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### PALESTINIAN EMIGRATION FROM JUDEA AND SAMARIA

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The periodic waves of Arab unrest in Judea and Samaria such as the one unleashed last spring appear on the surface to arise from widespread and escalating violence against the Israeli occupation and a growing consensus among residents of the territories backing the PLO. These impressions generally conceal the growing despair felt by Palestinian Arabs whenever the possibility of resisting Israeli settlement plans is contemplated or when some of the area's pressing problems are faced squarely. Even before Israel's Lebanon campaign, the mood among the majority of educated and committed Palestinians was one of fear rather than confidence, a feeling since intensified as the PLO strongholds north of the border have crumbled.

West Bankers are fearful for good reason. Once again, as in the early 1950s, the Palestinian Arabs are feeling abandoned by their Arab brethren. They must also live with the reality that many among them are selling land to the Jews for no other motive than private gain. A third factor which contributes to Palestinian fears and disillusionment, and the subject of the following analysis, is widespread emigration, grave enough to warrant the establishment of a joint Jordanian-PLO office in Amman to combat the phenomenon. The following analysis of the emigration problem utilizes Israeli and Palestinian sources of information (described in "A Note on the Data," at the end of the article).

#### West Bank Emigration: An Overview

Emigration from the West Bank is not a new phenomenon. During Jordanian rule, between 1948 and 1967, a very high natural growth rate of 4 percent *per annum*, was counterbalanced by the mass emigration of 150,000 West Bankers. The resultant average growth rate was an unusually low 0.6 percent. As a consequence, the population of the West Bank peaked at 742,000 in 1952, reached its nadir in 1967 (an additional 200,000 persons fled as a result of the Six-Day War), and had climbed to only 681,200 in 1977. During the time that the population was decreasing in the West Bank, the population of Israel tripled and that of the East Bank quadrupled. A relatively high level of education, a severe dearth of appropriate jobs in the West Bank, the opening of suitable positions in the growing bureaucracy in Amman and expanding teaching opportunities in the oil-rich Gulf States, contributed to what must be seen as a second exodus of Palestinians from the western part of Mandatory Palestine, following on the heels of the exodus in 1948.

A third wave of emigration, estimated at approximately 200,000 people, left following the Six-Day War. The character of the wave differs considerably from

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that of the second, which was primarily male, skilled or educated. The third wave comprised whole families and, as in the case of Jericho, whole towns. This flow of emigration abated in the second year of Israeli rule and reached its lowest levels in the years 1969-74 when Israeli-induced prosperity was widely felt, and full employment was the general rule. Nevertheless, even at the height of prosperity in the early years of Israeli rule, emigration of the educated persisted, reflecting the serious shortage of white-collar jobs.

Since 1974, the number of those emigrating has grown substantially, so much so that it is fair to say that we are witnessing yet a fourth wave of emigration. Skilled blue-collar workers began leaving, not because of a lack of suitable jobs in the West Bank or in Israel proper, but because they were attracted by high salaries offered in the Arab OPEC states, with which the local economy could not compete. Among the educated, and included in that category are high school as well as university graduates and professionals, the motivations for leaving involved the lack of suitable jobs as much as the attractiveness of foreign employment. All in all, emigration shot up from an estimated 8,000 annually in the first six years of Israeli administration to double that number since.

Again, for the sake of comparison, it should be remembered that the net numbers leaving the West Bank exceeded Israel's largest net emigration record, set in 1981, even though Israel's population is five times that of the West Bank. Emigration has been the decisive factor in keeping population growth low--less than 20 percent between 1967 and 1980--roughly equal to the growth of the Jewish population in Israel.

#### White-Collar Emigration: An Expanding Educational System and a Stagnant Labor Market

The persistent growth of white-collar emigration from the West Bank can be linked to two distinct phenomena: the large, continually expanding educational system which churns out ever greater numbers of high school and college graduates yearly; and a white-collar job market whose positions have not nearly kept pace with the growing numbers of graduates. To assess the impact of this phenomenon, it is necessary to analyze both why and how the educational system expanded and the reasons behind the limited growth of the white-collar market.

Three distinct features characterize the educational system in Judea and Samaria. First, it is unusually large in comparison to educational systems in other societies on a comparable economic level. Second, it is extremely unbalanced in terms of the type of education it offers. Third, it is growing very rapidly. All three features of the system have direct bearing on the availability of jobs and indirectly affect the volume of emigration from the area.

The West Bank institutes of higher learning include the four universities established under Israeli administration and nine other schools, most of them teachers' colleges. As of 1980, over 6,000 students were studying in those institutions.

The system's growth record is even more striking. While in the West Bank population as a whole grew more than 15 percent between 1967 and 1977, the high school population grew by 83 percent--from 16,025 to 29,013 students. The growth in student enrollment on the university level increased from a few hundred at the end of Jordanian rule to 6,000 by the end of the 1970s under Israeli administration. This dramatic growth has placed a tremendous financial

burden on the system and has hindered attempts to cope with its inadequacies.

