

# Iraq Today

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May Day  
Celebrations





**A fountain in a Baghdad park**



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**EDITORIAL**

**When Human Rights were Violated**

**T**he encroachment upon the rights of the Arabs took subtle steps. It began with a promise declared by a certain British Minister in 1917, and went all the way through to the declaration of "Israel" as a state in the very heart of the Arab homeland.

Sometimes the steps were imperceptible and looked even harmless as when the British tried for the sake of appearances, to curb the extensive waves of emigration to Palestine. It was not quite consistent on their part to do so while promising a "homeland" for all Jewry of the world. They only wanted the new-comers not to be too cumbersome for their administration, in other words, they wanted emigration to be subtly done and stealthily carried out for subtlety was the essence of their covert handling of all matters. Nothing should be made openly if it could give better results for them in a surreptitious way. Palestine was under their mandate and protection. Guardians by the appointment of the League of Nations of which they were the main protagonists, they did not play even that self-styled role with honesty and sincerity. When they left the land, they did not give it back to its lawful owners as they were supposed to do, being the trustees. Before leaving, however, they extemporised the last act but one of the tragedy. They devised the partition plan. As usual with high-handed schemes to be given as a better evil, when they are rejected the worse evil immediately steps in. It was natural that no Arab with the minimum sense of patriotism could have accepted the partitioning of Palestine. But it was not natural, as hindsight thinkers would induce us to believe, that because we rejected that pernicious plan, we should be in for a worse treatment and a harsher punishment: the creation of the ever expanding "Israel".

It is true that the Arabs were not strong enough nor sufficiently unified in their will to make their rejection of partition a rejection of every other danger that it was bound to bring in its train. Strength, however, is relative and depends on a variety of factors not the least of them is that of time. Those who think that time is on the side of fait accompli, i.e. the existence of a foreign entity in the Arab body, are overlooking the inner strength of that body to be rid of that cancerous growth. With more determined leaderships the Arabs can easily reveal their potential strength.

There is a loud talk these days about human rights. It is high time some consideration is given to the human rights of the Arabs in Palestine, for they are human too, or perhaps humanity is confined to everything that smacks of Zionism and Zionist activity? The human rights of the Arabs were disregarded when the Balfour Declaration was given. They were trampled underfoot when the Arabs were ostensibly protected by Britain. They were not thought worthy of consideration when partition was being worked out. Do we have to mention the utter neglect of the human rights of the Arabs with the creation of "Israel" and its recognition by nations supposedly anxious to prevent the violation of the rights of man?

It is axiomatic that no nation can defend its rights by proxy, but once it tries its mettle, it will not be wanting in the support it only marginally needs, having relied mainly, if not exclusively, on itself.

# Iraq, Venezuela Reaffirm Determination to Strengthen OPEC



President Bakr and Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez

Iraq and Venezuela, two founding members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), have reaffirmed their determination to further strengthen the organization.

The two sides also expressed their conviction that this required a further measure of unity and cooperation among the organization's member-countries, taking into account the role that could be played by the organization in

creating a new international economic order.

Both sides expressed their support for any effort conducive to making the Indian Ocean and its natural extensions a zone of peace and security. They upheld the role of the Non-aligned movement and its contribution to world peace and relaxation of international tensions.

In a joint communique issued on May 3 at the conclusion of a four-day state visit to Iraq by

the developing countries, and at the decision adopted by the OPEC Ministerial Committee on its financial and monetary affairs at its recent meeting in Vienna.

The two sides expressed genuine desire to promote bilateral relations on the basis of mutual respect and reciprocal benefit.

Both Iraq and Venezuela expressed views on international issues of common interest. They underlined adherence to the principles and objectives of the U.N. Charter.

The two sides also renewed the desire of their respective countries for cooperation with other raw-material exporting

countries in their endeavour to achieve fair and beneficial prices for their exports. In this respect, the two sides reaffirmed preparedness to contributing to the creation of OPEC-like organizations by the raw material producers.

The two sides underlined the need for effective policies to prevent hydro-carbonic resources. In this regard, they considered it appropriate for OPEC to initiate a study of the natural gas problem with a view to formulating policy lines consonant with the principle of preserving gas as well as with the states and international bodies and working out a policy for pricing gas export.

## PRESIDENT BAKR'S MESSAGE TO PEACE BUILDERS' CONFERENCE Conspiracy against Arab homeland exposed

President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, in a special message, greeted the international Conference of Peace Builders which convened in Warsaw, Poland, on May 6, and wished the conference every success in its efforts for promoting the consolidation and solidarity among the forces of benevolence and progress and warding off the attempts of aggression and oppression against mankind.

In his message which was read out at the opening session of the conference, President Bakr said that the conspiracy carried out in Lebanon was the main link in the chain of reactionary-Zionist-imperialist plotting against our Arab nation with a view to perpetuating aggression and foreign occupation of Arab homeland and continuing plunder of our natural resources.

Following is the full text of President Bakr's message:

On behalf of the people and government of the Republic of Iraq and in my name, I deem it a pleasure to greet you and wish you all success in your noble efforts to serve the righteous objectives of the world peace movement.

Your conference convenes in historical circumstances that are both critical and grave. The forces of imperialism, Zionism, racism and reaction have been compelled to retreat in many countries of the world under the successful blows of the national liberation movements of Asia, Africa and Latin America. They have also come under pressure

from European public opinion that equally nurtures ambitions for establishing order and stability. Further, those forces are confronted with a rising crescendo of the strident voices of free men around the world condemning war mongers, adventurists and monopolists.

These evil forces are today trying to tilt the scales in their favour and rob progressive humanity of the important gains achieved along the road of consolidating peace, progress, democracy and social justice.

Our Arab region is now witnessing the intensification of the Zionist onslaught with the latter receiving political, military and economic support from the United States of America and its reactionary and counterrevolutionary allies. In Lebanon, the conspiracy that has been underway for two years remains without any equitable solution that safeguards to the Palestine revolution the right of struggle for recovering the occupied homeland and that protects the democratic accomplishments of the patriotic and progressive movement of the Lebanese people. This conspiracy is but one of the main links in the chain of the American-Zionist-reactionary plot against our Arab nation. This plot aims at perpetuating foreign occupation of Arab land, continued pillage of our natural resources and the staging of a come-back of imperialistic influence, whose major footholds have been liquidated in the region — particularly in Iraq since the nationalisation of oil on June 1, 1972.

The Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez and his talks with President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, the two sides also agreed on the necessity of exchanging visits of delegations between their respective countries for "defining the possibilities of cooperation in cultural, technical, economic and other fields".

Iraq and Venezuela also expressed satisfaction at the important contribution being made by the special fund of OPEC to the development of economies of

The settlement formulas currently dished up for the so-called Middle East crisis stand no chance of success as long as they ignore the right of the people of Palestine to return to its land, exercise self-determination there, liberate all occupied Arab territories and liquidate the hot-bed of aggression that is jeopardising not only the security of our region but also world peace. Militant fighters for peace, progress and decent life around the world are called upon to heighten their solidarity with the Arab revolutionary movement which is fighting for liberation, for equitable peace in our region and for the creation of a united democratic socialist society.

The deteriorating conditions in the Arab region are closely connected with the invasion by which independent African states are exposed at the hands of foreign mercenaries. These mercenaries are trained and equipped by foreign intelligence services expressly for undermining the gains of the African people and placing Africans once more in fetters. Quite apart from the presence of odious racist regimes in Rhodesia, Namibia and South Africa the national liberation movement in the African continent is made the target of an imperialist scheme implemented by an alliance of reactionary regimes. These regimes are making a desperate attempt to stem the tide of the massive African advance towards political and economic independence and the building of a new free life.

While condemning the imperialist intrusion into the affairs of the upsurging African continent, we should caution against all forms of imperialistic plotting carried out behind diverse fronts and under excuses that stand to be rejected.

As a Non-aligned country, Iraq relentlessly battles against imperialist aggression and maintains firm struggle against all forms of racial discrimination, monopoly exploitation of natural resources and the human dignity of peoples. Further, under the leadership of the Arab Baath Socialist Party

and the forces operating under the banner of the Patriotic Progressive National Front, our country is striving for substituting cooperation, equality, and justice for all patterns of exploitative concessions, monopolistic thieving and the practices of the multinational corporations. The ultimate purpose is the creation of a new international economic order yielding common benefits to peoples of all continents.

The teeming millions of the world who have been elated with the successful efforts of restraining the nuclear monster and pulling off its deadlyfangs, are viewing with mounting concern the efforts of neo-fascism to torpedo peaceful co-existence, strain the international situation and deadlock the talks underway for ending the arms race and banning nuclear and other mass extermination weapons. The latter amounts to a universal demand to which humanity tenaciously holds in defence of its security and its right to live a happy life free from persecution, oppression and fear.

Those who are beating their breasts over what they call human rights, have themselves, more than any one else, abused human rights and man's dignity. They have meantly trampled underfoot the aspirations and legitimate ambitions of peoples and have been, and still are, perpetrating the most outrageous crimes everywhere in the world and in the Third World in particular. Human rights cannot conceivably be safeguarded by the world capitalist system that is grounded on aggression, exploitation and discrimination; they can only flourish in the climate of freedom, socialism, peace, right and equality which is what we want for our contemporary world.

In conclusion, I should like to wish the Warsaw Conference all success in galvanising efforts, cementing solidarity between the forces of peace and progress and dentering the forces of darkness, aggression and coercion.

The first of May has come to be regarded in contemporary history as the symbol of struggle and unity of the working class throughout the world. It is historically linked with the struggle against capitalism; against the latter's exploitation and oppression which led to the emergence of workers organisations defending their rights for dignified living conditions. Consequently, workers all over the world have been the spearhead of social, economic and political change in many countries. In the Arab region, the working class had its share in this respect, in effecting a socialist trend in our society towards building a better life for the people.

Mr. Michel Aflaq, Secretary General of the Arab Baath Socialist Party (ABSP), defined the position of the working class in the Arab revolutionary movement and the attitude of the Party to this militant class when he wrote: "We cannot be socialists and lay claim to socialism, while keeping the role of the working class limited and controlled, and viewing it as though it were not organically linked with us. We are part of the working class. Real socialists regard themselves as part of the working class. Socialist rule is the one which is led by the working class, viewing its potentials in the future rather than its shortcomings at the present; viewing what it can give and create in the life of the nation and in the battle of destiny".

With this clear-cut scientific outlook, the ABSP, since its inception, has linked national struggle with that of the working class after succeeding in revealing the essence of the conflicts and contradictions in Arab existing society more than quarter of a century ago, and defined the role of its vanguards, the working class.

The Arab revolutionary ideology has stressed the leading



## MAY DAY

character of the workers' role and defined the nature and historical phases of their advance forward. The Arab working class has always embodied, in practice, the will of the Arab nation for decisive struggle for overcoming all the contradictions involved in the Arab social reality throughout the phases of the development of the struggle. The bitter fight against imperialism, racism, Zionism, exploitation and backwardness reports the continuity of this struggle.

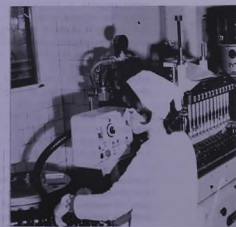
In his book "On Arab Revolutionary Policy Before and After the Setback", Dr. Elias Farah, member of the ABSP's National Leadership, says: "The role of the Arab working class in the contemporary Arab revolution is that of persistent expression of the nation's interests in their negative and positive aspects; and the role of persistent preparedness for leading the revolution in the phase of full accomplishment when all the revolution's contingents and forces get exhausted and the greatest burden is shouldered by the working class".

Dr. Farah adds: "While the working class, by virtue of its objective conditions, is the pioneering revolutionary class, its role in the contemporary Arab revolution is a principal one because the Arab revolution is an embodiment of the unity of the classes, groups and individuals working together to achieve the aims of this land".

