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# Both Sides of the Green Line

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JAMES GOODE

**July 29, 1990**

Orientation at a small, cozy hotel in Foggy Bottom, not far from the State Department. Fourteen academics from around the country, all with some experience in the Middle East, make up our group. In preparation for our study tour to Israel and the Occupied Territories, U.S. officials, Palestinian and Israeli representatives present a series of excellent briefings. A former adviser to Henry Kissinger, now a private consultant, reports that the United States has neglected and abused Jordan because of its close ties to Iraq. King Hussein is "turning back to his people." Anti-Americanism in Amman is more blatant than ever before. The United States does not have a Middle East policy but rather a domestic American policy about the Middle East, with little concern for people in the region.

A Palestinian professor reports that the number of deaths (1,000) of his people during the Intifada, which began in November, 1987, is comparable to twice the number of American deaths in ten years of war in Vietnam.

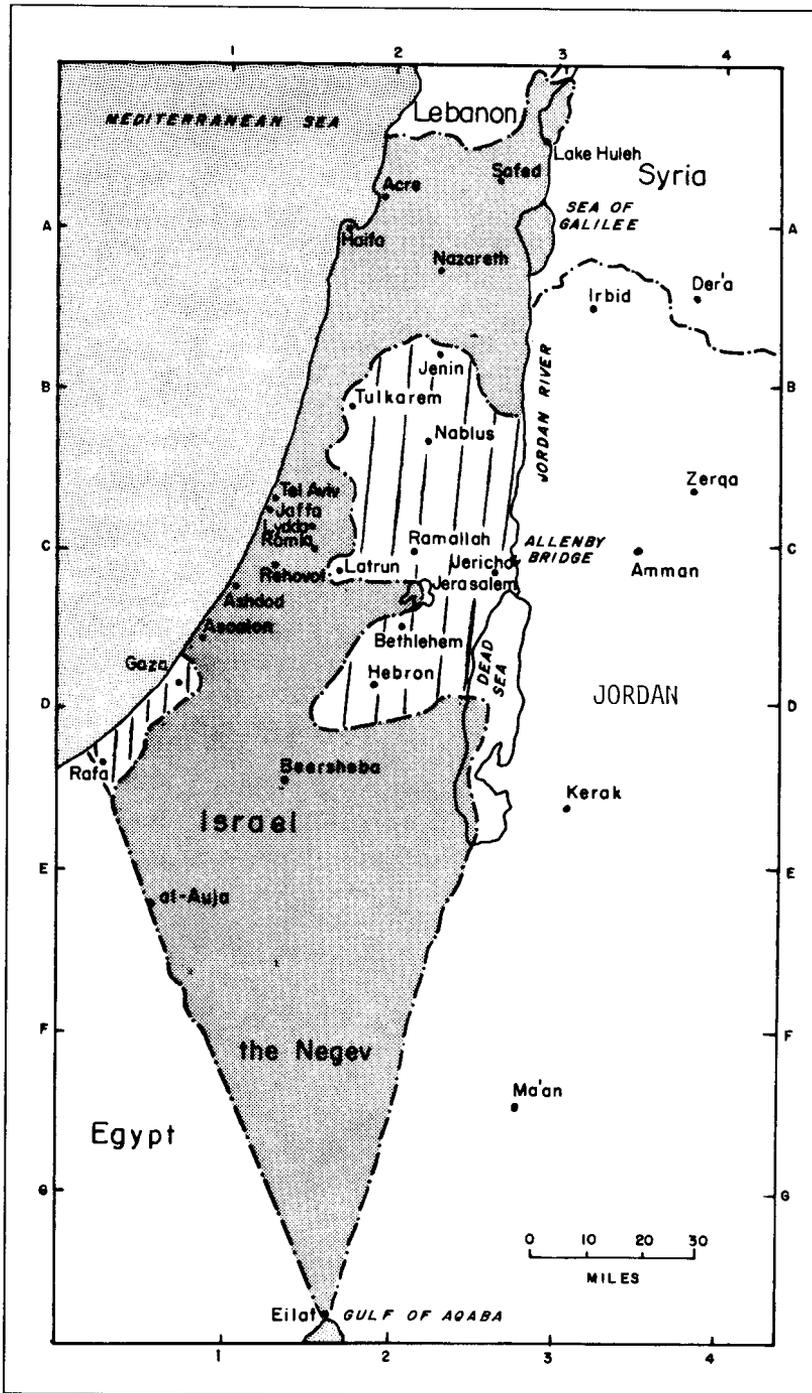
An Israeli journalist explains that the Israeli public is fed up with the Intifada and gives it little attention, because it is disturbing to them in a moral sense and they focus instead on the Soviet Jewish immigrants.