A serious imbalance in curricular offerings continues to characterize both the secondary school system and, to a lesser degree, the institutions of higher learning. In 1977, for example, only 4 percent of West Bank students studied in vocational high schools, compared to 50 percent in Israel, despite the fact that vocational students have the best opportunities for employment locally. Two-thirds of West Bank students major in the humanities. The system contains only one agricultural high school, even though agriculture is the largest sector in the economy. By contrast, 8 percent of Israeli high school students study in agricultural high schools, a figure that corresponds to the size of the sector in the Israeli economy.

We have already made mention of the fact that while the numbers of the educated have risen greatly, the number of suitable positions available has remained more or less constant. Statistics reveals only a slight growth in the labor force since 1974, the numbers hovering around 140,000, of which roughly 10 percent are employed in the scientific, academic, technical, managerial, and clerical categories.

The West Bank educational system today produces annually approximately 9,000 high school graduates and 1,500 graduates of institutions of higher learning. In addition, universities abroad produce an additional 1,000 West Bank-born graduates per year.

One-third of high school graduates score above 70 percent in the matriculations and continue on to universities, thereby deferring entrance into the labor force. Estimated conservatively, approximately two-thirds of the female graduates in this group do not enter the work force, a further reduction of 1,400 graduates seeking employment. We are still left with over 4,500 high school graduates who seek gainful employment per year. Assessing the number of college graduates entering the work force is slightly more hazardous because it requires knowing the number of women dropping out because of marriage or tradition, and requires an estimation of the number of graduates who do not pursue more advanced degrees. Indications are that both these groups are large. Nevertheless, we can assume that at least 500 local graduates plus 300 graduates of universities abroad seek employment in any given year. According to these calculations, then, roughly 5,300 educated Palestinian Arabs, excluding high school dropouts, are seeking employment in an economy in which there are only 14,000 positions extant in categories attractive to such job-seekers. In other words, there are less than three positions for every job seeker. In the same occupational categories in Israel, the ratio is 14:1.

How many job openings actually exist each year in Judea and Samaria? In 1980, the Military Administration employed 11,186 workers in suitable positions, of whom 850 were newly employed. Five hundred and forty-seven of those positions were vacated by their previous incumbents as a result of retirement, dismissal, or death, for a net of 303 new jobs. Those 850 positions represented 7.5 percent of that labor market. Assuming that the same number of positions opened up in the remaining white-collar job market, a figure confirmed by Israeli data, then the total number of job openings could barely have exceeded 1,100 (7.5 percent of 14,000).

If these calculations are correct, barely more than one-fifth of high school and university graduates could possibly find suitable employment in the West Bank economy in any given year. Moreover, the situation deteriorates from year to year as the rise in the number of these graduates grows out of all proportion to the slow increase in employment opportunities. While employment in government increased by 15 percent between 1973 and 1981, the number of those who left high school in twelfth grade without matriculating or completing the high school program increased by 50 percent.

#### Israel-West Bank Economic Integration and the Labor Market

Why did the number of those continuing their education increase so dramatically while the white-collar job market has hardly expanded? The answer to this lies in the impact of Israeli economic integration on the society and economy of Judea and Samaria. In brief, economic integration created a prosperity which enabled new segments of the West Bank population to educate their children. At the same time economic integration had a negative, or at best a neutral effect, on those economic sectors in the West Bank economy which traditionally create white-collar work.

There is no doubt that the creation of an Israel/West Bank/Gaza Common Market characterized by the absence of trading and monetary barriers and the free flow of workers from the territories into Israel engendered a healthy new prosperity. The absorption of over 40,000 Palestinian Arabs into the Israeli economy (almost one-third of the total labor force in the territories) by 1974 not only solved a grave unemployment problem that persistently plagued the area under Jordanian rule, but also provided the basis for domestic economic growth and the redistribution of wealth. Earnings fueled an annual gross domestic product growth of 11 percent between 1967 and 1980, while the transformation of rural and urban underemployed and unemployed into salaried blue-collar workers often meant that former have-nots now earned more than white-collar employees. Almost overnight, ambitious workers, having successfully completed training in one of the twenty vocational centers set up by the Israelis, had the opportunity of earning more than a beginning teacher or a mid-level clerk in a government office.

The new prosperity also meant that parents could now defer the entrance of their children into the work force, and maintain them while they received the free education provided under Jordanian law and continued by the Israeli military administration. For the first time, isolated villagers began sending students to high school. The growth of the educational system also affected other sectors of West Bank society. Transporting these students, for example, was cited as one of the primary reasons for the civil administration's updating of the public transport system in the West Bank. Lodging had to be found for students from distant villages in the towns where most of them went to study.