Mr. Aflaq emphasises that Arab unity can be built only by toilers; and socialism can be achieved only under the leadership of the working class. Arab unity can be



achieved only by a revolution through transformation of the existing reality. "Arab unity can



be achieved only if it is a combatant unity; only if the people in their overwhelming majority are armed and defend unity by force of arms".

Proceeding from this principled ideology, one can conclude that the working class is the fundamental revolutionary instrument for achieving the aim of liberation; and is also the major builder of unity. Armed struggle cannot attain its full revolutionary character unless its grass-roots and leadership belonged to the working class.

Furthermore, the ABSP maintains that the working class is

the mainstay of the humanitarian character of the nationalist, liberationist, socialist revolution, and the organic link between the Arab revolution and the national liberation and socialist revolution throughout the world, because the toiling class, as pointed out by Mr. Aflaq, is humanitarian in its nature, instinct and daily practice; and is dedicated to humanism and fraternity among peoples".

Hence, by virtue of its ideology, nature of struggle and composition, the ABSP is bound to be the party of the working class leading the Arab revolution.

The ABSP history is replete with stances interlinking the concepts of freeing the working class from exploitation and introducing socialism. In 1951, the socialist thought of the Party ushered in the stage of discussing the formulas for providing the workers and peasants with better conditions for struggle and also the effective means for compelling the then ruling groups in some Arab countries to yield to the demands and pressures of the working class. Through a series of relentless battles the Party was able to win for the working class in Syria an amendment of the labour laws. In Iraq, during the strike of the workers of a private cigarette company in 1956, and that of oil workers in Basrah, the Party stood by the workers and supported their demands.

The struggle of the Arab working class is dialectically connected with national struggle. This connection was defined by the ABSP on the occasion of the first of May, 1958, as under:

"The workers' problem today is the problem of the Arab people throughout the homeland. It is the political problem arising as a result of imperialists' interference and their continued efforts for maintaining their domination, influence, interests and ambitions, as represented in the reactionary

political oppression practised by ruling groups through confiscation of public liberties, crippling party, trade union and social organisations, and restricting freedom of thought and publication. It is the economic as well as the social problem. In face of the fact that the workers' question is an integral part of the general national question, we assert that the present struggle of the workers for the improvement of working conditions, raising their living standard, achieving social justice and a better life for them, all this is closely linked with the Arab people's struggle for the liberation of the Arab nation".

Under the socialist revolution of July 17, 1968, led by the ABSP, Iraqi workers have been able to achieve many gains. During the past eight years a number of labour legislations and significant achievements have been accomplished. Labour Law No. 151 of 1970 and its three subsequent amendments. Pension and social security for workers Law No. 39 of 1971; Decision No. 786 of 1973 and 95 of 1974 raising the minimum wage and living cost allowances for workers and employees; Decision No. 125 of 1974 on appointment of workers, and others have ensured the workers of full protection of their rights and of a decent life.

Through such legislations, the government has fulfilled its unreserved commitment to the labour movement. The government has also granted the labour class freedom of forming trade union organisations in a manner enabling them to shoulder their responsibility in society building; developing their talents and creative initiatives; running, controlling and implementing economic projects and plans; and carrying out their vanguard role in elaborating and promoting the State's policy as well as effectively participating in Arab and world liberation movements.

K. B.

## USURPATION OF PALESTINE

# Behind the smokescreen of deceptive diplomacy

by M. Sadeq Ali

Ever since the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, the Zionist settlers had been preparing themselves to colonise Palestine and set up there a racist and aggressive political entity. The anglo-US imperialists saw in it a bridgehead to control Asian and African wealth and manpower. A two-tier modus operandi for accomplishing this task was drawn up: first, to change the population pattern of Palestine, and secondly, to prepare the Zionists militarily to take on the Arabs.

A declaration of intent, made by a British Foreign Minister in his private letter to a Zionist banker (Rothschild) was conveniently incorporated by the victorious Powers in the peace treaty of Sevres with the vanquished Ottoman in 1920. The strategic position of Palestine further encouraged Britain to endorse the five-year-old assurance of her Foreign Minister made to the Zionist tycoon when she got the mandate of Palestine on July 14, 1923. And this was done in utter contravention of the express provisions of Sir Henry McMahon's commitment to the Sherif of Mecca, made by the British High Commissioner in Cairo in 1915.

McMahon categorically promised to Sherif Hussein the incorporation of Palestine into the independent Arab homeland comprising the Arabian peninsula, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, with the Mediterranean as the western frontier. Later, however, in order to cover up the deception hatched through the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916, the British government tried to take shelter behind an exemption clause, supposedly included in McMahon's correspondence to the Sherif. The exemption clause, the British claimed, related to the exclusion of "certain districts lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo.". Even then Palestine did not fall under this exemption clause, because, it was not situated west of the Damascus-Aleppo line.

And, therefore, in 1917 the British authorities thought it fit to give away Palestine to the Zionists at the expense of the sons of the soil. Neither the

givers nor the receivers were Palestinians. Still, the deal got the sanction of the victorious Powers!

The conspiracy to change the population pattern of Palestine started right after the endorsement of the Balfour Declaration by the major Allied Powers when the Zionists from Europa started emigrating into Palestine. In 1929, the Palestinian Arabs protested this calculated colonisation of their homeland by racist aliens who were systematically driving them out of land, trade, commerce and other fields of economic activities. In 1930, the British government sent to Palestine a commission which recommended suspension of immigration for the time being.

Despite this recommendation of Lord Passfield and Sir John Hope-Simpson, the number of immigrants jumped to 61,854 in 1934. This figure, however, did not include those who entered the country illegally. The Zionist capital investment also mounted and the Arabs were thrown out of all profitable undertakings. The mandate authorities had earlier fixed a quota of annual immigration; but this limitation did not apply to richer sections of immigrants, because, money could buy anything and the Zionists were never hindered by shortage of funds. As a result in 1936, the Arabs in Palestine again rose in revolt only to be suppressed by the brute force of the mandatory power and the Zionist terrorist gangs.

In 1937, the British Government sent Peel Commission to Palestine. The commission in its report recommended partition of the country. The British Parliament, however, in the face of Arab resistance against partition, revised its policy and on May 17, 1939, issued a White Paper on the issue. The White Paper which was approved by the Parliament, emphasised that Palestine was not to become a Jewish state, but an independent state of all the Palestinians. Such a state was to come into being after ten years. Immigration for the next five years was fixed at 75,000 and it was indicated that the Jewish population should be kept at about one-third of the Arab population.

The Zionists violently opposed the formula put forward in the White Paper. Incidentally, this was the first British policy statement on Palestine which

was approved by the Parliament. Other documents, including the Balfour Declaration, did not enjoy the sanction of the representative institution of the British people. But, whatever might be the status of the White Paper, the guardians of imperialist interests sitting at the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, by a vote of 4 against 3 rejected the formula on the ground that it contradicted the mandate.

During the Second World War, illegal Jewish immigration into Palestine went on at an unprecedented scale. The imperialist-Zionist plot of changing the population pattern of Palestine against the Arabs received fresh momentum. Side by side, the British Mandatory Power raised a Jewish brigade and sent them to the European battlefield. The brigade therefore, received the European level of training and attained high degree of fighting efficiency. In Palestine itself they imparted guerrilla training to Zionist activists. With the trained and armed elements, the Zionists raised their Hagana army. Huge quantities of arms and ammunition were smuggled into Palestine or obtained from the British army depots to fill the underground arsenal of the Zionists. The Hagana operated as a regular army of the Zionists under the protection and patronage of the Mandatory authorities, while the Stern Gang, the Irqun Zwei Leumi or national military organisation and other terrorist groups were engaged in clandestine operations against the Arabs. The military power of the Zionists was thus raised to such a level as to enable them to score a decisive victory against the Arabs in the event of termination of the mandate.

Being strengthened both numerically and militarily the Zionists, in May, 1942, at a conference held in the Baltimore Hotel, New York, demanded a Zionist state. The Baltimore Programme was accepted by the Zionist General Council Committee at its meeting held in Jerusalem in November, 1942. Simultaneously, the Zionists drew up plans for mass eviction of Arabs from Palestine and for the establishment of a Zionist empire which was to engulf, besides Palestine, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and even Cyprus. A direct evidence of the existence of such plans were recorded by Geoffrey Morton in his book "Just the Job".

The plans for mass eviction of Arabs were carried out by the Zionists through organised terrorism and extermination campaigns which climaxed in the massacre at Deir Yassin on April 9, 1948. As the Arabs were forced to flee their hearth and home, the evacuated territories were being handed over to the Zionist local bodies by the British man-

datory administration. The attempted political solution through the British Morrison Plan for a federated Palestine or the United Nations Partition Plan of 1947 were only diplomatic exercises in futility; these were designed only to be rejected by both the Zionists and the Arabs. The imperialists wanted a military solution and they adequately prepared the Zionists for the same.

At the conclusion of World War II, a large number of Zionist soldiers belonging to the Allied armies enlisted themselves with the Hagana or some terrorist groups. They enhanced the Zionist military might both qualitatively and quantitatively.

On the military side, the strength of the Hagana, in 1946, was as follows:

- a. A static force of settlers and townsfolk 40,000
- b. A field army for mobile operation 16,000
- c. A permanently mobilised full-time force 6,000

The strength of each of the three sectors of the army increased further as the demobilised Zionists from the Allied armies, particularly of Europe and America, came over to Palestine to join the Hagana.

Under these conditions the British government decided to withdraw on May 15, 1948. Before that date arrived, the Zionist military power which was by that time, sufficiently strengthened by the Anglo-US imperialists and international Zionism, launched a full-scale war on the Arab population, while the U.N. marked time. Genocide, mass murder and crime against humanity were perpetrated against the Arabs. The well-thought out plan of total eviction of the Arab population was achieved by May 14, 1948, when the usurpation of Arab Palestine was proclaimed by the Zionists.

Not that the world was suddenly presented with fat accompi; the world witnessed the execution, over a period of 31 years (1917-1948), of a deeply laid conspiracy, hatched by the imperialists and implemented through their strong arm — the Zionists.

Since the Third Arab-Israeli War... 1967, the number of Palestinian Arab exiles, including children born and brought up in exile, had risen to about one million and a half...

Prof. A. Toynebe "Experiences"

By Mohieddin Ismail

It seems that the first systematic contacts between the British Government and the Zionist movement started in 1839, when Lord Palmerston, who was one of the architects of British imperialist policy, engaged himself in "inviting" the Jews to Palestine. At that time Lord Palmerston gave his advice that the Jews should be encouraged to settle in Palestine under the protection of Britain. In 1902 Joseph Chamberlain repudiated the grounds of the scheme of Palmerston, and proposed that the Jewish question must be solved sympathetically and practically, since the British Government could do nothing for the Jews in Palestine, which was then under the Ottoman Sultanate, so he proposed a tract of land, on the threshold of Palestine: "Sinai" or an "Egyptian Palestine" according to the British Government.

## Justice vs. Self-interest

During the years of World War I, the Zionist movement wheedled its way to be under the patronage of Germany and to utilise for its purpose, its camarilla in the French Government. In such an immoral behaviour the Zionist movement was true to its own nature. In effect, by this servile hypocrisy,



Eviction of Palestinians is going unabated

the Zionist lost the influence of their "pressure groups" in both Berlin and Paris. They would not initiate any proposal to these two capitals, any more. Berlin was convinced that the Zionists were working for Germany, while Paris accused them of working for its enemies. But Sir Edward Grey, the last man among the British politicians at that time, who was to accept Asquith's attitude who showed no interest in Zionism at all.

Under the pretext of securing immunity from persecution for the Jews, the Zionist groups of pressure started their campaigns to persuade the

British Government that their only hopeful solution of the Jewish question is to recognise Palestine as the "Jewish National Home", with liberty of immigration to Jews of all countries, who are to enjoy full national political civic rights, a Charter to be granted to the "Jewish Company"; local government to be accorded to the Jewish population; and the Hebrew language to be officially recognised.

