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EDITORIALS

Claims for compensation

Steps are being taken for the preparation of claims for compensation to be presented at an appropriate time to Arab governments which have either confiscated the property of, or otherwise done injury to, the Jewish citizens of their respective countries. In our first issue we referred to the conference in Paris last July of former Egyptian Jews who had drawn up claims against the Egyptian Government totalling \$1,000 million for (a) personal compensation—\$500 million, (b) for confiscated Jewish community property—\$300 million, and (c) for religious articles—\$200 million.

Since then there have been two conferences in Italy of former Libyan Jews whose property has been taken over by the Gaddafi regime since it seized power from King Idris I in September 1969. It will be recalled that Libya was an Italian colony until the Second World War when Mussolini's forces were driven out of the country and Britain became, under the United Nations Trusteeship system, the effective administrative power until independence was granted in 1951 and King Idris was appointed ruler.

In the case of sequestration of Jewish property in Iraq, it is worthwhile noting the significant statement made by the late Mr. Moshe Sharett, on March 19, 1951, to the Knesset as the then Foreign Minister of Israel. Mr. Sharett stated: "... by freezing the property of tens of thousands of Jewish immigrants to Israel—stateless today but citizens of Israel the moment they arrive—the Government of Iraq has invited a reckoning between itself and the State of Israel. There already existed an account between us and the Arabs for compensation due to the Arabs who left the territory of Israel and abandoned their property there as a result of the war of aggression by the Arab world against our state. The act now perpetrated by Iraq with regard to the property of the Jews who neither violated Iraqi law nor in any way threatened the country's position nor under-

mined its security compelled us to link the two accounts.

"The Israel Government therefore has decided to inform the appropriate United Nations institutions—and I hereby make this public—that the value of Jewish property frozen in Iraq will be taken into account with regard to the compensation we have undertaken to pay Arabs who have abandoned property in Israel."

The then existing U.N. Palestine Conciliation Committee was thus informed in a Note the contents of which it forwarded to the Iraq and other governments. Various estimates of Jewish property which was confiscated have been made by newspapers such as *The Mideast Mirror* of Cairo as well as *The New York Times*, and in other quarters, to which one might add a share of Iraq's national assets.

At the United Nations, Israel's permanent representatives have on various occasions enunciated the principles for compensation laid down by Mr. Sharett.

Syrian Jewry's Ordeals

The 4,500 Jews in Syria have had little or no improvement in their precarious situation despite the appeals of various international organisations and governments concerned over the flagrant violation of human rights suffered by Syria's Jews. Nevertheless these representations must continue in other Arab countries so that they are ultimately effective. We warmly commend the untiring zeal of important personalities such as M. Alain Poger, President of the French Senate, Lord Wells-Pestel in Britain, Mr. Arthur Goldberg and General Lucius Clay in the United States and others who met on January 27, 1972 in Paris—the third anniversary of the nine Iraqi Jewish martyrs publicly executed in Baghdad. The arousal of world public opinion advances the cause of such deeply humanitarian issues.

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"Proclaim Liberty Throughout The Land, Un THE ECONOM

Some look back on Hebrew beginnings as inferior to contemporary civilisations and on Judaism as a narrow religion originally developed by simple nomads. But the founders of Judaism were not simple nomads. Both Abraham and Moses (as well as Daniel) were princes of the highest civilisations of their times. They had access to all the inner workings of their respective empires: they looked around them and did not like what they saw. **THE GREATNESS OF JUDAISM CAN BE MEASURED BY WHAT ITS FOUNDERS REJECTED AS SUBSTANDARD.**

Abraham and Moses might well have said as they turned their backs—one on the Chaldean empire, 3,800 years ago, and the other on the Egyptian empire, 3,200 years ago, "Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin", "You were weighed in the balance and found wanting", which was Daniel's Writing on the Wall at Belshazzar's feast just before the decadent Babylonian empire in its turn came to an end and fell, 2,500 years ago, to the enlightened rule of Cyrus the Great.

