

ARABS IN ISRAEL: FRIENDS OR FOES?

RAPHAEL ISRAELI



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THE KNESSET
MK ELIAHU GABBAY

בס"ד

The publication of this book in its English translation was made possible through the generous contribution of a family who is well-known for their love of the Jewish people, their caring support of Zionist causes, and their concern for the future of the State of Israel. May they continue to see the fruits of their labor in good health for many years to come.

ELIAHU GABBAY

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FOREWORD

The problems with which our country struggles are numerous, especially after the failure of the sweet dreams of Oslo and the outbreak of the second *intifada*, which relies on rampant terrorism and which has killed many among us. However, its severity increases exponentially when it turns out that the Israeli Arabs, who constitute 20% of the country's population and demand to share its bounty with us, take practical steps to aid their Palestinian brethren and thereby declared that they are no longer "torn between their people and their country", as they used to claim, but decided to throw their lot with the enemies of Israel and thereby defined their status outside of society and the Israeli political existence.

Indeed, the deception cultivated by the Israeli Arabs over the years, according to which they are "loyal" citizens of the Jewish state and are therefore entitled to enjoy the benefits of the democracy, unparalleled in the rest of the Middle East countries: Generous welfare payments, a high standard of living and some of the most advanced social services in the world; however, at the same time, they are entitled to claim that they will not fulfill any civic obligations, will side with Israel's enemies and collaborate with them and will even take action to destroy the State by supporting the *intifada* and the "right of return". This deception has dissipated after the Israeli citizens, who wish to survive, finally woke up and understood the inherent contradiction with which they have been living all these years.

As, we are not dealing merely with a national minority, a minority that demands to shatter the Zionist dream through the demand to transform Israel into a bi-national state, but with a large isolationist group that vigorously takes action to accomplish a violent takeover of the state lands, cultivate ideological crime against it and, at times, even provide active subversive aid to its enemies seeking to destroy it. Just as any sensible country is unwilling to cease to exist, so too, the time has come for the Jewish people to look realistically at the harsh reality that we are facing, and come to its senses in time and bring about a reversal in our treatment of this painful, fateful issue.

That is what this book seeks to present. It points to the foundations of the development of the Israeli Arab problem from a social-cultural-religious problem into a national question with calamitous potential for Israel, both due to the rapid Arab demographic growth, which relies, among other things, upon the benefits that the State pays from funds collected from Jewish taxpayers, and which cancels out, in relative terms, Jewish immigration; it exposes the shortsighted policy of the Israeli governments throughout the generations, which, in their quest for the Arab vote, neglected the fundamental problems of Zionism, until it mercilessly blew up in our faces, and forces us to execute a complete about-face in our attitude towards the Arab minority.

The writing and publication of this book was made possible by the generosity of my dear friend **Haim Yehezkel**, for whom these issues are close to his heart.

This edition of the book has been translated from the Hebrew version. Though some of the tenses have been adjusted to reflect the timing, the facts presented here are correct as of 2001 and have not been updated.

Eliahu Gabbay
Publisher

THE CONTINUED RELEVANCE OF THIS BOOK TO THE ONGOING ISRAELI ARAB SITUATION

CHRISTOPHER BARDER

It would be easy to suppose, at least from the Western media, that the “al-Aqsa” *intifada* had long since passed and instead there was relative trust and calm inside Israel, even in the Arab sector there. Very little is reported about it. However, in January 2008, reading between the lines, it was still possible to go beyond the events reported on even by the Israeli media and detect a direct continuum between the issues raised in Professor Israeli’s book and contemporary events and attitudes.

By way of example, the Prime Minister’s Office communicated the following:

Approximately 20 Israeli Arabs from Jisr A-Zarka and the Wadi Ara region were recently arrested in a joint ISA-Israel Police operation on suspicion of involvement in illegally trafficking in weapons and munitions. Six of those arrested were indicted today (Sunday), 27.1.08. The principal accused is Hamza Masri, 24, from Kafr Kara, who is accused of trafficking in weapons and munitions with Shahar Hanina, 41, the head of the Tanzim in Kalkilya. It is alleged that in 2005, Masri acquired a pistol for Hanina, as well as a 15-kilogram bag of potassium for use in preparing explosives, Masri was fully aware of the intended use of the potassium.

Masri was arrested in 2005 and warned about his ties with Hanina, whom he knew headed the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in Kalkilya. Upon his release later that year, Masri continued his links with Hanina. Masri purchased tens of thousands of dollars’ worth of weapons and munitions for Hanina, including an M-16, a hunting rifle and a laser sight for an M-16.*

* January 27, 2008.

This was, however, the tip of a much bigger iceberg, so to speak.*

Over the past year, many cases were uncovered regarding ties involving arms between criminal elements in Israel and terrorist operatives in Judea and Samaria and in the Gaza Strip. Security forces are engaged in a constant war on the trade and smuggling of arms, including from IDF bases, and their sale to terrorist operatives in the Territories. These ties between terrorists and criminals holding Israeli identity cards facilitate the acquisition of arms and ammunition which ultimately are used in attacks against Israel. The danger inherent in these ties is seen in the case of Hamas operatives and arms dealers from Jabel Mukaber in East Jerusalem, who were ultimately arrested. They were found to have had ties with two Hamas operatives who carried out the shooting attack at the Sheikh Sa'ed checkpoint, in the separation fence around Jerusalem, in May 2007. One of the persons arrested provided the terrorists with a weapon a few hours before the attack, in which two security forces were injured, one of them seriously. The terrorists, who hold Israeli identity cards and live in Jabel Mukaber, were killed in an exchange of gunfire during the incident. Under questioning, the detainees admitted that they were involved in extensive trade in arms with criminal elements, Arab Israelis from the north, and also Hamas operatives from Hebron and Bido, a village in the Ramallah District. The questioning also revealed that one of the terrorists acquired the pistol used in the attack a few hours before the attack, and that he had received it from Anan Muhammad Halaila, 21, an arms dealer, and also a resident of Jabel Mukaber. His name came up with those of other detainees as persons who had been involved in attempts to steal weapons from IDF soldiers with the intent of selling them.

Another example occurred in March, when security forces uncovered a network of arms dealers from the Nazareth area, who sold munitions that had been stolen from the IDF to Palestinians in the West Bank. Among those arrested was Arkan Bashir, an IDF soldier in the standing army, who admitted under questioning that he stole munitions from the IDF and sold them to arms dealers,

* IMRA, January 27, 2008, extracted from the Israeli Security Agency Report (cited below).

who then sold them to Ahmad Boz, a Fatah operative from Nablus, who was also arrested.

An Israeli Security Agency Report for 2007 made clear the continued problem of Israeli Arab violence.

A prominent phenomenon that has appeared over the years, and was renewed in 2007, is the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails at Israeli vehicles. In 2007, there were dozens of cases of stone-throwing inside Israel, with the major focal points being Route 443 and on roads in northern Israel and in the southern part of the country (the Beersheba area). Toward the end of the year, Molotov cocktails were also hurled at cars traveling Route 443.

In 2007, security forces carried out a number of actions in which they arrested and questioned dozens of Arabs who threw stones and Molotov cocktails at Israeli vehicles, civilians, and IDF troops, on a daily basis, endangering the lives of the passengers in the vehicles.*

In one recent survey the kinds of identity ambivalences highlighted by Professor Israeli became dramatically clear, thus demonstrating that Israeli Arabs continue to be predominantly and explicitly hostile towards settlement even of the Palestinian – Israeli territorial elements.**

Professor Nadim Ruchama, who conducted the poll, explained that these figures are clearly indicative of mistrust for the PA amongst Israeli Arabs.

Clearly, Israeli Arabs feel that the Palestinian Authority does not speak or act on their behalf. “Abbas addressed all the Palestinian populace at Annapolis Tuesday, but deliberately failed to mention the Israeli-Arab contingent,” said Ruchama.

This poll clearly indicates that Israeli Arabs do not find Abbas and the PA competent to make decisions on key issues that directly impact upon their futures. They clearly do not trust Abbas to make key concessions on their behalf in the same way that they did Arafat.

* The report may be found in full at <<http://www.mfa.gov.il/NR/rdonlyres/75FC2B98-A581-4C89-88AC-7C3C1D1BC097/0/Terrorism2007report.pdf>>.

** A survey conducted by the Mada-El-Carmel Institute, or the Arab Center for Practical Social Research, Roei Mandel, YNET, Published: 11.28.07, 21:48; Israel News, IMRA, November 28, 2007.

Ruchama went on to say that Israeli Arabs are especially fearful of PA recognition of a Jewish State of Israel. "Israeli Arabs are well aware of Israeli apprehensions regarding a 'two-state solution'. At the same time, they fear that the establishment of a Palestinian state and its recognition of the State of Israel would endanger their rights as Israeli citizens," he said.

"The Israeli Arab populace is essentially telling Abbas that he cannot make territorial swaps with Israel, nor can he officially recognize the Jewish state."

The above is nothing more than a small sample of the way in which the themes of the book echo down from the time of its original Hebrew edition to 2008 when the English edition is ready: The analysis remains absolutely relevant even though the details reflect the time when the book first appeared. The insights are as relevant today as ever they were.

PROLOGUE

In these days of “peace, peace when there is no peace”, of belligerence and expressions of hostility against Israel and the attempts of the Arab world in general to undermine Israel’s existence, the Jewish state again faces the need to rely on its few friends and to be wary of its declared and undeclared enemies, so that it can continue to defend itself. Because, it turns out that besides the regimes, organizations and rulers who hate us openly and joyfully and publicly seek our demise – like the violent people, who manage the affairs of Iraq and Syria, the governments notorious in their blind hatred of Jews in Iran and Saudi Arabia, the general Arab public opinion that gets excited by every attack against Israel and the Jews, terrorist organizations that embitter our lives on a daily basis and the media outlets in the Arab and Islamic world, which do not conceal their hatred for Israel and Zionism – in these times of crisis, enemies and provocateurs of a different sort and from different places, whom we have heretofore not counted on the long list of those seeking to do us harm, rise to the surface.