Immediately after the issue of Balfour Declaration, the Zionists launched a wide agitation campaign in the United States. The Zionists with an aggressive bellicose state of mind were planning to exercise troubles and terrorism, but they were afraid of suppression, and suppression will not be settlement, nor does any settlement seem possible within the confines of Palestine itself, because of the meagre number of the Zionists at that time.

● The Zionists succeeded in persuading the British Government to issue the ill-famed Balfour Declaration.

● They succeeded in persuading Lloyd George to present the Balfour Declaration as a "scientific

price" for Weizman who invented some lethal destructive explosives.

● They succeeded to persuade the British statesmen that it was easier to act "successfully" than to act "correctly".

● They succeeded to persuade the European architects of diplomacy that moral conduct may be a prerequisite to religion but not to a successful political life...

When the Zionists began to intensify interest, the White House was ready to accept, passively without argument, the Zionist claims.

The first steps taken by the Public Relations Department of the Zionist Organisation were the contacts with the American press. The department subsidised many Zionist inspired books, publications and releases and organised mass meetings and protest rallies to create pressure on Washington. High priority was given to win Congressional support for the Zionist Organisation in the United States and the Zionist aims.

When President Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945, the Zionist Organisation of America started intensive contacts with the Congressmen. President Truman began, on his part, establishing contacts with the ruling cliques of some Arab countries, hoping to inherit the imperialist British interests in the Middle East. During the tenure of office of Truman the American administration resorted to a variety of methods to weaken the newly emergent liberation movement in the Middle East and Africa. In the first post-war decade, it was evident that the American policy was aiming at setting up aggressive military blocs in the area.

The strategic value of the Middle East account for the intensification of the American imperialist activities in the area. Besides this reason, there is another one for the U.S. special interest in the area. It is the prospected natural resources of the Middle East. So the U.S. policy-makers referred to the policy of the Roosevelt administration on Palestine and promised to do everything to carry it out. Realising that the U.S. administration gave its voice to the Zionist cause, Ben Gurion declared in New York that the Zionists would resist even the British White Paper. The American Zionist demanded a liberalisation of the policy affecting immigration into Palestine. All the Zionist organisations exercised every form of pressure in the White House to bring their cause to a new stage. At that juncture, Truman stated "I do not think I ever had as much pressure and propaganda aimed at the White House as I had in this instance. The persistence of a few of the extreme leaders actuated by political motives and engaging in political threats, disturbed and annoyed me". It seemed that the Zionist organisations had been in full control of the American affairs. Truman stated again: "I am sorry, 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".

So Truman administration put the weight of its influence to secure free Zionist immigration to Palestine and to obtain votes for the partition resolution in the U.N. General Assembly.

During these three bitter decades since the partition, international developments convincingly show that justice could be ignored but it could not be delayed...

Last and not least justice is integrally related to virtue. If one has virtue he shall have a sense of justice...

## "Israel's" Illegal Occupation

The well-known British journalist, Mr. Mick Ashley, forwarded the following letter to the International Herald Tribune. It was published on 8 April, 1977. We reproduce the letter in part as it concerns the Palestinian cause.

ISRAEL is in illegal occupation of the whole of Palestine. It continues to deny the Palestinian exiles their lawful right of return and defies international law by building illegal settlements in the 1967-occupied areas. Yet it is the Palestinians who are being asked to be more "moderate" in the interest of peace.

The current appeal to the so-called "moderate" Palestinians to modify the legitimate rights of their people is not dissimilar from the claim of the "moderates" in the Labour movement that a retreat from our basic socialist principles would broaden our appeal to the people and ensure our survival in power. The reverse has happened and the more principles we abandon, the more workers lose faith in our movement.

It is likely that exiled Palestinians and those under 'Israel' occupation increasingly will turn to the more militant of their leaders, because "moderation" has not returned a Palestinian exile to his homeland or forced 'Israel' to return Arab land. In fact it becomes more clear with each passing day as 'Israel' builds more settlements that history is repeating itself and we are witnessing a creeping annexation, with the ultimate fait accompli. Surely it should not be difficult for any socialist to see that the current Western pressures on the Palestinians are more concerned with Western self-interest than a just settlement of this issue. A "moderate" peace without justice will lead to more war.

Brighton

Mick Ashley

Arab demonstration against Zionist occupation





## Non-Aligned Nations' Telecommunications Experts Meet in Baghdad

**E**xperts from 12 Non-aligned countries met in Baghdad on May 2-6 to discuss the prospects of efficient application of telecommunications and proper use of contacts via satellites for the flow of news despatches among the Non-aligned nations.

Mr. Taha Yassin Hassan, Ministry of Information Undersecretary, told the gathering, held in implementation of a resolution passed by the 1976 Colombo Non-aligned Summit Conference, that Iraq was fully prepared to provide whatever facilities necessary towards information coordination among the Non-aligned states with view to promoting their informative and technologi-

cal strength in a manner agreeing with their political and strategic importance. He expressed confidence that these meetings "will come up with fruitful, positive results leading to enhancing the communications media within the community".

"There is every reason to indicate that our present meetings are capable of developing means of closer contacts among the Non-aligned nations and of threshing out all difficulties", he said.

During the meeting the experts discussed, inter alia, the gathering of information and data, the question of tariff on press telegrams within the framework of bilateral or multi-lateral co-opera-

tion among the group of the Non-aligned nations and proposals on ways and means to achieve optimum utilization of the existing means of contacts including communications via satellites to ensure speedy flow of news despatches.

The Iraqi delegation to the meeting submitted a report on tele-communications system in Iraq and with foreign countries.

The meeting adopted several recommendations aiming at bolstering the mass media of Non-aligned countries. These recommendations will be submitted to the community's Coordination Council prior to the next summit conference to be held in Havana, Cuba, in 1979.

## 77: Year of Total Victory

### Eritrean Revolution in Decisive Stage

**T**he shrewdness of attacks launched by the Eritrean revolutionary forces against the positions of the Ethiopian forces of occupation has of late been intensified. More than 85% of the total Eritrean territory have now fallen in the hands of the revolutionary forces, and their battalions are amassing around the main cities including the capital, Asmara, which the Ethiopian regime has already transformed into a garrison city.

Several important declarations have recently been made by a number of leaders of the Eritrean revolution. According to them the year 1977 will be the decisive year when they will succeed to liberate the remaining 15% of Eritrea representing the principal cities.

On the other end of the armed and political conflict, it is to be noted that several supertransport airplanes carrying American arms and equipment from bases in the Indian Ocean have arrived in Ethiopia. These airplanes soared, on their way to Addis Ababa, above a number of African states which protested such acts. Simultaneously American M60 tanks are still being poured into the battlefield in an attempt to check the widespread operations of the revolutionaries.

Thus the Eritrean revolution seems to stand at the threshold of final victory following 16 years of bitter struggle. Eritrea is an ex-

remely important area in Arab and international strategy. It is the southern inlet to the Red Sea where the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait lies with tens of Zionist fortifications interspersed here and there on the Eritrean islands nearby, and in the two main ports, "Assab" and "Musawwa" as well as the four American bases of which "Kanio" in Asmara, is the most important and acts as a site of one of the main American centres of telecommunications and spying activities in the area.

On the other hand matters will not be so easy in Addis Ababa, should the Eritrean revolution be able to conclusively decide the situation in its favour this year. This means that Lieutenant Colonel Mengistu Haile-Mariam will be facing increasing problems this year following the increase in political crises within Ethiopia itself, especially as American aid and loans have failed to modify the picture of the intensely miserable economic system in the Ethiopian rural as well as urban areas.

The question of note is that the victory of the Eritrean revolution would lead to the introduction of great and maybe total changes in many countries adjacent to or overlooking the Indian Ocean, where the emergence of a revolutionary order in Asmara would certainly lead to blur the picture of the military develop-

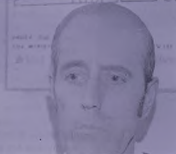
ment undertaken by Washington in the ocean and its main entrances particularly the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf. That is why it does not seem strange for Washington to undertake now, an airlift of reinforcements between its bases scattered along the Indian Ocean, the African continent and Addis Ababa.

The balance of power; however, is not necessarily governed according to the decisions of the enemy and his allies. The Eritrean allies offering great help in many fields. Standing out among these is Iraq, which has played a great role in unifying the splinter groups of the Eritrean revolution, a fact which led to the strengthening of its revolutionary campaigns. Likewise, Iraq continues to extend support to the Eritrean revolution so as to help it face up to the Ethiopo-American alliance. More than one source in the Eritrean revolution has declared that the help that the revolutionary government of Iraq is giving, would certainly enable the revolutionaries of Eritrea to carry their struggle forward with full confidence.

Mengistu Haile-Mariam and his colleagues in the ruling Ethiopian junta are trying hopelessly to stop the rolling wheels of the Eritrean revolution. That is why Mengistu is striving now to prepare for a large-scale offensive like the one he had launched in 1975 leading to several hundred killed among his officers and soldiers. His new offensive will be his last onslaught against the revolutionaries of Eritrea.

The world this year will witness the decisive victory of the Eritreans for which not only the leaders of the revolution, but also all political observers, are awaiting.

M. Salama



## A Britisher's Call to West

### Try to understand Arab position in your own interest

What does an average Britisher say about the sinister Balfour Declaration and what does he say about the consequences of that declaration? Why does a common Westerner call upon the nations of the West to review their policies vis-a-vis the Arab people and to open a new chapter of sincere friendship and understanding with the Arab World? Why were the archaeological valuables of Iraq removed from their original places and placed in the Western museums? Why should they not be returned now?

These and other questions were answered by Mr. C.V. Anthony Adams in a special interview with IRAQ TODAY's Abdul Razzak Fahmi.

Mr. Adams is a curator of Natural Sciences Royal Albert Memorial Museum, England. He visited Iraq last March after a lapse of over 35 years.

**Q:** What did you do before leaving Iraq in 1942?

**A:** I was working on the problems of malaria control in Iraq, Egypt, and the Arabian Gulf areas.

**Q:** Will you brief us about the conditions of the Arab homeland at that time?

**A:** At that time the Arab people were almost completely dominated and suppressed by the Western political and commercial interests, and although the Arabs lived in their own homeland, they were treated as less than second class citizens. The countries were exploited by Western monopolies and advantage was taken of cheap Arab labour which was available at the time. The position of the average Arab was such that he either had to work long hours for a very small income or starve.

**Q:** Do you notice a tangible change?

**A:** Yes I do. The Arab people have been able to throw off the chains of their former life. They have freed themselves of foreign domination and have been able to exercise their independence. They have made tremendous progress in industry, agriculture, construction, education and medical care.

The city of Baghdad, for instance, has undergone tremendous transformations so much so that it is now virtually impossible to recognize many of its old areas as a result of new planning and building programmes.

Especially it is gratifying to know that the Iraqi government of the ABSP stands firmly against Zionism and racism which are the policies of the so-called 'Israel' — a land which belongs to the Palestinian Arab people.

**Q:** How do you view the UN decision determining Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination?

**A:** I welcome the decision of any organization, international or individual, which condemns Zionism and racism, but I think that even this has come many years too late.

When the so-called "State of Israel" was declared by the Zionists, the nations of the world at that very time should have refused to recognize it as a State and upheld the right of the Palestinian people to live in peace and freedom in their own homeland. History will both record and condemn the Balfour Declaration issued by the British government which gave the Zionists complete freedom of entry into Palestine. This was the most vicious document ever written by any nation of the world, and it was inevitable that it would result in untold hardship for the Palestinian people and their expulsion from their homeland the eventual confiscation of their land by the Zionists, who had made known their intention even before the issue of the Balfour Declaration.

The plight of the Palestinians living as they do as outcasts in appalling conditions within refugee camps is not generally known throughout the world and particularly in the West.

The position today therefore, is that to a large extent, the people in the West, due to the Zionist propaganda, know little or nothing of the hardships under which the Palestinians are forced to live.

Neither do the people of the West know of the extent and the methods of torture inflicted on the Palestinian Arabs by the Zionists.