REFORMING ZEAL

Abraham was a reformer and his vision of a "Promised Land" was a place in which to build up a reformed society as the basis for the Kingdom of God, and in that nation so established all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

Moses too was a reformer. As a result of the fourteen-year plan of Joseph, which was the first attempt at long-term economic planning in history, the land of Egypt had passed into the ownership of Pharaoh, the Hebrews became slaves and their burdens were grievous. Moses became obsessed with freeing the children of Israel from personal slavery to Egypt. (The Exodus marked the first industrial strike in history. The Hebrews downed their tools never to work for Pharaoh again.) Moses also wanted to keep the Hebrews free from economic slavery to each other in their future home. He too needed the Promised Land to carry out his plan of the ideal community, the Chosen People, who would set up an example in righteousness and justice to the rest of mankind. The long and tortuous road to such a cosmic plan must of necessity be fraught with immense suffering. Only the stubborn "stiff-necked" Hebrews would be able to survive such ordeal which explains why they were "chosen".

MOSES' GREATNESS

The greatness of Moses can best be illustrated by an incident in the Wilderness when Eldad and Medad started prophesying in the camp and Joshua suggested that they be arrested. "And Moses said unto him: 'Art thou jealous for my sake? Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His spirit upon them!'" (Num. 11:29). It is not surprising that such a man should be The

Great Law Giver, chosen to legislate for "a thousand generations". In fact we are living at the beginning of the Mosaic Age.

The principles of Justice and Freedom pervade every aspect of Mosaic legislation—land receives special treatment. The experience in Egypt showed that unbridled private ownership of land, if followed to its ultimate conclusion, would surely lead to the complete enslavement of those who live on it. Therefore it was commanded that the land shall not be sold in perpetuity for the land is the Lord's and we are only visitors and sojourners on this earth. (Modern pharaohs please note.)

It is interesting to note that the land-tax of one-fifth of the produce imposed by Joseph for Pharaoh continued in force many centuries afterwards.

REASON FOR PROSPERITY

Rab, also known as Abba Areka, who established the famous academy of Sura in the third century when Babylonia was practically a Jewish state, was able to observe that new towns were more prosperous because, he explained, the accumulated sins of its inhabitants were few. In fact, the principal sin of old towns is that land values become accumulated to the landlords and this results in poverty to most of the inhabitants.

It is also noteworthy that Caliph Omar imposed a land tax for the Moslem treasury which he justified by conquest. Any future union of Middle East countries should adopt as one of its main policies a heavy tax on land both urban and rural so that in the process of developing the region wealth does not become amassed by the few.

SLAVERY CONDEMNED

Moses condemned slavery itself as an absurdity that results only from economic malpractices. He gave bondsmen a human charter that assured them freedom after six years. As a result, slavery in the contemporary sense never existed in Israel. Any lapse brought quick condemnation from the prophets.

Usury, which meant lending money on interest, was forbidden. It is possible that this ban did not apply to lending in kind. If this was so, an important distinction would have been made between money, which is only a medium of exchange, and capital which is real wealth. Even today our society does not make this distinction and the community has to pay vast amounts to the moneylenders for the use of money which, after all, is only paper.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SABBATH

The Sabbath was a forced day of rest as well as of spiritual revivication. The seven-day week has its roots in the story of Creation. The sanctity of the number seven itself being based on the number of the main heavenly bodies then known, the sun, the moon, and five planets.

"The Inhabitants Thereof" — Lev. 25: 10

S O F M O S E S *by N. E. DANGOOR*

Although modern trade union organisations have many harmful restrictive practices, they advocate one true theory, namely that longer working hours will not result in more benefits to the workers. Hence it is as important to limit working time as to ask for more pay. Moses recognised this and stressed the role of the Sabbath in the Ten Commandments. Making the day of rest a religious obligation helped the Jew to keep it scrupulously so that the Jew can say confidently: My Sabbath is not for sale. The sanctity of the Sabbath assumed such magnitude that it threatened to enslave its observers. It was, however, generally agreed, in due course that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. The weekly day of rest remained a uniquely Jewish institution for many centuries and even 1,500 years after Moses the rest of the world was still rejecting the Sabbath rest as a waste of time.

The seven-day weekly sequence has continued without interruption or change for over 4,000 years and is now universally recognised as the most popular and practical system of counting days.

