

the commentary accompanying the exhibit pointed out, history has proven their critique of Zionism correct.

The first panel speaker was Marwan Darweish, a Ph.D. candidate in the School of Peace Studies at the University of Bradford. Mr. Darweish, a native of Um Al Fahm in the Galilee, spoke about the effects of settler colonialism on Palestinians, particularly those inside the green line. Clarifying that the term settler colonialism applies equally to recent Soviet Jewish immigrants as it did to the various waves of immigrants before and immediately after the founding of Israel, he outlined the ongoing transformation of the Palestinian economic, political and social structure. Beyond further land confiscation and proletarianization of Palestinian peasants, the asymmetrical relationship between settlers and Palestinians in their separate economic, residential and educational spheres will be further entrenched by the recent settlement drive. In addition, Soviet immigrants will inevitably become part of the state security apparatus used to oppress Palestinians.

This colonization process is creating new areas of hinterland by immigrants who settle in and around Palestinian communities and who exploit the human and other resources available to them. As a result, the Arab villages inside the green line will become dependent on these hinterland settlements for medical care, employment and access to government offices.

Another aspect of the settlement drive is the accompanying dehumanization of Palestinians in an attempt to justify their displacement. Slogans of the past such as «a land without a people for a people without a land» are likely to reappear, in effect making Palestinians invisible.

The internal effects on Israeli society are manifested in increased daily incidents of racism, creating a situation in which there is no safety for Palestinians. This situation has created an atmosphere in which the concept of transfer is now legitimate, Israelis in general having lost their sense of outrage about it. Underpinning all of this is Israeli state policy which feeds this phenomenon, as do vaguely disguised

threats made against Palestinians by various Israeli officials across the political spectrum.

In his closing words, Mr. Darweish gave a chilling account of the disappointment expressed by neighbors of the man responsible for the Rishon Letzion massacre that he only managed to kill seven Palestinians as one indication of the growing racist attitude of Israelis. This in the context of the judicial system which sentenced Rabbi Levinger to five months in prison for killing a Palestinian, while he would risk one year imprisonment for sitting at the same table with the PLO.

The next speaker was Michael Palumbo, an independent researcher and author of *The Palestinian Catastrophe*. Mr. Palumbo discussed the nature of Zionism and the Zionist movement before 1948 as being based on expulsion to accommodate new Jewish immigrants. These realities form the historical precedents for present day immigration and dispossession, which serve the same purpose as they did over 40 years ago.

Continuing his discussion of the Palestinian dispossession, he criticized the apologists for Zionism who maintain that because there was never a formal blueprint for the expulsion of the Palestinians, Zionism is therefore not guilty of committing an historical injustice. He pointed out that rarely in history does injustice occur in such a mechanical way, yet this by no means exonerates the perpetrators from «sin.»

Turning to the war between the Arab states and Israel in 1948, Mr. Palumbo touched on some of the myths surrounding it. For example, the alleged Arab radio broadcasts which were said to have encouraged Palestinians to leave their homes were actually propaganda tactics employed by the Haganah. In fact, Arab states were threatening Palestinians not to flee. He also discussed the use of terror by Zionists to «encourage» Palestinians to leave, and made the case that concentrating on the few known cases, such as the Deir Yassin massacre, misrepresents the reality of what was happening at the time. That the world knows of only a few villages where massacres occurred gives the false impression that

they were isolated incidents when, in fact, they were frequent.

Ending his remarks, Mr. Palumbo reiterated the historic continuity to the present day threat of transfer, and expressed his pessimism about the future of Palestine.

The afternoon panel was led off by Dr. Uri Davis, director of the Jerusalem and Peace Service consultancy office and one of the founders of the Return group. In his remarks, Dr. Davis discussed the meaning of return, emphasizing that it is fundamental to any discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He maintained that resistance to the Palestinian right to return is rooted in entrenched racism and the knowledge that Israel can't accommodate the economic restructuring Palestinian return would necessitate, as the state was constructed to benefit Jews only. In addition, speaking from a purely moral aspect, it is untenable to advocate democracy and then accord rights only to Jews.

As the right to return would entail radical changes in many spheres, its meaning needs to be clearly understood in order to make it a viable reality. What the right to return does not mean, according to Dr. Davis, is that the original Palestinian inhabitants of a destroyed village would displace the present day inhabitants. What it does mean is that the former inhabitants would have equal access to present facilities and receive compensation for lost property, as provided for under international law. Clarifying the meaning of return is essential to dispel the false polarity that victory and return for the Palestinians means Jewish expulsion and misery. In a truly free democratic Palestinian society, Jews could find a political home.

In ending, Dr. Davis criticized those who advocate a two-state solution as a final settlement as accommodators of Zionism, interested in protecting a racist system of separation. Joint struggle is based on joint values to achieve victory, he said.

Raja Aghbariya, secretary general of the Abna Al Balad movement, made the next presentation, focusing on return and the Palestinians inside Israel. Mr. Aghbariya criticized some elements in the PLO leadership for