The UN resolution condemning Zionism as racism is merely a confirmation of the view held by the Arab people over decades. Zionism is and always will be a growing cancer in the Middle East, and in the future, as in the past, the so-called "State of Israel" will create nothing but problems and difficulties throughout the region.

It is of vital importance that the nations of the world represented in the United Nations should do everything in their power to uphold the rights of the Palestinian people and condemn the unrestricted activities of the Zionists which at present go unchecked.

**Q:** As we know you are against Zionism and in favour of the rights of Arab people, do you represent a particular movement or a group, or this is only your personal conviction?

**A:** I represent no group or movement. My personal conviction has led me to differentiate between what is just and what is unjust. The time has long passed when the Western powers should have ceased lending financial and other support to so-called "Israel" and instead should have concentrated on establishing sincere bonds of friendship and understanding with the Arab people. It is a matter of fact that the West will inevitably have to depend upon the Arab people for such essential imports as oil and other raw materials for many years to come. Those who represent the West in the Arab world should learn something about Arab culture, tradition, history and their growing influence on the world. Only then will they be in a position to understand the Arab point of view and this will result in good terms between the two ends.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL VALUABLES

**Q:** You have visited many museums and historic places in Iraq; what would you say about the archaeological valuables which have been taken away from here by Western countries?

**A:** I was deeply shocked and concerned to find in the Iraqi museums a reproduction of Hamourabi obelisk, the original of which is in the Louvre in France. I already knew the "Eshtar Gate" that Baghdad has is also a reconstruction of the original being in Berlin Museum. I am strongly of the opinion that all the original archaeological objects which have been removed from Iraq by foreign excavators or powers, should be returned to their rightful place in Iraq and that the foreign countries should themselves keep only the reproductions and not the originals.

Nevertheless, the objects which I have seen were of the greatest interest to me and especially the skeleton from the cave of Shanidar discovered in recent years and thought, from analysis of the

earth immediately surrounding it which contains Pollen grains, to be the first burial of man in association with flowers. The land between the Tigris and Euphrates is indeed the birth place of great civilizations.

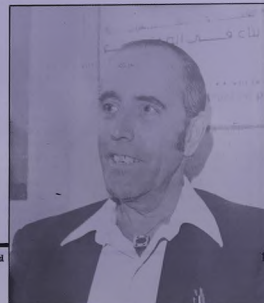
**Q:** What is your impression about modern Iraq?

**A:** It was gratifying to see that the traditional way of life blending with the modern life of Iraq. Away from the cities one can observe agricultural techniques which have undergone tremendous changes and which will continue to change as development in agriculture progresses. These changes and transformations are noticeable in every sphere in modern Iraq.

There can be no question that the Revolution which took place in Iraq on the 17th of July, 1968, led by the Arab Baath Socialist Party, has been like a long over-due blood transfusion to the country as a whole. The Revolution, I am sure, is but the beginning of the emergence of Iraq as a powerful country in the Middle East and this fact should be appreciated by the West.

**Q:** As a British citizen, do you think that the British mass media have given as much publicity about Arab world in general and Palestine in particular as it gives to Zionism and "Israel"?

**A:** No, the British public are constantly fed by the mass media the news about the so-called "Israel", and in particular on the development of Kibbutz and other Zionist activities. The news of the Arab world, on the other hand, is really given to the British people and little or no reference is made to the real plight of the Palestinian people. Because of this an average person in England is well informed on Israeli position on various issues, but he knows nothing of the Arab affairs. Consequently it is not surprising that many of the less-educated British people are sympathetic towards the cause of so-called "Israel", but have little or no support and understanding of the Arab people.



Mr. Anthony Adams: Western Mass Media biased



FOOTBALL



Ready for the day

## Iraq Youth Champions of Asia

It was a hero's welcome. The triumphant Iraqi Youth Football Team stepped down from the special jet which brought them from the Iranian capital only to be mobbed by thousands of cheering fans. Enthusiastic masses rushed to the Baghdad International Airport on a sunny day of 29th of April to greet the victorious young footballers who gallantly snatched the golden cup from the soccer teams participating in the 19th Asian Youth Football Tournament.

The Acting Minister of Youth Affairs and Minister of Information, Mr. Tareq Aziz, welcomed the Asian champions home.

The final 4-3 win over the Iranian Youth Team at Aayamrah Stadium, Teheran, before a sizeable 100,000 spectators, came at the closing minutes of the match. It

was a great performance by the Iraq youth soccer stars. The millions of TV viewers outside the stadium also enjoyed every second of the 90-minute tense encounter which was dominated by the visitors at the homeground of their rivals.

The match was full of life from kick-off to the final whistle. Short pass, correct anticipation, fast and coordinated movement to build waves of attacks and finally utilisation of each and every gap in the goal mouth were the main features of the Asian match. On many occasions the Asian Youth finalists even rose to the European standards.

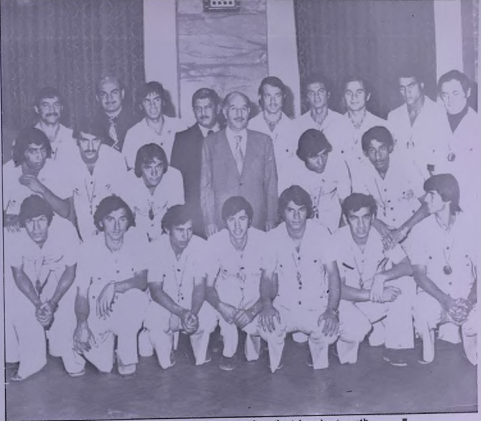
The Iraqis were the first to score a goal, but this did not upset our team. They mounted several coordinated attacks in search for an equaliser. Their extraordinary efforts were

crowned with success in the 29th minute when right wing Hussein Le'iby netted home the morale-booster (1-1). Spurred by this goal, the Iraqi team put all their weight in attack which paid dividend in the 37th minute (2-1).

At half-time the Iraqis were leading (2-1).

The Iraqis however came back to the play in the 15th minute after the breather when they converted a precious penalty (2-2). But the Iraqis who were really playing the champions' match, once again went into lead; centre forward Hussein Sa'eed stormed the Iranian net when the ball bounced after hitting the bar with the Iranian custodian completely beaten (3-2).

The Iraqis, who were the joint holders of the 17th Championship



President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr receives the triumphant youth

with Iraq, staged a comeback once again and the action-packed match seemed to end in 3-3 draw. But the superior Iraqis were determined to have it their way and deservingly so. Hussein Sa'eed headed home the all-

important trophy-winner when he got a lovely lob off a foul kick (4-3) taken by the Iraqi captain, Ayad Mohammad Ali.

### President Receives Champions

On their return to Baghdad, the

Asian Youth Football Champions got encouragement from President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr who received them in a special audience at the Presidential Palace on May 2. The members of the team also received special prizes.

The cup and the heroes.





## NEWS IN PICTURES

1. Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez (left) decorated President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr on April 30 with the Simon-Bolivar Medal, the highest Venezuelan Order, during the former's recent visit to Iraq.
2. Dr. Zaid Haider, member of the National Leadership and chief of its Foreign Affairs Bureau, led the ABSP delegation during its talks with the Finnish Parliamentary delegation held in Baghdad on May 5.
3. Venezuelan Minister of State for International Economic Affairs, Dr. Manuel Perez Guerrero (left), held talks with Mr. Adnan Hussein, Minister of Planning in Baghdad on May 2.
4. ABSP Regional Leadership Member and Chairman of the General Federation of Iraqi Trade Unions, Mr. Mohammed Ayesh (3rd from right) received a number of foreign delegations during the May Day Celebrations in Baghdad.



2



3



4



7 APRIL

20

Directed by: Muhammad Shukri Jameel  
Assistant Director: Ali el-Ubaidi, Janani Sabri  
Cameraman: Shakib Rasheed.

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary commemorating the founding of the Arab Baath Socialist Party (April 7, 1977), the General Organisation for Cinema and Theatre produced a short film (20 minutes) titled *Recollections of Struggle*. This film was shown in a number of cinema halls and clubs in Baghdad. Multitudes of citizens watched it with special interest.

The film deals with an important side of the reminiscences retained by the party's fighters, starting at the masses' struggle waged by the party against dictatorship and reaction in the royal-feudal epoch until the revolution of July 17, 1968, at which time the party objectives began to be translated into profound revolutionary achievements in all fields of social and economic development.

The camera of director Jameel turns to shoot the different aspects of struggle against the reactionary regimes, spearheaded by the senior and junior students as well as the factory workers. Synchronising with that are heard the beats of the Roneo mimeo-

## A NEW DOCUMENTARY FILM Recollections of Struggle

graph, which was used in preparing the party literature of various kinds. Then the spectators watched the students' strikes and sit-ins, as well as those of the workers. The camera depicts a vivid picture of the meetings held by the party fighters in the college campuses, in the cafes, remote gardens and even in the small boats gliding down the Tigris waters.



The director says that the film's every thought specifies that everything planned during the period of passive combativeness depended on objective diagnosis of the suffering of the Arab nation throughout its struggle in the aftermath of World War II; and on the need of that struggle for revolutionary eruption and the assumption of power in Iraq in 1968, to bring about political and economic liberation.

The sound of the Roneo, symbolising the voice of revolutionary awakening, recurs in the

scenes of the film at every clash with the reactionary police squads, implying exposure of reactionaries, agents and unjust treaties such as the Baghdad Pact.

The scenario took up the formula of perfect linking between the generation of the combatants who shared in the procession of the party and the new generation, now enjoying life under the revolution.

The new generation appears in the film touring the party museum, founded immediately after the rise of the revolution. The children are shown browsing inside the halls at the current printed materials of the party beside



the newspapers and other publications that the party used to publish. They also cast a look on the weapons, dumps, means of transportation and other equipment used by the combatants of the party throughout their long and tedious struggle.

The film, in fact, truly expresses the past memories of all the strugglers who shared, each one from his own position, in establishing the relations of the party with the masses, and bringing the progressive revolution to fruition later on.

## These are the "Civilized Zionists"!!

By Ruslan Anatolyev

# After the Merchant of Venice... Zionists Against Bach

the entire audience of 2,000 rose to their feet and gave him a 20-minute thunderous ovation.

In the intermission a Columbia Artists representative arrived with new tails, but the musician refused to change and reappeared in the second half paint-bespattered. And the American audience again applauded the mastery and self-control of the Soviet artist.

On the following day a reviewer on the New York Post wrote that these two incidents lent Spivakov's exemplary recital the aura of a heroic concert. The New York Times, publishing an apology by the Mayor of New York, stated that throwing paint at a fine performer of Bach's Chacona was tantamount to thrusting a knife into the Mona Lisa.

Very shortly, it became known that the provocation had been engineered by the notorious Jewish Defence League.

"The direct participants in the affair," was told, were Jewish theology students at Columbia University," said Spivakov. "Later I heard that prior to our concerts they had issued leaflets saying that performances by Soviet artists were a factor in lulling the anti-communist spirit in the United States."

By the following day the Soviet Embassy and Columbia Artists began to receive the first of many letters from Americans addressed to Spivakov with expressions of their indignation at what had happened.

John Cann, for instance, thanked the Soviet musician for his wonderful concert in Carnegie Hall, offered apologies for the actions of the insane individuals and said they did not represent either music lovers or real Americans in general.

Margaret Nice, a student, wrote that, she had attended Spivakov's brilliant recital and hoped that the actions of Zionist scandal mongers would not force the musician to cancel his scheduled concerts in New York.

Of course, Spivakov realises that it is not the Zionist hooligans who represent the American people. In discussing his plans he says: "In 1977 I expect to make several trips abroad, including one in a Mozart Festival — August 1. I will participate as a Mozart Festival — New York. I am deeply convinced that music has been and will always continue to be a medium of mutual understanding and friendship among peoples."