Famous among them is the list of European countries in which anti-Semitism has never been totally uprooted and which, when Israel finds itself in times of trouble, exchange their hatred for Jews, which is out of style, for blatant anti-Israel and anti-Zionist expressions, and therefore, they too stand, uncritically and without balanced deliberation, alongside our enemies. This has been the case since the establishment of the State and that, apparently, will be the case in the hard times ahead. However, since the outbreak of the second Palestinian *intifada* (called “al-Aqsa”, a name indicating that the struggle is over the Temple Mount), the anti-Jewish and anti-Israel expressions have multiplied, specifically throughout the democratic world, where anti-Semites can go wild virtually unhampered, to the point where it seems that we are in the midst of the process of internationalization and export of the conflict between us and the Arabs and Muslims to the entire world. The partners of the traditional anti-Semites, among them Palestinians and former and present Arab citizens of Israel, who now attack Israel and the Jews, are none other than members of the immigrant Arab and Muslim communities, legal and illegal, who join together with the

local enemies of Israel in order to disseminate terror and fear among the Jewish communities in those countries.

However, in all of Israel's wars that have transpired, there was never a fear or even a suspicion, lest the Arab citizens of Israel, whose governments throughout the generations naively treated them as "loyal" citizens, would also join our enemies without opting to leave the country. On the contrary, despite the fact that most of them have never actually engaged in combat in order to defend their country against their people, they displayed, in more than a few crises, identification with Israel during its difficult hours, volunteered to substitute at work for reserve soldiers who went to the front, donated blood for the wounded and expressed trepidation regarding the dangers facing the State, to whose fate they have decided to link their own. While now, things have changed: Not only is there no longer any desire to volunteer and publicly support the State of Israel, which is also supposed to be their state, but there are public attacks against it and even the brandishing of the flags of its enemies in the streets, at a time when Israel is fighting for its life.

These dramatic reversals in the Israeli Arabs' attitude towards their homeland did not come about suddenly, did not come as a surprise to anyone who has observed their conduct over the years and is not necessarily a product of the various Palestinian *intifadas* alone. They are tied to the dynamic of the development of the Arab minority in Israel since its inception; the huge rupture that began since the Six Day War; to the reversal that led to the first Land Day in 1976; the disintegration of the Israeli Communist Party, most of whose members were Arabs, since the dismantling of the Soviet Union; to the rapid growth of the Islamic Movement – sister party to Hamas and other zealous Islamic groups; and recently, the Palestinian *intifadas* that led to the ill-fated Oslo process and subsequently were sustained by it until its total exhaustion and demise. More than a little of this rotten fruit borne by Israeli policy towards its Arabs can be attributed to the naïve beliefs of our governments who were mistakenly delusional, cultivated vague and ambiguous language and refrained from bold decisions at appropriate times in order to correct the situation before it blew up in our face – in every sense.

In the following pages, an attempt will be made to survey the changes that took place in the radicalization process of the Israeli Arabs, with our authorities more than a little to blame, because in their quest to garner Arab votes on election days, they made baseless and irresponsible promises, and once there was no prospect of their being fulfilled, could only deepen the frustration and confusion followed by anger and hostility among the Arabs. Therefore, latent

in the patterns that were set by the founders of the State – most of which were based on mistaken assumptions, no less than the ideological and social qualities inherent in the Palestinian-Arab-Muslim among us – are the seeds of the trouble of our present-day conditions. Afterwards, we will examine the conflicting identities in the soul of the Israeli Arab, who is torn between his people and his state, between the demands that he accustom himself to the host state and his feelings that he is the host and the landlord. Of course, like symbiotic tools, to the degree that the Israeli Arabs' Palestinian-Arabic-Islamic identity grows, their ties to Israel contract.

Ostensibly, in light of the far-reaching achievements of the Israeli Arab as far as the level of his personal freedom is concerned, the welfare services to which he is entitled and the life expectancy that he enjoys, he should have no interest in toppling the foundations of the State, whose bountiful blessing he enjoys. However, in practice, that is not the way it is. After all, despite the fact that in response to a direct question, most Israeli Arabs will state that they wish to remain Israeli citizens, even if they were offered an alternative, in the same breath, they are enthusiastic supporters of the “right of return” for their brethren to Israel, which if it was implemented and would transform them into the majority in the country, would put an end to all of the benefits that they enjoy today. At the same time that they demand the right to full citizenship, they disavow their obligation to serve their country, isolate themselves in their institutions, aspire to cultural autonomy perhaps followed by political autonomy and adopt positions that are not only isolationist (a legitimate position in a democratic society) but are explicitly full of hate, antagonistic and even hostile, against which every state seeking to survive would battle in order to defend itself.

The present situation, in which all of the questions, fears and question marks have exploded into a substantial, profound and unbridgeable crisis, obligates the State of Israel to undertake a new, bold and determined thought process, in order to protect itself from the loss of its dream and its assets. This is no longer a warning and call for “courage for change before the calamity”, as in the well-known vision of Yitzhak Ben-Aharon in a different context, but rather an explicit handwriting on the wall, engraved in big letters for all to see, and cries out, in the final hour before slipping into the abyss, for courage for change **after** the calamity, which we allowed to befall us and which is destined to sweep us all to our demise, if we do not gather our wits to mobilize and take action quickly, resolutely and consistently. Because the demographic clock, upon which the Israeli Arabs place their hopes, is mercilessly, persistently ticking against our interests, to the point that even without the right of return it will overcome us,

when the sources of mass immigration, which are finite by their very nature, run out as opposed to the inherent infinity of the “war of the womb”, which we will not be able to survive in the long run.

Most of the material in this book comes from works written by the author himself and has been published in many books and articles over the years, specific analyses of defined aspects of Arab existence in Israel. Additional data, especially in terms of the quantitative modification of the findings, were gathered from governmental and Arab sources of recent years and united into one complete and comprehensive work infused with a mission of public service. Aside from my long-term personal interest in this unpleasant material, there are four additional factors that motivated me to set aside the rest of my interests in these difficult times and devote myself to the task:

1. The events of the *intifada* that broke out during the Days of Awe, in both senses, of Autumn 2000 and which stormily swept the Israeli Arabs in their wake to an identity crisis and to a spiritual and emotional upheaval that Israel did not anticipate;
2. The establishment of the commission headed by Justice Theodore Orr to investigate the events that led to the tragic killing, in violent riots, of 13 Israeli Arabs who went out to identify with their brethren in the events of the *intifada*. The extreme emotion that accompanied the testimony and the massive expectations that the Israeli Arabs cultivated regarding the commission findings that were, in their opinion, going to reinforce the sense of discrimination and plotting against them on the part of the Israeli authorities, signaled to me that it is necessary to place before the Israeli reader, in a timely fashion, a comprehensive survey of this complex and fateful matter. The commission’s generous invitation that I appear before it in order to say my piece encouraged me to gather the data and consolidate my thoughts into a unified, comprehensive point of view;
3. Many conversations that I conducted with professional colleagues and many debates in which I appeared together with Israeli Arabs of various hues, in the media, in academic discussions and in personal conversations, illustrated to me the depth of the abyss between us and the lack of hope in attempts to bridge the gap in pleasant ways that are antiquated. This is the source of my urgent sense that the time has come to raise our voices and sound the alert, even if my statements that aroused severe disagreement in the past, in the pre-calamity days, are all the more so liable to agitate in the midst of the events transpiring around us at present;

4. The unstinting encouragement of my friend and colleague, MK Eli Gabbay, who, from time to time, expressed before me his fears aroused by the sight of the events transpiring within the Arab sector in general, and especially upon hearing their belligerent statements of the Arab members of Knesset, which led him to thoughts about the urgent need to inform members of our people of the imminent dangers, and especially since the outbreak of the bloody events with which we are dealing. Ultimately, his considerate and determined persistence was as salutary as it was fruitful.

Jerusalem, Late Spring 2001

CHAPTER ONE

THE FORMATION OF THE ARAB MINORITY IN ISRAEL

There is a plethora of general and professional literature that traces the development of the Arab population in Israel, from the seventh century Arab conquest to this very day. Even if we disregard the waves of immigration from the neighboring Arab countries to Israel over the years, whose effects are still apparent in the names of families and places (al-Masrawah, from Egypt and the Mughrabi Quarter, from North Africa), we must deal with the watershed historical moment that is the UN Resolution of November 29, 1947 as the beginning of our story. Despite the fact that our ties to this land for thousands of years can be neither undermined or refuted, from our perspective as well as in terms of the proven, documented objective historical reality, the Arab residents of Israel do not necessarily view things in that way, for two reasons: First, in their eyes, the political and demographic reality before the establishment of the State of Israel, i.e. the Arab majority that existed in Israel for many generations, determines the fate of the dispute between us and them. Second, Palestinian myths, which have gained currency among more than a few Israeli Arabs, have developed recently, regarding the familial relations between them and the ancient Canaanites. The intention of the composers of these fabrications, which are totally baseless, is, of course, to combat our claims of priority and election in the dispute over our rights here, through a counterclaim of the same type, which establishes the expulsion of the Canaanites (their ostensible ancestors) in the course of the ancient Israeli conquest, as an introduction to modern Israel's "false claim" regarding its return to its ancestral homeland.