Over coffee one of our group tells us of an in-flight meeting with an old friend, who is running for Congress as a liberal Democrat. After Al revealed his destination and purpose, the would-be congressman explained that he was meeting with members of the "Israeli" lobby whom he hoped would lend him their financial support.

At dinner two colleagues question whether or not Palestinians deserve a nation because of their chronic disunity prior to the uprising. This triggers debate, but no consensus.

**July 30**

More briefings. Reaching saturation point by midday. Several speakers declare that history is useless in the present situation because it inflames passions. [We hear this again and again in the ensuing days.] A Palestinian speaks of women in the Intifada.



She argues that sacrifice, not fulfillment, is the key to women's liberation in the West Bank. American feminism is too ethnocentric, she adds, and must change its attitudes toward women of the Third World. At the end of the two days, I am reminded of the fable of the six blind men and the elephant, for our speakers have presented differing, sometimes conflicting, views on the Intifada.

### July 31

Departed New York City at midnight on Royal Jordanian Airlines. I awake about two hours out of Amman with the faint scent of rosewater in the air. Every seat on the jumbo jet is taken. Of the Arab women passengers only half wear traditional dress, the rest Western dresses. The plane lands on time and we move quickly through customs. In the arrival lounge, some women send up joyous ululations upon the appearance of a bearded Arab elder in traditional garb; their menfolk respectfully kiss his hand. Outside a young Jordanian, hurrying along with friends, drops his parcel; it shatters, and for a moment the desert air is redolent of fine scotch.

Our modern hotel perches atop one of Amman's many hills. The tour escort, Professor Lou Cantori, who has just returned from Baghdad via Egypt escorting another group, is there to greet us. We first met in Cairo in 1987 and he seems to have lost none of his love for the Middle East. After a delicious buffet of Arab dishes, grilled lamb, rice, piquant vegetable stews, we assemble with two other groups—Protestant ministers and university geographers—who are also crossing the Jordan River in the next few days. Touring the Occupied Territories appears to be a thriving trade.

A Palestinian neurosurgeon, who works at Makassad hospital in East Jerusalem, tells of the lamentable health situation in the Occupied Territories, too few hospitals and medical personnel, too little finance from the Israeli government. The Intifada's casualties have put impossible strains on medical services. He explains that "rubber" bullets are actually metal, coated with a thin layer of rubber and that along with the "plastic" variety—an amalgam of metals—they can be lethal if used at less than fifty meters. We examine a collection of shrapnel removed from patients and view slides of the wounded. He criticizes the United States for shipping so much tear gas to Israel.

Later, Lou informs us that violence is increasing in the West Bank with the whole region slipping into militancy. He has this on the authority of well-informed friends in Cairo. "Let's not kid ourselves," he adds. "We're going into a war zone." Hyperbole? We can soon judge for ourselves.

### August 1

Early morning finds us at the Jordanian foreign ministry. We wait for the director seated around a U-shaped table with the youngish-looking monarch peering

benignly down on us from a faded portrait. Mr. Bilbeisi arrives with many apologies for tardiness. Tea and coffee are served to all as is the custom. Our host reveals Jordan's frustration with Israel and the United States. His government thought that the Americans would press harder for a settlement with the Palestinians once the Cold War ended, but it has not. The United States kept Jordan in the dark concerning its negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Jordan does not oppose Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel but knows that limited economic resources in the region will lead to shortchanging the Palestinians. Regarding the increasing strength of Islamic parties in the region, he remarks, "When people lose faith they revert to God."

