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American Friends of the Middle East. 1952-1954.

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משרד המודיעין
ISRAEL OFFICE OF INFORMATION

11 East 70th Street
New York 21, New York

TRafalgar 9-7400

November 21, 1952

Rabbi H. Friedman
c/o Congregation Emanuel
B'nai Jeshurun
2419 East Kenwood Blvd.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Dear Herh,

I had an S.O.S. from Mrs. Kovenock to which I replied as per attached copy. Abe Harman in particular thinks that you are the person to do a very important job there, and that you will find a way of avoiding all snags. However, I am sufficiently impressed by the Cleveland experience to understand that you may have doubts entering into any such situation. If you believe that no prominent Jew should be associated officially with such a committee of the American Friends, then one may ^{not} think in terms of a reliable non-Jew, perhaps one of the women of the Milwaukee Committee for Israel, playing the part of a watch-dog on the Committee. But I am always afraid that such people are usually not well enough informed and not sufficiently ~~integrated~~ ⁱⁿ with us so as to remain with us and not end up by working on the other side.

Well, if you should decide to go ahead with it yourself after due overtures made by Virginia Huebner, then you will certainly have the blessings of the Embassy as well as of the American Zionist Council. Your difficulties will probably be, if any, only with the Jewish Community in Milwaukee. Should you decide against it, then I think your counsel would be invaluable to whoever gets involved with the Committee on our behalf.

I have seen Rabbi Kaufman since my return here. I find that Abe Harman has been in touch with him and Yahil about the forthcoming "Pilgrimage". We shall do our best to make it a success.

I wonder how your own Jewish Committee is shaping up and whether you have already been elected Chairman to the loud acclamations from the broad Jewish masses. Please drop me a line.

It was very nice seeing you again, and I particularly enjoyed the evening at your home.

With kindest regards.

Cordially yours,

Russ E. Eshel

Rabbi Friedman

C O P Y

November 21, 1952

Mrs. Harry Kovenock
Milwaukee Committee for Israel
400 E. Belle Avenue
Milwaukee 11, Wisconsin.

Dear Esther,

I have just received your letter of November 18th. (the mail is awfully slow) and I hasten to give you my personal reaction after consultation with our Embassy in Washington; Mr. Harman, Head of the Israel Office of Information; Rabbi Ungar of the American Zionist Council; and Mrs. Epstein of Hadassah.

This is the situation as I see it, in the light of what is happening in Milwaukee and my talks with the above named people: It is no use, and it may even not be advisable to fight against ~~the~~ establishment in Milwaukee of a Committee of the American Friends of the Middle East. It will be established anyhow, so it may be just as well to be in on it. In view of the special situation in Milwaukee, where you have such a strong Committee for Israel, it might be possible to keep pro-Arab activities under control, and prevent them from becoming anti-Israel and anti-Jewish.

You may wish to appoint an influential member of your committee, perhaps Virginia Huebner, to negotiate with Rev. Reisman on the following basis: If he is concerned with the Middle East, so is she and your Committee, as well as other Jewish organizations in Milwaukee. If he envisages his own activities on behalf of the Middle East, as including Israel in a positive way, apart from naturally eliminating any anti-Israel propaganda, then there may be a way of cooperation. In the event of Reisman giving positive assurances, it may be suggested to him that a prominent Jew may be appointed Vice Chairman of the local Committee of the Friends, in order to make it an inter-communal and non-exclusive affair. A man for instance such as Rabbi Friedman could, in my view, do a great deal to prevent the local Friends at least from conducting anti-Israel propaganda, and might even give some qualified and limited support to the case of the Middle East as a whole, on the lines of my recent speeches in Milwaukee, that is to say, American interest in, and assistance for stability in the Middle East, based on peace and friendly relations ~~with~~ ^{between} Israel and her Arab neighbors.

To tell you quite frankly, there is a snag in such a situation. It has happened in Cleveland, where a Rabbi associated himself with the Friends Committee, that an appeal for clothing for Arab refugees was then made by the Committee. The Rabbi was involved and this appeal was bitterly ~~received~~ ^{resented} by the Cleveland Jewish Community. I understand from Mrs. Epstein that Hadassah too, would not like to be involved in such appeals.

Nov. 27, '52

Change Speech Date of British Diplomat

Sir Reader Bullard, British ambassador to Iran from 1939 to 1946, will speak on "Crisis in the Middle East" at a dinner-meeting of the Foreign Policy Association of Milwaukee at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 4 at the City club. He originally was scheduled to speak here Monday night.

Nov. 25, '52

THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL

Describes Arabs' 'Growing Pains'

Americans were asked to have patience with the Arab countries Monday by Lawrence E. D. Aplin, 48, a Milwaukee born international YMCA staff member doing organizational work in Lebanon. Aplin did YMCA boys' work here from 1927 to 1934. He has been in Lebanon the last year.

Although an increasing sense of nationalism in the near east arouses distrust of the west, Americans "ought not to become too impatient with countries that are in the throes of developing new responsibilities along with new privileges," Aplin said in an interview.

"Making mistakes occasionally is part of the growing pains of

taking on new responsibilities," he said. Aplin said that along with nationalism he detected a new social restlessness in Lebanon. Many groups are getting an education for the first time and are beginning to be conscious of a need for "the people to have more to say in what is going on," he said. He described these groups as the "newly educated have nots."

Aplin spoke Monday at a luncheon of the downtown YMCA's committee of management and Monday night he addressed the metropolitan board of directors.

From our own political point of view, it would do no harm, on the contrary, it would be a great advantage to Israel publicity-wise, if a Jewish Community were to donate some clothing for Arab refugees. After all, the Government of Israel too, has made considerable financial allocations for the relief of Arab refugees through the United Nations, and is supporting approximately 20,000 Arab refugees in Israel. We see no harm in this, but on the other hand we do not wish to encourage anything that might ~~disturb~~ the Jewish community. No political advantage would be worth such a crisis.

There may be a way out if Rabbi Friedman, or whoever joins the Friends in a responsible position such as Vice Chairman, were to make the point that as he would not ask the Friends to support, let us say, Hadassah projects, in the same way, he would not ask the Jewish community to support purely Arab projects.

AMERICAN JEWISH

Summing up, I would say that Virginia Hiesner should do the sounding out of Reiser and the Arabs to see whether there is any basis for co-operation. I am sorry I did not meet her last week in Milwaukee and therefore cannot judge the kind of person she is and whether she would be well enough informed and steady enough to follow our line whatever the pro-Arab pressure may be. You will have to decide that for yourself. But I do believe that something may be gained by at least a local rapprochement if handled properly. I am sending a copy of this letter to Rabbi Friedman, and would ask you to be in touch with him about it. May I also ask you to keep me informed step-by-step as to what is happening. Naturally you are free to write for guidance to the American Zionist Council, as well as to Mrs. Epstein, but I feel that the final decision will have to be made in the light of the local circumstances. I feel that I should tell you that Mrs. Epstein's reaction was the only negative one in view of the Cleveland experience. I am sure you will hear from her separately.

With my warmest regards and looking forward to hearing from you again, and many thanks for your kindness and great efforts during my recent Milwaukee stay which I thoroughly enjoyed,

Yours ever,

Rg

Ruth Goldschmidt

RR/1392

c.c. Rabbi Friedman



משרד המודיעין
ISRAEL OFFICE OF INFORMATION

11 East 70th Street
New York 21, New York

TRafalgar 9-7600

January 2. 1953

Rabbi H. Friedman
Congregation Emami-El B'ne Jeshurun
2419 East Kenwood Blvd.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Dear Herb,

Thanks a lot for your note of December 29, and enclosures, which I have forwarded to the department interested in such matters. It is very useful information.

Please do let me know if there has been any development about (a) the Milwaukee Committee, and (b) the American Friends of the Middle East, in Milwaukee. I know I am a nuisance asking you for a report, but you will realise that our people are most interested in both projects, so when you have a moment, please drop me a line.

With best wishes,

Yours cordially,

Ruth.

Ruth Goldschmidt

RR/1507

January 8, 1953

Mr. Louis Lipsky
American Zionist Council
342 Madison Avenue
New York 17, New York

Dear Mr. Lipsky:

I had a conference this afternoon with the Reverend Ensworth Reischer of Milwaukee, who is one of the Vice-Presidents of The American Friends for the Middle East. Mr. Reischer is a Methodist minister, as was his father, who occupied the pulpit of the Broadway Tabernacle in New York for many years. His father was a good friend of Dr. Stephen Wise, and he himself remembers having met Dr. Wise many times over the course of the years.

I discussed with Mr. Reischer very frankly the impression which the Jewish community has of the American Friends of the Middle East. I told him that the general impression was that this group was pro-Arab, anti-Zionist, and in favor of a solution of the Arab refugee problem, namely, the return of the Arabs to Israel, which was in the main unacceptable to the Jewish point of view. I explained further that the peculiar constellation of partners who made up the American Friends gave the Jewish community further cause for doubt. The fact that there is a coalition of such diverse elements as the Christian Century, The American Council for Judaism, Dorothy Thompson, oil support, could only lead to the conclusion that the interests of this total group might easily be construed as being inimical to the interests of Israel. I was quite frank with Mr. Reischer in presenting this analysis to him and he listened carefully and thoughtfully.

It seems to me that he is a moderate. He stated vigorously that the objective of the American Friends was not to press for a return of Arab refugees to Israel. He explained in great detail why this statement could not be made as a matter of public policy, because it would inalienate and infuriate the Arab world whose sympathy

the group is attempting to achieve. He went further to explain that the reasons for soliciting the friendship of the Arab world was to improve the status of America in that region, to help stabilize the Middle East, and to prevent a development of anti-American sentiment. He realized that the American Friends has become labeled as anti-Zionist and anti-Israel, and agreed that it was unfortunate that such a labeling had taken place.

He admitted that the primary objective was to improve public relations with the Arab world. He was equally frank to admit, however, that if this meant destroying public relations with the Jewish world, that it might be a pyrrhic victory. He said that his position all along had been to try to maintain good relations with Zionist groups, but that he was not in a majority on his Board in that point of view.