From time to time calendar reformers threaten this system by proposing to insert one or two nameless days at the end of the year in order to achieve a uniform year made up of 13 months of four weeks or four quarters of 13 weeks. This has consistently been resisted by world Jewry as well as by many Christian Churches.

JUBILEE YEAR

The climax of the Mosaic economic and social system was the Jubilee Year, celebrated every fiftieth year—after seven periods of seven years. "Then shalt thou send abroad the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement . . . and Proclaim liberty throughout the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof", and all land reverted to its original owners—in a sense, the community—all debts were cancelled, all "slaves" freed and society could turn a page and start afresh.

Economic slavery results from perpetuating indebtedness and allowing the individual to own for ever community values such as land.

Modern society with an efficient communications system and an effective law enforcement machinery enables a few to own vast riches, most of which in fact does not represent real wealth but only indebtedness one to another and by allowing such fictitious wealth to earn interest, the rich get much richer and the poor have to get poorer. In Western countries 5 per cent of the people own 50 per cent of the national wealth. For instance, every child born in the U.K. is born to a debt of about £3,000, made up of land values, national debt etc., and this figure mounts every year. The average person just manages to pay the interest on this, say £5 per week,

which leaves most wage earners only enough to exist. Hence the economic ills of our society: poverty amid plenty, unemployment amid vacant jobs, galloping inflation and the resultant loss of human values and moral standards.

Moses foresaw all this and his decrees were intended to break the vicious circle. It is impossible to institute today in our complex system, a jubilee year but we can do something as effective: put a wealth tax of 2 per cent per annum (equivalent to a 50-year jubilee) on all community values, to be shared, as a "national dividend", by all members of the community. Instead of political frontiers we would have economic communities.

The modern remedy to usury is that the State should provide the necessary medium of exchange free of charge. This can be tied up to the payment of the "national dividend". It would thus be possible to bring down interest rates to around 3 per cent per annum.

I reject laissez-faire capitalism, a system which promises to make everybody rich but fails. I reject regimented Communism, a system which attempts to make everyone poor and succeeds. Instead, I favour the economics of Moses based on freedom of opportunity and Justice ●

Arabisation of Iraq Continues

250,000 Persians 'told to leave Iraq'

From the Daily Telegraph 3-1-72

About 250,000 Persians living in Iraq have been ordered to leave the country as soon as possible, according to Sheikh Mohammad Shahrudi, a Moslem leader already expelled.

He said that more than 5,000 vehicles carrying 50,000 deportees from Iraq were now waiting on the Iraqi side of the frontier for clearance by Persian authorities. So far, of 60,000 refugees, 10,000 had been admitted to Persia.

Officials in Teheran have claimed that more than 100,000 Persians have been expelled since 1969, when relations between the two countries deteriorated during a dispute over navigation rights in the estuary of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.

RELATIONS SEVERED

Iraq severed relations with Persia early this month after Persian forces occupied the three tiny gulf islands of Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tumb.

Persian authorities were working round the clock to clear and screen deportees and give them care and shelter at settlements set up in several southern Persian towns. Deportees said that Iraqi nationals with Persian wives had been forced to get divorced. Those who refused were imprisoned and their wives expelled after being divorced by proxy.

The Arabs will never make peace with reality *by EXILARCH*

Immediately after the Six-Day War many observers believed that the shock of defeat would bring the Arabs to their senses and force them to the conference table where a just and lasting peace might be negotiated for the benefit of the whole region.

But in September 1967 at the Khartoum summit conference Arab leaders unanimously resolved that there can be "no peace, no recognition, no negotiations" with Israel. Instead, the Arabs have tried, through military, diplomatic and economic measures, to force Israel to withdraw to the pre-1967 armistice lines, as she uselessly did once before, after the 1956 Suez war. Those who support the Arab case ignore the fact that when Israel was confined to those lines, Arab attitude was exactly the same: they talked war and not peace.

THE ARABS WILL NEVER MAKE PEACE WITH ISRAEL—any pretence to the contrary is only meant to put pressure on Israel to evacuate occupied territories without achieving secure frontiers and a lasting peace—for a genuine peace would mean take and give, and Arab thinking, politics and strategy have always been based on the wonderful formula: all to take and nothing to give.