Next, the foreign ministry's department of Palestinian affairs only a few blocks away, but presenting a strikingly different atmosphere. The small building appears run-down and every room is crowded with Palestinians seeking one kind of assistance or another. A television crew waits to record our meeting for the evening news. The tone here is shriller. Dr. Ahmad Qatanani informs us that the Israelis have a statement on the wall of the Knesset proclaiming that their land extends from the Nile to the Euphrates. Later, he softens, explaining that Jordan only wants the United States to be more evenhanded, not pro-Arab and anti-Israeli.

The afternoon is free for a walk to the main bazaar. En route we espy the imposing headquarters of Jordan's general intelligence agency. We have been cautioned about cameras but two of our group cannot resist taking shots of the complex from the hilltop a quarter mile away. Suddenly, soldiers appear as if from nowhere and escort us to the main gate. Guards open the offending cameras and remove the film. Chastened, we depart. Traveling in groups, I remember, can be troublesome.

In the evening our doctor friend returns to show a locally produced video on the injured of the Intifada. How would it play in the United States? The product is embarrassingly amateurish. Politely, we suggest changes, which altogether indicate he should start over. If he is discouraged he hides it well, thanking us warmly for our comments.

## **August 2**

Early departure for Jerusalem. Lovely, rugged country as we descend the few thousand feet to the Jordan River valley where banana plantations line the roadsides. The tiny but famous Allenby Bridge does not live up to my expectations. Nor does the river, which is only twelve feet wide here. Nevertheless, guards patrol everywhere. In the distance I sight an Israeli post situated on a barren hilltop ringed with rows of barbed wire. A sign announcing THE CIVIL ADMINISTRATION OF JUDEA AND SAMARIA welcomes us to the West Bank.

Israeli border guards surround our bus, their machine guns hanging carelessly from shoulder straps as they inspect around and under the vehicle. What contrast between the Jordanian soldiers we have just left and the Israelis who are now checking our passports. These new warriors are so clearly Westerners; their rapid, crisp movements, their intensity of purpose, give them away. How long I wonder until they blend into the land? How must our Jordanian bus driver feel when he comes within the Israeli dominion? I watch him carefully but he betrays nothing.

The one-hour drive through the biblical wilderness reveals little change since my last visit in 1969, but as we near Jerusalem, we encounter the first Israeli settlements. They sit on hilltops, staring down menacingly at passers-by on the road below. From the valley floor one can see they have been built for defense. Like American stockades of old, outside windows are mere slits and upper floors protrude over lower levels. The largest of all, Ma'ale Adumim (population 10,000), extends down to the road, and settler children frolic in a large swimming pool in seeming defiance of the arid landscape.

Jerusalem, "City of Peace." West Jerusalem is largely Jewish, East Jerusalem is approximately 55 percent Palestinian, but this changes almost daily as Jews arrive to take up residence. Israel has annexed the eastern half of the city, which it won from Jordan in 1967, but the world has yet to recognize this annexation. A tour of the old walled city reveals few obvious signs of the Intifada except for closed shops and splashes of black paint on walls where Israeli army patrols have ordered locals to cover graffiti, which proclaim, "Long Live Palestine!" "Long Live Fatah!" "Arafat Is Our Leader!" We notice the forbidden green, black and red Palestinian flag painted over several doorways along the Way of the Cross.

In the evening we learn of changes to our schedule necessitated by the designation of two days in the coming week as strike days. These are in addition to the half-day strikes that close Palestinian shops every day at one o'clock. On these two days we cannot move safely within the Occupied Territories, so we will spend them across the green line in Israel.

### August 3

Visit to West Bank kibbutz, Kfar Etzion, scene of a determined Jewish defense in 1948. After viewing a remarkably effective video, detailing the final days of the defenders, the screen rises slowly to reveal the bunker where the last defense took place. A wisp of smoke rises lazily from below. I recall the inexperienced, but sincere, attempt of the doctor in Amman. Outside, acres of neatly manicured lawns and flowerbeds announce the presence of Europeans in this thirsty land.