What cannot be contradicted and therefore is a determining factor in both our campaigns against the Arabs and our international struggles today, is the

situation on the eve of the UN Resolution, in which approximately two-thirds of the residents of Israel west of the Jordan were Arab-Palestinians; if we include the residents of Israel east of the Jordan, the Jewish minority would be even smaller. These fundamental facts are worth emphasizing because it is only by grasping the historic Greater Land of Israel (Palestine, in their vernacular), on both sides of the Jordan, as a land in dispute between us, that the opportunity for a resolution of the problems of both nations will be explicit and concomitantly the chance to find a cure for the gradually exacerbating problem of the Arab-Palestinian minority among us, may emerge, which we will discuss in the upcoming chapters. The numerical data indicate that on the day of the Partition Resolution there were more than a half-million Jews in Israel, while the Arab population in Western Israel was more than a million. Had the Partition Resolution been implemented, the overwhelming majority of the Jews would have remained along with a respectable number of the Arabs as a minority in the Jewish state, while the Arab state would have included more than a million citizens along with a negligible Jewish minority.

However, it is well known, that the Arabs rejected the Partition Resolution and invaded the designated Jewish territory. In the course of the battles in 1948-1949, the area under Israeli control expanded to the point that it included over half of the Arab population west of the Jordan; however since about 80% of them were uprooted, some by means of their removal from the battlefield, some in response to the Arab call to evacuate their villages to which they would return victorious and some who fled for their lives in fear of the war, only 130,000 remained in the Jewish state, to whom an additional 30,000 were added as the war abated and after the signing of the ceasefire agreements between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom, which called for the repatriation of some of the displaced persons. In other words, when the borders of the new country were set and the Arab displaced persons ceased their wandering, there were only 160,000 Arabs under the rule of the new Israeli government, most of them still in their homes, where they remain today. About one-fifth of them lost their previous places of residence, whether because they were destroyed in the course of the war, intentionally or unintentionally, in preparation for or as a result of the battles, or because the State refused to allow them to return to their villages for security reasons (Ikrit and Biram, for example). Most crowded into cities and existing villages, because in contrast to neighboring countries that absorbed Palestinian refugees from the Land of Israel (Syria, Lebanon and Jordan), or from Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip that came under Jordanian and Egyptian rule, where “temporary” refugee camps were set up until the “return”, Israel did

not establish refugee camps and therefore the displaced persons who remained in Israel settled in their new permanent residences.

The most prominent incident illustrating this process, that involved much human suffering, although the political and moral responsibility rests on the shoulders of the Palestinian and Arab leadership, which rejected the partition suggestion, occurred in the flourishing city of Nazareth, a city since the era of Crusader rule, when it was the seat of the Archbishop of the Galilee, through the Ottoman Empire, when it was an assembly point for the Turkish and German armies before the fateful battle at Megiddo during World War I until the British Mandatory Government which made it a district capital and base for its army in northern Israel. With the outbreak of the battles in 1948, Kaukaji's Arab Liberation Army, which invaded from Syria to assist the Palestinians, chose Nazareth as its headquarters from which he conducted his attacks on Mishmar Ha'Emek, which resulted in the migration of many Arabs from the surrounding villages to seek shelter in a city considered to be safely under the rule of a friend. In July 1948, the IDF embarked upon "Operation Dekel" which rebuffed the invading Arab forces and liberated the Lower Galilee. In those fateful days, during which the existence of the State hung in the balance, the Prime Minister of the provisional government, David Ben-Gurion, found the time to order the establishment of a special management board to govern the city, with a mandate to avoid friction with the residents and prohibit damage to the holy places there. The population as a whole, like all of the other Arab residents who remained within the borders of the Jewish state, was placed under a military government.

In the course of the war and in its immediate aftermath, more than 10,000 refugees congregated in Nazareth and thereby increased its population by 50% and also contributed, as most were Muslims, to the transformation of the predominantly Christian city into an evenly divided city and subsequently, over the years, into a city with a Muslim majority. In the broader national context, there are varying, contradictory statistics: There are those who claim that since approximately 90% of those who left Israeli territory were Muslims, the rest (approximately 60,000) were Christians; and there are those who determine that since the relative number of Christians who fled was much smaller than the number of Muslims, in the wake of the war, the percentage of Christians increased to 20%. In any case, the total number of Arabs was 247,000 in 1961, as the proportion between Muslims and Christians remained largely constant; however since 1967 the proportion has deteriorated due to the Christian emigration overseas, either due to the rise in their standard of living which led

to a decline in their birthrate, or because the unification of Jerusalem brought to the area under Jewish rule a significant number of additional Muslims. Thus, in the 1990s, the percentage of Christians among the Arab population dropped to 12%, although their absolute numbers almost doubled (to about 110,000) and thereby their relative number within the Arab population was restored to its level at the end of the British mandate before the onset of the refugee problem. The upshot is that the Muslim population grew much faster, primarily because of its accelerated birthrate, despite the increase in its standard of living, but also because of the increase in life expectancy, the improvement in social services and the addition of the East Jerusalem residents to their ranks. At the start of the new century, their number grew to more than a million (more than six times since the establishment of the State) and it is approaching 20% of the population of the State, almost the same size as it was in 1949 after the signing of the ceasefire agreements, the stabilization of the remaining Arab population and the absorption of the trickles of new immigrants prior to the later great waves of immigration.

This matter is critical to the future of the Jewish state in the Land of Israel because ultimately, it is the “war of the womb” that will determine majority and minority in this country. The large waves of immigration in the 1950s, 1960s and 1990s have already run their course and it is doubtful whether they will ever recur to resuscitate the Zionist enterprise. It is not because its allure has faded but rather because the large reservoirs of potential immigration, from the Arab countries and the Communist Bloc, which were primarily immigrations motivated by distress, have almost completely dried up, and our brethren who live in the affluent countries refuse to come. On the other hand, the potential growth of the Arab population among us is unlimited and will ultimately overcome us, even without the implementation of the right of return, which is supported by the Israeli Arabs. Every Jewish wave of immigration only temporarily delays the movement of the center of gravity to the developing Arab majority. The proof is – all the waves of mass immigration have succeeded in merely, more or less, preserving the ratio between Jews and Arabs and it will hereafter get gradually worse for the Jews, unless we take it into consideration when planning for the future.

True – not all members of the Arab minority are homogeneous. Among them are Christians who adopt one of two extremes: There are those who rally around the extreme nationalist pole, like the founders of the Israeli Communist Party and the leaders of the New Communist List once, and the leaders of the National Democratic Assembly today, who aspire to prove to their fellow Arabs

that they are no less combative and anti-Israeli than their Muslim brethren; and there are those who prefer to emigrate so as not to undergo the ordeal of seeing their Christian cities and villages transformed into Muslim cities and villages, which is what happened in Nazareth (and in Bethlehem under Palestinian rule); and there are some who move to mixed cities like Haifa and Jaffa, where they can integrate into the general population without drawing Muslim attention and hostility. Potentially, these are foundations that could lead them to equality and to fidelity to the State of Israel and if they do so we will reduce by a significant percentage the numbers of those who hate us from within. The Druse, too, who numerically are equal to the Christians, although they have a higher birthrate, were recognized as a denomination with equal rights, which fulfills its obligations to the State and can be counted among its loyalists. There are also those who seek to include the Bedouins in this loyalty march, as a minority of them faithfully serves the State and their number also approximates the numbers of Christians and Druse, although their birthrate is even higher than the Arab average in Israel. However, it is important to remember that they, like most Israeli Arabs, are Muslims and therefore they are subject to ambient pressure to fall into line with the general hostile Arab, Muslim policy. In any case, even if we subtract from the Jewish-Arab demographic balance these friendly populations, to whom we can add the negligible Circassian minority, the ever-increasing threat of the overwhelming majority of the Arab/Muslim population in Israel, whose number is approaching a million, remains intact.

However, we would be guilty of generalization if we think in non-discerning, stereotypical terms of the Arab population in Israel, without getting into a detailed analysis of the nuances and the fine distinctions that exemplify not only each religious denomination, but also various communities within each denomination. For example, within the Muslim community, there are more than a few Arabs who consider themselves part of the State of Israel and take steps to be integrated within it. At the same time, there are Christians and even Druse who speak out against the State and even verbally abuse it and join together with the most extreme nationalists. In addition, the consequential differences within each denomination are conspicuous: Between the rural and the city-dwellers; between homogeneous and heterogeneous villages; between the minority among them that preferred to become almost totally integrated in the Israeli way of life and the majority that cultivates its heritage, language, culture and uniqueness; between the various clans in each village; and between the political parties, which drive to the margins personalities and groups that could have coexisted under other circumstances. We saw, for example, that the Bedouins are considered a

sector in and of themselves within the Muslim denomination, although many of them are adherents of the Islamic Movement, who vociferously condemn the service of the members of their sect in the IDF. Furthermore, inter-tribal jealousies and personal or regional loyalties have also had an impact on their conduct. However, no sector can compare to the Christians who are divided into so many different sects and sub-groups that it is difficult to speak of them as a homogeneous denomination with a common foundation. These schisms among the various denominations are also rooted in the situation that was extant prior to the establishment of the Jewish state and was interrupted midstream after its establishment, as well as in the various positions taken by various political and spiritual centers, beyond the State's borders, from which the Israeli Arabs have never severed ties.