I suggested that I understood the nature of the tightrope he was attempting to walk, and that the least he should do is make sure that the Jewish groups understand the line of approach of the American Friends. He agreed that confidential liason would be a valuable thing. He insisted upon making the point that if it were known publicly that the American Friends had contact with official Zionist bodies that much of their work with the Arabs would be invalidated. He told me he would be in New York on the 28-30 of this month for a meeting of the American Friends. He suggested that during that visit he would be happy to talk with you. For reasons of tactics he would rather not have such a visit made public and would prefer to have it conducted in a spirit of informal and friendly exploration. He doesn't know at what hotel he will be staying, but suggested that if you drop him a note here in Milwaukee (his address is 1010 West Wisconsin Avenue) indicating that you would be happy to see him, he would meet you at your office or any place mutually agreeable.

My personal judgment is that such a conversation would be worthwhile. I think he is aware of the label which the American Friends has acquired in the Jewish mind and regrets the fact that this label has been attached. I think further that he would honestly like

Mr. Louis Lipsky -3

to improve public relations with the Jewish group. I think a realistic appraisal of his political position is that he accepts Israel as a fact; does not think it makes any sense to press for the return of Arab refugees to Israel; sees great practical difficulties in the way of resettling the refugees in Arab countries; and feels that during this process of impasse, America is suffering because the Arab world tends to blame America for being so pro-Israel. This is, I think, a fairly complete statement of his position. He has a good factual background of the material and I think is intelligent.

I told him that I did not know whether you would be interested or would have the time to invite him to see you personally. I also told him that Jerome Unger was the Executive Director and that a conversation might be arranged with him. He will understand if you write him a discreet letter, and he will also understand if he does not hear from you at all.

If there is anything further I can tell you about this, please don't hesitate to call.

Very sincerely yours,

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

HAF/ms

c.c. Rev. Ensworth Reiser
1010 W. Wisconsin Ave.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

January 8, 1953

Mr. Louis Lipsky
American Zionist Council
342 Madison Avenue
New York 17, New York

Dear Mr. Lipsky:

As you can see from the inscription on the bottom of the other letter, I sent a copy of the other to Reiser. For your own eyes, alone, I wanted to fill you in a little bit on the background.

Ruth Goldschmidt first told me about him. She had one conversation with him when she was in Milwaukee recently. You might check with her by phone to garner her impression.

I wouldn't take your time to bother with the guy at all, if it weren't for the fact that I think he might be a weak link in the chain. He is a fairly decent and ethical person. He has a broad liberal background which stems from the social action school of the Methodist Church. He told me that he made quite an effort originally to establish liason with the Jewish groups. Apparently somebody steered him to Carl Voss. He suffered a certain disillusionment when Voss did not retain in confidentiality the nature of their conversation. Apparently it leaked out that the American Friends was making a contact with the Zionist bodies and this prejudiced their case. After that, he sort of tended to shy away and he lost status within his Board because everybody used this as an example to indicate that it didn't pay to try to keep on the good side of the Zionists.

Apparently he feels that he is being terribly liberal by being willing to make another effort to establish contact. It isn't a matter of protocol with him that he wants an invitation to come from you. He apparently feels that he can't make another overture again, but that if an overture comes from your side, he can respond to it in all good conscience.

Mr. Louis Lipsky - 2

I have no idea of knowing what your policy in the matter is. I'm not close enough to it. I happened to stumble on this by accident, as it were. If you feel that you want to talk with him, in the hope of finding in him a moderate person through whom more moderate views can be made to prevail within the American Friends, then you go ahead and invite him to come and talk with you. If for some reason you feel you would rather not, then I would appreciate it if you would write to me and I will speak with him orally, without putting anything on paper, explaining that he will not be hearing from you. I don't think, incidentally, that this will cause any antagonism on his part. He will simply understand that it is strategically or tactically impossible for you to do so.

So feel free to make your decision any way you want. I am trying to walk on eggshells in order not to get you involved in something that might be dangerous. On the other hand, I really think that this may be an individual worth cultivating.

With perfect confidence in whatever decision you make, I am

Sincerely yours,

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

HAF/ms

January 14, 1953

Miss Ruth Goldschmidt
11 East 70th Street
New York 21, New York

Dear Ruth:

It has been a long time since I have had an opportunity to write, but I have been busy in the meanwhile nevertheless.

The main problem with which I've concerned myself is the matter of Rev. Mr. Reiser and the American Friends. Mrs. Kovenock had been talking with me about the best method of approach to Reiser. I said that I would be happy to call him out of the blue. She decided against that - wisely, I think.

Then, one day, he called me. He wanted me to cooperate with him in a joint radio program. I stalled on that, but used it as an opportunity to suggest we have lunch together. The lunch turned into a four hour affair. The gist of the conversation is pretty well contained in the enclosed letters I wrote to Lipsky. Subsequently I saw him again, within a week, at a meeting of the local Ministerial Alliance. I had been invited to speak on the subject of "The Jewish Holidays". A few days before the meeting, I was asked to change the topic and to discuss instead, "Israel-Arab Relations". It was a heaven-sent opportunity, because Reiser was in the audience. I presented the full position, including an oblique comment about the American Friends. It didn't draw his fire at all. On the contrary, he became even friendlier after the second meeting than the first.

An interesting sidelight is the fact that some other minister took up the angels, and took exception to my statement that America should consider it in the interest of her own foreign policy to continue to support Israel. This man said that he didn't think a single Arab would agree that this was in the best interest of American policy. I admitted he was probably right. He went further to say that he didn't think it was in the best interest of American policy either. At which point

Miss Ruth Goldschmidt - 2

there were quite a few murmurs in the room of disapproval of his position. It was rather encouraging to see that our public relations position has not degenerated completely. I have the feeling that some of the good will that was built up over the past years is still latent. It is simply lying dormant and I had the feeling that a fairly effective revival of interest had taken place among these thirty-five or so ministers by the time I got through.

So far there has been no further talk of a local chapter of the American Friends. So nothing has been done about my being incorporated into the picture. I daresay that Reisman would welcome it very much if I were to become involved with him. He would take it as a sign of approval or sanction of the Jewish community. I really don't know which is the wiser course. At any rate, the question is currently academic, because no request has been made of me or anyone else, as far as I know.

Finally, with regard to the local Milwaukee committee for watch-dog purposes, we had one meeting of the group of eight people, representing all parties. It was my feeling that Swickow should be the Chairman. He resisted being drafted. The meeting broke up rather inconclusively, with a sort of general understanding that he should be Chairman and I would agree to be Vice-Chairman. I understand from Mrs. Agulnick that after the meeting broke up, he continued to resist. At any rate, he is going to Israel soon, for a four or five weeks trip. When he returns, we will tackle seriously the whole business and get the thing organized effectively.

If there is anything else I can do, just keep on hollering. With all good wishes, I am

As ever,

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

enc.

HAF/ms



משרד המודיעין
ISRAEL OFFICE OF INFORMATION

11 East 70th Street
New York 21, New York

TRafaelgar 9-7600

January 26, 1953

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman
Temple Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun
2419 E. Kenwood Blvd.
Milwaukee 11, Wisconsin

Dear Herb,

I have just come back from Texas and was delighted to find your letter of January 14th.

I have just been in touch with Jerry Unger who informed me that Louis Lipsky is writing to the Reverend Reiser inviting him to look him up during his stay in New York.

While I do not think there is any harm in that, I am also sure that we cannot count on Reiser to have any policy-making influence within the American Friends, nor do I believe that he wishes to exercise such influence. From my own talks and contacts with him, I feel that this man wants to have his cake and eat it. He wants to work quite definitely on behalf of the Arabs, but at the same time he does not want to lose his reputation as a liberal, and wants to avoid if possible, to incur the enmity of the Jewish community in Milwaukee, which, as you know, can do him a great deal of harm. I think the rest is just plain double talk. Don't forget we are socially on very friendly terms here in New York with Garland Hopkins and other big machines of the American Friends. Abe Harman had lunch with them, and Karl Baehr and Karl Voss meet them almost regularly. The pattern is almost the same. They assure us they have nothing against Israel and want our cooperation, and accept us as part of the Middle East. However, these nice sentiments never show up in any literature or speeches sponsored by the American Friends, and after all, they are not talking here to Arab audiences but to the American public.

(cont'd)

You will probably be able to work out quite a nice relationship with Reisner who needs you more than you need him, but I wouldn't trust him too much.

I am glad to hear that you had a local Jewish Milwaukee committee meeting, representing all parties. I hope that after Rabbi Swichkow's return from Israel, he will feel more inclined to assume the chairmanship. Anyhow I feel quite confident that you will be able to work-out something effective.

With my warmest regards,

Yours ever,

Ruth
Ruth Goldschmidt

RR/1541



AMERICAN ZIONIST COUNCIL

342 MADISON AVENUE

• TELEPHONE MURRAY HILL 2-1160

• NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

Cable Address: AMZIONIST

January 26, 1953

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman
Temple Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun
2419 E. Kenwood Blvd.
Milwaukee 11, Wis.

Dear Herbert:

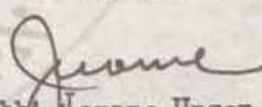
Mr. Lipsky has written to Mr. Reisner, as the enclosed copy of his letter indicates. He wants me to thank you for your letters of January 8th.

Miss Roth Goldschmidt has of course discussed this whole situation with me too, and her information has been passed on to Mr. Lipsky.

We look forward to hearing from Mr. Reisner and shall communicate with you again after we have heard from him and seen him.

With warm good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,


Rabbi Jerome Unger
Executive Director

JU:JK
(Enc.)

CONSTITUENT ORGANIZATIONS

Hadassah, Women's Zionist Organization of America • Hapoel Hamizrachi • Labor Zionist Organization of America-Poale Zion
• Mizrachi Organization of America • Progressive Zionist League-Hashomer Hatzair • United Zionist Labor Party (Achdut
Avodah-Poale Zion) • Zionist Organization of America • Zionists-Revisionists of America

January 26, 1953

Rev. Ensworth Reiser
1010 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Dear Rev. Reiser:

If you should be coming to New York
within the next few weeks, please let me know.
We could meet to discuss matters of common interest.