Later, we visit Efrat, a new settlement, inhabited largely by Jews from English-speak-

ing lands. Our host, Bob Lange, a young American immigrant, graduate of the University of Wisconsin, dismisses Palestinian nationalism, saying that the Intifada is rooted in social welfare issues. His conversation turns repeatedly to this morning's Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. He already has a Kuwaiti joke to tell us. This settlement, he reports, is built on land that belonged to King Hussein before 1967. [Later, we are told that the land had been common pasture—not royal land—used by the surrounding Palestinian villages.]

At Dehaishe (population 8,000) we get our first look at a refugee camp. A 15-foot wire fence separates the camp from the road that carries Jewish settlers to work in Jerusalem each day. The fence discourages stone-throwing. The army has sealed all but two entrances. We visit a family whose husband and father was recently shot to death by a soldier in the same room we occupy. Then another family whose twenty-three-year old son, Ziad, has just returned from six months' imprisonment in Ansar III, Israel's high security prison in the Negev desert. His family was not allowed to visit him there. Although he was never charged with an offense, he now carries a green identity card, which prevents him from entering Israel, and incidentally alerts authorities that he has a record. Despite crowded conditions, the houses appear more substantial than I had expected.

On our way out of the camp at the intersection of two paths, we become involved briefly in a rock-throwing incident. To our right teenagers hurl rocks over our heads at an Israeli patrol downhill to our left. The soldiers, several obviously in their teens, push along a Palestinian not much younger than themselves. We scramble to get out of harm's way, but this incident ends peacefully as the patrol withdraws, and the youngsters flash the V sign. Does our presence encourage the stone-throwers? Would the patrol have withdrawn so quickly if we had not been in the area? Later while we wait for the bus, an officer releases the detainee.

We tour East Jerusalem with a representative of American Near East Relief Aid (ANERA). Apartment building proceeds at a furious pace in this area, where boundaries have steadily bulged outward through annexations of adjacent land. Many of the new complexes will house Soviet Jews. We pass crumbling remains of Palestinian villages, derelicts of 1948 and 1967. Ayn Karem, a former Arab village, has become a Jewish artist colony, and the Holocaust Memorial, Yad Vashem, which we visit next, stands on land formerly belonging to this village. "The Palestinians are Hitler's last victims," says our guide.

Yad Vashem stands on a high ridge partly hidden in a grove of pines and overlooking a beautiful Mediterranean landscape of scattered cypress and olive trees. The complex covers many acres, but the children's memorial impresses me most. Upon entering I feel disoriented as I inch along a narrow walkway in the darkness. Sud-

denly turning a corner, I am surrounded by thousands of tiny, candle-like lights whose glimmers reflect off the polished surfaces of walls, floor and ceiling; in the background voices intone an endless list of names—the youthful victims of the Holocaust.

#### August 4

Today we travel to the Gaza Strip. It is the sabbath and in West Jerusalem knots of men and boys in prayer shawls hurry to synagogue. Along the strategic road winding down from Jerusalem toward Tel Aviv and the sea, the passes are strewn with reminders of earlier violent encounters; burnt out Jewish vehicles, now mini-memorials, line the roadside. We turn south at Latrun monastery, from where one can survey the flat, fertile lands stretching away in three directions and covered variously with orange groves, vineyards, wheat, and sunflowers. All this, too, was once Palestine. We pass Neve Shalom (“Oasis of Peace”), a unique settlement where sixteen Arab and Jewish families live together in peace.

The tiny Gaza enclave, only twenty-nine miles long and eight miles wide, is surrounded by barbed wire except in the west where it meets the Mediterranean. It is home to six hundred thousand Palestinians. Although barely one thousand Jewish settlers live here, 15 percent of the land has been set aside for future use as an Israeli settlement zone. For greater security we transfer to a blue and white bus of the United Nations Refugee Welfare Agency (UNRWA) at the border. Here where the Intifada began, tensions run high. The army is everywhere and we pass through several checkpoints on our way to Jabalia (population 58,000), second largest Palestinian refugee camp in the Middle East. Conditions appear much worse than in the West Bank. We pass a huge pond of raw sewage. Our UN guide informs us that the Israeli government has been slow to allow construction of a treatment center, but building has at last begun. We visit a crude home of cement-block walls and sheet-metal roof. It contains three six-by-eight-foot rooms in which twenty members of two families live. There is no indoor plumbing and the tiny atrium is open to the sky; there are no windows. Although the residents want us to see their living conditions, I feel uncomfortable intruding upon their bit of privacy. As the bus pulls away, I try to imagine what it must be like to be trapped in such a place.