Several examples will clarify the matter for the reader. For the Bedouin tribes in the Negev, who had familial, commercial, lifestyle and tribal ties with their counterparts in Sinai and in Jordan along the Arava prairie, it was difficult to accept the establishment of an artificial international border that separated them. For them, drugs and weapons trade, smuggling connections or crossing borders to find brides for youths that come of age are natural and legitimate acts that are not necessarily directed against the State, although formally it is in violation of its laws. The State's attempts to resettle the Bedouin tribes in permanent cities, in order to provide them with educational, health and welfare services, are perceived by many of them as restrictions on their freedom to wander in the desert as they please, or as eviction from "their lands" – State lands that were never registered in their names although they camped there with their tribes and grazed their flocks there. For others, the opportunity for advanced education, urbanization and openness to the wide world is so attractive that it diminishes within them the sense of resentment and discrimination. Another example: Since the Israeli Arabs are Palestinians as well as Arabs and Muslims (or Christians or Druse), most of whose groups of attribution are situated outside of Israel, of necessity this leads to the development of ties that are not always consistent with the country of which they are citizens. We will deal with the multiple identities in the coming pages, but here it will suffice if we internalize the huge variety of beliefs, opinions and feelings intrinsic to all denominations of Israeli Arabs. If we add to those the political and ideological loyalties that supersede borders, like, for example, the international communist movement in its glory days, which brought with it extended stays in those countries for the purpose of professional training accompanied by ideological indoctrination; or on a different note, the ties of the Islamic Movement in Israel with its sister "Muslim Brotherhood"

organizations in Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority; or the ties of the Israeli Druse with their brethren in Syria and Lebanon; or the burgeoning political connection between Israeli Arabs and the hubs of their nationality in Syria and the Palestinian Authority, we will understand the entangled fabric in which they function and in which they weave their emotional, psychological, social and even political affiliation.

The Christians, whose factionalism into 24 sub-groups and embarrassingly variegated loyalties has a multi-faceted history, are especially prodigious. The largest faction among them is the Greek Orthodox whose Patriarch resides in Jerusalem and which changed its leadership over time from native Greek to local Arab. The Russian Church is the historic patron of this faction and it purchased numerous properties and built many churches, monasteries and schools back in the 19th century. That is the source of its great power today as the largest owner of real estate in Israel. The second most significant community is the Greek Catholic, which already during the British Mandate, when the legendary Archbishop Hakim whose activity was centered primarily in northern Israel, identified with the political struggle of the Palestinians and took extensive action, especially in the Vatican, to promote their interests. Hakim even attempted to unite politically all of the Christian denominations in Israel in order to harness them to the Palestinian cause. The third group is (Roman) Catholic, headed by the Latinate Patriarch in Jerusalem, who claims Crusader roots, although his predecessors were forced to relocate in Acre when Jerusalem was conquered by Saladin in 1187, and were forced to leave there too in 1291; ultimately the Patriarchate was reestablished in the 19th century. Under its auspices, there are groups of Dominican, Jesuit, Franciscan, Carmelite and Benedictine monks who run schools and relief institutions especially in Jerusalem and in northern Israel. In contrast to the other two, this community focused on its relations with the Vatican, to which it owed its loyalty. Recently that trend has changed, with the appointment of the Palestinian Michel Sabah as Patriarch. Archbishop Capucci's involvement in smuggling arms for the Palestinians after 1967 is also not forgotten. Beyond these communities, the others are too small to warrant treatment in this context. The reference is to Maronites, Armenians, Copts and a large assortment of Protestants. The involvement of the State of Israel in their affairs relates to their conflicting claims, which sometimes escalate into bloody skirmishes between them, over the rights to preserve and protect the sites sacred to Christianity and from the fact that some of their leaders are foreign nationals, under the auspices of foreign governments, despite the fact that most of their adherents are full-fledged Israeli citizens.

This unholy mixture of identities, rivalries, cultures, religions and loyalties among the Israeli Arabs, if we add to it the great diversity within the Jewish majority, which itself consists of various immigrants and from the fusion of disparate, distant fringes, is what makes the cultural-social environment in Israel so fascinating and unique, but also difficult for both the majority and the minority. As on the one hand, one may claim that it is the plethora of identities that enables each group to preserve its distinctiveness and to function as a separate collective, but on the other hand it is clear that the great Jew-Arab schism, with the State in a state of war or at least in a state of perpetual tension and hostility, prevents every sub-group or tribe from standing alone against the rest; rather it obligates them to solidarity on both sides of the great divide between Jews and Arabs, which distinguishes and defines, and only on the margins is there room for internal friction within each camp. Nevertheless, these margins are wide enough to sustain enough cultural and political disputes within each sector and certainly between the different sectors. Thus, in the present state of tension between Israel and its neighbors, it is only natural that the sectarian violence within Israel will increase. The bloody events of the High Holidays of the year 2000, when the Arab masses, supported by the Palestinians in the territories, rioted against their government, will attest to this. At the same time, the internal split among the Israeli Arabs has never been so intense, for reasons of both ideology and interpersonal, intertribal and inter-communal competition, a situation that makes it difficult for them to present a united front against the State of Israel.

One of the great paradoxes is that while with the establishment of the State, once they were unable to liquidate it as they promised, the leaders of the Israeli Arabs fled abroad and left behind a leaderless public, lacking confidence and lacking direction, which overnight became a minority in its land, it was the State of Israel that – with its openness and standards of freedom, of the education and representation that it provided them – that restored their self-confidence, enabled their reorganization and facilitated the growth of a young, better educated and more daring leadership, to battle unstintingly for their rights and subsequently to struggle against it. Another paradox: While originally a military government was imposed on the Israeli Arabs, which involved limiting their movement, restricting their activity and refusing to allow the displaced persons (the internal refugees who abandoned their villages but did not go or were not sent outside the borders of the State) to return to their villages, it was specifically when the military government was dissolved and the Arabs granted their freedom in 1965, their criticism of the State, its institutions and government, increased,

their language regarding discrimination against them became more virulent and the tenor of their protests against the State intensified, as it is manifest on Land Day, the day of the *Naqba* ("catastrophe") (Israeli Independence Day) and their public identification with the Palestinians and the rest of Israel's enemies. We will see below that these paradoxes will be explained by the profusion of identities active in the soul of nearly every Israeli Arab, not only between his village, community, religion and tribe and other parallel local identities, but primarily in his attitude towards his land as an Israeli, Palestinian, Arab and Muslim. One of the ways in which they avoid confronting the reality of life as a minority in a land in which they were a majority, is to repress the present demographic reality, which provides the Jews with the majority for the time being and to draw comfort from the vision that a day will come in the not too distant future in which they will reassume the position of majority due to their much more accelerated birthrate than that of the Jews, with which even massive waves of Jewish immigration can hardly keep up.

During the massive wave of Russian Jewish immigration, many of the leaders of the Israeli Arabs protested to the authorities in Russia because they were allowing their Jews to immigrate to Israel, while Arab refugees had been wasting away in their camps for decades awaiting implementation of the right of return. This sounds fantastic in light of their incessant complaints about their "suffering" in the State of Israel, their "repression" within it and the "discrimination" with which they are treated. After all, if it is so terrible, why would they want to include more of their people living in "freedom" abroad in their suffering? Recently, matters have become clearer as the leaders of the Israeli Arabs are publicly calling for the right of return for the Palestinians in general and insist, as did Yasser Arafat, that the returnees, approximately three and a half million of them, who are descendants of the seven hundred thousand (to quote the highest figure) who fled in 1948-1949, become full-fledged Israeli citizens. It is not that the PLO and its supporters have been overcome by Zionist feelings and are rushing to strengthen the Jewish state by bolstering its population. Rather, this is public defiance on the one hand, and an unsophisticated and unconvincing attempt to halt at all costs the meteorically successful process of consolidation and strengthening of the Jewish state, on the other. Defiance, to what purpose? Because along with its negation of immigration as one of the foundations of Zionism, for an ostensibly "humanitarian" reason, they are also challenging the rest of the dreams and principles of the Jewish state like settlement, security, ties to the Jewish people, democracy and economic growth, even though they are well aware that they accrue far-reaching benefits

from the realization of those aspirations. We will discuss these challenges in the following pages.

There is no reason to elaborate about the significance of immigration as it is the sole factor that has so far offset the natural growth of the Israeli Arab population and prevented them from utilizing their numbers to take over from within. Although this balance will not last forever, as was mentioned above, the Arabs are in a rush to realize their potential majority, whether by means of reinforcement by returnees from without or by undermining its Jewish foundations – with the courteous assistance of some of our fellow Jews who mean well and perform evil – and by the imposition of a “state of all its citizens” upon it so that its symbols, objectives and resources will be accepted by those who negate its existence. When one apprises them of the prospective consequences of the Arabization of the State, i.e. that if the Jewish majority that established its values, built its economy, instilled freedom and democracy in it and enhanced its power was lost, it will immediately be transformed into another poor, backward, corrupt and autocratic Arab country, as was the case in Gaza. They object to the “racist” statement, which questions the Arab ability to establish and sustain a progressive, open and thriving state, although they are unable to produce an example or precedent for a state of that sort among their 22 countries and the 200 million Arab brethren. Once they told us that the Palestinians were different, and that were they to achieve independence they would establish a bona-fide democratic state. We saw and were not convinced. We were also not convinced that those returning from the refugee camps would bring with them any governmental, economic or ethical message with which we are not already familiar. Nevertheless, it seems that it is much more important to the Israeli Arabs to bring their state down to the level of the rest of the Arabs – as long as they get rid of the Jewish majority and its innovations that make them jealous, even if by doing so they will lose its benefits – than to be absorbed as a minority with equal rights and obligations in the flourishing, progressive Jewish, Zionist state, and to accept their status within it.

