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Box 54, Folder 14, Arab-Jewish relationship, 1970-1971.

Letter to the Editor
The New York Times
229 West 43 Street
New York, N. Y.

Dear Editor,

As a human relations agency deeply involved in promoting improved understanding between Arabs and Jews in Israel since 1948 - the year the Jewish State was founded - we found the series of articles by David Shipley on "Arab-Jewish Relationships" deeply disappointing and unhelpful.

For nearly forty years, the American Jewish Committee has regarded the problems of intergroup tensions between Arabs and Jews in Israel as one of utmost seriousness and urgency. For that reason, we have sponsored a number of major social research projects and publications, foremost among them, "From Conflict to Understanding: Relations Between Jews and Arabs in Israel since 1948" by Prof. Ernest Stock, and "The Arabs and Jews" in Israel, by Harry M. Rosen. ~~We have also sponsored numerous Arab-Jewish intergroup programs affecting many levels of interaction between Israeli Jews and Arabs.~~ Through our Jerusalem offices.

Our years of study and experience have persuaded us that one cannot hope to make a constructive contribution in this critical area unless one gives due weight to two major factors in the Arab-Jewish encounter.

The first is the long history of "Separateness" (Ernest Stock's term) between Arabs and Jews in Palestine. Contrary to the impression left by Mr. Shipley, that "separateness" did not begin with the creation of the State of Israel, nor it is due to the alleged "racism," "arrogance," and "oppression" of Arabs by Israelis. Before World War I, under Turkish rule, communal separateness not only had official sanction but was part of the administrative system of the Ottoman Empire, to which Palestine belonged.

After the end of Turkish rule, the Balfour Declaration and its incorporation into the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine heightened the political conflict between Arabs and Jews. The Arab side found its chief weapon in non-cooperation with the British authorities and periodically in communal violence, peaking in the bloody disturbances in 1929 and the protracted riots of

In reaction, 1936-37. Jewish policy on the development of the National Home sharpened institutional separation and carried it from religious and communal spheres into public life. Nearly half of Israel's Arabs who were born since 1948 and the Jews who were born into the Jewish State have absorbed these hostilities from their elders who suffered through these tragic conflicts.

As Prof. Stock observes: "Much of the pattern of intergroup relations in Israel is a legacy of the pre-State period. Arab and Jewish communities under the British mandate led separate lives, maintained separate economies, went to school under separate systems of education and practiced social exclusiveness (not to speak of armed hostility.) Nothing happened between the establishment of the State and the Six Day War (in 1967) to alter this pattern appreciably."

The second factor has far less to do with "racism" than the uniqueness of the Arab minority ^{community} in Israel. Again, Prof Stock: "Israel's Arabs have had a strong sense of belonging to an Arab people, the main body of which not only dwelt beyond Israel's frontiers, but also proclaimed its enmity for the ~~the~~ state of which they were citizens. A distinctive culture and language, as well as religion, set the Arabs and Jews apart. This made for a voluntary institutional segregation - particularly in education - which in turn served to perpetuate the separateness of the two populations, not only geographically but also on the plane of daily contact and communication."

Given the power of those historic forces which stamped "separateness" as a way of life on both the Jewish and Arab communities, compounded by the unrelenting threats of Arab rejectionist states to destroy Israel since its founding, the miracle is that there exists today so many hundreds of people in both the Arab and Jewish societies in Israel who are seeking to find another way of coexistence and mutual respect. The fact that there are today some 29 organizations working throughout Israel to advance human relationships between Jews and Arabs is the important story that is to be told. Not the extremist comments nor the horror stories compiled by Mr. Shipler - that's old stuff of which we have had more than ~~enough~~ enough for the past forty years and more.

Marc H. Tanenbaum
Director, International Relations
American Jewish Committee



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

Paris Office: 30, Rue La Boetie, 75 Paris 8, France • Elysees 69-11, 83-63 • Cable: Wishcom, Paris • Zachariah Shuster, European Director

FO-Eur
February 26, 1970

MEMORANDUM

To: Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
From: Zachariah Shuster
Subj: Emigration of Christians from the Holy Land

I am sending you herewith a translation of an article which appeared today in La Croix, the influential Catholic daily in France. It deals with the problem of Christians in Israel, many of whom, according to this article, are forced to emigrate because of the unfavorable attitude toward them both from Moslem Arabs and Israeli Jews.