Sincerely yours,

Louis Lipsky
Chairman

LL:JK

ISRAEL OFFICE OF INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM

11 East 70th Street
New York 21, N.Y.

to: Harry Steinberg

Date: March 31, 1953

from: Benny Cohen

Re: First Meeting of the Milwaukee unit of
the A.F.M.E.

Enclosed you will find a circular letter which was sent by the A.F.M.E. to various colleges in Milwaukee. It was forwarded to us by an Israel student. This student and a friend of his attended the first meeting which took place on March 12, 1953, and was attended by approximately 30 persons: 13 were American Arabs; 4 were Arab students; 8-10 were Americans (among them two clergymen).

Mrs. Wafia Khouri Makdissi of Lebanon spoke against the "Zionist menace" and blamed Israel for the plight of the Arab refugees. The student's impression of Mrs. O.R. Sellers is that she is very well acquainted with Middle Eastern affairs and an ardent pro-Arab.

Rev. Ensworth Reigner was chairman of the meeting and tried to be fair in the discussion. When the Israel student attempted to protest the inaccuracies and falsehoods aired in the discussion, he was asked not to begin any arguments. Someone asked why German reparation funds should not be channelized to the Arab refugees.

The Israel student wrote us that future meetings of the A.F.M.E. will be attended by our students. He asked for any information on Mrs. O.R. Sellers; do you have anything on her?

cc: A. Harman
R. Goldschmidt
Hanan Bar-On

C O P Y

THE ARAB PROPAGANDISTS

EVER since the founding of Israel, many pro-Arab spokesmen in the United States have attempted to create an unfavorable climate of public opinion with regard to the new Jewish State. Through the use of the speaker's platform and various publications, the American public has been subjected to a barrage of anti-Israel propaganda. The participants in these campaigns have been either veteran propagandists identified with the organized pro-Arab movement in this country or self-styled experts of the Middle East sympathetic to the Arab cause. While in many instances these spokesmen appeared to be expressing a legitimate pro-Arab point of view, frequently their attacks against Israel—either by design or otherwise—had a generally harmful impact upon the American Jewish community and a secondary anti-Semitic result.

By the winter of 1949 the intensity of a two-year anti-Israel propaganda campaign had diminished considerably. But this lull in pro-Arab activity ended in 1951 with the arrival here of Abdul Raham Azzam Pasha, founder of the Arab League, the highest policy-making body in the Arab world, representing the states of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi-Arabia and Yemen. One of Azzam's primary objectives in coming to this country was to organize a centrally directed adequately financed Arab propaganda apparatus. The seeds which Azzam planted bore fruit, and in 1951-2 The Arab League and other pro-Arab propagandists took over in selling the Arab cause to the American public.

While they have avoided anti-Semitism in their formal propaganda various individuals associated with the League have begun to negotiate with a number of bigots and professional propagandists unfriendly toward minority groups.

As yet only a few of the negotiations have concluded in definite working agreements but plans are being formulated for a number of "deals". Following is a report of the individuals concerned and their preliminary negotiations.

ALLEN ZOLL

Particularly interested in the Arab cause was Allen Zoll, founder of the National Council for American Education.⁽¹⁾ Throughout the year Zoll, who has a long record of propaganda activities, attempted to ingratiate himself with top ranking Arab diplomatic representatives and Arab League officials in the United States in attempts to sell his services as a public relations expert. In his discussions with the Arab representatives, Zoll pointed to the need for establishing a pro-Arab, anti-Israel propaganda machine in the United States, with Zoll, of course, acting as a paid "expert".

His first sales target was Omar Haliq, who in the Spring of

1952, while acting as representative in the United States for the Arab League, met with Zoll to discuss German reparations to Israel. Haliq reacted sympathetically to an offer by Zoll to publish pamphlets explaining the Arab point of view, and sought his advice before submitting a report to the Arab League headquarters in Cairo with respect to the Arab Chapter in The ADL book, *The Troublemakers*. Haliq included in his report several of Zoll's recommendations for possible counter-action against the ADL exposé.

Undoubtedly encouraged by Haliq's friendly reaction, Zoll redoubled his efforts to sell himself to other Arab personalities in the United States.

On November 14, 1952, Issa Korachi, correspondent for the Arab press, introduced Zoll at a luncheon at the United Nations to a number of Arab diplomats. During a five-hour session with this group (including several Arab foreign ministers, and the Arab League's Secretary General, Abdul Hassouna), Zoll held forth on the implications of the American elections for the Arab nations. He predicted that President-elect Eisenhower and his administration would be generally sympathetic to the Arabs despite obstructive efforts of some pro-Zionist Republicans. Therefore, Zoll went on, the time was now ripe for the creation of an Arab propaganda office in the U. S. which would help American agencies, including his own, to destroy Zionist influence in American politics and to stave off the influence of a Communist-Jewish world conspiracy.

Going far beyond the proposals he originally made to Haliq, Zoll suggested the following themes to be advanced in an Arab propaganda campaign: 1) a demand for cessation of U. S. economic aid to Israel; 2) a campaign against German reparations to Israel, and 3) a boycott in the Arab countries of American products manufactured by Jewish controlled companies to compel the owners of these firms to stop aiding Israel. (Zoll offered to provide a list of partially or wholly owned Jewish firms.)

Zoll impressed his luncheon companions sufficiently to enable him to arrange subsequent meetings. Thus, a few days later he met with Ahmed Farrag, then Egypt's Foreign Minister. This time Zoll added another wrinkle to his scheme. He suggested the establishment of an Arab desk in the New York office of his National Council for American Education whose function it would be to prepare pro-Egyptian and pro-Arab propaganda for distribution to Zoll's mailing list of American schools and universities. Such an "Arab Desk," Zoll indicated, could be of value when Egypt or the Arab League itself opened propaganda offices in this country.

Farrag is reported to have accepted Zoll's proposals in principle and to have invited him to visit Egypt at the expense of the Egyptian government.

Zoll pursued his goal assiduously. The day after his meeting with Farrag, he conferred in New York with Abdul Hassouna,

(1) See THE FACTS, May, 1951.

Secretary General of the Arab League. Tailoring his sales talk this time to fit Hassouna's requirements, Zoll discoursed on the need for an Arab League propaganda office in the United States, and went so far as to suggest that he be appointed by the League as its special representative to handle the problem of American Zionist activities. In addition, Zoll presented the League's Secretary General with a ten-point program to improve the United States' attitude toward the Arabs and revise it with respect to the Israelis.

Hassouna expressed an interest in Zoll's suggestions and asked for a detailed budget on the cost of the propaganda apparatus he envisaged.

Zoll met with Hassouna on later occasions. On one visit they discussed the possibility of a publication to be edited by Zoll and subsidized by the Arab League. On another, Zoll was accompanied by Russell Maguire, wealthy publisher of the American Mercury, who last year purchased copies of John Beatt's anti-Semitic book, *The Iron Curtain Over America*,⁽²⁾ for distribution to his friends. That the meeting was a cordial one is indicated by a report that Hassouna invited Maguire to visit the Arab nations as a guest of the Arab League. And of particular significance to Zoll was Hassouna's subsequent declaration that the long-deferred Arab propaganda office in the U. S. would be launched some time in 1953, and that the Arab League was considering employing an American lobbyist to handle its affairs in this country.

Just how or whether Zoll will fit into the Arab propaganda effort in the U. S. remains to be seen. It seems evident, however, that he is looked upon with favor by a number of Arab officials, particularly the Egyptian delegation in the U. S. which, authorized to do so, has under consideration payment to him for his services.

BENJAMIN FREEDMAN

While Zoll was busy posing as a friend of Islam, other troublemakers were similarly engaged in helping the Arab cause.

Among those eager to offer their services was the discredited anti-Zionist propagandist, Benjamin H. Freedman.⁽³⁾ Last May, Freedman wrote a long letter to Azzam Pasha in Egypt outlining a program of counteraction to offset the unfavorable publicity created by the exposé of Arab propagandists in *The Troublemakers*, and even offered to go to Cairo to discuss the project with Azzam personally.

Although nothing came of this proposal, Freedman continued his attempts to make himself useful to Arabs in this country. Last summer he submitted a report on the political situation to a meeting of high-ranking Arab diplomats in Washington who had gathered to discuss the forthcoming Presidential campaign. Freedman's report which was read but discarded as "exaggerated," urged the Arabs to fight against the Democratic candidates who, he charged, were supported by Jewish capital.

A few months later Freedman met with Fouad El-Pharaony, prominent member of the Egyptian delegation. He had, said Freedman, two important political items that he wanted to

pass on to his friends in the Arab League: that Stevenson if elected was planning to have "two Jews" in his cabinet, and that the Zionists in the State Department had received instructions from the "Jewish espionage" agency, the Anti-Defamation League, to sabotage any aid to Arab countries.

Shortly after the election Freedman appeared at the delegates' lounge for an appointment with Hassouna, the Arab League's Secretary General. During their forty-five-minute talk, Freedman tried to sell the idea that the Arab League could make good use of the October 15 issue of *Conde McGinley's Common Sense* which "proved" that "Marxist Jews" ran the United Nations. (There is no evidence that Freedman underwrote this particular issue, although he is known to have subsidized several previous issues of McGinley's hate sheet.)

Meanwhile Freedman continued to attend the U.N. sessions and early in December arranged an interview with Dr. Zafer Rifai, Foreign Minister of Syria. At that time Freedman tried to convince the Arab delegate that he was an expert on Jewish Zionist activities in the United States and proposed the establishment of a Syrian office of propaganda in this country with which, he said, he would be glad to cooperate.

Rifai took Freedman's suggestions under advisement and indicated that he would turn the matter over to the proper authorities at the Syrian Embassy in Washington.

GERALD SMITH

In addition to consorting with such personalities as Freedman, some Arab spokesmen in this country have accepted the cooperation of several professional anti-Semites including Gerald L. K. Smith.

Last year Smith sent out a number of letters to prominent Arabs concerning various aspects of "the Jewish problem." Among those to whom he wrote was Kamil Rahim, the Egyptian Ambassador, and when Rahim's representative, Colonel Khalifa, attended the Republican convention in Chicago in July, he had an hour's conversation with the Christian Nationalist leader.