Now south to Rafah where two parallel barbed wire fences divide Egypt from Gaza. Several women stand on boxes shouting in Arabic to unseen family members and friends, separated by the 1978 peace accords. Disembodied voices drift back across the border. At the UNRWA’s clinic we hear again of the woeful lack of medical facilities in Gaza. Rafah, a city of one hundred thousand people, has no hospital, and since 1975 the Israeli government has refused permission for the Red Crescent Society to build one. On our return trip northward we encounter a string of burning tires in the middle of a main thoroughfare; passers-by pay little heed as Israeli

military vehicles rush to the scene. Often cans of gasoline are set in the middle of these burning rings as booby traps, we are told, so soldiers sometimes force bystanders to put out the fires in case of explosion.

We spend the afternoon at Marna House, a haven for weary travelers in Gaza city. While awaiting the arrival of a Palestinian delegation of local notables, we watch a BBC documentary, "Life Under Occupation." At one point in the film an Israeli soldier recounts his feelings about beating a six-year-old Palestinian boy: "It's not much fun," he admits, "but you have to do it." Occupation brutalizes everyone, it seems. Our eight guests arrive for discussion of the Intifada and of future prospects. They are disillusioned and complain bitterly of Israel's procrastination in seeking peace. Nothing will be settled, they claim, until the United States exerts sufficient pressure on Israel as Eisenhower did in 1956. Extremists on both sides will be the chief beneficiaries of delay. At dusk curfew descends on the city and from our balcony we watch army vehicles patrolling up and down nearby streets. In the distance we make out the lights of coastal patrol boats guarding against infiltration.

### August 5

Today, Dr. Hatem Abu Ghazala is our host. A remarkable man, he has single-handedly raised funds to support schools and training facilities in Gaza. A portly, jolly man, his jovial appearance masks an iron determination. He treads a narrow path, independent not only of the Israeli occupiers but on occasion of the PLO as well. We visit a school for Down's Syndrome children and a training facility—a branch of Calgary University—which awards bachelor of arts degrees in education and a master's degree in rehabilitation, whose graduates will help paraplegics and other victims of the Intifada. His programs are often established without official Israeli approval. He put up a new building for the handicapped without a permit and when the military governor told him he had violated the law, the doctor defied him to blow it up "in this UN year of the handicapped." The center still stands.

Our last visit in Gaza is with the head of the Palestinian Women's Union, a fiery, old leader who harangues us on U.S. policy in the Middle East and defends Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. She holds nothing back.

The afternoon schedule includes a briefing on the Intifada at the Israeli foreign ministry in Jerusalem. We arrive a few minutes early and wait in a comfortably air-conditioned room, a welcomed relief after the heat and humidity of Gaza. To our surprise, the chief of Persian Gulf analysis begins the briefing, telling us as he thumps a copy of the *Jerusalem Post* that the "whole world is unified in indignation" over events in Kuwait. Lou interrupts to say that we have come to learn about the Intifada, not the gulf, and he goes on to criticize the polemical nature of the briefing. An awkward silence follows before the director of North American affairs takes the

podium. His credentials include a doctorate in Middle East studies from Oxford, and he presents a more balanced talk than that of his junior colleague. He peppers his discussion with Americanisms: “the \$64,000 question,” “it just ain’t so.” The tension quickly subsides. Israel, he reports, has a security policy, not a foreign policy; the major threat is not the Palestinians of the Occupied Territories, but rather Arabs of the surrounding states; no one in the Occupied Territories likes Israel, of that he has no illusions. Israel is concerned that once the PLO wins a separate state, it will seek to eliminate the State of Israel. Suspicion and mistrust underlie every statement he makes. No one seems willing to put the Palestinians to the test.