Courtesy "Sputnik"

Vladimir Spivakov, a winner of international competitions in Moscow and Paris, Genoa and Montreal, together with the pianist Boris Bektaterev, was invited by Columbia Artists to give several concerts in the United States. In the course of the month, Soviet musicians performed in Chicago, Miami Beach, New York and other cities. "In Miami Beach," said Spivakov, "we played in a hall seating 3,000. As always, there was a full house and the audience was plainly appreciative. In the second part of the concert, several men broke into the hall with the obvious intention of disrupting the recital. There was a lot of shouting, threats, noise. However, I did not interrupt my performance. The hooligans were ejected from the hall. After that incident, we hoped there would be no repetition. But we were mistaken..."

In New York, the famous Carnegie Hall was packed. Taught by bitter experience, the managers had exercised caution: There were 60 policemen in the hall.

Some 2,000 people were listening to a Shubert Sonata. Suddenly, a slovenly looking character ran up to the stage and hurled an object at the violinist and accompanist. A policeman barely managed to intercept the missile. The audience voiced their indignation. The hooligan was put out of the hall. The performance went on without a second's interruption.

The second item on the programme was Chacona, written for solo violin by Bach, a piece which demands colossal concentration from the musician. The wonderful music filled the hall closer to the end, when he had reached what musicians call the "golden section", he suddenly felt a violent blow.

"I did not see this skunk approach the stage", said Spivakov. "I only had a sensation of pain and heard the audience gasp with one breath. It became difficult to breathe and I felt as if the light had gone out; the paint from the burst plastic packet thrown by the provocateur made everything look black for a moment. The violin, the bow, my shirt, and tails were all splashed. For an instant I felt like quitting the stage. But then, I thought, that was precisely what the instigators wanted. So I collected myself and played on..."

Spivakov finished the Chacona. When he did,

## Soviet Magazine Lauds Iraq's Revolutionary Role

**T**he "International Life," a Soviet monthly magazine, has described the July 17, 1968, Revolution of Iraq as one of the most important landmarks of Iraq's modern history.

The magazine in an article said, Iraq's revolutionary government had been working energetically to liquidate the heavy legacy of the past. Those efforts had the foundations of the current stability and prosperity that Iraq was witnessing at present.

The Moscow magazine praised the resolutions of the 8th Region-

al Conference of the Arab Baath Socialist Party which, it said, formulated the pattern of solidarity between progressive and democratic policies in the country, provided for the intensification of struggle against imperialism and laid the foundations for resolving the Kurdish issue and for ushering in major social and economic transformations. The magazine made special mention of the historic oil nationalisation act and described the agrarian reform law as a major step for bringing about drastic transformations in the Iraqi countryside.

The Moscow magazine said that the past nine years since the July 17 Revolution had witnessed steady growth in Iraq's stature in Arab and international affairs. It also spoke highly of Iraq's policy of maintaining and consolidating relations with the members of the socialist community. In a reference to the Iraqi-Soviet Friendship and Co-operation Treaty, the magazine said "The treaty opened up vast new horizons for developing relations between the two countries".

In conclusion, the magazine noted the prominent role played by Iraq in the Non-aligned movement, in OPEC and in the struggle against international monopolies.

## Zionist Military Hit by Manpower Shortage

By S. Kassab

**T**he Zionist "Armed Forces" magazine reported that the military strategists in "Israel" are currently studying a highly dangerous issue; i.e., shortage in manpower. "Israel" badly needs manpower for using the large quantities of sophisticated weapons scheduled to be delivered from the United States of America in the next four years.

"Al-Itisad al-Arabi", an economic magazine published in London, commenting on this topic, says that the solution to this problem requires an increase in the strength of the Zionist armed forces by a third. The number of Zionist armed forces has been doubled since 1970.

Military chiefs in "Israel" have warned that in the event of a failure in efforts to drag more people, especially technicians and experts, into the Zionist army, the authorities will be compelled to prolong the period of the compulsory service as well as the reserve service. Presently, the compulsory military service in "Israel" is three years, while the reserve service tops five weeks each year.

According to official Zionist statistics, utilization of human resources in the Zionist armed forces is the world's highest average: 86 per cent of males in "Israel" are conscripted in the compulsory service for a period of three years, in addition to re-

serve service for which those under 55 years of age are enlisted for a period of five weeks each year.

Shortage in manpower is not only attributed to the increase in quantities of sophisticated weapons which "Israel" gets from the United States, but it is mainly due to drop in immigration of Jews to the occupied land; it dropped from 55,000 immigrants in 1972 to 20,000 in 1975, as shown in the table below:

Immigrants to and emigrants from the occupied land  
1967-1976

Year	Immigrants	Emigrants	Difference
1967	14,300	13,000	1,300
1968	20,500	6,000	14,500
1969	37,800	5,400	32,400
1970	36,800	4,900	31,900
1971	41,900	7,200	34,700
1972	55,900	11,200	44,700
1973*	54,900	11,800	43,100
1974	32,000	26,700	5,300
1975	20,000	16,000	4,000
1976	20,000	20,000	NIL

(\* ) October War.

Official analysts predict that the Jewish immigration to "Israel" will drop considerably in the future and they expect that the number of emigrants will exceed that of immigrants for the first time since "Israel" was planted in the heart of the Arab homeland in 1948.

## Full Benefits for Workers

# Production goes up in Mosul Sugar Mill



**T**he sugar mill in Mosul went into production early in 1969. Today the place is by most recognizable from what it then was. With 1080 workers and 220 administrators (115 technicians among them) the mill works nonstop for 24 hours a day in four working shifts. It is one of three sugar mills in Iraq — there is one in Sulaimaniya and another in Missan — but it remains the largest sugar mill in the country.

The workers enjoy full benefits. Five hundred of them live in houses built for them by the mill. A worker pays 40 fils in the canteen for a meal which costs the mill at least twice as much, and he is transported to his place of work and back home in mill buses. The mill administration allows every worker one day's compensatory holiday after three days of work.

We meet Wabab al-Sarraj, the technical director of the mill, who has been with the mill since his graduation in Chemistry in 1959, and he provides us with the following data concerning the mill:

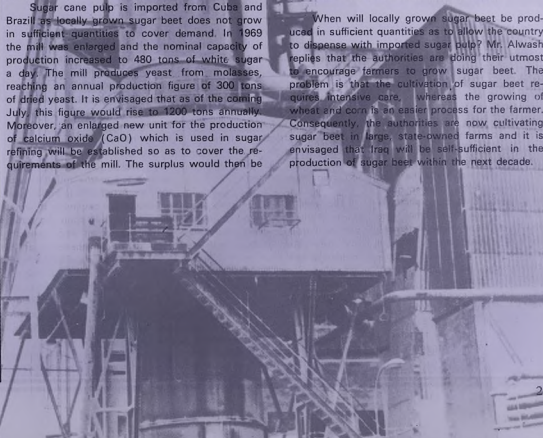
Sugar cane pulp is imported from Cuba and Brazil as locally grown sugar beet does not grow in sufficient quantities to cover demand. In 1969 the mill was enlarged and the nominal capacity of production increased to 480 tons of white sugar a day. The mill produces yeast from molasses, reaching an annual production figure of 300 tons of dried yeast. It is envisaged that as of the coming July this figure would rise to 1200 tons annually. Moreover, an enlarged new unit for the production of calcium oxide (CaO) which is used in sugar refining will be established so as to cover the requirements of the mill. The surplus would then be

sold to the other sugar mills. Already under production is the chemical Ca(OH)<sub>2</sub> which is used in filtering mineral water, and in many industries, including tanning and the manufacture of limestone. A hundred tons of this will be produced daily. A third unit will produce steffen which would be used to extract surplus sugar from sugar beet. The daily nominal production figure will be around 35 tons of white sugar. A packaging unit will also be added, with a nominal production figure of 30 tons a day.

At a meeting with the Director General of the mill, Mr. Ali Alwash, we learn that the production figure is 480 tons, production has actually reached 853 tons, making a daily average of 689 tons of white sugar for March, 1977. This compares with an average of 477 tons a day registered last year in August.

We ask the Director General if there are any problems which he would like to see solved. Yes, he replies, the three sugar mills in Iraq still do not cover the domestic demand, and therefore, two more mills are now in the planning stage.

When will locally grown sugar beet be produced in sufficient quantities as to allow the country to dispense with imported sugar beet? Mr. Alwash replies that the authorities are doing their utmost to encourage farmers to grow sugar beet. The problem is that the cultivation of sugar beet requires intensive care, whereas the growing of wheat and corn is an easier process for the farmer. Consequently, the authorities are now cultivating sugar beet in large, state-owned farms and it is envisaged that Iraq will be self-sufficient in the production of sugar beet within the next decade.



# The Iraqi Theatre

The Iraqi theatre is thousands of years old. History tells us that ancient Iraqis used to perform theatrical works and art expressing their life with all its joys and sorrows, valour and victories as well as its renowned poetic compositions. The present monumental amphitheatres in many Arab countries (at al-Ukheidir, Nineveh, Ur and Babylon in Iraq; al-Patra and Jerash in Jordan; Nazareth and Galilee in Palestine; Ba'albek in Lebanon; Luxur in Egypt and at various historical sites in Yemen, Syria and Morocco), show that they had been used for staging something akin to contemporary theatrical works. This is true despite the fact that the use of these amphitheatres had been confined to duels, rhetoric, proclamation of official orders, announcement of military bulletins, festivities and wedding parties — all of which are of a general theatrical nature.

In the ruins of Ur, archaeologists discovered a text of a Sumerian religious play, composed of 435 verses, dating back to the year 2006 B.C. Egyptologists have also established that ancient Egyptians had precised phantasmagoria five thousand years ago. Some historians say that Imam al-Shafie had praised phantasmagoria in poetry, saying: "Phantasmagoria is the most useful lesson for those in quest of the truth. Images and shadows pass and fade out while the mover of the universe is eternal". Should this story be true, it should prove that the art in question was in use before the year 200 Hijra (Islamic year). Priests of ancient Egypt and Iraq were well informed of the components of light. Hence their ability to conjure the transfer of the image of a clergyman from one mirror to another.

During the last century, most churches of Iraq ran schools with stages forming part thereof. Rarely was there any school without a stage. A priest by the name of Hanna Habash wrote three plays which were performed by theatres in Nineveh in 1880.

In the 20th century, the newly-formed Ministry of Education in-



troducted the "model school". These schools, which were established in Baghdad and other governorates, had their own stage. Local administrations also founded many halls adequately equipped with the requirements of theatrical performance. Early in 1923, theatrical activities began to mature in official and national schools as well as in patriotic organizations.

The year 1927 witnessed the birth of the first modern Iraqi theatrical troupe. It was founded by actor Hakki al-Shibli and included artists from other Arab countries. Soon afterwards, other similar troupes were established in Baghdad, attracting many amateurs. The Scientific Institute Troupe, founded by producer Yahia Fayeek in the early 20s can be considered as one of the first comprehensive theatrical troupes.

Mr. Fayeek disbanded that troupe in the early 30s and formed another one under the name of the Arab Theatrical Troupe.

It might perhaps be interesting to recall an incident in this respect. In Colombia Cinema, in Baghdad, which used to show silent pictures for British occupation troops, an Iraqi troupe

once staged a play called 'Majnah'. It was a satirical play, containing some phrases against military occupation and colonization. The police attacked the cinema, but the spectators foiled the attempt to arrest the actors and helped them steal their way safely home.

The growth of theatrical activities within schools and organizations led to the foundation of the Fine Arts Institute in Baghdad in 1936. In the beginning, it taught music only. But upon the return of the youngmen who went abroad to study theatrical art, a theatre was annexed to the Institute in the early 40s. Many actors graduated from the Institute. But they were posted to different schools, because, the government did not intend to encourage a theatrical movement.

In the wake of the Second World War, the Iraqi Theatre was

unable to function properly because of the rigid censorship, shortage of plays and lack of regular full-time actors and platforms. The only hall available was King Faisal's Hall — now the People's Hall.

Following the Revolution of 1958, actors began to breathe in a comparatively healthy atmosphere. Many theatrical troupes were founded and many artists returned to Iraq. A great many plays depicting the revolution and people's aspirations were written. The situation however changed because of the unstable political conditions which were detrimental to the theatrical movement.