In a subsequent report to Rahim, Khalifa indicated that he had been favorably impressed by Smith whom he characterized as one of the principal fighters against Zionism and Jewish influence in the United States.

Smith boasted to Khalifa of the "wonderful cooperation" he had been receiving from various representatives of Syrian-Lebanese American clubs. While he did not elaborate on the nature of this cooperation it was reported that Farid Zeineddine of the Syrian legation had paid Smith for anti-Israel "literature."

Other Arabs, too, began to evidence a sudden interest in Smith's anti-Semitic propaganda. Dr. Ahmed Galal Abdelrazek, Egypt's permanent representative to the United Nations, ordered Smith's pamphlets for his Legation and found *The Cross and the Flag* so stimulating that he bought 100 subscriptions and expressed an interest in personally meeting its editor, Don Lohbeck. The Saudi Arabian delegation also developed an affection for Smith's publication and ordered subscriptions of the hate-sheet for its members.

(2) See *THE FACTS*, February-March, 1952.
(3) See *THE FACTS*, June, 1948 and June, 1950.

ROBERT WILLIAMS

Meanwhile the West Coast bigot, "Maj." Robert H. Williams,⁽⁴⁾ was making strenuous efforts to sell his services to Arab representatives in the United States.

Last spring, before the political conventions, Williams wrote Abed Bouhafa, Arab League agent and correspondent for the influential Cairo daily, *Al Misri*, pointing out the danger to the Arab cause if a Zionist-supported candidate were to receive the nomination. Williams had, he said, a scheme to spike such a move which deserved the support of the Arab newspapers and suggested getting together with Bouhafa to talk the matter over.

At the same time Williams also reportedly contacted various members of the Egyptian Embassy in Washington, advising them that he would be in Chicago for the conventions and that he would be delighted to consult and exchange views with any Arab diplomat who cared to look him up.

A month after the convention Bouhafa approached Williams and offered him a nominal amount to write an exclusive "exposé" of the Anti-Defamation League—presumably for *Al Misri*.

But Williams was out for bigger game. In September he wrote the Arab League and offered to prepare a twelve-page pamphlet dealing with various phases of the Israeli-Arab controversy, including a report on the pro-Israeli activities of the Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Committee. Williams offered to do the complete job, including suitable names from his mailing list, for the "bargain" price of \$2,000.00.

The Arab League's reaction was favorable. A few days later Omar Haliq, a consistent reader of Williams' *Intelligence Summary*, replied that the idea was feasible and asked Williams for an outline of the brochure, pending final authorization from Cairo. Haliq had no doubt that the project would be approved and offered to assist Williams in its preparation in any way he could.

While Williams has succeeded in convincing the Arabs that he can be of use to them, other professional bigots thus far have been less fortunate. The notorious Joe Kamp contacted the Egyptian delegation without any observable results and on several occasions Upton Close tried unsuccessfully to interest the Egyptian Ambassador in a radio project. As for the bigoted Gerald Winrod, he managed to get himself invited to lunch at the Egyptian Embassy early last year. What happened at the meeting is not known.

To what extent the Arabs will continue to cooperate with professional anti-Semites and native troublemakers remains to be seen. Much depends apparently on whether they decide to establish the long-deferred Arab propaganda office in this country. According to the French language Cairo newspaper, *Le Bourse Egyptienne* of February 23, the Arab League has already appropriated 300,000 pounds for the creation of propaganda offices in the United States and abroad during the current year. Although similar reports have been made in previous years, this time it appears that the Arabs are determined to go ahead with their plans. The probability that they will then make some definite arrangements with such individuals as Allen Zoll and Robert Williams cannot be disregarded.

(4) See *THE FACTS*, March, 1950.

THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

IN RECENT months numerous inquiries have been received regarding the activities of an organization sponsored by prominent Americans, The American Friends of the Middle East. The inquiries are apparently prompted by the fact that some of the personalities connected with the organization had given expression in the past to pro-Arab and anti-Zionist sentiments which, wittingly or not, in the opinion of many, had a generally harmful impact on the American Jewish community.

While there is no indication that The American Friends is anti-Semitic in its orientation, its ideological affinity with Arab propaganda in this country plus the fact that some confusion has arisen over its objectives, makes an examination of its activities desirable.

When the group was formed in June, 1951, its declared objectives, as proclaimed in full-page ads in the *New York Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune* were defined, for the most part, in rather broad ethical and humanitarian terms—to defeat the threat of Communist aggression in the Middle East and to strengthen the bonds "of culture and religion, of literature and education," between Americans and the peoples of the Middle East.

The group's founder (and later its president) was journalist Dorothy Thompson, whose attacks against Israel and charges of dual loyalty against American Zionists have made her an increasingly controversial figure in recent years.⁽⁵⁾ On its roster of distinguished charter members were several persons with records of pro-Arab leanings, including Dr. Philip Hitti of Princeton;⁽⁶⁾ Dr. Garland Hopkins, associate editor of *The Christian Century*, who supported the defunct Committee for Peace with Justice in the Holy Land;⁽⁷⁾ and Dr. Millar Burrows, author of the highly controversial book, *"Palestine Is Our Business."*

Although from its initial announcement The American Friends appeared to be concerned with the problems of all Middle Eastern countries—presumably including Israel—Miss Thompson soon made it clear that its real objective was to publicize and win support for the point of view of the Arab nations. In a letter to the *New York Times* (July 7) she asserted that while her organization "is not directed against Israel, . . . it is determined to try and see to it that the problems and achievements of other Middle Eastern States are not totally ignored."

Miss Thompson added that The American Friends was "trying to improve relations through broader and more objective knowledge on both sides." In a letter to members (August 20) she pointed out that:

I consider it to be one of the principal tasks of the American Friends of the Middle East at this time to help in breaking down the tendency on the part of the American press and radio either to disregard everything friendly to the Arabs or to print only distorted and untrue statements about them.

With her communication she included a copy of a letter written by the noted author, Vincent Sheean, one of the American Friends' charter members, which depicted Israel as

(5) See *THE FACTS*, June, 1950.

(6) See *THE FACTS*, May, 1948.

(7) See *THE FACTS*, June, 1950.

an aggressor nation and was highly critical of Zionists in general.

Shortly after it was founded, The American Friends set out to aid the Arab cause in every way it could. On September 30, 1951, Omar Haliq, acting U. S. representative of the Arab League, acknowledged in a memo to Cairo that Dorothy Thompson and the American Friends had been giving the League invaluable aid in promoting an Arab Festival in Washington, D. C. Subsequently Miss Thompson initiated a series of appointments with Arab diplomats and reportedly told Fuad El-Pharaony of the Egyptian delegation that she wanted to coordinate Arab activities in the United Nations with those of the American Friends so that the Arab position could be explained and interpreted to the American public.

In addition, the American Friends interpreted the American political scene for the benefit of Arab League officials. At a meeting of top diplomats of the member states of the League at the Egyptian Embassy in Washington on July 2nd, a report prepared by the American Friends was read regarding the attitudes of the political candidates towards Arab-Israeli affairs.

Meanwhile a series of private conferences and receptions were held between members of The American Friends and Arab representatives to discuss topics of mutual interest and in April, 1952 Dorothy Thompson and Garland Hopkins, executive vice-president of the organization (on leave from his position as associate editor of *The Christian Century*) embarked on a tour of the Arab nations.

While in the Middle East Dr. Hopkins and Miss Thompson received the "V.I.P." treatment from high-ranking representatives of the Arab countries. Abdul Rahman Azzam Pasha, the Arab League's founder, let it be known that he favored the organization's objectives and the Syrian Government awarded Miss Thompson its Medal of Honor for defending the Arab cause in the United States.

Following Miss Thompson's and Dr. Hopkins' return to the United States, the American Friends increased its propaganda activities designed to further the Arab cause. Among the significant projects sponsored by the organization—according to its first annual report—were: the creation of Phoenix Lectures, to provide speakers generally sympathetic to the Arabs; the launching of a weekly column to provide small-town papers with feature articles reflecting the American Friends' point of view, and the distribution of pamphlets dealing with the Arab refugee problem. In addition, the American Friends established a Middle Western office in Chicago and announced that other branches had been or were being formed in various other cities—both in this country and in the Middle East.

One of the high points of the organization's public activities was its co-sponsorship of an Arab Student Conference in June, 1952, at the University of Michigan.

The four-day conference, attended by two hundred Arab students from all parts of the country was heralded in an

American Friends press release as "a courageous and constructive step on the part of Arab youth towards strengthening the spiritual and cultural bonds between the peoples of America and the Arabs."

Among the speakers was Dorothy Thompson who told the students that nothing "short of war" could halt the trend toward unification of the Arab states and predicted that the Arab nations were determined to resist any "further encroachment into their world of the State of Israel."

The conference was originally conceived as one which students from all Middle Eastern countries would attend but subsequently the American Friends explained that "unfortunately the intensity of feeling between Israel and the Arab nations is so great" that they decided to limit the conference solely to Arab students.

The American Friends continued to increase the scope of its activities and in January of this year held its first annual conference at New York City's Hotel Delmonico. On this occasion some 200 guests heard such prominent speakers as publisher Henry R. Luce, Dr. Stephen Penrose, President of the American University of Beirut, and several Ambassadors from Arab countries.

While officials from all the Arab League nations were present there was no representative from Turkey which has traded with Israel and during the two-day conference several speakers openly attacked the Jewish State and Zionism.

One of the most inflammatory speeches was given by Farid Zeineddine, Syrian Ambassador to the United States, who denounced "some powers" for having aided in the creation of Israel and charged that Zionism had "undermined the moral ascendancy which the United States enjoyed in the Middle East and sapped the United Nations of much of its moral worth in the eyes of the Middle East peoples."

Another Arab speaker who attacked Israel was Dr. Charles H. Malik, Lebanon's U.N. delegate, who demanded a "fundamental re-examination of Western Policy" with respect to the Near East. Referring to Israel as "a source of deep rancor" in the Arab world, he contended that the Arabs "must be disabused of the conviction that the West has, so to speak, handed them over to the Jews."

As a result of the prestige garnered by its first annual conference the American Friends has reportedly attracted substantial financial contributions from American oil companies and wealthy individuals sympathetic to its aims which will enable it to enlarge its activities substantially in the months ahead.