SEVENTEEN ARAB STATES

Claiming control of 17 very rich, mainly under-populated countries, the Arabs deny the Jews their right to live in their ancient homeland in the Middle East. This unyielding attitude, characteristic of a reckless and "total" gambler, has pervaded Arab thinking throughout history and on many occasions gave them good dividends. Tariq burned his ships when he landed at Gibraltar. For him and his army it was the conquest of Spain or death. Earlier, through single-minded opportunism, the Arabs defeated both the Byzantine and Persian empires.

Today Arab leaders—one day a Nasser, one day a Gaddafi—again dream of an empire extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf and beyond. Such dreams, albeit they sometimes come true, have made the Arabs live in a world of fantasy now fuelled by new oil wealth and so they often find it difficult to face reality.

A recent parallel has been the stunning defeat of Pakistan, whose leaders claim descent from Iraqi Arabs, at the hands of the Indian Army, whose chief of staff in the Eastern front, General Jacobs, of Iraqi Jewish origin, played a leading part in the battle and in the end negotiated the unconditional surrender of the army of Pakistan.

REPRESSION

The war came as a natural and necessary sequel to a year of repression, persecution and terror by West Pakistan which resulted in the exodus of 10 million Bengalis to India. The Bengalis might have been content with autonomy within Pakistan but,

after the bloody events that ensued they would not be willing to give up their hard-won independent Bangla Desh. President Butto, instead of accepting the realities of the situation and recognising Bengali independence, now speaks of "liberating" not only East Pakistan but also Kashmir and Palestine. He offers to negotiate with India new frontiers on the basis of the 1947 partition of the sub-continent, thus hopelessly hoping to get Kashmir and other territories which, having failed to get them by force of arms, he now wants to gain by diplomatic acrobatics.

MULTI-NATIONALISM

Nuri Said, the Iraqi premier who was murdered in the 1958 revolution, was perhaps too good for his time and place. He was a leader not too much obsessed with Arab nationalism and aimed to develop the Fertile Crescent as a multi-national commonwealth (which it is) and not as an exclusively Arab enclave. Recognising the natural desire of many Jews to re-establish their Middle Eastern home and realising the benefits that would accrue to the region which could be transformed in peace and prosperity into one of the leading countries of the world, he proposed in 1946 to admit two million Jews from Europe if the Jews would give up their plan of an independent State. His proposal was rejected by the Arabs and came too late to be accepted by the Jews. Later when the federal plan for Palestine was published some Arabs opted for Nuri's proposal. After the U.N. decided on partition the Arabs came to favour the federal plan. And when the State of Israel emerged in 1948 and the Arabs failed to wipe it out of existence by war, they announced their acceptance of the U.N. partition plan. After the events of June 1967, they have been clamouring for the boundaries of 1948. They are always one step behind, for they cannot make peace with reality.

ARABS REJECT CEASEFIRE

On the first day of the June War, Arthur Goldberg who was then United States representative at the U.N., proposed a ceasefire but this was rejected by the Russians and the Arabs. In his memoirs, President Lyndon Johnson continues the story. "June 7, the third day of the war, began with the Israelis announcing that they were willing to accept a ceasefire, provided the Arabs agreed. But the Arabs did not respond. **They apparently could not accept the reality of the situation in the field.** The Israelis kept moving forward."

This refusal to accept reality results from a defect in the Arab character—they cannot live at peace with their neighbours. And while the Arabs on many occasions in history gained from calculated perfidy, the Jews often suffered as a result of their loyalties—to their faith, their neighbours and their allies. The

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THE MIDDLE - EAST and the INDIA - PAKISTAN CONFLICT

by PERCY S. GOURGEY, M.B.E

A major consequence of the war between India and Pakistan could in the long-term be the transformation of Middle East politics.

For our immediate purposes it is interesting briefly to

- (1) trace the course of India-Israel relations,
- (2) assess the causes of India-Pakistan hostility,
- (3) recall the demand for Bangla Desh, and
- (4) draw tentative conclusions therefrom.

(1)

At the historic Palestine Partition vote of November 29, 1947, India, which had gained her independence three months earlier, voted against the majority decision for an Arab and a Jewish state in the area, and moved a minority report supporting a federal solution of the problems.