That unhappy state of affairs came to an end with the triumph of the July 17 Revolution of 1968. Now there are three state and one private theatres in Baghdad, in addition to the theatres of the various mass organisations. The present Development Plan in-

cludes the establishment of five more ultra-modern theatres in Baghdad. A special organisation for theatres has been created. To this organisation belongs "The National Art Troupe" that presents Iraqi art to the outside world. Other theatrical troupes in Baghdad include: The Message (al-Risala), July 14th (Tammuz 14), the People's Theatre (al-Masrah al-Shaabi), the Vanguard Youth (al-Shabab al-Talief), the Artistic Theatre (al-Masrah al-Fanni), and the Pioneers (al-Ruwad). In addition to the above-mentioned there are theatrical troupes in other Iraqi towns.

The Iraqi theatrical troupes proved their success both inside and outside the country. They performed works written by Iraqi and other Arab as well as famous foreign playwrights. They also participated in many theatrical festivals.

Amongst the distinguished Iraqi playwrights we find: Nur al-

Din Faris, Edmon Sabri, Zannun Yusif, Ghazi Majid, Taha Salim, Ali Hassan al-Bayati, Yusif al-Ani, Badri Hassoun Fared and Adil Kazim.

Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, Kassim Mohammed, Sadik al-Sayegh, Badri Hassoun Faced, Sami Abdul Hamid, Saadi Yunis, Yusif al-Ani and others have translated into Arabic many of the masterpieces of Chekhov, Bernard Shaw, Moliere, Beckett, Karlo Koldouni, Luigi Bernadello, Ben Johnson, Victor Hugo and other eminent writers.

The progress so far achieved indicates that Iraq is witnessing a brilliant theatrical revival. Production — in quantity and quality — and the rise in theatrical consciousness, reassure us that the Iraqi theatre is already well established.

The Iraqi theatre is steadily progressing, its roots that go 5000 years deep will no doubt help it attain a high standard.

by Isam al-Khattat





Poet Bayati

## POETRY

the master of his own fate. Camus believed that the world was as absurd as Sisyphus, world. But man's determination to go on living could bring about the suitable climate for creating a world closer to his liking.

The author of the study finds that al-Bayati's uncommitted poet has much in common with Camus' absurd hero. Though both of them were conscious of the absurdity of their lives, and both lived a life of hardships and sufferings, they were determined to live in dignity.

The absurdity of life, suicide, closed universe, and rounding the cipher are recurrent themes in

## Influence of Camus on al-Bayati

**M**r. Khalil Rizk, under the supervision of Professor Salih J. Altoma of the Indiana University, has prepared a comparative study of the concepts of Sisyphus and Prometheus as they are reflected in the works of the French existentialist writer Albert Camus and the Iraqi poet Abdul Wahab al-Bayati. The study has attempted to trace the influence of Camus on al-Bayati.

Sisyphus, according to the ancient legend, was to pay for his contempt of the gods. His punishment was to roll a rock uphill. The rock kept endlessly rolling down. He was condemned to live in such a manner. Nevertheless, he had a liking for such an absurd life because he felt that he was

al-Bayati's poetry. No doubt they reflected the poet's experience of the absurd. The images of a suffering Sisyphus are repeated every now and then by al-Bayati:

I shall be, but in vain,  
I shall remain from nowhere,  
With no face, no history, from nowhere,  
Light and the tumult of the city strike me  
from afar.  
The same life,  
A new boredom,  
I walk on, caring for nothing  
Thousands of years and nothing

## The Occult

by Sami Mahdi

This is my body: The face is still mine,  
I haven't changed: A log walking,  
And a fire still slumbering inside it.  
And you, where are you?  
You came. Who has seen you?  
Have you penetrated through our skins  
Like the sun and the air, or have you  
Remained in the charts  
Of clothes a mere fold,  
Or have you subsided and then turned into a stone?  
I wish I could see you,

I could point a finger at you,  
I could turn it with the round face,

And in the specious streets throw a firebrand,  
And gather the people, and say:  
This is my mate.  
Can you, then, say: No?  
Will you stay where you are occult,  
showing up in a rite and clippings?

I looked for you in the morning's paper,  
On my desk, in the tea-cup,  
And meditated in the faces all along my way,  
But could not find you:  
Where are you,  
It is said: you have incarnated yourself in us.  
How?

Waiting for the traveller  
Save his sad present  
Mud and clay.

The author is of the opinion that al-Bayati's traveller is the absurd hero; a fugitive who finds nothing other than nothingness and wretchedness... He suggests also that the man in "Shattered Pitchers" though an indifferent stranger, was a rebellious man who took, in the poet's view of course, an existentialist realistic attitude towards life. Like Camus' Sisyphus, al-Bayati's man rejected death and rebelled against it consciously. Again the common thing between them is their upholding of life itself. Still they were both crushed and shattered by life and its hardships.

The author cites the existentialist Karl Popper as tracing some existentialist concepts in al-Bayati's early works, while in his later works, he stopped seeing things in an existentialist eye. Nevertheless al-Bayati has remained under the spell of Camus even after his maturity. Camus' thought, to al-Bayati, was the window from which he looked at the outside world.

Prometheus, another shattered but defying victim of the gods was chained to a rock while the vultures were preying on his liver. According to the "Rebel" of Camus, Prometheus' action should replace Sisyphus' solitary revolt. For the revolution is the evidence of the individual's existence. In his turn, al-Bayati emphatically stresses the difference between the rebellion and the revolution, contending that a rebellion, which may be metaphysical,

paves the way for the real revolution. Still more the author finds that the stream of thought of Camus and al-Bayati, is the same. He points out that al-Bayati insists that man can control evil and get to the "City of Light" through revolution. However, al-Bayati seeks to act to bring about this revolution through art which sheds no blood at all, even the enemies' blood. The poet is the rebel who seeks to reach the root of the revolution and establish a utopia. In his search for the City of Light, or the Utopia, al-Bayati is always keen on looking for a new hero who will rise not for his own sake, but for the sake of others.

Interestingly, the author finds the Prometheus image in almost all the works of al-Bayati. Even though such images speak different languages, assume different faces and live in different localities, such as al-Hallaj, al-Khayyam or simply the Arab refugee.

Yet the Prometheus of al-Bayati shoulders a heavier burden, he is supposed to bring the sufferings of mankind to an end. A saviour must come and no longer the oppressor will be tolerated. Here al-Bayati takes a militant attitude in complete conformity with the defying Prometheus. He gets more militant when he invokes the image of al-Hallaj (who was a helpless and peaceful Sufi) fighting evil with his sword instead of his words.

All these images are easily found in Camus: "...the revolutionary will be inclined to resort to violence only when no other alternative is possible".

Adnan al-Himairi

Will you remain a mere rarity lying in kings' treasures?

In a street tumbling with people and bitumen,  
I saw a poster. I was told:  
Here settled down his face,  
Here he addresses people,  
When they pass by,  
And shows each one  
Compassion of a day cogious,  
But when I wanted to see you, I couldn't find you.  
I shouted: Where are you?  
Have you settled down among them?  
Were you lost in the turmoil,  
or have you entered a cafe.  
Become the tea, the waiter, and the customer?  
Are you, among people, like people?  
It's said: You are a bird  
That the sea bargained with about the land.  
But when he saw the land,

He altered into rain,  
Imbided into the soil,  
Broke out into fire that flamed tree-tops.  
No, you'll neither be a bird nor rain.  
You are the conflagration of the earth and the sky.  
No; you are here, there, within me,  
In water and soil,  
In children's satchels, in women's beds,  
It's time of love,  
And you are the great lover.  
On the swords of the poor  
you have a face.  
On the papers of all poets  
you have a history.  
When night falls dark  
Whence do you call us?

Translated from Arabic by  
Kadhim Sa'adeen.

**G**laze or enamel is a term given to the hard vitreous compound which is fused upon the surface of pottery, brick and tiles for the purpose of decoration. This art was and still is practised by the people of Mesopotamia.

Like all Orientals both Babylonians and Assyrians were fond of gay colours. They gratified their taste for colour in various ways. They used enamelled bricks and tiles for the purpose of architectural decoration.

The finest and largest specimens of the Assyrian enameller's art, as yet discovered and best preserved, was at the principal gateways of Khorsabad. The tiles

repetition of these beasts in brilliant colour all over the massive gateway must have made it a work of impressive power and grandeur.

When these different colours of the enamel were analysed it was found that the yellow was an antimoniate of lead, the white was an enamel or glaze of oxide of tin, the blue was copper containing some lead and the red was a sub-oxide of copper. Glaze or enamel is, therefore, a form of glass made of silica, minium and potash stained by the chemical combination of various metallic oxides whilst in a melted condition in the crucible.

Under the Abbasid Caliphs the

Nothing of the early Abbasid Baghdad survives, but its marvels have been described so extensively that some sort of reconstruction is possible. Baghdad was founded in 762, by order of the Caliph al-Mansur, and was built on a circular plan. The Royal Palace and the Great Mosque were standing in the centre of the heavily fortified walls of the circle. The form of al-Mansur's palace is not known. This palace was called the Golden Gate Palace, its dome was covered with green tiles.

In the vast city of Samarra, the second Abbasid capital, which was founded by al-Mustansir, in 836, only the two great mosque buildings survive.

The important architectural decoration in Samarra was discovered in the Jawask al-Khakan Palace. Lustre-painted tiles were used for wall decoration.

Now many major religious buildings, mosques and holy shrine buildings are decorated with glazed and lustre-painted tiles. They are painted both with abstract floral and geometric designs known as Kashi. All elements of the design form one intricate pattern creating an overall uniform effect. The background behind the floral designs is usually covered with solid lustre.

Geometric and epigraphic figures attained a beauty of decorative style unsurpassed in any other Moslem art. Kashi tiles were in great vogue. Arabic characters were used for making decorative designs; and these characters became powerful motif in Islamic art. Through it the Moslems sought a channel for their esthetic nature which could not express itself through the representation of animal objects.

From a distance the domes and minarets of mosques and holy shrines are the most conspicuous for the turquoise blue or green tiles which cover them and flash like glass or gold in the bright sunlight of Baghdad.

Sherrif Yusuf

## One-Act Play



# Return to Haifa

THE BOOK, THE AUTHOR AND THE PLAY

"Return to Haifa" was Ghassan Kanafani's last published work during his lifetime. Written shortly after the Arab-Zionist war of 1948, this novella is a gripping account of the Palestine refugee. No other book about Palestine, be it fiction or factual, Arab or non-Arab, manages to convey the essence of the tragedy in such a powerful way. And in so few pages.

Ghassan Kanafani was born in a village, Beita in Palestine and raised in the refugee camps in Lebanon and Syria. He quickly made his mark as a versatile and prolific writer. A prominent short story writer, novelist, playwright, critic and journalist, he was widely known almost as the spokesman for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. For this he had to pay the price, when at the age of 27 he was assassinated by Zionist agents in his home in Beita. The terrible suspicion also claimed the life of his sixteen-year old niece.

It was a tragic loss, his early death was a terrible tragedy to his family as well as being a grievous loss to the cause of Palestine and to Arab literature in general.

This one-act dramatization of the novella is a work of heritage and commemoration. Performed

on several occasions in the major cities of Scandinavia (Oslo, Trondheim, Stockholm, Copenhagen etc.), the play has had an unbroken reputation in countries, even not comparatively recently, only Zionist-occupied myths were known, as Syria and so on occupied. Consequently, it can be said that "Return to Haifa" is the Palestine problem in a dramatic nutshell.

The Return to Haifa

A Novella by Ghassan Kanafani dramatized as a one-act play by A. H. Mansoury

The Place: A house in Haifa. The Time: 30 June 1948 — about three weeks after the end of the Arab-Israeli War.