This is also connected to the total Palestinian refusal to recognize the Jewish people’s right to self-determination and to freedom. In fact, one of the paragraphs in the infamous Palestinian Charter, which, to date, has neither been abrogated nor revised, contrary to the promises that were extorted from the Palestinians to do so, determines that the Jewish people is not a nation, a fact confirmed by its dispersal among the nations, and they, unlike the Palestinians are therefore undeserving of a state of their own. Their desire to implement the right of return, a right supported by the Israeli Arabs, as mentioned above, is precisely intended

to dilute the Jewish state to the point that the Jewish right to independence will self-implode. Our wise men who concocted the Oslo Accords paid no attention to this matter, although they were warned by more than a few of us. Therefore, they failed to raise the reasonable, obvious and egalitarian demand before the Palestinians that in exchange for our recognition of their right to self-determination, which was justified in the context of reciprocity, they would have to repay us in kind. We did not proffer that demand, they did not volunteer to be fair and meet that demand and therefore we remained with our unilateral recognition of their right, while they seek to eradicate our parallel, equal and reciprocal right, by inundating us with Arabs who will put an end to that right by democratic means. Incidentally, had we insisted on that simple reciprocity, not only would we have earned the world's approbation, but we would have thereby, for all intents and purposes, divested paragraph 20 of the Charter of its meaning and rendered it moot. Thus, the Israeli Arabs, in their refusal to accept their status as a permanent minority, their opposition to immigration, their defiance of the Jewish state whose declared identity they seek to dissolve and in their support of the right of return of their brethren to within the borders of Israel, are actually declaring blatantly and loudly that the Jews have no right to self-determination and at the same time are pressuring their government to implement the Palestinians' "natural and incontrovertible right" to it.

The same is true of the Zionist component of the State, which the Israeli Arabs, along with the rest of the Palestinians, are categorically demanding that it pass from the world. Once again the ineptitude of the wise men of Oslo, who recognized the PLO as the national liberation movement of the Palestinian people, is plain for all to see. That would have been proper and understandable had it been mentioned in the context of reciprocity, and had they demanded in return, in equality and reciprocity, that the PLO recognize its counterpart – Zionism. Again, had we demanded something so basic and fair, the entire world would have stood by our side. Instead, we granted the PLO legitimacy at the same time that it, the rest of the Arabs and all haters of Israel, continue to sully Zionism as racist, "Nazi" and other vitriolic epithets. Furthermore, the Palestinian Charter does not only attack Israel, but also attacks all of the political, economic, military and cultural manifestations of the "Zionist entity", in exterminatory terms that were phrased with much effort in 15 of its 33 paragraphs. Therefore, that was an opportunity to demand and achieve Palestinian recognition of Zionism – its historical rival. That, in and of itself, would have brought about the liquidation of the Charter and the abrogation of the anti-Zionist paragraphs within it, sparing us the need to demean ourselves and beg that it be revised.

Even when the issue of revisions of the Charter was raised, Israel demanded that all paragraphs opposing the existence of the State or alternatively those opposing Oslo be removed. However, in actuality, there were no paragraphs of that sort, as the Charter's attacks are against Zionism, not against Israel, and in Oslo the matter of Zionism was never raised because we never asked that it be raised. Thus we eased the way for the Palestinians, including the Israeli Arabs, to continue their attacks against Zionism and to demand the de-Zionization, if the de-Judaification did not satisfy them, of Israel.

The amateurish and naïve manner in which our leaders and the purveyors of bad advice working alongside them allowed themselves to be tricked and manipulated into a situation of give and take without the take, is positively astonishing. They accepted, in their simplistic and unsophisticated perception, recognition of Israel, which they heard directly from the PLO, as a fitting return for their recognition of the PLO. It is not, as when the Palestinians agreed to state explicitly the ineffable words "recognition of Israel" and not of the Jewish people or of Zionism, as mentioned above, they accepted upon themselves a non-Jewish non-Zionist State of Israel, whose Palestinian citizens are already challenging those foundations; therefore after their reinforcement by means of implementation of the right of return, in which the returnees will be neither enthusiastic Jews nor Zionists, in the future an Arab majority will be formed, which will utilize its democratic right to transform Israel into another Arab country, which could also change its name to "Free Palestine". Thus, while Israeli recognition of the Palestinian people and the PLO (which was manifest in a contractual commitment) as distinct from Palestinian recognition of the Jews and of Zionism – which was never sought and therefore never provided – was an irrevocable, binding declaration, Palestinian recognition of Israel, and not of the Jewish state and Zionism, is by its very nature temporary and given to interpretation and therefore does not obligate anyone over time. The Palestinian raising of the right of return at the crucial stages of Camp David and Taba negotiations, provides overwhelming evidence as to the Arab agenda. The declarations of Palestinian leaders, including those of the "moderates" like the late Faisal Husseini, during the *intifada*, regarding the ultimate objective of imposing their sovereignty over the entire Western land of Israel, and certainly the declarations of the members of Hamas, who demand the territory of the Jewish state due to its sanctity as *waqf* land, are decisive proofs of this orientation.

Settlement was always the primary bone of contention that caused the greatest friction with the Arab minority and even led to the inception of the first Land Day in late March 1976. As to the extent that Jewish settlement grows, becomes

established and expands, not only does it signal to the Arabs that the Jews are indeed putting down roots in their land, but it also comes, in their eyes, at the expense of their lands that were confiscated over the years in order to establish additional Israeli settlements, even if they were established on state lands and not on their private property. Even worse, from their perspective, is that the broadening of Jewish settlement means putting aside to their dream of return, as the potential settlement expanse is being completely overtaken. Thus, despite the fact that Israeli agriculture has increased the Arab agricultural output ten-fold – through learning – and immeasurably improved their crop-dusting, mechanization and marketing alignments – through imitation – this blessing was a curse in their eyes. Modern agriculture, which adopted new crops, new processing methods and at times production quotas dictated by the agricultural production councils, was loathsome in their eyes and came at the expense of the crops and lifestyles to which they were accustomed. The Israeli Arabs' opposition and bitterness rises every time new agricultural settlements are established in their vicinity, like the Galilee kibbutzim and outposts, because they consider them an invasive way of life that flaunts, in their proximity, a role model likely to teach work, behavior and openness methods that will harm and "corrupt" their youth. All the more so when urban settlements are established on the outskirts of their villages and cities (Upper Nazareth, Carmiel, etc.) which underscore even more blatantly – and therefore arouse jealousy – the gaps in standard of living, in the pace of life and in their results. In addition, in most of the instances, the Arabs point out that the new Jewish cities have an element of restricting their actions and strangling their settlements as they are left without expanses to live and develop.

Land Days, therefore, which began on March 31, 1976 and have been held annually since, at times with displays of violence against the authorities, are not only a symbol of resistance against land confiscation, but primarily an attempt to establish a boundary for Jewish settlement. Recently, the organizers have threatened violence and even bloodshed if the security forces dare enter their villages in order to impose order. Can anyone imagine what would be our fate if some violent gang were to threaten law enforcement authorities with bloodshed if they enter their turf in Beersheba or Ramat Gan? And the Israeli Police, subject to criticism by the Arab leaders, the media and politicians who seek to curry favor with the Arabs in the futile hope to win their votes, refuses to engage in confrontations. Instead, they "negotiate" and have "discussions" with those threatening them instead of putting them on trial; thus the scale of the demonstrators' demands gets progressively greater from year to year.

The authorities report that Land Day “passed peacefully” and even praise the “restraint” of the demonstrators, even when it turns out that the “restraint” also included brandishing flags of the PLO, Hamas and Hizbullah (all well-known “friends” of Israel and the Jews), calls for the sacrifice of soul and blood in order to gain redemption of the Galilee (from whom exactly?) and sometimes to top it off, calls to slaughter the Jews. In recent years, this extreme “restraint” has been tied to the “restraint” of the Palestinians in the territories and both have banded together, cooperating in the planning and the actual demonstrations, against their common “enemy”. These fulminations have borne fruit in the past and therefore there is no reason why they should not continue. Proof is the “Stars” program planned by the Israeli Government in the past in order to interrupt the continuum of Arab control in the Eron Valley, due to the very real threat that it poses to traffic between northern Israel and its center, and due to the isolation that it imposes on distant Jewish settlements, was abandoned by other governments that sought to win the hearts of the Arab voters.

The problem of the settlements has another aspect that has come about in recent years. Under the rubric of “preserving the Arab heritage”, or “restoration of the sites sacred to Islam”, much activity is underway in Israel of listing, restoring and commemorating all of the sites of Arab settlement that were destroyed in the course of the War of Independence, while exerting pressure on the State to permit their resettlement. Everyone anticipates a decision on the matter of Ikrit and Biram in order to create a precedent and subsequently to petition the courts about the discrimination against those places where resettlement would not be permitted. The Israeli Arabs well understand that the courts rule on the basis of justice and equality before the law, in private, specific cases that are brought before them – as became clear in the recent ruling in the matter of the Arab purchase of a lot for settlement in Kazir – and not on the basis of long term political considerations, which place on the scales the survivability of the Jewish state. The listing and commemorating are not historical/museum actions of memorializing the past, but rather a tool to revive the past and perpetuate it, by teaching children that they are residents of a settlement or village which has not existed for more than 50 years, by taking groups of tourists to their previous homes and thereby restoring their ties to those places and by going in the middle of the night to refurbish a cemetery overgrown with grass or a destroyed mosque. In this way, the repeated call at the Arab demonstrations in Israel regarding “redemption of the Galilee”, or other areas, takes on concrete, practical and immediate meaning. An additional meaning, no less immediate and threatening, is the connection between the revivification of the Arab settlement

map of yesteryear to the Palestinian right of return of tomorrow, which they wholeheartedly support. In other words, the places designated for the returnees have already been located, identified and to whatever degree possible are in the process of rehabilitation and restoration, ready to receive the joyous returnees to their homeland and lands. The fact that in the meanwhile new lives have taken root in these places neither deters them nor cools their enthusiasm.