In connection with our increasing interest in Christian attitudes toward Israel, I think it would be worth having a good look of our own in this area. Perhaps we should ask our office in Israel to get some objective information on this subject, both from the Israeli authorities and from Christian leaders in Israel. What is particularly important, is to investigate whether there are special difficulties for Christians to occupy administrative positions, as suggested by this article.

Of course, we must keep in mind that most of the Christians referred to are Arabs, and if such difficulties exist, they are probably not on account of religion but because of ethnic origin and the lack of confidence on the part of Israelis in the Arabs, regardless of their religion. This does not change, however, the significance of the situation, and certainly should be paid attention to within the context of our attempts to bring about greater understanding of the Israeli situation on the part of Christian bodies.

cc: Mr. Gold
Dr. Segal

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TRANSLATION

La Croix -- February 26, 1970

THE EMIGRATION OF CHRISTIANS FROM THE HOLY LAND

The emigration of Christians from the Holy Land is an old phenomenon, but one which during the last few years has taken on proportions sufficient to warrant the Pope to become concerned and to express, as he has done recently, his disquietude vis-a-vis the progressive desertion of the churches.

The problem is not indifferent to the Israelis. The press and television have referred to it; and of the public inquiries about it there emerged two principal reasons for Christian emigration: the difficulty in getting employment which is encountered by the intelligentsia, and the latent hostility of the Moslem masses.

There is one point that is important to emphasize in order to avoid the interpretation that this question falls within the politico-military context of the Middle East. The emigration of Christians is not tied up with the presence of Israel on the West bank of the Jordan. It has existed for several years, and the number of emigrants during the Jordanian regime was of the same magnitude as today.

How many Christians are there in the Holy Land? Probably not more than 100,000. The statistical annual of Israel puts the figure at 72,000 for the Israeli territory before the six-day war and the region of Jerusalem. The other important concentration of Christians is Bethlehem and its environs, with about 20,000 Christians.

From the ethnic point of view most of the Christians are Arabs, and share the problem together with other Arabs in the country. In spite of this, the Christian religious leaders have always asked for special treatment for their communities, while refusing to be distinguished from other minorities. If they vigorously protested when a Maronite Christian village was evacuated, they were silent, however, when the same thing happened to Moslem villages. And the Moslem masses have gone through an anti-Christian wave because of the help given by the Western countries to Israel.

This has produced tension between the two communities. Because of these conditions, the emigration -- 8,000 Christians during the last two years -- practically never goes to Moslem countries. It is directed primarily toward the West, the U.S., Canada, Australia and Latin America. This choice is equally conditioned by the influence of Western missions. 50% of Christian students in Israel, and a still larger percentage in Jerusalem, study in schools directed by missionaries. The teaching there

is primarily done in foreign languages, and the programs put the accent on the history, geography and culture which are not those of the region. The atmosphere of these institutions is English, French, American, etc., and the students can easily pursue their studies in the countries of origin of their professors.

In addition, as Arabs, the Christians educated in Israel find difficulties in getting work, primarily if it is a position in the administration, because of the distrust by the Israeli Jews.

The Apostolic Delegate, Monsignor Lagi, is now getting together facts and suggestions. It is primarily a question of constructing a Christian university in Jerusalem and a higher technical college in Ramallah. It is planned to create a fund from which loans can be extended to students who are learning trades, and to merchants, as well as to enterprises which will furnish employment to Christian workers and assure their material future.

cc: Mr. Gold
Dr. Segal
Rabbi Tanenbaum
Dr. Resnikoff





For Internal Distribution

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FROM THE ISRAEL OFFICE...

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON: *An Arab-Jewish Student Workshop.*

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

הוועד היהודי האמריקני

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November 1971

This report deals with intergroup problems between Israel's Arabs and Jews.

Pioneer work in this area was undertaken by Martin Lakin and others* who tried to apply human relations training to the conflict of Arabs and Jews in Israel. Based on the insights provided in this study, this office initiated modest experiments with groups of Jewish and Arab students at Haifa University and the Hebrew University. The results of the former, led by Professor Avraham Binyamin, will be published shortly.

Here we submit a preliminary report on the Hebrew University workshop that was conducted a few months ago. With this publication, we hope to make a further contribution to a better understanding of how this workshop method can be applied towards the amelioration of a major intergroup problem in Israel.

I want to acknowledge here our deep appreciation to Dr. Charles Greenbaum, now head of the Hebrew University's Psychology Department, and to Adnan Abdul-Razzak, graduate student at the University, who planned this program with us and conducted it on our behalf. This report was prepared by them and I am grateful for the high professional level that characterized their total involvement in this experiment.