Despite Miss Thompson's contention that the American Friends "is not a propaganda agency" its activities to date indicate that it does, in effect, perform that function and if its present plans materialize, it seems destined to become an increasingly powerful and influential adjunct to organized Arab propaganda in this country.

American Christian Palestine Committee
342 Madison Avenue, New York 17, N.Y.

MEMORANDUM

to: Harry Steinberg
from: Barbara Foster

April 16, 1953

re: Your question about Mrs. Ovid R. (Katherine) Sellers

She is Director of the Mid-West Region, American Friends of the Middle East, Inc., Chicago, Illinois. The Phoenix Lecture Bureau lists her as "widely known as an authority on the Middle East. She studied at the American School of Oriental Research, Jerusalem, in 1928. Twenty years later she taught at the American Girl's School in Beirut and Beirut College for Women. Mrs. Sellers has just returned from leading a tour to the Middle East. A graduate of Vassar, she is particularly active in the work of the United Council of Church Women. Subjects: Journeying found the Mediterranean; Ancient Lands and Modern Ways; Old Jerusalem; The Road to Bethlehem; Lebanon, Land of Colour; Women of the Arab World." (brochure for season 1953-54)

Her husband is Dean of the McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. He was among eleven churchmen who issued an appeal on 12/25/50 for immediate aid to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and vicinity, including Bethlehem, as per Christian Century of January 3, 1951.

Dr. Sellers served as a year as Director of School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. Milwaukee Journal 10/13/49 reported Sellers said that the refugee problem in Palestine was "largely of American making" and that it was up to Americans to relieve the refugee's distress as much as possible." Visited Jerusalem 1948; close friend of Col. Shean who was killed with Bernadotte.

Dr. Sellers is one of the most rabid pro-Arab Christian leaders, and undoubtedly his wife follows the same line.

COPY

From the
AFME CLIPSHEET

AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE EAST, INC.

139 East 57th Street, New York 22, N. Y.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
William Z. Cline, Director

NEW ADDRESS: MIDDLE EAST HOUSE, 47 East 67th Street, New York 21, N.Y.

EDITORS SPEAK BEFORE OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB

New York, January 7 -- The three American journalists who recently completed a fact-finding tour of the Middle East under the auspices of American Friends of the Middle East were guest speakers today at the regular monthly meeting of New York's famed Overseas Press Club. They spoke to an audience of over 200 writers and correspondents at a luncheon in a mid-Manhattan restaurant.

COGLEY SEES "ANTI-AMERICANISM"
AS SERIOUS AND WIDESPREAD

John Cogley, executive editor of The Commonweal, told his audience that they found an intense and growing feeling of "anti-Americanism" throughout the Arab world. He said that he and his two companions (Dr. Harold Fey, executive editor of The Christian Century and Dr. Morris Lazaron, contributing editor of the Jewish Newsletter) "found no reason to believe that anti-American feelings were limited to one group, country or special class in the Arab world." He attributed this feeling to the Arabs' belief that the United States was responsible for the creation of Israel.

"To put it bluntly," he said, "the U.S. is blamed for Israel, and whether we like it or not, anti-Israel feeling in the Arab world is as universal, obsessive and deepfelt as anti-Communism is in the United States.

"I ask you to remember," he continued, "that the Palestine question to the average Arab is not merely a political question. It is a matter of deep human feelings... For the simple, basic, inescapable fact is that there are hundreds of thousands of Arab refugees living in tents, whose homes were once in Israel. The plight of these people has a tremendous effect on Arab thinking about Israel and about the West -- the United States in particular."

COMMUNISTS SKILLFULLY EXPLOITING
ANTI-AMERICAN FEELINGS, HE HOLDS

Pointing out that the Communists were skillfully exploiting anti-Americanism in the Arab world, Cogley declared that the "United States' real challenge there lies in giving these people a stake of their own in the survival of freedom." He called on the United States to "pivot our policy around" and show them "the West at its best."

FEY RECOMMENDS "FENCED-IN"
POLICY AS FIRST STEP

Dr. Fey suggested that the first step to any solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict was to keep it "fenced in." He declared, "I became convinced that the presence of the U.N. is the biggest factor preventing the waiting war from becoming a

shooting war. The U.N. is effective because it channels world opinion and particularly American opinion, which has weight even though we are hated."

The United States, Fey thought, should lose no time in trying to win back the friendship of the Arabs by giving them a "vested interest" in democracy. "If our policy," he said, "is to develop free men, not satellite states, as Secretary Dulles says, we should use every such asset to build real political independence."

"LITTLE ISRAEL" POLICY NEEDED HE BELIEVES

With regard to Israel, Dr. Fey recommended the adoption of what he called a "little Israel" policy. "Israel must not and will not be permitted by the great powers to expend further by force," he said. "By identifying herself with her neighbors, by yielding some of the land taken in excess of the U.N. boundaries so some of the refugees can be resettled, by seeking to be a good neighbor, Israel may win recognition and eventually friendship. When that happens, she can rise with her neighbors in a regional advance to which she can contribute greatly."

U.S. MUST HELP: HUMAN AFFAIRS NOT STATIC

According to Fey, the United States must help in that regional rise. He pointed to Point Four as having demonstrated how this can be done and said that the Jordan Valley development must be carried through, even though it may have to be begun "piecemeal." He also recommended that, as much as possible, all such aid should be done under the United Nations, to avoid the "feast and famine of congressional whims."

The Jordan Valley, Fey pointed out, can give 200,000 refugees permanent homes. "When that many are resettled," he said, "the resettlement of the other 600,000 will not seem as impossible as it now does. Every time a refugee leaves a camp and seeks work on his own, the situation changes. Human affairs are not static, but changing. By the use of intelligence and good will, this one may change for the better."

LAZARON ADMONISHES UNITED STATES: "PLAY NO FAVORITES"

Dr. Lazaron reminded his audience that formerly the United States "had the confidence of the Arabs" and now "has well-nigh lost it." According to him the United States can regain that confidence only if we regard the Middle East as a whole. "The strategic importance of the area," he said, coupled with "considerations of justice and humanity, our own national security and the peace of the world, demand that we play no favorites in the Middle East. The American people have been given a distorted and one-sided view of the picture. It is high time we got the whole truth," he continued, "for Middle East tensions are having increasing repercussions here."

ISRAEL MUST CHANGE ATTITUDE TOWARD ITS MINORITIES, HE FEELS

Dr. Lazaron suggested that one thing Israel could do would be to "change its attitude toward its minorities." He charged that the State discriminated against its non-Jewish citizens who comprise about 12% of the population and declared that "there should be no second-class citizens in the so-called 'outpost of democracy' in the Middle East."

He called on Israel to "renew its offer to take in 100,000 refugees" and to miss no opportunity to try to win the confidence of her Arab neighbors. "All the nations of the Middle East need each other to develop the entire area for the good of all."

After all the sacrifice of men and money that has gone into the founding of the State of Israel, it would be a tragedy, he observed, for the new country to collapse.

"Without peace Israel will continue to be a subsidized nation," he concluded, "and no nation can long endure on such a foundation."

EDITORS ADDRESS PUBLIC MEETING IN WASHINGTON

Immediately following the Overseas Press Club luncheon the three editors, accompanied by Garland Evans Hopkins, executive vice president of American Friends of the Middle East, and the organization's public relations director, William Z. Cline, traveled to Washington, where they addressed a public meeting at the National Presbyterian Church. The hall was filled to capacity when 400 Washingtonians, among whom were members of Congress and the diplomatic corps, crowded into the auditorium to hear the speakers. The National Presbyterian Church is the church where President Eisenhower regularly worships, and its pastor, Dr. Edward L. R. Elson, is a member of AFME's Board of Directors. Following the addresses by the three speakers, the meeting was thrown open to questions by Mr. Hopkins, who presided. The meeting lasted over two and one-half hours.

EDITORS REPORT FINDINGS TO SECRETARY OF STATE

Washington, January 8 — John Cogley of The Commonweal, Harold Fey of The Christian Century, and Morris Lazonby of the Jewish Newsletter, who recently completed a fact-finding mission to the Middle East at the invitation of American Friends of the Middle East, called on Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, today and spent an hour and fifteen minutes reporting their findings to him and the Under-Secretary of State, Walter Bedell Smith.

Emerging from the conference after what a United Press reporter called "an unusually long time and a story in itself" the editors said that Mr. Dulles was very cordial and had listened with great interest to their report. They told reporters they had recommended the following to the Secretary and his advisers:

- 1) Keep Arab-Israeli tension fenced in by publicity and pressure.
- 2) Give Arabs vested interest in freedom and encourage cooperation with the West.
- 3) Extend Point Four to the countries of the Middle East on an "impartial" and "proportionate" basis (These two words are the key to their recommendations, they said).
- 4) Encourage cooperation between Arab and South Asian countries.
- 5) Second class citizenship, as it now exists in Israel, should be taken to the United Nations and held there until inequalities are rectified.

Asked what was meant by the phrase, "impartial and proportionate," Dr. Fey, acting as spokesman for the group, said that they objected strenuously to the rather

common practice of "balancing off Israel against the eight Arab states." This he called "illusory and false." Point Four aid, he said, should be extended without prejudice to each country according to its needs.

"We believe," the spokesman for the editors continued, "that the Arabs are not being fairly treated by the American press nor their case put fairly to the American people. This should be rectified so they can never again say that we're unfair because we don't know the facts."

"We do reject the idea," he said, "of an 'either-or' label concerning American friendship in the Middle East." Our policy, he observed, should be aimed at getting Arab recognition of Israel as a fact and Israel to recognize its position as a Middle Eastern country identifying its life and destiny with that of its neighbors.

The editors told the reporters that they had been courteously received by Israel and the Arab states and they had been much impressed with the unlimited self-sacrificing spirit demonstrated by both sides in showing them around.

The meeting with Secretary of State ended a day that had started early with an appearance before the Foreign Operations Administration's committee on the study of the Palestinian refugee problem. From there the group went to Capitol Hill for meetings with key government officials.



American Friends of the Middle East sponsored meeting at
National Presbyterian Church, N St., N.W.
January 7, 1954, 8:00 P.M.