Reasons of expediency, including the large Muslim minority in India and the several Arab votes in the U.N., doubtless played their part in conditioning India's attitude. Nevertheless, about three years later, on September 18, 1950 India accorded Israel both *de jure* and *de facto* recognition yet withholding the exchange of diplomatic representatives.

This was a result of the compromise in the struggle between the pro- and anti-Israel factions in Nehru's ruling Congress party, the pro-Israel faction motivated more by bitter memories of the Hindu-Muslim massacres at Partition than by Israel's achievements.

Their influence prevailed to a greater extent when in 1952 India agreed to the establishment of an Israeli consulate in Bombay which served, and serves, to focus considerable public support for Israel. This is expressed not only in the press but also in organisations like the Indo-Israel Friendship League.

Thus despite the cool, perhaps unfriendly attitude of the Indian government to date, popular support for Israel is widespread.

(2)

TWO NATION THEORY

The seeds of the India-Pakistan conflict were sown historically in Islam's abhorrence of idol-worship which Muslims regard as the predominant characteristic of Hinduism.

It was in the early nineteen-twenties that Mohamed Ali Jinnah, a prominent Indian Muslim lawyer who later founded Pakistan, became disillusioned with the Hindu-dominated Indian National Congress of which he had been a leading member, resigned his position and joined the All-India Muslim League whose main aim was to end alleged Hindu discrimination against Muslim minorities in all walks of life.

In 1940, the Muslim League under Jinnah's presidency, proclaimed its resolve, in furtherance of its "two-nation theory" to have a separate Muslim state carved out of India when the country became independent.

The first communal massacres on a large scale occurred in August 1946 when Jinnah announced "Direct Action Day" in support of his claims and the Muslim League government of Bengal in British India did little or nothing to prevent Muslims slaughtering Hindus in the streets of Calcutta before calling out the troops to restore order.

In the next 18 months retaliatory action between Hindus and Muslims followed in Bihar and Orissa, and the Punjab, and, after Partition on August 15, 1947, in Kashmir.

Fighting between India and Pakistan in 1948 was brought to an end by U.N. intervention and armistice lines were established in Kashmir, Kashmir became a perennial test-case of Pakistan's "two-nation theory" and hence a *casus belli* again in 1965 when India and Pakistan fought a three-week war formally ended through Soviet Premier Kosygin's mediation in the Tashkent Agreement of January 1966.

MUSLIM-ARAB BRETHERN

It is noteworthy that while India has accorded recognition to Israel and permitted an Israeli consulate in Bombay, Pakistan has declared that she will never recognise Israel for her "aggression against Pakistan's Muslim-Arab brethren".

It was at a Muslim League Council meeting in Bombay in 1943 that Mr. Jinnah indicated his grandiose dreams of Pakistan, as the largest Muslim state, "leading the Pan-Islamic world". (Incidentally, it was as a result of adverse propoganda against Zionism and Jews emanating from this meeting, that the Central Jewish Board of Bombay was formed, of which I later became Hon. Secretary.)

(3)

The demand for Bangla Desh, "an independent country for the Bengali nation", arose as a result of the neo-colonial status of East Pakistan from which, after nearly two decades of independence, there occurred a net transfer of resources to West Pakistan officially estimated at £1,000 million sterling.

During his visit to London at the end of 1969 Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the previously gaoled leader of Bangla Desh, recalled to us that in a referendum in the old undivided India, Bengali Muslims had cast the decisive vote for the creation of Pakistan.

Yet East Pakistanis were treated as "second class citizens" and the bulk of recruitment of the country's foreign and civil services and the armed forces as well as the development projects were in West

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Pakistan. "Though 70 per cent of Pakistan's foreign exchange was earned by East Pakistan, we received just 30 per cent in return for it", he protested.

He pointed out that because of Pakistan's prejudice against India perpetuated by the Kashmir problem, Pakistan imported coal from China rather than from India at a much higher price because of the increased transportation costs. On the vital language issue, he declared that though Bengali was spoken by the majority of the people of Pakistan, yet it did not enjoy commensurate status.