Dr. M. Bernard Resnikoff
Director
Israel Office

* Lakin, M., Lomranz, J., Lieberman, M.A., Arab and Jew in Israel: Case Study in Human Relations Training Approach to Conflict, Middle East Area Studies - Series I, American Academic Association for Peace in the Middle East, 1969.

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~~Final~~ Annotated Inventory of Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel

Introduction

We hear an awful lot about war and violence between peoples in the Middle East, but we hear very little about the positive activities by some of these people to work for peace. Somehow it's not newsworthy when Jews and Arabs in Israel sit down together and try to understand one another and establish cooperative relations despite their differences. Therefore, we set out to do a comprehensive report of all such efforts. As of fall 1983 we found 29 organizations working throughout Israel to enhance relations between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs.

The existence of these groups informs us not only that Israel's internal problems of Arabs-Jewish relations, developed over years of separation, fear and fighting, are enormous and troubling, but also that there are forces within the society that are striving valiantly to acknowledge these problems and offer ways to overcome them. These organizations listed, while currently limited in terms of activity, support and participation, may offer real encouragement to battle-weary peace seekers everywhere. They provide models and hope for peaceful change and change for peace.

In a region where intergroup conflict is the rule and cooperation the exception, we celebrate in these organizations and hope that by providing information about them and ways non-Israelis may support their efforts, they will be strengthened in working for understanding, cooperation and equality between Jews and Arabs in Israel. And perhaps their efforts, as they grow, will help to dispel the despair that says hatred is eternal and peace a pipe dream, and thus may even point to new efforts to forge paths to peace between Israel and Arab nations.

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However, even if these organizations have such broader political implications, their strength lies in the fact that while some do receive governmental support, none are affiliated with any specific political party, and all are community based and focused. Their emphasis is upon forging social peace between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs by, 1.) breaking down stereotypes and building trust and respect at interpersonal and intergroup levels, 2.) influencing a variety of institutions to deal more constructively with the issue of inter-communal relations and, 3.) striving to overcome economic and political inequalities within the society at large. We believe that it is precisely through working at these 3 levels - the social psychological, institutional and structural - that effective and long-term intergroup conflict resolution and social peace may be achieved.

While there is an overlapping of these functions and even personnel among these various organizations, we have categorized them into three groups: those dealing primarily on the interpersonal, social psychological levels to foster intergroup understanding, those functioning at a broader institutional level promoting research and proposing policy changes, and those functioning within the political and legal spheres to enhance the civil rights of all Israelis.

The first and by far the largest group we list as "Human Relations Organizations." These operate, for example, along the model of the "Heart-to-Heart Camp" (page ___) which sets up guided interpersonal encounters between Jewish and Arab youth in a camp-setting to enable fears and stereotypes to be broken down

and friendships to be built up. Another representative organization in this category is the "Neve Shalom Community" (page ___), where Jews and Arabs live together cooperatively and run a school-for-peace which brings Jews and Arabs from around the country together for joint seminars and retreats.

The next group consists of "Policy and Research Organizations." These have a range of programs including an emphasis on issues of Arab-Jewish relations in Israel. An example of the three we list is the "Van Leer Institute" (page ___) which among other projects has, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, developed and piloted a very successful curriculum entitled "To Live Together" educating students in 50 Jewish schools about Arab peoples and cultures - something not yet regularly done.

Finally, we list three "Civil Rights Organizations" that strive to enhance Israel's democracy and pluralism. The "Association for Civil Rights in Israel" (page ___) for example, works on specific issues where Israelis - often minorities - seems to have been discriminated against, and it seeks to protect their legal rights while publicizing the issue to avoid its recurrence.

In conclusion we would like to express our gratitude to all the people who helped us in carrying out this project. First of all we are grateful to the many leaders of the organizations listed for the time they took to meet with us, and even more for their on-going efforts. And we are grateful to Ms. Shula Koenig of the America-Israel Civil Rights Coalition and Ms. Phyllis Halpern of The Irving I. Goldstein Foundation for their moral and financial support.

This listing is a work in progress, one which the authors hope

will be useful enough to warrant frequent revision. If there are groups which have inadvertently been omitted, we hope to be so informed. Further, the usefulness of this work can only be gauged by those of you who receive it and benefit by it in some way. Thus, we invite comments from as many people as possible about this project and ask for suggestions as to how it might be improved.

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