Dr. Edward L. R. Elson is minister of this church, which is attended by President Eisenhower. Dr. Elson was present and introduced the chairman, Dr. Garland Hopkins, the executive vice-president of AFME, who in turn introduced the speakers. The hall has an ordinary capacity of 250, but 300 were present. Present were ambassadors and diplomatic representatives of Middle Eastern countries, and members of the board of directors of AFME.

Dr. Hopkins began by saying that the AFME was concerned with the total Middle Eastern picture as it affects Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, etc. AFME was deeply interested in reducing the tension insofar as "we have any influence." The best American policy is one that is based on a well-informed American people. Dr. Elson has been able to aid in this respect since he has visited the Middle East. Any of those who go to the Middle East through AFME is not told what to see and what to say. AFME has but one line: to get the truth to the American people.

The Middle East area is one of great turmoil and tension in these days. The question is as to our part in the area. To try to answer this question, AFME sends men from magazines and newspapers of the kind to assure a true report. One of the men on the last trip was Dr. Morris Lazaron, of the Jewish Newsletter, which has Zionists, non-Zionists and anti-Zionists on its board. Two of the best reports, as he (Hopkins) read them, were the last one written by John Cogley in the Commonweal, and the forthcoming one by Harold E. Fey in The Christian Century. He had read the proofs on it.

Cogley said there were two things he could do in his talk: One was to interpret the situation and the other to present some aspect of what the three saw. He would follow the second approach. What hits an American the strongest traveling through the Middle East is the anti-Americanism. To those who have done some traveling abroad, this is not so great a shock. Such persons have learned that we can't have universal popularity while we're trying to help the world. It's human nature. No one ever heard of shooting Santa Claus, but maybe that was because Santa Claus doesn't hang around after Christmas. We hang around; we have to. The result is friction even between allies. This is inevitable, and it is an annoyance only so long as it is not at too serious a stage. The kind of anti-Americanism in the Middle East is not just tourist-baiting; it is serious.

The party began to realize the situation in Cairo, where they talked with Naguib and with the people. They found a strong feeling against the United States in Egypt, Jordan and Iraq...There is no history of American imperialism in the Middle East. The people in the Arab world always believed in the sincerity and goodwill of the United States. The anti-Americanism that has developed is all bound up with the political question concerning Israel. It is not only political in its nature, but highly colored by emotion. It is partly the result of hurt pride. The Arabs think they have been let down by the United States. They look at a simple fact; that there are 100s of thousands of Arabs who once used to live in Israel and who now live in tents in refugee camps. The plight of these people is ever in the minds of the Arabs. It influences their thinking toward the West. I was asked this question over and over: "How would you like it if someone came in, took your house, picked your fruit, and ousted you from land that had been with your ancestors for centuries and put you in a tent?"

Rightly or wrongly, this is how the Arabs see the question. Anti-Israel feeling in the Arab world is as common and deep as anti-Communism in the United States — and the United States is blamed for it. The Arabs believe they have a good case and that it has been ignored in the United States by the press, the radio, television, at least until lately. They feel their case has not been evaluated according to justice, but according to the domestic political needs of the parties in the United States — the political parties.

This is what we heard, not necessarily what we think.

The muctar at Kibya (where Cogley was impressed with the professional nature of the job of destruction) said: "I hold the United States responsible for this."

When the party visited a refugee camp, it was raining, and most of the tents were leaking. He was pulled into one tent by a man who thought he was a UN official. There was one blanket to the family and that was around an infant. The other children were shivering in a corner. The father was furious. The mother was weeping. Another woman, whom he supposed to be the mother-in-law, cried out, "America is to blame."

The Arabs feel they have time and are used to poverty. "All your Point IV's, all your Jordan plans, all your dollars will not get us to give up our demands for justice," they told us. The Communists are exploiting the situation. The challenge to us is in helping give these people their own stake in freedom. This is a big job. The challenge is to show the West at its best. We have to remember what Vincent de Paul said, "You can't teach the gospel to men with an empty stomach." You can't teach them democracy in such circumstances either.

Fey said the Middle East was the last major uncommitted area in the world. It was the strategic bridge to Africa and the East. Here was 50% of the world's petroleum. Here were 40 million Arabs and a few million Jews. Here was an area within easy reach of the Communist system. Cogley had written an article which he entitled, "The Waiting War." That fitted. There was the boycott by the Arab states as they tried to strangle Israel. There was the resistance, sometimes convulsive, of Israel. Fey said that the party heard of 700,000 refugees, infiltration, alleged criminality, the inevitability of a second round. They heard Moshe Sharett, the prime minister, reply in the Knesset to the UN condemnation of the crime at Kibya. Sharett presented a bold front to the world, but said also that this sort of thing must stop. It puts Israel in a defensive position.

This animosity is an old story from long before Christ. It could not have happened if Hitler had not committed his atrocities against the Jews. It could not have happened if America had not closed her doors. It could not have happened if Palestine had not opened her gates. Seven hundred thousand Arabs panicked and left the country. Four hundred thousand Jews, on the other hand, were forced out by the Arabs. But the fact is that it did happen. And it may mean more to the future than Germany or Korea.

Middle East defense pacts are under way with separate military accords to be signed with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. There is the Jordan Canal where UN guards are to be seen. The presence of the UN in the Middle East is the greatest single factor preventing the Waiting War from becoming a Shooting War.

What needs to be done:

1. The area must be fenced in, kept inviolate.
2. The Arabs must be convinced that Israel is now a state and that its boundaries have reached its limits. The Arabs have a dread of further aggression. In return, there could be at least a partial lifting of the boycott.
3. As Cogley suggested, the Middle East must have its stake in freedom. Basic is that the Middle East is one, and all will only lose if the tension continues.
4. Arabs must accept the existence of Israel. Israel, on the other hand, must follow a little-Israel policy. It must be content to be a small country, but perhaps with wide outside interests, like England.
5. Israel must accept the state of life like their neighbors had and have, and there must be a common rise in the standard of living.
6. The Jordan Valley development must be carried through -- in one country at a time if need be. And this should all be handled through the UN. Much will look different when 200,000 Arab refugees are settled. The way will then be open for settling all.
7. A United States of the Middle East might be set up on cultural ties. Maybe this is being shocked into being by Israel.
8. We must realize that it is wrong to speak of The Waiting War as inevitable.

LAZARON was introduced as the first Jewish rabbi to travel on both sides of the Arab-Israel borders since the Arab-Israel war. He was the second American of Jewish faith to travel in the area since that time. He was once a Zionist, but 20 years ago rejected Jewish nationalism.

Lazaron said his position was nervous. He might be looked upon by the Arabs as a spy, and by the Israeli as an enemy.

Palestine had been a major interest in his life. He continued interested in all the problems that center around Palestine. It is a land sacred to Catholic, Protestant, Jew and Muslim, and it is strange that in the Holy Land there should be all this hate. To meet the problem required the patience of Job, the statesmanship of Disraeli, the cleverness of Machiavelli, the strength of Atlas, and the compassion of Jesus.

To understand our country's place in the picture, we must consider the Jews from 1930 to 1945. We must think of Jewish bodies burned and consumed in the gas chambers. We must see Jews knocking at the gates of the world and crying, "Let me in," and know that the gates did not open. We must look upon Jews everywhere trying to save their brother Jews, and understand how they felt when the gates of Palestine were opened.

Lazaron said that he believed that Palestine was a mistake because it created more problems than it solved for the Jews in Palestine, those in the U.S. and those in the rest of the world. But Palestine was now here as a state and it would be a great tragedy if the state were to fall. He told of a

German Jew who told him in Israel: "Life here is hard and cruel, but this is the one place in the world that Jews can call their own. This is it, and we mean to keep it." He told of how hard the Jews worked, spoke of seeing some working with rocks with their bare hands. Jews are divided in their interests and on problems, but they are united, he said, on the invincible will to hold on to what they have. Epic things are taking place in Israel that would glorify the character of any people.

But there is a concentration on their own problems that has led to chauvinism, to dependence on the force of arms. There are 400 synagogues in Jerusalem but they are attended by the old. A strange new type of Jew is arising. Fate is building him. He is hard, tough, courageous. He has lost the chastening anger of his fathers.

In trying to understand the situation, we must realize that human beings and human feelings are involved. The Arabs consider the Israeli interlopers. They say they have taken over our fields and our groves, our lands. They fear Israel expansion. They fear that here is an alien culture that has cut the Middle East in two, and that will overcome them and destroy them. This is not an attitude that can be rationalized. It is too emotional for that. A new life is coursing through Arab veins. They have become determined to cast off the imperialism of the past. They are determined to catch up with the West. Israel to them, however, is a symbol of Western imperialism that is trying to overthrow them. A deadlock persists, with daily border incidents that keep passions inflamed. Here, too, is the indecent odor of Soviet intrigue. We found it wherever we went. The Arabs cry, "You created Israel, and you can bring her to reason." Israeli cry: "We are the only reliable ally of the West in the Middle East."

We must look at the whole. We must consider strategy, justice, humanity, our own security. We must play no favorites. The American people have been given a distorted one-sided view. Middle East tensions have repercussions here. Suggestions:

Israeli gestures: 1) A changed attitude toward the Israeli minorities. End the A card and B Card system, with the latter for Arab Muslims. There is no place for second class citizens in the so-called outpost of democracy in the Middle East.

2) Take in 100,000 Arab refugees. Israel should miss no opportunity to try to win the confidence of her neighbors. Israel needs peace. It is a subsidized nation. Prejudices must be lessened. Such action as proposed would help bring about similar action by the Arab states. We need patience.

The Western world went into the East a thousand years ago with sword and bloody warfare and even the cross in hand, but the East would not listen. Centuries later they have come back with technological advances and the Arabs still say, "No." What we need is the spirit of the Eastern people, of the Psalms, of the Koran, and of Jesus. The leaders of Israel can bring into the East their century-old analysis of the Western world and lay it on an altar as an aid to the spirit of Moses, Mohammed and Jesus. For this they need more of the old religious spirit, in offering their work to God.

COGLEY, in answer to a question, said that the big problem was not so much finding a means of compromise, but in getting the compromisers to compromise. The problem is not so much in finding a formula, as in finding a way to get both sides to sit down together.