His Awami League's sweeping victory in December 1970's general elections, held in the aftermath of the cyclone disaster, was significant evidence of the massive support he received from the people of East Pakistan for his six-point programme.

(4)

While the scale of genocide in Pakistan is still not comparable to the mass slaughter of six million Jews in Hitler's Europe, at least a quarter of a million people are known to have been killed in the fighting in East Bengal since March 25.

Yet one wonders if in the long term it could lead to the "Balkanisation" of the Indian sub-continent feared in the days of British rule and provincialism. (Incidentally, the Indian general who negotiated Pakistan's terms of surrender is of Baghdadi-Jewish origin—General J. F. R. Jacob.)

The armed conflict opens up intriguing prospects of radical realignments of powers despite the imponderable elements in the situation. No one would have dreamt three years ago when Nixon became President that the U.S. and China would be aligned in support of Pakistan against India supported by the Soviet Union.

ISRAEL EXAMPLE FOLLOWED

There is a jockeying for position by the super-powers as the Soviet Union through the Pact with India last August has secured her access to the Indian Ocean, thus enabling her still further to out-flank the United States position in the Middle East. Hence the movement of the U.S. Seventh Fleet into the Bay of Bengal.

Will this Fleet also seek to neutralise the Soviet base in the island of Perim ceded by Britain to South Yemen (Aden) in 1967, which is at the approaches of the Red Sea commanding access to the Suez Canal?

In the strategic conduct of the India-Pakistan war India has sought to follow Israel's example in the Six-Day war of gaining immediate supremacy in the air. Will we henceforth hear less in the U.N. of "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory gained through war" which is the opening sentence of the Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967 affecting Israel and Jordan?

These are questions the answers to which we can await with interest ●

PURIM IN BAGHDAD

by OLGA SOMECH PHILLIPS

My father, David Eliahoo Somech, was born in Baghdad some years over a century ago. Coming to England as a young man, he joined the Sephardi community in Manchester, and I was born in that city of a London mother.

My father spoke often of his youth, and amongst other memories, I recollect his vivid account of Purim in Baghdad. He told me, a schoolgirl, how his native town a thousand years previously under the rule of the great Caliph, Haroun-el-Raschid was the most celebrated city in the world, both for its learning and commerce. He would recall how the shawls and carpets came on mules from Persia in that golden age; honey and dried fruits on rafts down the River Tigris from Asia Minor; silks and swords on camels from Syria; and pearls, sugar and spices on sailing vessels from India. In those days beautiful Baghdad was what dry geography books call the Commercial Emporium of the World.

PURIM CUSTOMS

Purim had been always a feast of jollification, and the preparations were on a big scale even in my father's boyhood. A few days ere the Festival the Baghdadian Jews were absolutely inundated with beggars of all shapes and sizes, who walked in at every open door clamouring for alms. The Synagogues were packed with congregants, the services commencing at different hours, so that early or late attendants could find some place of worship where prayers were beginning: the earliest ones commenced at dawn. The inhabitants of Baghdad loved jollifications, and the Feast of Esther was a very merry time there. Every Purim the Jewish children took their Megilloth and jingled them loudly in their Synagogues; those of the wealthy were encased in gold or silver, whilst those of the poor were without cases; but everyone from the wealthy to the humblest would take a Megillah.

Yes, old Baghdad saw life during Purim. The season of Purim coincided with the rise of the River Tigris far above its normal condition. This was owing to the melting of the snow in Asia Minor. On account of the removal of the floating bridge whereby one could cross the river at normal times, people had to cross by means of a Kuffah, an ancient craft used as a ferry. My father said that it existed still in his boyhood, being a deep, round basket composed of reeds and thickly cemented with pitch. At Purim time the currents of the river became uncontrollable as they still do at that particular time of the year.

On the opposite side of the river was a spot not far from the shrine of the High Priest Joshua, according to the records, where good Israelites from Baghdad went on pilgrimage once a month at the birth of the new moon. They would enjoy there a day's picnic under the shade of the trees at the holy spot—a magnificent Mausoleum surrounded by palm trees.

