

that time, our intelligence people failed to understand what was going on in Cairo and in Damascus. This time, they didn't read the situation in our own backyard.» Schiff noted the future security implications of failure to find a political solution: «If a war breaks out in the future, we will have to keep more forces in the territories to safeguard the settlements, the roads and our military supply depots... And unless we move fast and vigorously to satisfy the demands for equality by the 700,000 Israeli Arabs, we will have an enemy in our very midst. Our security position could become precarious.»

## NEW GROUPS

Under the impact of the uprising, a number of new groups have emerged in opposition to Israeli government policy vis-a-vis the occupied territories:

- Israelis by Choice was formed by a group of old and recent immigrants who consider that the repression exercised by the Israeli army is a betrayal of the ideals which prompted them to come to 'Israel'. This group issued a leaflet saying: «We chose to be Israelis, and therefore we are struggling against the occupation.» They demand a political solution via immediate negotiations with the Palestinians.

- Bridge for Peace was also formed in opposition to official policy and has organized a campaign of blood donations to West Bank and Gaza hospitals.

- The National Circle was formed on January 13th, demanding a political solution for the West Bank and Gaza Strip in view of «the demographic threat and the potential threat of Israel becoming a binational state.»

- People with Conscience was formed the same day by Arab Jews who sent a food convoy to the besieged Gaza Strip, and began a hunger strike to last until the trucks entered the Strip.

- Red Line - Jews and Arabs Against Occupation was established on February 13th, to unify Israeli and (Palestinian) Arab protest and reach out to public opinion in order to end the occupation. The founding convention, held at a settlement in the Galilee, planned peace marches and a petition campaign.

- Year 21 was established in Jerusalem by residents who will not serve in the

Israeli army in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; 1,000 people, including prominent Israeli professionals, have signed the Year 21 petition, condemning the occupation and calling for a boycott of Israeli products manufactured in the settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Year 21 members assert that 21 years of occupation have created a new mentality and behavior among Israelis.

## MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF OCCUPATION

The moral and material costs of maintaining Zionist security in the face of all-out Palestinian revolt raised new questions as to the very future of 'Israel'. Several factors contributed to this, not least of which was that Palestinians who have lived under Zionist occupation since 1948, joined in the uprising. Such questions, actually raised by the first Day of the Land in 1976, posed themselves with new weight. Israelis may have become somewhat accustomed to displays of Palestinian nationalism in Nazareth and Um Al Fahem, sites of high Palestinian concentration. This time they were shocked when the small Palestinian communities left in Acca, Lydda and Jaffa, now considered Israeli cities of mixed population, also staged mass demonstrations.

Another factor contributing to Israeli uncertainty is the specter of international isolation presented by disillusionment with 'Israel' and its supposedly democratic character among the US public and American Jewish community. Such concern was evident at the mid-February protest in Tel Aviv by Israeli intellectuals, where playwright Danny Horowitz read aloud a foreign newsclip describing how Israeli soldiers had tied Palestinian boys on the hood of their jeep to ward off stone-throwing.

In an unprecedented public display of criticism, Rabbi Schindler, leader of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, called on Israeli Defense Minister Rabin to stop the beating policy (*Los Angeles Times*, January 25th). In the same week, the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress protested the Israeli army's use of force. In March, Michael Lerner, pro-Israeli editorial writer for

the Jewish magazine, *Tikkun*, wrote that the uprising has «precipitated the greatest crisis facing the American Jewish community since the Holocaust.» The director of the Middle East section of the American Jewish Committee, Dr. George Gruen, stated that American Jews are overcome by «feelings of anguish» not only for Palestinians but for Israeli soldiers as well (*The Guardian*, March 15th). This last statement illustrates that much of this type of critique is based on the idea of saving 'Israel' from itself.

The flurry of criticism and dissent elicited by the Zionist state's brutality against Palestinian civilians has not, however, crystallized into clear, new alternatives. The platforms put forward by the new Israeli groups, like that of the largest movement, Peace Now, do show that a broad sector of Israeli society opposes occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and longs for a political solution. However, the reasons for this position are varied, and the solutions proposed by these groups generally fail to address the fundamental causes of the problem, i.e., the nature of Zionism and 'Israel' on the one hand, and the totality of the Palestinian cause on the other. Despite the new movements, the genuinely democratic Israeli forces remain small and isolated, though the current uprising certainly gives them opportunities for growth. The Israeli forces of influence who do propose an alternative to Israeli government policy, such as Rakah (the Israeli Communist Party), are highly dependent on support from Palestinian Arabs living in the Zionist state.

In the overall picture, the sector of Israeli society that yearns for peace may be overwhelmed by the opposite move to the right, a common tendency in reactionary states whose underpinnings are being challenged. There are signs of the electorate moving to the extreme right-wing fringe, along with the increasing participation of settlers in the army's repression against Palestinians. Prolongation of the uprising will undoubtedly lead to a clearer crystallization of the contradictory tendencies in the Israeli society, allowing for more precise analysis in the future.