FEY said some beginning was needed.

The Iraqi ambassador asked Lazaron, since there are second class citizens in Israel, would he say whether there were any such in the Arab lands. Lazaron said there are none legally, but some persons were not permitted equal privileges in residence, socially, economically. There was discrimination, and there had been persecutions occasionally. These could be understood. He then quickly went on to say that the best reception the party had was in Iraq, that he was most pleased and charmed by its young king, and that he had told several former prime ministers that Iraq would do well with the young king "if you old codgers let him alone."

FEY, asked what United Nations resolutions had not been carried out, said the list could be obtained from the Syrian embassy. There was the matter of original boundaries of Israel, with the state 25% larger after the fighting.

LAZARON, asked if Israel threatened expansion, said various groups were in the country. He would be the last to speak for Israel. He thought, however, that if the existence of the state were guaranteed, the questions of military expansion might be made academic. This would be more true if the boycott also were lifted.



From AFME NEWSLETTER, January, 1954

THREE EDITORS REPORT ON THEIR TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST

The first news conference to take place at AFME's new headquarters, Middle East House, was held on December 14 for the editors of three religious publications who returned the previous day from a six-week reportorial survey of the Middle East. They were Morris Lazaron, writer for the Jewish Newsletter, Harold E. Fey, executive editor of The Christian Century and John Cogley, executive editor of The Commonweal.

Dr. Lazaron of the Jewish Newsletter pointed out that in Israel he had found a little nation invincibly determined to maintain its integrity and insure its future. He said that he had also found "passionate nationalism and a singular disregard by Israel of many of its obligations to many of the nations whose support had brought the State of Israel into being." He deplored Israel's failure to "consider the effect of its internal and external policies upon American Jewry and its blindness to psychological and economic realities inherent in its position." Dr. Lazaron said he was "disturbed" by the discrimination in jobs, education and public offices in Israel and urged that the State grant "full equal rights" to minorities. He said he thought that Israel should make "some substantial gesture of conciliation in the matter of refugees and compensation" that will convince the Arab world of its desire for friendship.

Dr. Harold Fey of The Christian Century found encouragement in the modernization of economic life in the Middle East but said that the bitterness of hatreds occasioned by the Arab-Israeli war "threatens all the gains which are being made in improving the standards of living." Stating that powerful factors are causing the Arabs to unite, Dr. Fey emphasized the movement for Arab union as one which deserves careful consideration. "For many reasons the United States should give the Middle East major and proportionate attention," he said, pointing out that "its 40 million people are as yet uncommitted as between communism and the democratic world."

John Cogley, executive editor of The Commonweal, stated that he saw no immediate solution of the Arab-Israeli problem. "Israel has to get it into its head that it is a small nation of 1,500,000 in the midst of 40,000,000 Arabs and realize that the United States cannot afford to antagonize the Arab world." According to editor Cogley, there must be gestures made by both sides. "The Arab world will have to accept the fact that Israel is here to stay," he said. "On the other hand, Israel must be made to understand that what it does affects not only itself and the immediate area but the entire world."

MEMORANDUM ON RABBI MORRIS LAZARON

Rabbi Morris S. Lazaron was a member of a group of reporters who visited the Middle East at the end of 1953 under the sponsorship of the American Friends of the Middle East. This organization, as is well-known, while claiming to express friendship towards all the nations of the area, in fact concentrates on highlighting the difficulties between Israel and the Arab states, to the disadvantage of the former.

In the course of his public report since his return, Dr. Lazaron pays lip service to the fact of Israel's existence, and has some kind things to say about the morale of its people. He then proceeds to concentrate on points of criticism, of which the most important is that the Arab population of Israel is being treated as "second-class citizens," whose rights of movement, employment, etc. are restricted by the military authorities. The short answer to this charge is that the economic condition of the Arabs of Israel is infinitely superior to those of the majority of Arabs in neighboring countries; Arabs are well represented in the Knesset and civil service; Arab students attend the Hebrew University; Arabs are members of the Histadrut Trade Union Organization. Wherever movement has been restricted, it has been for purposes of internal security, which Dr. Lazaron conveniently ignores. The fact is that in some cases Arabs have acted as fifth columnists, providing hiding places for infiltrators and marauders from Jordan and the Gaza Strip. The Government of Israel would be failing in its duty if it did not take appropriate steps to insure the safety of the majority of the population, and any necessary restrictions imposed upon the Arabs of Israel are the direct result of the hostile policies of their kinsmen across the border.

Lazaron's proposals for the relaxation of tension between Israel and the Arab states are exclusively suggestions for unilateral action by Israel. For example, he urges that Israel admit 100,000 Arab refugees "as a gesture of friendship." This is a wholly impracticable proposition which would result only in further Arab demands. Lazaron has no idea what the Jordan reaction would be to any such gesture, because he was refused admission to Jordan on the grounds that the government could not be responsible for his protection.

It should be noted that Lazaron was a consistent opponent of Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel for many years. Now faced with the fact of Israel, he has had to make the necessary adjustment, but he remains an enemy of Israel. The Jewish Newsletter, which has been the vehicle for published reports on his trip, is notoriously supported by the American Council for Judaism, whose hostile views on the welfare of Israel are well known.

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From a letter to
The Editor
The Christian Century
Chicago, Illinois

January 21, 1954

Dear Sir:

As a Protestant minister who has been a reader of the Christian Century for over thirty years (and hope to continue for at least another thirty) may I register a protest against the editorial in the issue of January 13, 1954 entitled, "Israel Citizen: Class B." It is the kind of statement that inflames but does not accurately inform. As one who has visited Israel (not at American Christian Palestine Committee expense) I could write an article on the same low levels of Mr. Fey's and give a completely different picture of present conditions in Israel.

During World War II a foreign reporter could have visited Southern California, witnessed the atrocious treatment accorded thousands of loyal American citizens of Japanese descent by unscrupulous business men and observed the brutal methods by which these citizens practically lost their homes, furniture, farms, jobs, etc. He could then have made the impression in his native land that this was a fair and honest picture of the United States. In the words of Scripture, Mr. Fey, "What went ye out for to see?"

Cordially,

Wm. Lindsay Young
Vice President
National Conference of Christians
and Jews in Los Angeles

From a letter to
The Editor
The Christian Century
Chicago, Illinois

January 21, 1954

Sir:

During the past summer, it was my privilege to visit and study the Arab countries and Israel as a representative of some of the Protestant churches of Southern California and Nevada. Drawing upon what I saw and confirmed during those months of investigation, I regard Editor Harold Fey's article, "Israeli Citizen, Class B", as a grievous distortion of the truth of the situation.

The one principal fact which to me stands out above all others, and which must not be obscured, is that the treatment and status of the Arab minority in Israel is infinitely superior to that accorded any "enemy" minority anywhere else during wartime. It happens to be more Christian in every way than the American handling of the Nisei minority during the recent war with Japan.

What Israel has done in this instance is kinder, more tolerant, and more appreciative than the usual action toward such minorities in the Arab world not only in this generation but for centuries.

Pointedly, it is incomparably better treatment than Jews have received in Arab countries in our own time.

I talked to these Arabs in many places in Israel. They are physically well, in line with high Israeli health standards, and in contrast to the Arab villagers of Jordan and Syria. Medical and social welfare services are free to them, and I saw several hundred Arab children of school age being fed at a nutrition center in Galilee.

Exactly contrary to what Mr. Fey indicates, I found that the system of education for Arab boys and girls is rapidly developing into an efficient and competently run enterprise which will have no equal in any Arab state. Teachers told me that while the Jewish community is required to share locally a substantial part of school costs, Arab schools are financed entirely out of the national treasury. Arab students at the crowded Hebrew University in Jerusalem told me that they were accepted as readily as anyone who had the necessary academic prerequisites.

Many Israeli Arabs whom I met were openly grateful for the freedom of their cultural and religious interests. They spoke positively of their voting rights and what is for many of them their first experience in democratic local government. They discussed pro and con their part in the national labor organization and mentioned appreciably their several cooperatives, on both producer and consumer level. What a splendid -- if startling -- contrast they provided to the thousands of unemployed, sick, and starving Arabs I saw living in feudal squalor in Syria and Jordan.

This is not to say that the Arabs of Israel are basically happy. So long as the rulers of the Arab League maintain a state of war or of impending war against

Israel, the Arabs within the Jewish state will continue to live in the unhappiness of confused loyalties, and security regulations will continue to pose problems.

I made a sincere effort to check those complaints by Arabs which were mentioned in our conversations with them. I discovered that in isolated cases seeming injustices have occurred, some of which must wait until war's end for correction. But I found no verifiable instance wherein the Israel Alien Property Custodian has taken over houses or lands without paying compensation or where it will not be paid.

All in all (and this is where the emphasis must be placed), a remarkably high level of equity has been maintained -- one which to my mind defies comparison to similar situations in our own national history.

Perhaps the most absurd single statement by Mr. Fey is his assertion (quoting a Paris newspaper) that Jews regard every Arab as a potential fifth columnist or infiltrator. Nothing could be further from the truth. I met numerous Arabs in Israel who hold responsible positions in government and elsewhere and who are trusted and respected. The truth is that most Jews earnestly desire to make the Arabs first class citizens of the land. The sad fact is that they can become that only when the Arab states recognize the existence of Israel and meet the Israelis at the conference table to resolve their differences there.

That day is not hastened by appeasing the demands of Arab vengeance, nor by compiling falsehoods, malicious rumors, and unconfirmed charges. Truth is still truth, and right is still right. One should be discriminating about the company he keeps, and those with whom he travels.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Guy M. Davis, Jr.
Professor of Religion
Chapman College (Los Angeles, Calif.)

Note: The churches which sent me to the Middle East include First Methodist Church of Glendale, First Methodist Church of Pasadena, First Methodist Church of Los Angeles, El Segundo Community Methodist Church, Wilshire Christian Church, Monrovia Ministerial Association, First Methodist Church of San Fernando, First Methodist Church of Alhambra, Huntington Park First Methodist Church, and several others. I was there this time about nine weeks.