Certainly one's eastern blood can glow with reminiscences of a past Baghdad and near the site of the ancient Babylon ●

COOKERY CORNER

by GASTRONOME

In 1226 when Baghdad was still riding high (just before it was savagely sacked by the Moguls in 1258), Al-Baghdadi wrote his famous book of haute cuisine as part of the art of good living which pre-occupied the wealthier classes of the Middle East of that age.

He divided pleasure into six categories: food, drink, clothing, sex, perfume and music, in that order. Modern society attaches different values to these pleasures: after centuries of repression and as a result of the discovery of antibiotics and the Pill, sex is rapidly gaining first place, closely followed, through the influence of radio and television, by music. Un-clothing is rather the order of the day and with a figure-conscious generation food and drink cannot be indulged in for pleasure. Amid the pollution of nature in which we live there is no place for the delicate, exotic pleasures of scent and perfume. In his book, Al-Baghdadi left out dishes using commonplace ingredients and cultivated recipes employing spices from China, India and East Africa. The bon-viveurs used to assemble in sessions of degustation in which poetry was recited in praise of the various preparations.

At the Institute of Contemporary Art in The Mall, last month, we relived the times of fancy and fantasy of those days when Mr. Michael Hordern, the well-known actor, succinctly read selections from Mr. Nissim Dawood's translation of *The Thousand and One Nights*, interspersed with Persian singing by Shusha. To crown the evening Mr. and Mrs. Dawood entertained a large company at their home to a supper of exotic foods and drinks.

Mr. Dawood belongs to an ancient and distinguished family of Babylonian Jewry. He has produced the most popular English translation of the Koran (Penguin 1971) after re-arranging its suras. He follows in the footsteps of such Iraqi Jewish giants of Arabic as Harun ben Moses of Basrah who established the exact rules of Arabic grammar in the ninth century. [History of Arabic Literature by Jurji Zaidan.]

One of the episodes of the "Nights" gave a detailed and mouth-watering description of a sweet called "Konafa", and we give below a recipe for this princely dish from *A Book of Middle Eastern Food* by Claudia Roden (Penguin 1971). Baklava and Konafa prepared at home can be entirely different from those found in shops and restaurants. They should be light, crisp and delicate:

Konafa (Kadaif)

The dough for this pastry can also be bought ready-made in Greek shops. It is made of flour and water mixed into a liquid batter and thrown through a sieve on to a hot metal sheet over a small fire. The dough sets in strands which are swept off the sheet very quickly and remain soft. They look like vermicelli or shredded wheat, only soft, white and uncooked.

You can make konafa with two different fillings, a cream filling or one of walnuts and pistachios.

1 lb. konafa pastry
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. unsalted butter, melted

Syrup

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. sugar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ pint water
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon orange blossom water

Cream filling

3 tablespoons ground rice
2 tablespoons sugar
1 pint milk
 $\frac{1}{4}$ pint double cream

or

Walnut or pistachio filling

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. pistachios or walnuts, coarsely chopped
2 tablespoons sugar

Prepare the syrup by stirring the sugar, water and lemon juice over moderate heat, then simmering until it thickens and coats a spoon. Stir in orange blossom water and cook for 2 minutes longer. Cool and chill lightly in the refrigerator. Prepare either of the following fillings.

Cream filling: mix ground rice and sugar to a smooth paste with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk. Boil the rest of the milk and add the ground rice paste slowly, stirring vigorously. Simmer, stirring, until very thick. Then allow to cool, add cream and mix well.

Walnut or pistachio filling: mix the chopped nuts with the sugar.

Put the konafa pastry in a large bowl. Pull out and separate the strands as much as possible with your fingers so that they do not stick together too much. Pour melted butter over them and work it in very thoroughly with your fingers, pulling the shreds and mixing so that each one is entirely coated with butter. Put half the pastry in a large, deep oven dish. Spread the filling over it evenly and cover with the rest of the pastry, evening it out and flattening it with the palm of your hand.

Bake in a preheated slow to moderate oven (350° to 375°F Mark 3 to 4) for 45 minutes, then in a hot oven 450° to 475°F (Mark 7 to 8) for only 10 to 15 minutes longer, until it is a light golden colour. Remove from the oven and immediately pour the cold syrup over the hot konafa.