Perhaps the security problem, the apple of the Israeli population's eye, which devotes the best years of its life to serve it, is also that which arouses the most primal opposition among the Israeli Arabs. Not only on the immediate, personal plane, according to which they see no need, and certainly no obligation, to set out to defend the State, in which they claim citizenship with equal rights, but primarily on the fundamental level of the right of Israel to security; as according to their point of view, Israel is always the aggressor, even when it is defending itself, because it does not have the right to defend that which it acquired by means of robbery, dispossession, abolition of rights, repression and discrimination. The Arabs are forever the victims, even when they attack, terrorize, murder, liquidate, detonate and threaten. There is no question here of investigating each case individually, in order to discern with a watchful eye who was the aggressor and who was his victim, because aggression is part of the Jewish essence and the Israeli way of life, while absolute justice is always on the side of the Arabs. Therefore, when Israeli Arabs react to an infuriating terrorist attack against their country – especially if one of them is involved as a terrorist or a victim – they will always condemn the “act” or the “incident”, just like the Palestinians from the territories, as if it were a natural disaster rained down from the heavens. They will not condemn the perpetrators, even if they explicitly identify themselves and even boast of their actions. Because it is inconceivable that Arab perpetrators, who are only defending against Israeli aggression, will be condemned for their act of heroism and sacrifice.

Israel's security, therefore, is an annoyance in the eyes of its Arabs, and as a result they will do nothing to enhance it. When the opportunity presents itself, they will take action to compromise it. A few years ago, when the issue of guard duty at student dormitories arose, the Arab students refused to participate in that task, claiming that “they have no one from whom they need to defend”. As if the terrorist, who comes to attack their dormitories, has any way of distinguishing between them and the other students, unless they had prior consultations with the terrorists, or even abetted them, to attack these students and spare those. As far as they are concerned, let Israel lose all of its security assets, because every fighter plane and tank that it purchases, not only comes at the expense

of the allocations of which the State deprives them, but they also delay the realization of the right of return that they so desperately desire to see in the near future. Therefore, any manifestation of contribution to Israeli security on the part of minorities, whether Druse, Bedouin or Christian volunteers, is met with outpourings of hatred from the general Muslim population, who were it not for fear of the authorities, would actually take action to hurt them. Those minorities who serve are accused of “collaboration”, heaven forbid, with the defenders of their country, and therefore there is no Muslim cleric who will agree to pray for the souls of those who were killed in action. After all, a traitor has no expiation and it is preferable that the community, which is so intent on struggling to gain rights in its state, disassociate itself from him and even ostracize him once he so impudently took part in fulfilling his obligations as well. Not to speak of Palestinians or Lebanese who aided Israel during its times of trouble and continues to protect them as a token of gratitude; however the Israeli Arabs distance themselves from them in contempt, do not welcome them into the community, condemn them and banish them and refuse to let their children play with the children of the “traitors”. As if defending Israel or assisting in its defense will always be fundamentally unacceptable while provoking it and undermining its existence is a sign of heroism and national pride. What country in the world would silently abide by such insubordinate and destructive behavior?

The security matter is also tied to the general conflict between Israel and the Arab and Islamic world. Israeli Arabs, witnessing Israel’s massive power, which was always implemented against the Arab countries, obviously cannot accept that and align with its supporters; on the contrary, they criticize it whenever it is implemented, align against it and even preach to us that “the policy of force will not succeed”, as if Israel would survive even one day without its military strength. Hence its collective categorical refusal to serve in the security forces, the Israeli Arabs’ pointed criticism of the volunteering of individuals among them and of the general Druse commitment to serve as a sect that has tied its fate to the State. In contrast to the years preceding the Six Day War, during which the Arabs contributed blood and a work force during the State’s time of distress, today service or volunteering of that sort are considered actual treason. In other words, to the degree that the Israelization of the Israeli Arabs increased, their reservations concerning having any involvement in its security activities also increased. And that was not only due to their refusal to be seared in the fire of someone else’s war (even though they are ostensibly “loyal” citizens) and their recoiling from participating in the rout of their people, but primarily so as to avoid seeing first hand the glory of the IDF, the revered defender of the

State, whose defeat they would like to witness, or at the very least not witness its victory.

All Israeli governments in the past and the present repeated the fabrication of the “loyalty” of most Israeli Arabs, except for those exceptions who are, every so often, caught committing serious security violations. Thus, of course, they are freeing the Arabs from the onus of proof and even from the reason to consider the disloyalty inherent in their constant, blatant affiliation with its enemies, ignoring any security constraints. The loyalty test of which we are speaking is not a passive concept whose popular meaning is: Anyone not placing bombs in the streets is considered loyal. This definition suffers from two shortcomings: First, many Arabs would like to place bombs or throw stones or Molotov cocktails at Israelis, but refrain from doing so due to lack of courage or fear of the legal authorities; however there are sufficient thousands among them who have killed Israeli soldiers and citizens, were violent towards the law enforcement personnel, placed explosive devices or car bombs in our cities, blocked traffic arteries, collaborated with terrorists from without or incited against Jews and their country beyond any accepted levels in defensive democracies and other similar crimes that will be surveyed extensively in the chapter about Arabs as Israelis. Today, the “work” is done by Palestinians who sow destruction, devastation and death in the streets of Israel while the Israeli Arab leadership – and presumably their rank and file brethren – applaud them unimpeded. Second, we would say, according to this litmus test, that the ultra-Orthodox Jews who do not stand at attention on memorial days, treat the State flag with contempt, evade military service and declare their anti-Zionism are also “loyal” as they do not place bombs in the streets. The proof is that the State is tolerant of them even when they act violently towards it, riot in the streets and hurl stones at passing cars on the Sabbath and the like. Even *Neturei Karta* (Guardians of the City) who are openly hostile to the State, do not observe its laws and are not partners in its frameworks, would be deserving of our respect due to their loyalty, because they do not take action against the State’s security.

Loyalty is an active concept of willingly taking part in the yoke of obligations imposed by the State and not merely silent attachment to its udder and unimpeded suckling from it. It means accepting its values, identity with its objectives, learning its language, taking part in its national holidays, respect for its symbols, service in its army and willingness to defend its existence and to fight when the need arises. The majority of the Arab population does not pass most of these tests. It is within its rights because it cannot identify with a Jewish, Zionist state. However, we must cease to delude ourselves as to its “loyalty” and

it must cease to demand full civil rights, at the same time that it is undermining the very foundation of the State, rejecting its values, dissociating itself from its contours, loathing its goals and siding with its enemies in sentiment and in action. Therefore, under the rubric of security we include internal security, which protects us from plots and threats from within. We see that every time the State confiscates land (even from Jews) for public needs (roads, training sites, development, industrialization, etc.), or seeks to enforce zoning laws that are blatantly trampled in the Arab sector, or to reassert control over state lands that were illegally occupied, the matter nearly escalates into war. The Arab leaders stand and violently obstruct the implementation of the law with their bodies, challenge and undermine the legal authorities and transform matters of civilian planning and law enforcement into chaos mixing criminal activity and politics, media and provocation of the state whose citizens they are. Not to mention the violent, murderous demonstrations, against their state and in identity with its enemies, in which part of the Arab Israeli citizens participate. This casts a giant shadow over not only their loyalty and their refusal to assume their proportional part in the security burdens incumbent upon the State, but also on the additional security burden that they impose on the shoulders of the State due to their conduct towards it and against it. In addition, the continuing ties between the State and the Jewish people in the Diaspora are an annoyance in the eyes of the Israeli Arabs. Every so often, we hear complaints from them that the State prefers to bring within its borders, under the Law of Return, Jews who never set foot here and even more so non-Jews whose only connection to the Land is utilitarian and not emotional, while at the same time rejecting the inherent right to return of the Palestinians, who were residents of the area. They are aware of the fact that the war between the parties is not about justice or humanity, but rather about history and nationalism. Historically, it was they who not only rejected the compromise proposal and the partition that was conceived by the UN and would have brought the conflict to an end, but they also tried to impose upon the Jewish state its solution of liquidation. Failing that, their pride was wounded, their anger erupted and their frustration grew. Furthermore, Israel, despite its minuscule dimensions and sparse population, dared to emerge victorious over all of the Arab armies, though even today it continues to refuse to apologize for doing so and to take responsibility for the Arab refugee problem and for the transformation of the Israeli Arabs, who were supposed to be the lords of the land, into a minority within it. Of course the Arabs have no share of the responsibility; they are the innocent, unfortunate victim to whom everyone owes everything. Nationally, because this land, that

was supposed to satisfy the rights of self-determination of the two peoples, has become a wrestling arena in which the rejectionists, who sought everything while attempting to cast their rivals aside, always lost, while the compromisers, who displayed willingness to partition, compromise and conduct neighborly relations, always won. That is what they find unbearable.

Little Israel, which survived the War of Independence by the skin of its teeth, became a transient phenomenon in the eyes of the Arabs after the war. They prepared for another round of war and then another, because the small, besieged, weak, fragile Jewish state, which in their eyes lacked vitality, would not be able to defend itself over time. Then it turned out that the Jewish people in the Diaspora, not only came to its assistance during the war, but continued to help expand its population and support it politically and economically afterwards. Above all, the Jews of the Diaspora served as a reservoir of potential immigration, the Arab opposition to which we discussed above. Therefore, it is no coincidence that despite the sanctimonious contentions of the Arabs in general that they have no dispute with Jews but only with Zionists, they themselves confuse the two and add the State of Israel to the confusion. They always detested Zionism and Jews when they fought against Israel, always meant Jews when they hurled invectives against Zionism and Israel and always despised Israel, the product of Zionist Jews. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that in all of their battles with Israel, they sounded slogans of “slaughter the Jews”, even before the establishment of the State – in the massacre of the Jews of Hebron (1929), in the massacre of the Hadassah convoy (1948) and also in the uprising in Umm-al-Fahm (2000). The political platforms of the Arab and Islamic movements, like the PLO and Hamas, as well as political speeches and religious sermons, street conversations among Arabs as well as schoolbooks that they use to educate their youth, mention Israel, Jews and Zionists in one breath and with the same degree of animosity. This points to the continuing connection in their eyes between Israel, its Judaism and its Zionism; hence the war that it wages against all three.