In the evening we hear Gideon Spiro, a very different kind of Israeli spokesman. He is co-founder of Yesh G’vul (“There is a Limit”), a group which has been active within the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) in opposing the war in Lebanon and more recently the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Each of its approximately five hundred members decides what his or her limit will be. Some refuse service beyond the green line, others refuse to participate in collective punishment of Palestinians. Although few in number, they remind the Israeli public of the difficult moral questions of occupation. Spiro paid a higher price than most for his unpopular views. The government dismissed him from his civil service position for five years as punishment for his outspoken, after-hours opposition to government policies.

### August 6

Today, a full strike day, we spend visiting representatives of the Labour and Likud parties in Tel Aviv.

Mr. Israel Gat welcomes us into his small office in the shabby, overcrowded headquarters of the Labour party a block from the Mediterranean. Labour, he explains, is willing to negotiate with any group that does not use terrorism. In any negotiations the issue of Jerusalem will provide the thorniest problem and should therefore be considered last. His party lost the last election, he claims, because of the Palestinian attack on the Israeli tourist bus in Egypt. As the discussion proceeds, I reflect on the fact that as long as Israel focuses on isolated acts of terrorism, it plays into the hands of extremists, whose aim of course is to disrupt the peace process.

At the highrise Likud headquarters, Rodney Sanders, a South African immigrant, regales us with wisecracks, referring to the negotiations of Jordan’s King Hussein as “the pussy-footing of the plucky little monarch.” He reveals a tougher side as well, announcing that Israelis can trust no one but themselves and that the PLO statement of 1989 was a document for Jewish genocide. He dismisses statements in his party’s platform that claim Judea and Samaria are not subject to negotiation. “Everything is possible,” he assures us, but after his performance it is difficult to know what he and his party stand for—perhaps that is his purpose.

Lunch with a journalist from the *Jerusalem Post*, who relates the growing anger of many Israeli Jews faced with rising governmental assistance for Soviet immigrants and for the orthodox religious minority.

At Tel Aviv University's Jaffe Center for Strategic Studies, an influential think tank, a representative sets out two options for peace: either to maintain the status quo or to enter into dialogue with the PLO. The latter seems preferable, he argues, but it will be a long process of three to five years during which Israeli public opinion is changed. The only way to bridge the gap until confidence is built up between Israel and Palestine is for the United States to offer guarantees to both sides. Israel needs help from its friends; it has never made peace without this. Perhaps the PLO cannot deliver a settlement but they have to have tried and failed before alternatives can be pursued. It is reassuring to hear this expert admit that Arabs, too, have reasons for suspicion and mistrust of Israel.

Optimistic thoughts of reconciliation evaporate when we return to the front lines in Jerusalem. As we enter the city we pass along streets crowded with angry Jews; at a major intersection police and army units stand ready. Two young Jewish men, who were kidnapped yesterday, have been found stabbed to death outside the city, and Jewish mobs have been stoning hapless Palestinians on their way in or out of West Jerusalem.

#### **August 7**

Today takes us to Beit Sahur one of three Palestinian Christian villages near Bethlehem. Its inhabitants refuse to pay the high taxes assessed to support the occupation and they have suffered for this act of civil disobedience. During a forty-five day curfew the army cut off food and power to the village and seized all appliances, tools, and so forth, in lieu of back taxes, thereby destroying the economic life of the community. Harrassment has continued.

Six village leaders meet with us to discuss life under the Intifada. A professor tells us that universities went underground after the Israeli government closed them two years earlier. They have had mixed success. Neighborhood groups in the village have organized numerous self-help committees to weather the crisis. [As we speak, Israeli military vehicles rumble by outside the garden wall.] Many Christians have gone abroad; it is easier for them than for Muslim Palestinians. The Christians made up 25 percent of the West Bank population in 1970; now they account for only 3 percent. The Beit Sahuris have resisted the trend to emigrate but they cannot say how long the community can be maintained. Already Sahuri land has been annexed to Jerusalem to make room for Soviet Jewish immigrants. Only increased U.S. pressure on Israel can bring peace. Why, they ask, was the United States so reluctant to criticize Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, yet so quick to oppose Iraq over

Kuwait? Finally they remind us that the Intifada is still very much alive but that it receives less coverage in the United States since the April visit of Henry Kissinger, who advised the government to close off foreign media access to developments in the Occupied Territories. There is nothing immoderate in their talk, but they caution that without early resolution, radicals will prosper and disaster will come to everyone in the region.