Konafa can also be made into small, individual rolled pastries. This is the form in which they are most commonly sold in pastry shops. The threads of dough are wrapped around a filling of chopped or ground walnuts, chopped pistachios or ground almonds to which a little sugar and some rose water have been added. One way of making them is to lay a flat bundle of threads of dough moistened with melted butter on a clean surface. Lay a flat stick or a wide skewer along it diagonally. Arrange the filling over the stick or skewer, then roll or flap the threads of dough tightly round the stick. Slip the stick out carefully, leaving the filling inside the roll. Arrange the rolls on baking trays and bake as described above. Then pour cold syrup over them as they come out of the oven. Cut into individual portions and serve, preferably cold. One traditional way of baking the rolls is to arrange them in a spiral in a round baking tin.

The Arabs will never . . .

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cry for law and order and against lawlessness pervades the Jewish Scriptures: How long, O Lord, shall the ways of the wicked flourish?

By their selfish and irresponsible behaviour, by their inhuman, often savage, treatment of minorities (of which the current expulsion of 80,000 Persians from Iraq is the latest example) the Arabs have forfeited their right (if right they ever had) to lead the Middle East.

PAX ISRAELITA

Having successfully contained Egypt for the past 24 years and thereby saved south-western Asia from Egyptian domination, Israel must now organise the Fertile Crescent into a democratic, multi-national union of Jews and Arabs, Kurds, Lebanese, Palestinians, Persians, Druse, Turkomen and Assyrians a union from which Egypt, by virtue of its geographical position and its peculiar demographic and economic problems, must be excluded. Pax Arabica must now give way to Pax Israelita.

President Sadat's repeatedly threatened intention to restart the war of attrition would be a tragedy for the Middle East as it would only delay the day when peace and prosperity can be established in the region ●

"Cellar Club"

The Cellar Club announce their new Committee:

Chairman: Mr. Isaac Amber.

Secretary: Miss Vivien Shina.

Treasurer: Mr. Sas Timman.

Committee Members: Mr. Y. Yamen, Mr. Farid Shamash, Miss Olivia Timman and Miss Linda Abdulezer.

We wish the Club continued success under their guidance.

In the next Issue

● **United Europe a Threat to Jewish Survival?**

United Europe would be dominated by Germany and a united Christian Church who with America would mount a new white man's crusade against Russia, Afro-Asia and Islam.

The House of Israel must take up positions on home ground to face the coming cataclysm.

● **The Geonim of Babylon**

by Rabbi Gershom Harpanas.

● **The Refugee Problem and Peace in the Middle East**

by Heskell M. Haddad, M.D.

President, American Committee for Rescue and Resettlement of Iraqi Jews, Inc., New York.

Letters to the Editor

From Mr. D. Segal

As a former schoolmaster of Mr. N. Dangoor, I cannot tell you how much pleasure I got on receiving a copy of *The Scribe* thus to make contact again after all these years. You know that every teacher thinks that he has been somewhat responsible for the development of his pupils and when they get on he basks in the reflected glory.

I know that Baghdadi Jewry has been considerably reduced in number and that those few who remained were subjected to most inhuman restrictions.

I recall that I met the late Mr. A. G. Brotman at a talk he gave in Hull on the Board of Deputies of British Jews, of which he was Secretary at the time. It is not generally known that he was Headmaster of Shamash School in Baghdad for some years before he was appointed Secretary of the Board in 1934. (Mr. Segal succeeded Mr. Brotman as Headmaster of the school.—Ed.)

I should imagine that the object of *The Scribe* is two-fold, (1) to revive memories of the ancient past, and (2) to link together all Jews of Middle East origin.

I send best wishes for your success.

D. Segal, 3 Thorgill Grove, Bricknell Avenue, Hull

Action Committee

The march on the 12th of December on behalf of Syrian Jewry from Speaker's Corner to 10 Downing Street, culminated in a petition for Syrian Jewry being handed in to the Prime Minister by a delegation of the Action Committee for Arab Jewry, led by Lord Janner, and including Mr. M. Pottesman and Mr. P. Gourgey of the Action Committee and M.P.s G. Janner, M. Orbach and S. C. Davis.

Comments and articles welcomed. The views of individual contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the Journal.—Ed.

Please send to:

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