The struggle of the Israeli Arabs to de-Judaize (by implementation of the right of return) and de-Zionization (by abandoning its symbols, values and ideological platform) the State, is intended to separate Israel from the sources of its vitality and hope. Their hope is that the processes of Arabization of the land, to which they aspire demographically, culturally and politically, will ultimately deter the potential immigrants from the West, who are the final repository of potential Jewish immigration, which will ease the way for them to become the majority in the near future and gain control of the land by democratic means. Therefore, it is strange, not to mention unfortunate, that some Jewish organizations in

America have recently been afflicted by “guilt” feelings because they “neglected” the problems of the Israeli Arabs during the years of their support, investment and mobilization for Israel and began considering promoting educational and developmental projects for that “neglected” sector. They do not understand that this support, if it is realized, will only bolster Arab hopes, in this period of conflict between them and the Jewish majority, that they are close to severing this Gordian knot between Israel and the Jews of the world, by encouraging the Jewish Diaspora to support them and not their enemy, Zionist Israel. As far as they are concerned, they are probably smiling under their mustaches to find that the united Jewish front that always opposed them is crumbling before their eyes. This will not encourage them, as per the delusion of the American Jews, to greater moderation or an attitude of solidarity and loyalty to their Jewish state, but, on the contrary, it will instill within them new expectations that their aspirations will be soon realized.

Even the Israeli democracy, under which they are, apparently, freer than any other Arab group that does not live in the West, is under fire by the Israeli Arabs. Ostensibly, that is surprising because it is precisely that minority population, protected by the principles of the liberal Israeli democracy and which the judicial system acts like a watchdog so that nothing untoward happens to it, is the most contrary, the loudest, most violent and most destructive force against that system. They accuse it on a daily basis that it is not a real democracy, that it is discriminatory, racist and repressive and do not understand that they are actually describing themselves as they do not give any indication that they have internalized what is democracy. It is difficult to blame them for not comprehending the real meaning of democracy; however one must certainly blame them for their failure to learn what they do not understand. After all, the only Arabs in the world who have experienced a taste of democracy, with the exception of those in the West, live in Israel. However, instead of appreciating its merits, to attempt to improve themselves through its principles and to thank the Lord that they have been given this unique opportunity, they seek to distort it to fit their needs and to teach the Israelis what is “true” democracy, as if they invented it and are not merely immature students desperately, and unsuccessfully, attempting to grasp its implications. According to them, democracy exists in Egypt as well and some of the greatest advocates of democracy among them returned from their visits to murderous Damascus inspired by the monarchical republic in which the cruel bloody reign is passed down from father to son. In contrast, within Israeli democracy, which for the first time granted them the right to vote and be elected, they continued to operate, over the years, the Bolshevik

regime of their communist party in its various incarnations, the clan system that grants priority to dignitaries and ancestry over the talents of the educated youth, unbridled rhetorical fulmination over responsible civilian productivity, and the Islamic order that prefers (like Israeli ultra-Orthodox Jews) sheiks (rabbis) at the expense of secular elected officials.

If a slow and blessed change has taken place in this gradually changing political behavior, it is only thanks to the democratic culture that they are slowly beginning to internalize, by means of the state educational system, the free press, the judicial system and the political system, to which they owe a considerable debt regardless of how much they attempt to deny it and renounce it. However, they have a long way to go as do other Israeli populations, who also have little experience in the recent past in purely democratic traditions. They believe, or at least they behave as if democracy came into being so that they could receive allocations, participate in elections, act riotously in the streets and the Parliament, act violently against law enforcement officials as they please, receive rulings that meet their expectations and say whatever comes to mind with no constraints. They do not understand that democracy must also keep law and order, demand fulfillment of civil and security obligations, insist on the protection of its institutions and civil servants from violence and abuse, sometimes subjugate the will of the minority to the needs of the majority, educate for civic responsibility and demand loyalty to the State as mentioned above. They do not grasp, for example, that they cannot anticipate state perquisites for their youth if they continue to run wild on the campuses in protest against the State's existence instead of going to fulfill their obligations and defend its borders; it is beyond their comprehension that they cannot demand equal rights, allocations, participation in running the State and protection by the State and its institutions while they fail to fulfill even their most fundamental obligations (for example: national service and payment of real taxes), and instead they openly identify with its enemies, attack witnesses in the courtrooms, incite the public with their speeches and writings (see below, the chapter about the Arab as Muslim, and quotations from their statements), hurl stones and Molotov cocktails at policemen and passers-by, burn fields and inflame violent demonstrations against the very same state.

In a democracy, citizens take part in promoting the general well-being and the assumption is that if things are good for the general population, things are also good for the individual citizen and vice-versa. However, the opinion and belief has taken root in the Israeli Arab public that general well-being means the well-being of the Arab population while the good of the State has never entered their

mind or agenda. This is manifest in their sectarian ethnic/national/Palestinian/Arab concerns and in their political organization within Israel. For example, in their public pronouncements, the Arab leaders have never once expressed concern over the economic, tourism, security, unemployment, water, balance of trade or foreign currency difficulties encountered by the State. They are exclusively concerned with those matters relating to the Arab sector or the welfare of the rest of the Arabs or the Palestinians. Even when several Arabs served as deputy ministers or in other positions in the government service, they dealt with Arab matters and as a rule, showed no general interest in the plight of the State. When there was a Deputy Minister of Education or Deputy Minister of Health, he never cared for, made declarations about, tended to, showed any interest in or took into consideration the general needs of the State within his ministry's realm of responsibility. As far as he was concerned, providing for the Arab needs justifies his existence because he "serves those who sent him" according to his statements, and is not entrusted with serving the general public. However, when a Jewish minister or deputy minister is suspected, even unjustifiably, of giving preference to Jews, then the Arabs are the first to sound a complaint. After all, the benefits that they enjoyed during the Rabin-Aloni administration, like reverse discrimination in education, construction of schoolrooms and generous budgetary allocations to the local governments, were accomplished by and at the initiative of Jewish ministers, who saw to the needs of the general population and with a comprehensive national perspective decided to give specific preference to the Arabs, in order to compensate for the gap that had accumulated over the years. Is it at all possible that an Arab minister would manage the matters relating to the Israeli population, employing national considerations, while granting specific priority to Jews if the need arose? I wonder.

The sectarian focus of the Israeli Arabs has a destructive effect on democracy from another perspective: The State has an overabundance of political parties ranging from the so-called Right to the extreme Left. Had the Arabs opted to function within existing frameworks, like a British citizen of Pakistani or Indian origin does when he joins the Conservative or Labor Parties and successfully climbs the party ladder and reaches high ranking positions, then they would not have to bang on the doors to get one of their own appointed minister. Why only one minister (or one Supreme Court Justice) and why not any more than one minister? After all, we do not want a quota system that will only perpetuate the separation and the distinctions. We must enable each person who rises up through the ranks due to his personality, his skills and his affiliation with the general political configuration, to display his unique strengths and to play a role

in society, for the greater good, including, of course, Arab citizens. An example of this is Minister Salah Tarif, who was chosen by the Labor party to represent it in the government, not as an “Arab minister”, but rather as a representative of the movement, who was able to win over the hearts of its voters with his personal qualities. However, the rest of the Arabs, who establish exclusively Arab parties and function within their framework and as their representatives, send a clear message that they have no interest in being integrated into the fabric of the Israeli political parties. It is as if the Muslims or the Jews in the United States or Great Britain were to establish their own parties instead of being absorbed into the existing party establishment. It is not only that some of these Arab parties are blatantly hostile towards the State, one of them (BaLa”D, the National Democratic Covenant) whose acronym also has nationalist overtones (*bilad* = land or homeland), and also the word “national” means, of course, the Palestinian and not the Jewish homeland, transmits a message of separation and not one of integration.

Of course, the freedom of political organization in Israel allows its Arabs to form associations and parties the likes of which are not permitted to function in the Arab countries and regimes, which they so revere and admire. In the “democracies” of Egypt and Jordan, for example, Islamic parties may not participate in elections, not to mention in the dictatorships of Syria and Iraq where any party that is not the monolithic ruling party cannot even announce its existence. In Israel, on the other hand, six mayors of cities and villages who head their local Islamic Movement chapters were elected. The southern faction of the Islamic Movement (see the chapter on Israeli as Muslim below) joined together with another Arab party in order to run for the Israeli Knesset and to place two of their representatives there. After all that, we hear from them about repression, suppression and discrimination to which they are subject in the State of Israel, which is tolerant to the point of placing itself in jeopardy. But these elected officials fail to understand how destructive, both personally and in terms of the State whose full citizenship they demand, is the separatist doctrine that they are cultivating. As, first of all, they are losing, or at least they are distancing themselves, from the power centers; since by being elected separately they are not only blatantly anti-establishment, but are also explicitly or implicitly anti-Israeli. Second, they thereby sentence themselves to the margins of society, because the Jewish majority will always dissociate themselves from them, will not want to associate with them and will prefer to unite the Jewish Right and Left over humiliating dependency on their votes. Third, the Arab elected officials have no chance to gain what they promised their voters from

the outside and will be always dependent on the goodwill of the various Israeli governments; were they to opt to work from the inside, within the existing establishment, which they despise and with which they refuse to cooperate, and were they to display interest in the general problems of the State of Israel and not only in what happens in their own backyard, then their influence and accomplishments would grow immeasurably. In contrast to their isolationist and sectarian positions, all Israeli governments over the generations took care of the Israeli Arabs, some more and some less, and saw to their advancement and their integration into the State. Had the Arab leadership assisted them with a constructive and productive approach, with the desire to integrate and identify instead of to segregate and seethe, there is no doubt that the present feelings of alienation, which that leadership promotes and stokes, would moderate and even disappear.