We hurry to keep a 2 o'clock appointment with U.S. Consul General Philip Wilcox. Security is so tight that it takes more than half an hour for us all to reassemble in the garden of the consulate. Wilcox, a diplomat with many years' experience, reports directly to the State Department, by-passing the strongly pro-Israeli embassy in Tel Aviv. Israelis, he reminds us yet again, are security conscious; they are deeply insecure and frightened. Both peoples have been "victims of history." Despite the Gulf crisis he assures us that the Israeli-Palestinian issue is still a top U.S. priority. Yes, he visits the refugee camps frequently and "they are disgraceful, they are a blight."

At Tantur, an ecumenical institute run by the Catholic Church, we are introduced to Dr. Philip Madden, an American priest, who heads the center. He recounts his own experiences since his arrival over a year earlier. He sought permission to go into the prisons as a chaplain. Israeli authorities first requested his passport and then made countless demands for one form after another. After a year they denied permission because he had not replied to their last letter, which he had never received. When he charged that the ministry of religion had no intention of letting him in, they assured him they could work together, and they requested his passport again. In a calm, emotionless voice he adds, "The Israelis are constantly playing a game and the Western world believes them."

Through his work at Qalandia refugee camp he has come to learn much of the army's methods. Palestinians there fear most the knock on the door in the middle of the night. Almost every young man, aged sixteen to twenty-three, has been in prison at least once. If the soldiers come for one member of the family and he is not at home, they will take someone else. In one family he knows well, a seventeen-year-old boy was killed by soldiers, then his fourteen-year-old brother was arrested. After many entreaties he was released but his sixteen-year-old brother was taken and held for two months without charges.

Back in West Jerusalem the situation has turned ugly. "This is the Jewish Intifada," boasts one Israeli soldier. The stoning of Arab vehicles continues. We pass a car with smashed windshield, its driver lying bloodied in the roadway where an angry mob has left him after beating him in sight of his wife and daughters. By-standers look on sullenly as an ambulance crew administers aid. [He dies in hospital the following day.]

## August 8

Early morning walk through the narrow, bustling streets of old Jerusalem on my way to Al Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock, the most revered site in Islam after Mecca and Medina. The compound covers roughly fifteen acres, studded with monuments from Islam's past. Once inside the guarded gates, all is serene. The wind moans softly in the cypress trees. Worshippers are few at this early hour, and I remove my shoes to enter the Dome of the Rock from whence, Muslims believe, the Prophet Muhammad ascended into heaven during his nocturnal journey. After a quick tour of the lavishly carpeted and tiled interior, I withdraw. Outside at the edge of the compound I peer over a low wall at the bottom of which lies the Wailing Wall, only survivor of the Jewish temple of Roman times. Jews gather here each day to pray while above them towers the Muslim shrine, beneath which must lie the ruins of the temple. In recent years this focal point of the two great religions has provided the locale for violent confrontations. Now, yeshivas, Jewish theological training schools, supported by American benefactors, have moved into buildings traditionally considered part of the Muslim and Christian quarters of the Old City. These encroachments have heightened tensions. But on this morning Jerusalem really does present a peaceful appearance.

At 9AM we set out for northern Israel, the Galilee, Lake Tiberias and the Golan Heights. Our aim is to get some sense of the situation of Israeli Arabs, who make up 17 percent of the population and reside largely in the north.

En route we visit Kibbutz Gan Shemu'el as guests of Hanna Knaz, an American Jew, who has lived here for twenty-four years. She is a co-founder of "Women in Black," a small but growing organization opposed to the occupation, whose members gather each Friday afternoon throughout Israel to hold silent one-hour vigils. We ply her with questions about the kibbutz and she expresses concern for its continued good health. Each year reveals more members concerned with their own good than with the communal good. Apathy continues to spread among the membership. She is plain-spoken, an attractive individual, who quickly establishes rapport with the group. Beyond the kibbutz she sees fear as the greatest obstacle to peace. Israeli society has become coarsened as a result of military service in the West Bank and Gaza. Speaking out against the situation in Israel and the Occupied Territories is neither anti-Israeli nor anti-Semitic, she tells us: "Americans have a special responsibility for knowing what is happening here."