From a letter to
Mr. Paul Hutchinson, Editor
The Christian Century
Chicago, Illinois

January 24, 1954

Dear Mr. Hutchinson:

You and I have never met, although we have many friends in common, such as the Cranstons, Drs. Earl and Mildred. As a loyal subscriber and ardent reader of the "undenominational Journal of Religion" which comes weekly, however, I have known and appreciated your splendid leadership. In a wonderful way, you have been and are the free and respected voice of American Protestantism.

Thus it was with some alarm and uncertainty that I observed the coalition of the Christian Century with the group called the American Friends of the Middle East and the American Council for Judaism in relation to Editor Harold Fey's recent trip. It seemed to me then, and I am considerably more convinced now, that such an alliance can only hurt the Christian Century.

The American Friends of the Middle East is an organization with definite international political interests. It knows but one viewpoint in a situation where another viewpoint is at least as deserving of expression. Surely friendship is a worthy aim, but that aim becomes unworthy if friendship is to be secured at the expense of justice and human welfare. It does not seem to me to be Christian to be friendly to avengers, to aid those who relentlessly pledge bloodshed and immolation. In fact, I have not yet been able to decide whether we ought to be friendly (which of course means rather more than kind social relations) to Arab countries wherein human rights are not held in esteem and where feudal and even medieval conditions prevail. I raise the same question that has been raised in our dealing with Franco Spain.

But that is apart from the issue. The point is that it does not seem proper to some of us for the Christian Century to enter into any arrangement with an organization of the type indicated.

The second group involved offers an even more unhappy problem. The American Council for Judaism is, as you know, a small national Jewish organization of some 15,000 persons. It is in no sense representative of American Jewish thought and is a divisive and recalcitrant minority group within Judaism. The public statements issued by this group have been filled with hatred and intentional errors; all Jews understand that the American Council for Judaism is flatly anti-Israel.

Now we have within Protestantism a strikingly similar group of which we are all very much ashamed. That group goes by a nearly identical title, the American Council of Churches. The American Council for Judaism has Rabbi Elmer Berger to make its wild accusations. The Christian group has Carl McIntire.

The Christian Century has rightly called Protestants to support the National Council of Churches. You and I have shared with countless others the hope that the rest of the nation and the world (and surely the Jews) would not identify us with the American Council of Churches. It seems to me that the American Jewish community has a right to expect as much from us, that we will not think of them in terms of this maverick group which does not represent their whole or best thinking.

In other words, the Christian Century seems to me to be turning its back on one of its own principles when it enters into any arrangement with the American Council for Judaism.

Beyond this there was in my alarm a concern for the objectivity of news reporting. Having spent the summer months in the Arab states and Israel as the representative of some of the Protestant churches of Southern California and Nevada, I know how hard it is to get the unvarnished facts. In this case, I wondered if even a sensitive reporter could penetrate the impending blackout of both recent history and facts that was sure to surround this enterprise.

When the articles appeared, my worst fears were justified. What emerged was a collection of opinion, fancy, and unverified charges.

There were throughout innumerable factual errors. I cannot understand how either naivete or lack of time for investigation can have produced this kind of thing.

There were malicious and misleading opinions presented uncritically.

There were many important statements presented with, "it is said," "it is reported to be," "it seems to be," etc. If these things were significant enough to be reported, they were significant enough to be properly checked.

Finally, much in the articles was conveyed by innuendo and implication and by what was left unsaid. Interestingly, the picture of Israel that was presented was not the Israel that I encountered during my study tour of the Middle East, but rather the Israel that lives only in the minds of the Arab press.

My interest in writing this sincere appraisal to you, Mr. Hutchinson, is a plain desire for equity and honesty. It seems to me that the Christian Century owes it to itself and to the truth to straighten out this befuddled and unfortunate situation.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Guy M. Davis, Jr.
Professor of Religion
Chapman College

From a letter to
The Editor
The Christian Century
Chicago, Illinois

From Dr. Max Nussbaum
Hollywood, California

January 26, 1954

...It is true that Israel citizens carry identity cards. It is a known fact that Israel is in a state of actual war, caused by the refusal of her Arab neighbors to convert armistice agreements into peace treaties. Under such conditions, members of nations hostile to the country in which they reside are subject to close scrutiny of their movements in any country of the world. Such measures taken for the security of a country which faces constant danger from all frontiers, with alien citizens having family and other ties beyond these hostile borders, is a procedure accepted by all countries of the world and their citizens. May I remind you, as an example, of the restriction of movement and close supervision of American citizens of German and Japanese descent in the United States during World War II. In times of war and friction it is, unfortunately, unavoidable that, once in a while, an innocent person has to suffer from such laws of restriction, and deplorable mistakes are made by minor officials when such laws have to be enforced.

Unless one goes to the Middle East with a preconceived hatred of Israel, it should appear quite natural that any area of Israel where Arabs are in the majority should be under military rule, as long as the Arab governments surrounding the country threaten day and night with a "second round" accompanied by the annihilation and extinction of Israel and predicting that they will return one day as the conquerors of Israel, thus constantly encouraging and supporting subversive activities.

Allow me to say a word about the Arab abandoned property: There is an Israel Land Acquisition Law which has been issued for the purpose of protecting the Arab landowners now legally residing in Israel, but who have been considered absentees. At the time of the census of November, 1948, the time of the armistice, there were 69,000 non-Jews living in Israel. By the end of 1952 the number had risen to 179,000 because thousands of Arabs returned to Israel legally under the agreed plan of the reunion of Arab families. Some 50,000 Arabs came back to Israel illegally, and even here, the vast majority of them have been granted resident certificates and full citizenship. The fact that property was turned over to the Custodian of Absentee Property did not, and does not, imply the confiscation by the Israel government of such property. Exactly the opposite is the actual truth. During the past three years, property worth millions of pounds has been returned to Arabs legally residing in Israel. The intention of the prevailing law is to protect the Arab rights and to effect a fair settlement on all cases which remain outstanding. It is a law of protection, not one of expropriation, and anyone studying Israel without bias could easily find out how it operates.

It is sheer malice to say of the Israel government that it aims to "harass and worry the Arabs out of the country." Everything humanly possible has been done by Israel to improve the lot of the Arab as an Israel citizen. Not only were they given the right to vote, but their women were enfranchised without any qualifications -- for the first time in the history of the Middle East. Neighboring Jewish settlements are on friendly terms with their Arab village neighbors and cooperate with them for the improvement of their farm lands, their health, and their social problems. The gentlemen who visited Israel, though only for a couple of days, must have, undoubtedly, found every evidence of this truth. But here, again, one has to take into consideration human frailties, and it might

well be that controversies arise about a lamb or a sheep that strays from an Arab settlement into a Jewish one and vice versa. Is it any different with American neighbors? Do such rather personal feuds merit mention in an article which is supposed to deal with serious problems in the Middle East?

In the case of education, let me quote some facts and figures for the elucidation of your reporter: The end of the Mandatory regime in May, 1948, and the self-imposed exodus of the Arab population wholly disrupted the Arab educational system. The Israel Ministry of Education was therefore confronted with the problem of starting the Arab school system anew. One of the most difficult problems was, and still is, the shortage of teachers, not only for Arab, but for Hebrew education. While military operations were still going on, the Israel government made the utmost effort to open the Arab schools along with the Hebrew schools at the beginning of the 1948-49 school year. Under the Compulsory Education Law, elementary education is to be "maintained by the State and local authority jointly". While the Jewish community, through the municipalities, shares a very large part of the expenditure for education, Arab schools are totally financed by the Government Treasury. Needless to say, all institutions of higher learning -- the Hebrew University, the Technion, Weizmann Institute, etc. -- are open to Arabs as they are to all other inhabitants of Israel.

Arab teachers are being trained in increasing numbers. Prior to the establishment of the State, 45% of Arab children of school age were attending school. By the end of 1952, 90% of all Arab children of school age were enrolled. The same is true of the sphere of political life.

Participation of Arabs in Parliament was matter of factly granted. Never in their history had one of these Arabs the right to vote under the feudal system of their Arab rulers. They are represented in Parliament in three parties called "Progress and Work", the "Farmers and Development Party", and the "Israel Arab Democrats". It will be interesting to your readers to quote from their platforms.

The Israel Arab Democrats platform states: "In addition to its specific demands for the Arab community in Israel, the Party demands Israel's cooperation within the framework of the United Nations in ensuring world peace and improving the political economic and social conditions of the Asiatic and African nations."

The program of the "Progress and Work" Party states: "The party stands for the development of the Arab villages by the organization and encouragement of producer-cooperative associations, irrigation and the use of modern equipment".

The Farmers and Development Party: "In addition to its specific demand for the Arab community in Israel, the Party stands for organization of Arab labor in close cooperation with the Histadrut (Labor Union)."

I wonder whether the author of the article in your magazine would be able to name any other Middle Eastern country, with the exception of Turkey, where the Arab has such rights as a free citizen.

With regard to the rectification of boundaries, agreements to redraw the lines at various points had, on the lower level, been reached between Israel and Jordan. These agreements would have averted the curious and difficult situation which H.E.F. describes. The Israel government ratified these agreements, but the government of Jordan refuses to do so. The agreements, therefore, did not go into effect.

Can there be any doubt in anybody's mind that security regulations would be

relaxed immediately upon the vaguest showing of readiness for reconciliation on the part of the Arab states? On the other hand, as long as threats, economic boycotts, marauding and murder is rampant in the Middle East, the treatment afforded those Arabs who are the kin of those who threaten Israel, should be looked upon with due appreciation and pride on the status afforded them by the so-called "enemy".

There is no other way of winning the confidence of certain parts of the Arab population in Israel than to grant them what they have been granted, which is already beyond the physical and economic capacity of the young struggling state. The Arab world had the opportunity to avoid strife and bloodshed had they accepted the proposal for partition of the United Nations in 1948. They preferred war.

The fact that Israel permits everybody, regardless of nationality and creed, to visit their country, in contrast to all other Middle Eastern countries, is ample proof that they have nothing to hide. The time might come when it will be possible to deal with the advice of people like Dr. Fey. Unfortunately, he who has seen Israel on so brief a visit as a tourist, is not qualified now to draw a truthful picture of the situation, nor can he criticize or advise, unless he knows and states all the facts within the realm of reality and truth...