Democracy is not implemented only in the central government, which, for most of the citizens of the State, is distant and at times disengaged, but first and foremost on the local level, which every citizen and resident deals with on a daily basis. In the Arab sector, the act of democratic election, of a mayor or municipality head – personally and the members of the municipality in a party list, has moved new and young forces, which replaced the dignitaries and the traditional clan lists. The mayor of Umm-al-Fahm, for example, who was elected by an 80% majority of his city's electorate, could not have won so decisive a majority just from his clan (one of four in the city), or even only from the supporters of the Islamic Movement in the city. His vigor, his modest lifestyle, his concern for the matters of the city and its individuals are what have made him so popular, well-liked and well-received. No doubt, therefore, that he and many others like him, some young and educated, who have drawn democracy and democratic management principles from the surrounding Israeli society, or in its schools, have brought about a revolution in municipal representation and in the function of local government in the Arab sector. In practice, there are two types of government there: The old and clannish, which continues to cry before the central government about discrimination, displays for all to see the "sewage flowing in the streets", which has become a proverbial mockery, organizes demonstrations against the government in its backyard while at the same time doing little to make tax collection and the bloated apparatuses more efficient, was unsuccessful in liquidating corruption and the politics of nepotism and continues to prefer relatives in appointments. In contrast – the new regime, whose most outstanding representatives are members of the Islamic Movement, who, with vigor, imagination, frugality and efficiency harnessed the energy to change the

face of their cities, mobilizing volunteers, gathering contributions of money, building materials and work hours in order to renovate, fix and build without requiring gifts from the government. They have achieved real accomplishments and changed the face of their cities. But they also transformed them into Islamic enclaves within the State of Israel, which live their lives totally disconnected from it and slowly are exchanging the law of the State, which they do not care for, with municipal bylaws that enable them to prohibit alcohol (and drugs) in their cities, to build separate bus stops for the two genders and to separate the pre-teen boys and girls in the state schools within their boundaries.

In other democracies that knew how to defend themselves, in the United States and Great Britain, immeasurably harsher measures than the “discrimination” ostensibly practiced by Israel *vis-à-vis* its Arab citizens were taken. In Britain, for example, the Home Secretary was authorized, during World War II, to order the apprehension of anyone whom he had a basis to suspect a threat to state security; and in the United States all citizens of Japanese descent were incarcerated by order of the Supreme Court, which determined that the State is allowed to take steps in its defense that are consistent with anticipated (not real) threats. All that, when no British or American citizen did anything that even hinted at an act of terrorism or violence against his country and when, at least in the United States, no danger existed to the existence of the country, because all of their wars were far from home and no act of war took place in its territory. After the war, the United States suffered through the Senator McCarthy episode, which led to the firing, interrogation, incarceration and even the stripping of the citizenship of many who were suspected of theoretical sympathy for communism. Has Israel taken, or even come close to taking, steps of this sort, even while fighting for survival and while its Arab citizens were undermining its foundations, denying its right to exist, siding with its enemies, damaging its facilities and attacking its law enforcement personnel? We all know what would have befallen us had we dared and desired to follow in the footsteps of the great democracies. We are quite fortunate that thoughts of that sort never entered our minds even during our most difficult hours, except for some deviations (like Kafr Kasseem) that were handled by the legal system. These volitional and moral restrictions that the State, justifiably and unilaterally accepted upon itself, are not acknowledged or appreciated by the Israeli Arabs, although under any Arab regime they would not have enjoyed anything similar, but rather they serve as an impetus for them to disparage the State, to rebel against it and to revile it.

Even the economic aspect, which more than any other should have been quantifiable, neutral and unbiased, reveals the intentions of the Arabs in Israel.

Was any one of them deprived of the ability to initiate, invest, invent, raise capital, take chances and succeed? The few that dared and took initiative experienced significant success. The others do not ask themselves why they are not initiating and succeeding but rather blame the discriminatory government policy – but do not say in what way was it discriminatory. What do they want? That their villages be granted border settlement status, with its concomitant tax relief, while they claim that they are not in danger from any terrorists or any Arab country and they therefore see no obligation to defend the country? They were provided with electricity, water, roads, telephones, educational institutions, culture and health as well as an unprecedented democratic electoral system for their councils and cities of a much higher quality than they could receive in any of the Arab countries that are the object of their dreams. Did that diminish their hatred? Not at all – they remained devoted to placing responsibility on the State and on the “discrimination” with which it treats them, with the exception being the six cities and councils that are under the rule of the Islamic Movement, to which Nazareth will soon be added, that organized their society and resources differently (as we will see in the chapter on The Israeli as Muslim), did not anticipate favors from anyone and established voluntary mechanisms, which compensated – and more than compensated – for the shortfall in government support. The others prefer to remain in the mode of unfortunate victims, who, instead of rolling up their sleeves and beginning to work, redirect the blame in the direction of the State. How convenient, appealing and captivating!

The Israeli Arabs never stopped to ask themselves why they find themselves in the lower levels of Israeli economic development and why their percentage of unemployed is higher than the national average. They are so caught up in their world of complaints against the State that they also do not take into account the construction, expansion, rise in standard of living and the introduction of modernity into their lives that has taken place under Israeli rule. This rule has moved them centuries ahead and has brought them closer to the standards current in Israel, in contrast to the villages of their brethren that remained light years behind them, under non-Israeli rule in the other parts of the Land of Israel. Have they asked themselves why Herzliya is wealthier and more flourishing than Or Akiva, or Ramat Aviv than the Florentine neighborhood in Tel Aviv or Beersheba than Sderot? After all, they are all Jewish cities and neighborhoods. Have any of them screamed vociferously about state discrimination? Furthermore: Are Rahat and Tel Sheva like Turan and Beka? If there is discrimination, why are all of the Arab settlements not abject and all of the Jewish settlements prosperous? It seems that this is a problem that transcends the ethnic-national borders in Israel

and the explanations and solutions are in the socio-economic realm, which no one challenges. After all, every society contains people who are rich and poor, talented and untalented, industrious and slothful, ambitious and shiftless. In wealthy New York, are Fifth Avenue and Park Avenue the equivalent of Seventh Avenue or Tenth Avenue? Boston and Detroit? California and Alabama? And the result is – if the Israeli Arabs insist on separate Arab education, which provides them with fewer matriculation certificates and less eligibility to enter university than their percentage of the population; and if they refuse to join the army and go through the crucible that every Israeli undergoes; and if they choose to isolate themselves within their parties and conduct their policies of alienation instead of integrating into the existing political frameworks; and if they establish their own “national” bodies like the Arab Mayors Forum or their Monitoring Commission that also includes the Arab members of Knesset; in short they prefer conflict and hostility with their State over identification with it and battling against it over battling together with it, they should not be surprised if they are shunted to the margins of society in every sense, including the economic one.

When the crisis broke out in Nazareth in 1997, when the Islamic Movement entered the courtyard of the Church of the Annunciation by force and illegally established a tent mosque, in order to gain possession of the territory that was designated for work to absorb the masses of pilgrims anticipated in the year 2000, this author was appointed as a member of the governmental commission of inquiry that was supposed to trace the roots of the inter-communal confrontation and to recommend ways of escaping the dead end. In the coming chapters, we will detail this decisive episode in State relations with the Islamic Movement and with its Christian minority. However, for our purposes here, we will note that when the Islamist leaders were warned by the commission that their continued illegal occupation of the area would render futile the efforts to promote the city’s development, which were the joint initiative of the municipality and the Ministry of Tourism with the objective of welcoming the record tourism anticipated in the year 2000; and that the citizens of the city themselves, most of whom are Muslims and make their living from tourism, would be the first and immediate losers, they resolutely stated that establishing the mosque in the courtyard was much more important to them than the economic gains anticipated if they dismantle the tent and halt their violence. That choice that preferred an ideological religious success over economic gain should not be surprising and even has an aspect that evokes respect and admiration. But it also provides an overwhelming answer, an answer that was confirmed by other Muslim leaders that all those who believe that economic development will lower

the level of fundamentalism, and that raising the standard of living necessarily leads to a decline in religious motivation and to the disappearance of complaints of discrimination, not only knows not of what he speaks, but he also adopts a patronizing, offensive and insulting approach as it assumes that tossing a pile of dollars at religious groups committed to their tradition, will lead them to change their ways or will put an end to their claims. It has been proven, contrary to the common stereotype, that it is not only the penniless youth, bereft of hope, lost, lacking familial and social anchors and uneducated that are drawn to the Islamic extremes of Arab society in Israel and in general; but it is also older men with families, educated, professional and whose income is not bad at all. Therefore, the economic matter in the attitude of the Israeli Arabs is so marginal a consideration that they are willing to suffer, to be abused and to lose as long as they get what they want, or at least succeed in dragging Israel down from the heights of its success.

Thus, there are many facets to the existence of the Arab minority in Israel, from the governmental, economic and security perspectives as well as the attitude of that sector to the fundamental values and assets of the Jewish state like immigration, settlement, Zionism, symbols and the like. In the coming chapters we will discuss the crucial question of the identity affiliation of the Israeli Arabs, whose fragmented souls go back and forth between being Israeli, Palestinian, Arab and Muslim. We will discover that their identity affiliation always combines several of those elements, with emphases on one element or another or total submission to one or the other, in accordance with the events taking place around him. Therefore, the parameters of this identity are not only complex and entangled, but they are also individual for each person or affiliated group within the Arab community; and most important, they are not static but rather they are dynamic both in the soul of each individual and also in the consciousness of the entire collective. Let us see.