As we travel north and inland from the coast, the countryside becomes more rugged, hills rising to two or three thousand feet and to the east lies the even higher Golan Heights with the Sea of Galilee nestled below. I am surprised at the amount of land here and the apparently small population.

We are bound for Rama, headquarters of the Galilee Society, which provides Israeli Arabs with a variety of services. The Arabs here are powerless, we are told, and the society was founded in 1981 to try to offset inequalities between Arab and Jew. Half of Israel's Arabs live below the poverty line, but only 9 percent of its Jews. Statistics for health, education and employment are reeled off to substantiate the imbalance. In addition, Jews share in private Jewish charity from abroad. Arabs do not. The government will only support services after the local community has set them up, so the Galilee Society starts water, sewerage, and other projects in Arab villages and then gets the government to take them over. Expropriation of Arab land in the Galilee has gone on steadily since 1948, and more and more water is being diverted to the Negev Desert in the south. The problem of limited water resources may be one of the most difficult to resolve when a Palestinian state is established. Our hosts hasten to assure us that they are loyal citizens, determined to use their rights to protect themselves even though they are at a disadvantage.

A short time later we enter the largely Arab city of Nazareth with its winding roads and houses stacked in ranks, climbing the steep hillsides. After a long climb to Christ Church, the pastor welcomes us into the enclosed churchyard, and we sit with him there amidst the lengthening shadows. He tells of difficult times when the small Jewish community of Upper Nazareth took over 50 percent of the land, leaving little for the sixty thousand Arabs in the city. But he concludes on a hopeful note, saying that the greatest discovery will come when Israelis and Palestinians sit down together to talk and discover that they are not enemies.

### August 9

After squeezing in an early morning visit to the interesting bazaar, where housewares predominate over tourist gewgaws, we drive north toward the border with Lebanon in the Golan Heights. At the border stands "the good fence." Why this name we can only guess. The snack shops and souvenirs attract the UN soldiers who patrol the nearby buffer zone between Israel and Syria. On our return south we pass fertile, well-watered fields of cotton. After lunch in Tiberias, a mecca for Israeli tourists, we visit several biblical sites in the area and then in late afternoon follow the Jordan River south into the Occupied Territories to return to Jerusalem from the east. All is quiet along this route, for today is another strike day and shopkeepers have closed their iron shutters. We observe several lumbering Israeli cargo planes, making low passes over the Jordan valley and then disappearing behind a ridge of hills to the east. Is this routine or a foreboding of some new international crisis? Perhaps it is only a warning to Jordanian units surely watching the display from the far side of the valley.

Tired from two days on the road and ten emotion-packed days in the area, we would all welcome an early night, but Faisal Husseini, a prominent Palestinian leader, has

agreed to meet with us at the hotel at 8:30 PM. So we rush dinner to keep our appointment. He appears right on time with his two bodyguards. His white shirt is open at the neck, and he leans forward on his elbows, speaking softly, but confidently, to the group. He tells us that Palestinians will negotiate with anyone who treats them as a people. He explains that the Intifada is not a military movement but rather that it works to change people's attitudes and to raise their consciousness. He admits that fundamentalism among Palestinians is growing in the absence of a peace process. Again we hear the complaint that people cannot understand why the United States opposes Iraq in Kuwait but does not oppose Israel in the Occupied Territories. He expresses doubt about the genuineness of conservative Arab support for the Palestinian cause and closes by predicting that the worst is just ahead for the Palestinians.

### **August 10**

Up at 5:45 AM for an early start to Amman. With no delays, we cross the border at 8 AM. I feel a sense of relief as the tensions of the previous week abate. The experience was stimulating, but depressing, too, for it seems that events are headed away from peace and reconciliation, perhaps toward catastrophe.