Scene: A subscene of a small, one-story house occupying three quarters of the stage from left to right (and left to right of the audience). To the right, a low stage leads up to a narrow flight. There is a small hall at the entrance, opening into the living room. Aside from a clothes stand and a little table on which are stacked some newspapers and magazines, the hall is bare. The living room also being parallel with the audience, is very simply furnished. On the wall facing the audience hangs a large panoramic picture of Jerusalem, beside which hangs a Damascus wall-clock. To the right are assembled five comfortable chairs in a half-circle. One notices that

the chairs do not match — two of them looking rather odd and modern and of a different design than the other three. In front of the chairs there is an antique coffee table studded with mother-of-pearl. At it is a woman, seen containing five pacific feathers, on the left there is a sofa giving in a slanted position to face both the sea and the audience. Placed on it is a stack of books, besides a woman willing to be lulled and pressed. Beside the sofa the house is situated as a corner of the stage, with its entrance placed at a distance eight feet from the audience.

Between his door and the narrow right of the stage and in the remaining quarter not occupied by the house, one can see parts of the city in the background. It is late afternoon and as the story progresses it becomes gradually darker and the sun has finally set at the end of the play. Said and his wife, Safiya come up the street from the left. They are a Palestinian couple in their mid-thirties. The man is dressed in a dark business suit with a matching necktie. His wife also has a dark dress on. They look strongly disheartened as they slowly walk parallel to the house, not meeting their eyes away from it. For a moment they stand looking at it with their backs to the audience.

Said: (Sits down beside her and says softly)

Safiya: (After a pause) It hasn't changed.

(Walks slowly towards the entrance). It needs replastering, perhaps.

Said: (Following her, almost to himself) Yes, this is our old house and that (indicating the background with a slight movement of his hand) is Haifa.

Safiya: Look, one can still see the pencil scribbles on the wall. This used to be his favourite playground of the neighbourhood children.

Said: (Looking closely at the name-plate beside the door) They've changed the name.

Safiya: (Sitting wearily on the porch) What does it say?

Said: I can't read it. It's in Hebrew.

Safiya: (Sighing) Why did we come here?

Said: (Still standing) Well, it's you who suggested it. You kept on saying: everyone's going back to have a look at his old house, so why don't we?

Safiya: I wanted so much to see our old house again. We got married in it twenty years ago, remember?

Said: (Sits down beside her and says softly) Was that the only reason that made you want to come here? (She begins to weep quietly. He rests her head on his shoulder and pats her hand tenderly.)

Said: Do you know...? Throughout all these twenty years, I kept on dreaming, hoping, expecting that one day the Mandelbaum Gate would open. Yet it never occurred to me that it could be opened from the other side, from their side. When they did open it, the whole thing seemed so insulting, degrading, humiliating. They opened the borders as soon as the war, (bitterly) the lightning Six Day War was over. They wanted to show us how civilized they were. They wanted us to admire them, to stand in awe of their achievements. That's why they opened the gates and let us in. (His anger subsiding) Well, now that we are in Haifa what's to do we do next? We've seen the breeze from the sea — the joyed the breeze coming in from the sea — so why don't we haven't seen for twenty years — so why don't we return to our exile?

(Safiya does not reply but begins to sob)

Safiya, it's no use. One mustn't cling to wild hopes.

## Glazed Bricks and Tiles Through the Ages

here formed an arch resting on the backs of projecting winged bulls. The ground of the arch was blue, and the composite winged figures were yellow, while a line of green edged the lower part of the head-gear. The rosettes which formed the supplemental decoration were white.

However the brick-enameller's art reached its climax in the ionian frieze which adorned the Procession-Street at Babylon. The lions here stood out in white alabaster clay. Here, also, the whole of the wall of Ishtar Gate was covered with reliefs of animals, principally bulls and dragons, all represented on the enamelled bricks i.e. yellow and white on a blue background.

glazed and coloured tiles technique progressed far beyond the ancient civilization in Assyria and Babylonia. The artists discovered and perfected the peculiar technique of painting in metallic glaze that was to enjoy popularity in the Near East and in Spain.

The pigment, composed of silver and copper, was painted on the already-fired glaze and fixed by a second firing in a special low-temperature kiln. This secret passed to Egypt under its Fatimid rulers (969-1171) and subsequently to Syria and Persia. Iraqi glazed and coloured tiles here reached Tunisia; they covered the prayer pulpit — Mihrab — of Qayrawan mosque.

▲ Forms of Glazed Tiles



You know that we left no stone unturned in our search. We made enquiries through the Red Cross and the U.N. Trade Supervisors. We even contacted foreign friends and asked them to continue the search on our behalf. All to no avail.

**Safiya:** Well now that we're here, we can at least ring the bell and ask. They (indicating the house) might be able to tell us something. (Through this dialogue, a woman about the age of Safiya, is seen walking around inside the house, dusting the furniture, and glancing every now and then at Said and Safiya through the window. They don't notice her).

**Said:** They might not let us in. They might turn us away as if we were beggars. This has happened to others in our situation, you know. These people don't like to be reminded that they are living on stolen grounds.

**Safiya:** Would you rather we went on living in this uncertainty for another twenty years?

**Said:** Safiya, we have two other children. Khalid will be going to college this autumn. We must think of the future; we can't afford to spend our lives being haunted by the past.

**Safiya:** (Getting up) The past is a part of us; we cannot escape it. I am going to ring the bell, Said.

(Both stand motionless for a moment — Safiya's arm stretched forward to ring the bell).

**Said:** (Quietly) I'll ring it. (He does)

(Miriam gets up from the sofa where she has been folding the laundry and goes up to open the door).

**Said:** (After a slight pause) Good afternoon. May we come in?

**Miriam:** Yes. (She motions them in) I have been expecting you for some time now.

(Already on their way to the living room, both Said and Safiya turn abruptly to look at her when they hear that).

**Said:** Do you know who we are?

**Miriam:** Of course. You are the owners of this house.

**Safiya:** How did you guess that?

**Miriam:** From everything. The way you stood outside looking at the house — I was watching you from the window. From the photo albums you left behind. And since the war, so many people have come back to look at their former homes, that I thought to myself, sooner or later, you were bound to turn up. Please sit down.

**Safiya:** (She sits down on one of the chairs. Said remains standing — both are still examining the room with their eyes) Where did you come from?

**Miriam:** You mean my country of origin? (She sits on the sofa.) I am from Poland.

**Said:** When did you arrive here?

**Miriam:** In 1948.

**Safiya:** When in 1948?

**Miriam:** We arrived in Haifa on the first of March. My husband and I stayed a few months in a small room in a building crowded with refugees — Jewish refugees of course, then we were allotted this house by the Jewish Agency.

**Said:** Needless to say, we have not come here in order to drive you out of the house. This would require a war, you know. We only came to look at our things. You understand these things (makes a sweeping gesture with his arm) belong to us.

**Safiya:** Except for these three chairs, practically everything in this room belongs to us.

**Miriam:** I understand... I understand. Please excuse me for a moment. (She gets up and exits left).

**Safiya:** She goes about the place as if it belonged to her.

**Said:** Well, she has been living in it for twenty years.

**Safiya:** The Jerusalem picture is still there. And the Damascus rug too. We had five of these chairs, but now there are only two. They do look old and shabby, don't they? And the antique, mother-of-pearl table — my uncle's wedding present to us. It looks a bit faded. But where is the glass vase that we always kept on it. This wooden vase doesn't belong to us.

**Said:** Nothing belongs to us here any longer, Safiya.

**Safiya:** (Disregarding his remark) they have changed the curtains.

**Miriam:** (Comes in bearing a tray with coffee and biscuits on it) As I watched you from the window, I knew you would finally decide to ring the bell and come in, so I made some coffee. (She places the tray before them) Please...

**Said:** (Still standing) There were seven fathers in that vase. I remember them well, but now there are only five.

**Miriam:** I couldn't tell you what happened to the missing ones. Perhaps Dov lost them. He always played with them when he was a child.

**Said:** Have you got a son? How old is he?

**Safiya:** Is he here now? Can we see him? (Simultaneously)

**Miriam:** He is twenty.

**Safiya:** (In great agitation) Well, where is he?

**Miriam:** (Glances at her wrist-watch) He should be here by now. The trouble with him is that he has never been punctual in his life — takes after his father in this respect, I suppose. (Bites her lip).

**Safiya:** Is he your son?

**Miriam:** (Shakes her head)

**Said:** Did you adopt him?

**Miriam:** (Lighting a cigarette, then blurting out

the truth) Actually, he is your child.

**Safiya:** (In great excitement) You see, Said, it is Khalidun, our baby. I told you... I always told you we would one day find him. O thank the Lord for that, thank the Lord.

**Miriam:** (Irritated) Please let me explain. I want this matter, this painful matter to find its natural ending.

**Said & Safiya:** (Impatiently) What natural ending? What are you talking about?

We are his real parents, aren't we? When do we get to see him?

**Miriam:** (interrupting them) Do let us discuss this matter calmly, please. What did you say you called your child?

**Safiya:** Khalidun... We called him Khalidun.

**Miriam:** And we called him Dov. Now listen to me. I am going to tell you the whole story. They had told us at the Agency they'd only give us this house if we accepted the baby with it, an Arab baby, they said. Well, we would have taken him anyway, Arab or not Arab, with a house or without a house. The terrible years I had spent in a Nazi concentration camp had made me barren and both my husband and I wanted a child badly. We brought him up as if he were our own flesh and blood. But now that he's almost twenty, a grown-up man, let's give him the choice. Let him decide to which side, ours or yours, he would want to belong.

**Safiya:** (Eagerly) yes, this is fair enough. I am sure Khalidun will choose to live with his real parents, with his own flesh and blood.

**Said:** (Angrily) How can you be so naive, Safiya? What flesh and blood are you talking about? They had him for twenty years — the first twenty years of his life — time enough for him to inject into him all their hatred of us. What free choice can he really have? Safiya, we lost our child forever the minute we left him behind.

**Miriam:** Why did you leave him behind when you fled?

**Safiya:** You are a good one to ask this question. We were driven out by your people.

**Said:** (Sits down for the first time since he entered the house) Do you want to know what happened on that black April day? You have already told us you arrived in Haifa in March, but I shall give you the benefit of the doubt by assuming you were unaware of what was happening to us, the people of this city, on that fateful day in April 1948. I'll tell you: Safiya and I had been married for a year and a half. She had never lived in a city before, having been born and raised in the country. When I went out to work every morning, she remained alone in this house with the baby. That day had begun just like any other, and I was at my

office when the situation suddenly exploded and shells began to rain on the city from Mount Carmel in the east. We soon discovered that the British garrison, until then the arbitrating force between the Arabs and the Jews, had been withdrawn without a word of prior notice to the Arabs, and that the Zionists were all set to step into the shoes of the departing British. Before long, we realized that the fate of the city was to be decided that very day. Clashes were breaking out everywhere, but I couldn't take part in them; (bitterly) like most of countrymen, I was unarmed, untrained. The British had seen to it that when they finally departed, the Palestinians would be no match for the Zionists. My first thought was to rush home, to be with my family in that critical hour. I drove my car towards the quarter of town where my house was, but the streets leading to it were blocked. I abandoned the car and tried to go on foot. There were large crowds everywhere and suddenly I found myself in the midst of a surging crowd of people in a state of panic who pushed me with them to the waterfront. It was no good my shoving and jostling, this wave of frightened humanity carried me with it inexorably in the direction of the harbour.

**Safiya:** (Picking up the story) My husband has already told you that I came originally from the country. I was still not used to living in a city; especially in a city like Haifa which was one of the worst danger points in the whole country then. When I heard the bombardment that day, I almost lost my mind waiting for my husband to return home. When hours passed and there was still no sign of him, I felt I had to go downtown to find him and bring him home. I couldn't of course take the baby with me when the bullets were flying everywhere, so I left it in its crib, and rushed out like a madwoman looking for Said. It was hours before I caught sight of him in the midst of the crowd that was pushing both of us towards the sea. I threw myself in his arms and that was the last thing I remembered for some hours afterwards.

