Arabs are not drafted or permitted to volunteer for the army, despite popular Arab agitation that they be taken into the army. There is not one single company of Arab soldiers in the Israeli army, not even for window-dressing purposes.

Given such an Arab policy, is it any wonder that the Arabs turn to anti-Israeli parties and feel that the bitterer the opposition the better?

The Nazareth elections have given some impetus to the official talk about modification of policy toward the Arabs. But more than a modification or liberalization is needed: a completely new emphasis and new policy is needed.

The prosperity, peace and security of Israel depends in the long run not so much on its relations to Washington or Moscow, but on its relationship to the Arabs both in Israel and in the neighboring Arab countries. This central fact cannot be over-emphasized. All policies must flow from it and must make this an important consideration.

If the rulers of the Arab states place difficulties in the path of the peaceful and fraternal relations of Arabs and Jews, should the self-styled "socialist" leaders of Israel do the same and pour oil on the fires? The present policy of Israel does exactly that, and heightens the conflagration. It gives real and useful tools into the hands of those who want no peace.

Such a policy is not only alien to socialist policy and disastrous from any moral point of view; it is also against the self-interest of both the Arabs and the Jews in general and of Israel in particular.

For a small country with exposed borders living in an Arab area, everything depends on its Arab policy. The prosperity of Israel depends on reducing its military budgets; and the re-establishment of normal area trade and trade routes depends on creating a popular feeling for peace. The Israelis cannot rely on Washington or London to force the Arabs to make peace. Peace will come not from outside diplomatic pressure but by popular feeling. For Israeli, taking the first step means decent treatment of its Arab minority.

To treat all Arab residents of Israel as an undifferentiated enemy mass is to ape (and justify) the Arab feudal rulers in their treatment of Jews, and it is subversive of the needs of Israel. There is absolutely no excuse for the present policy. It is wrong from a long-term view and has

brought no short-term results.

Let the "practical" people who justify the policy on the basis of "security" point to the security it has brought! It has meant not security but heightened insecurity from both within and without. Its results have been not loyalty from the Arab Israelis but the Nazareth election, which displays the Arabs' hostility to the world.

As for those who argue that the Arabs are "Orientals" who are impressed by might and will be loyal subjects and followers of the strong, let them show one place or area where the present "strong" Arab policy has brought loyalty or friendship—or even subservience!

What the present policy has accomplished is to tighten the tension, diminish security, heighten fear, increase hatred, and destroy whatever elements of friendship had existed before the creation of the state. The Israeli policy is more than wrong; it is downright stupid.

The ominous warning of the Nazareth election must be heard before it is too late for an effective change in policy.

Un-Americaneers —

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or sent home by employers during the hysteria aroused the last time the committee was here.

Clardy says he has subpoenaed 90 persons in Detroit, mainly among the professional groups. Prominent unionists called include William Johnson, recording secretary of Ford Local 600, who is backed by the Local Union, and the president of Cadillac Local 22.

Unlike the UAW members, the university and high school teachers called will have no protection from their organizations or institutions, if they invoke the Fifth Amendment. Wayne, Michigan, Michigan State and the Detroit Board of Education have made this clear.

Recently, quite a stir resulted on the U. of M. campus when a 19-year-old student testified she had been asked by the FBI and a university official to spy on a prominent Stalinist. The Stalinists told everyone, "Just come to me, I'll tell you what I think. Why turn a student into a stoolpigeon?"

Various persons in educational circles here have already announced in the daily press that they had been subpoenaed, and they expected to refuse to cooperate with the committee in any way whatsoever, standing on their constitutional rights. One woman teacher blasted the committee, declaring she never was a Communist, but also she refused to become a stoolpigeon and inform on others, or help break down the Constitution of the United States.

NEW CLIMATE

DETROIT, May 8—So far the hearings of the Un-American Committee, which is now invading this city, have shown that the witchhunt does not find good soil in an industrial center which has 140,000 unemployed and which is suffering from a serious case of depression jitters.

Especially when the labor movement takes a cold view of the shennanigans. And if school teachers had the kind of protection furnished by the UAW-CIO to its members this time, there would not even have been six suspensions of alleged and real Stalinists.

The Detroit hearings provided a deep contrast to the wave of hysteria which featured the hearings two years ago, in which many persons named were literally run out of shops.

Actually, the men in the shops remained far more preoccupied with the

rumors of cutbacks, layoffs, etc., than with the listing of what even Detroit's papers called "small-fry Communists." For the public at large, there was more fascination and repulsion in the McCarthy-army circus in Washington. And there was general concern over possible and not very popular involvement in the Indochina mess.

Furthermore one Detroit paper, the *Free Press*, carried an excellent article on the use of the Fifth Amendment, provided for it by a top Michigan lawyer. Its main point was that individuals should use the Fifth Amendment for otherwise they can be tricked into perjury or contempt with ease by a smart congressional questioner.

The feature story gave some good examples of this, and then made the point that the whole basis of Anglo-American jurisprudence was involved in the retention of the Fifth Amendment in the Constitution. This was a far cry from the usual "Fifth Amendment Communist" stories, and it must have bothered Mr. Clardy quite a bit.

The Detroit *News* carried a three-quarter page ad by 75 distinguished Michigan attorneys which blasted the abuse of Congress' investigating powers and their subversion by publicity-seeking committees. The essence of the ad was a speech by William T. Gossett, counsel of the Ford Motor Company, who has repeatedly criticized the congressional and senatorial committees and whose defense of the Fifth Amendment and the theory of innocence until proven guilty by court has been a noteworthy event at various legal gatherings in the Middle West.

LESSON FROM LABOR

Outside of the mock heroics by a young Stalinist who undoubtedly imagines himself another Thaelman defying Hitler's court, the hearings proceeded fairly quietly, and with such little impact that Clardy found it smarter politics to adjourn the session for Thursday and rush back to Washington to vote for the seaway bill. On Friday he couldn't get a quorum of his colleagues, and only a friendly witness, Mrs. Bernice Baldwin, testified, listing 200 names which no newspaper bothered to print.

This coming week, the Clardy committee is holding hearings in Lansing and Ann Arbor. Their main effect may be to demonstrate that this is an age of cowardice in university circles, alleged citadels of academic freedom and the free and unhampered pursuit of the truth.

It is reported that two University of Michigan teachers have been subpoenaed, as well as someone at Lansing, home of Michigan State University. At Wayne University, two young professors were suspended, and a grade school music teacher with an excellent record for 17 years was also suspended in Detroit.

It should be noted that when the UAW-CIO informed all Detroit employers that it would resist any penalties imposed on any of its members who used the Fifth Amendment to protect themselves, nothing happened in the shops.

Would it be expecting too much from the various university associations and professorial conclaves to have these self-proclaimed bulwarks of American democracy do at least as much as the "backward" and "ignorant" union movement has done, once it caught its breath?

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