**Said:** She had fainted. I heard people around me say that the Jews were massacring all Arabs who remained in the city. Men, women and children were scrambling to get into the boats at the harbour and I carried Safiya's limp body and got into one of them. We sailed away. That day many thousands of Palestinians had been forced at gun point to leave everything they owned behind and flee the city at once. We lost not only our possessions but also our child. Afterwards we tried every channel, knocked on every door in our search for the child, but all to no effect.

[A tall young man in military uniform approaches the house from the right, opens the door with his key, deposits his cap on the peg and then be-



gins to leaf through one of the magazines from the stack on the little table. He says something in Hebrew).

**Miriam:** Dov, we have guests who want to meet you.

**Dov:** (coming into the living room) Good evening.

(Both Said and Safiya are stunned at the sight of his uniform).

**Miriam:** Dov, I want you to meet your parents — your real parents.

**Dov:** (looks at them for a second then walks across the room to stand beside Miriam) You are the only mother I know. As for my father, he was killed in the Sinai Campaign eleven years ago. What do they want? Don't tell me they come to fetch me back?

**Miriam:** Why don't you ask them what they want?

**Dov:** Can you tell me what you want, sir?

**Said:** (Standing up, embarrassed) Nothing perhaps only curiosity brought me here. I see you are in the army. Whom are you planning to fight?

**Dov:** (roughly) You have no right to ask. You belong to the other side.

**Said:** (laughing nervously) Are you sure I am the one who is on the other side?

**Safiya:** Don't you feel we are your parents?

**Dov:** (defensively) Why can't we discuss all this in a civilized manner? As far as I am concerned, I only discovered that Miriam and Yevrat were not my real parents about three years ago. Ever since early childhood I have been a Jew, going to the Synagogue, attending religion classes at the Yeshiva, eating Kosher food, studying Hebrew. When I was told that Yevrat and Miriam were not my real parents, nothing changed. Not a thing. And the fact that I was of Arab origin did not make me more sympathetic to the Arabs, for I kept wondering how a father and a mother could think of leaving behind their five-month old infant and flee, whereas two perfect strangers could adopt this baby and raise it as if it were their own child. Would you care to comment on this, sir?

**Said:** No, please go on.

**Dov:** I am at present a soldier in the army reserve. I haven't participated in any actual fighting yet in order to be able to tell you how I feel. But let me say this: I belong here: This lady is my mother (he puts his arm around Miriam's shoulder) and I don't know you. I don't entertain any special feelings for you.

**Said:** You know, Dov, I have another son called Khalid. You notice perhaps that I haven't your brother. He is seventeen and he wants to join the Palestinian resistance movement. Your first battle may be with him fighting on the other side.

**Dov:** None of this need have happened if you had behaved like a civilized man aware of what he was doing.

**Said:** What do you mean?

**Dov:** I mean you shouldn't have left Haifa. And if that was impossible, you shouldn't have left a baby behind. And if that proved impossible too, you should never have ceased trying to return. Do you say that this too would've been impossible? Twenty years have gone by, sir. Twenty years. What steps did you take during that period in order to get back your child? You waited for us to win the war and conquer more of your territory before you came back to claim your long-lost child, the child you so shamefully abandoned. If I'd been in your place, I would've gone to war rather than wait all these years. Could there have been a more valid reason for going to war? But you're all incapacitated, paralysed by the chains of your own weakness. (Safiya weeps) Don't tell me you spent twenty years weeping. Tears do not bring back those who have been missing — tears have never wrought miracles. What have you got to say for yourself?

**Said:** (as if to himself) I don't want to argue with him.

**Safiya:** He is saying we are cowards. And because we are cowards he becomes this kind of man.

**Dov:** What do you mean, Madam?

**Said:** She is asking whether what we did justifies your attitude. Two wrongs do not make a right. When will you people stop considering the weaknesses of others, their mistakes and blunders, as justification for your own misdeeds? Don't you realize the moral bankruptcy of such an attitude? Your equations are full of loopholes, for on the one hand you Zionists maintain that our mistakes justify your actions, and on the other, you state that an injustice cannot be set right by another injustice. You use the first argument to explain away your presence here, and the second argument to shirk the punishment that's your due for dislodging us out of our homes. It seems to me you enjoy this game to the full; you positively delight in it.

**Dov:** This is not a moral world.

**Said:** You are the ones who are always talking about morality. How, after all, can you condemn Dachau and Auschwitz if not by the common norms of morality? You say you don't feel yourself an Arab. All right then, let me talk to you as a Jew, or better still, as just a human being: When will you realize that a man commits his worst crime when he thinks that the faults of the others justify his immoral actions and when he acts according to this principle? Do you think we will go on making errors for ever and ever? And supposing we stop making errors one day — what then will you be left

with? (turning to his wife) Do you know what a homeland is, Safiya. (a short pause) Palestine, real Palestine, isn't a mere remembrance. It's more, much more than a pair of missing leathers or even a lost child. It's more than some scribbling on the walls of a house. I always asked myself: What's Palestine to Khalid, my other son, who was not even born in Palestine? He knows nothing about the glass vase or the picture on the wall or the porch. He has never seen this house, this neighborhood, this city, and yet he wants to take up arms for all these things and is prepared to die for them.

**Dov:** Don't forget we have been here twenty years. You can't turn back the clock.

**Said:** You are forgetting that you people turned back the clock by two thousand years.

**Dov:** We have built up a modern state while you still live in the past.

**Said:** Are you sure the state you have built is modern? It's true you have the keys of technology at your fingertips — that I grant you. But what state can truly be modern when the minds of its people are permeated with the myths and prejudices of past millennia?

**Dov:** You must remember that we have been persecuted for so long. We still carry the scars on our souls.

**Said:** They taught you that at school, didn't they? Did they also teach you why the Arabs who never harmed the Jews throughout history should pay for the persecution inflicted on your people by other nations?

**Dov:** It was all the will of God.

**Said:** I knew you were going to drag God into this. You people use Him if he were a bell-boy waiting on you; press the button and he is there. But tell me: do you believe in Him?

**Dov:** I was brought up as a Jew, though I must admit I am not a practising one. I really don't know if I believe in God; I suppose I haven't given the subject much thought.

**Said:** This is very strange. The whole idea behind the creation of the state of Israel in Palestine was based on a so-called divine promise, and yet it seems to me there are few Israelis who really believe in God. How do you explain this?

**Dov:** I am not going to explain anything to you; I don't have to. We are here by right of conquest. It's as simple as that.

**Said:** Yes, this is what it boils down to; you are here by right of conquest. To the outside world you may wax eloquent about your divine right in Palestine and of the infallible word of the Bible. You may draw tears of contrition from European and Americans when you dwell on the theme of the Holocaust. You may boast about the desert which you

caused to bloom; you may point to your atomic reactor and your plane factories and use all these diverse themes to justify your presence here in this land. But when you are face to face with a Palestinian, you can only justify your presence in the country of his ancestors by telling him you are here by right of conquest, because you know full well that he is not going to swallow the nonsense you reserve for outside consumption. For seventy years you have told yourselves and the world that we Palestinians did not exist. And yet here we are; not only do we exist, we also are determined to regain our country. Can you go on denying us?

**Dov:** You Arabs are so intransigent.

**Said:** We are, ain't we? Listen, Safiya, we were wrong when we thought that a country was only the past. To Khalid, our son, it is the future. We have made our mistakes but a generation shall rise to correct them. Dov is our shame, Khalid is our honour; our remaining hope.

**Safiya:** Let's go, Said. (she takes his hand).

**Miriam:** You can't leave like this. We must come to an amicable understanding.

**Safiya:** What amicable understanding can there be between us?

**Miriam:** Let us go on talking to each other. This dialogue must not stop.

**Safiya:** When you have thrown me out of my house and turned my own son against me, what is there for me to say to you?

**Miriam:** Don't think I am without sympathy for you.

**Safiya:** Can you translate this sympathy into deeds? (pause) No, you can't. How can you? My husband was right. We should never have returned in this way.

**Said:** (As they are leaving) You can go on living in this house for the time being. It would require a war to remove you from it and restore it to us.

**Dov:** (It is warping him) ...

**Said:** (Interrupting him) Thousands of Palestinians have paid and will go on paying the price for their return in blood. So be it.

(When the door is closed behind them, Safiya sits wearily on the porch. Said stands beside her, holding her hand. Both Miriam and Dov watch them in silence through the window. The sun is setting).

**Said:** This won't be the last time for us to see the sun set in Haifa. A time will come when we'll be seeing it every day, every single day. I know we will.

Curtain

#### ABSP DELEGATION CONCLUDES VISIT TO ALGERIA

An Arab Baath Socialist Party (ABSP) delegation headed by Mr. Naeem Haddad, ABSP Regional Leadership Member, returned early this month to Baghdad winding up a four-day visit to Algeria. The delegation was invited by the Algerian National Liberation Front party.

While in Algiers the ABSP delegation held talks with ANLFP officials on the latest developments in the Arab area, the Zionist-imperialist plotting against the Arab nation and coordination of efforts and experiences between the two parties in all fields.

#### IRAQI COLLEGE OF MEDICINE MARKS 50th ANNIVERSARY

The Baghdad University College of Medicine celebrated on May 7 its golden jubilee of its foundation.

Throughout the half century of its existence the college produced 4465 doctors with different specializations who played a pioneering role in virtually exterminating the endemic and epidemic diseases of the country. These doctors bolstered the medical services in Iraq.

Since July 17 Revolution, the Iraqi College of Medicine has witnessed two major developments. In 1970 the post-graduate studies division in medicine was created. Last year the Arabic language was introduced as the medium of instruction.

#### ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY COORDINATION MEETING

A three-day symposium on coordination of aluminium industry in Arab countries was opened in Baghdad on May 2 by Iraqi Minister of Industry and Minerals, Dr. Mohammed Najah Khalil.

Attended by delegates from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Democratic Yemen and Iraq and experts from the UNIDO and Arab Economic Unity Council, the symposium considered means of developing industry in the Arab world. Measures required for organisation and coordination of this industry were also discussed.

A recent survey indicated that there are 74 factories for aluminium industries in Iraq and a sum of ID 32 million has been earmarked for the creation of a giant modern factory in Nassiriyah, southern Iraq.

#### IRAQ ATTENDS EURO-ARAB COOPERATION SYMPOSIUM

Oil Minister Mr. Tayeh Abdul Karim led the Iraqi delegation to the meetings of Euro-Arab Cooperation Symposium held in Florence, Italy, late in April last. The 3-day symposium was sponsored by the Arab-Italian Friendship Society.

Addressing the symposium Mr. Abdul Karim expounded Iraq's stand towards the Euro-Arab dialogue, stressing the importance of having given political, economic and technical aspects in the relations between the Arab and European countries. He urged a reconsideration of the structure of the international economic system and called for the establishment of a world economic order based on justice and equality in all fields.

#### IRAQI-CZECHOSLOVAK JOINT MINUTES SIGNED

The Iraqi-Czechoslovak joint trade commission signed on May 4, in Baghdad a joint minutes for bilateral trade plan for the current year.

The minutes was signed for Iraq by Mr. Hazem Ahmed Abdulkhalil, Director General of the economic relations department with the socialist countries at the Trade Ministry and for Czechoslovakia by a Director General at the External Trade Ministry.

The minutes provides for expanding volume of trade exchange and promoting technical and economic cooperation between the two countries.

#### INA NEW OFFICE ABROAD

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) started receiving direct news despatches from Paris through its new office opened in the French capital on May 2. Meanwhile, new INA correspondents left for London and Teheran to open new offices there.

INA has correspondents and offices in various parts of the world including New Delhi, Moscow, Lagos, New York, Nicosia, Colombo and most Arab countries.

#### ARAB SYMPOSIUM ON COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS

An Arab symposium on organisation and management of cooperative associations in the Arab countries, sponsored by the Arab League organisation for administrative sciences, was held in Nineveh, north of Iraq, on May 2.

The six-day symposium dealt with several research papers in cooperative fields covering agricultural, productive and service aspects and means and methods of their management and organisation.

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