What is less apparent is why the impact of this integration adversely affected white-collar employment. Four main reasons can be cited. First, while integration with the Israeli economy created 40,000 jobs, they were overwhelmingly blue-collar positions. Many white-collar sectors in the Israeli economy were simply closed to Arabs from the West Bank for state security reasons, particularly the tremendous government and defense sector, which employs over one-third of the entire Israeli work force. As long as the Palestinian Arabs remain

Jordanian citizens and reject the standing Israeli offer of citizenship, this will continue to be the case. In the private sector they could hardly fare better even if they sought to compete with higher level Israeli professionals. In addition to the obvious language barrier, West Bank high school or university graduates receive an education inferior to that offered by the equivalent Israeli institutions. Thus, the most dramatic development on the West Bank labor market, namely employment in Israel, effectively bypassed the white-collar workers.

In some cases, economic integration adversely affected white-collar and professional employment. Such was the case with the medical profession in the vicinity of Jerusalem, where Arab doctors and the hospitals with which they are affiliated came into direct competition with some of Israel's finest medical institutions. The number of West Bank lawyers has declined, both as the result of an ongoing strike by many West Bank attorneys against Israeli changes in the legal system, and because of the increasing recourse of local Arabs to Arabic-speaking Israeli lawyers for litigation in both Judea and Samaria and the Israeli courts.

Of paramount importance is the slow growth in government employment. Only 10 percent of the West Bank work force consists of government employees; in Israel the figure is over double that. The growth in West Bank government employment has barely kept pace with the increasing population, let alone the increase in the number of graduates. Though the growth of the product of the West Bank was double that of Israel's in the years 1976-79, the growth both of its government expenditures and employment trailed far behind that of Israel. While there is great virtue in restraining the growth of government bureaucracy, the lack of a burgeoning civil service is especially critical to the labor market of a society which graduates two-thirds of its high school students in the humanities, and whose other tertiary economic sectors are so undeveloped. On the other hand, a recent labor report reveals that 80 percent of Israeli university graduates in the years 1975-80 were absorbed into government employment.

A primitive industrial sector is yet one more obstacle to the development of white-collar employment. West Bank industry remains in substance what it was under Jordanian rule. Accounting for a mere 5 percent of the West Bank product, the average industrial establishment employs three workers and is engaged in processing basic commodities. This is hardly the type of industry that could create openings on the managerial level or create a need for scientific researchers and technicians. The loss of an initial wage advantage and the reduction of Israeli tariff barriers with the EEC has resulted in no growth in this sector since 1974.

Another factor is the almost total absence of locally-based financial and banking institutions in Judea and Samaria. In Israel the unusually large banking sector is a major employer of white-collar graduates both on the high school and the university levels. Again, the absence of indigenous banking institutions is the direct consequence of economic integration. Financial institutions in the West Bank were not allowed to reopen after the Six-Day War as a result of their refusal to act as independent banking institutions and, as such, to sever ties with their central offices in Amman. Israel's decision marked the final demise of a Palestinian banking system created in the late 1930s, but which had barely survived the blow of territorial partition in 1948. The Six-Day War marked its death knell.

The Political Significance of White-Collar Emigration

Throughout the many changes fifteen years of Israeli administration have wrought, the Palestinian inhabitants of the territories have claimed to be motivated by the idea of *sumud*, or "steadfastness"--holding out against an enemy bent, in their eyes, on Judaizing the West Bank. Obviously, emigration of the most educated and most politicized segments of West Bank society is hardly in keeping with the doctrine of *sumud*. It is not surprising then that Jordan and the PLO have taken steps to try to minimize the outflow of educated Palestinians from the West Bank. Jordan, for example, has continued to pay striking civil servants and lawyers and to supplement the salaries of those who continued to work in the bureaucracy. More recently, both the Hashemite kingdom and the PLO have attempted to address themselves to the problem of the educated young by financing business growth in the area. Yet their efforts are only halfhearted, a reflection of the internal dilemma such aid creates. Though on the one hand, subsidies and business growth might in a minimal way alleviate the problem, they also promote economic interaction between Palestinians and Israelis, and provide new sources of income for the State of Israel through taxation of the revenue this business activity generates. Providing the Arab municipalities with monies to expand activities and employment leads to another dilemma, the creation of local power bases which might one day negotiate with the Israelis independently and challenge the PLO's claim to represent all Palestinians.

Between the indifference of the Israelis to this state of affairs, and the halfheartedness of the PLO and Jordan, both of whom are interested in maintaining the West Bank as a non-entity as much as they are interested in promoting *sumud*, the Palestinian Arabs in the territories cannot but expect the situation to continue. Once Palestinians in the West Bank were confident that time was on their side; today they are thinking differently. Emigration of the young and educated is both a reason for this change of attitude and a manifestation of the change.

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A Note on the Data

Population, workforce, and high school enrollment figures are based on data provided by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics in the Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978, and the Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1981. Figures on higher education in the West Bank can be found in the Military Government's "Thirteen Years of Israeli Rule" published in 1980; and in Emile Nakhleh (ed.), A Palestinian Agenda for the West Bank and Gaza (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1980). My estimates on emigration are based on figures published in Al-Kuds, Al-Fajr, Ha'Aretz, and the Jerusalem Post. For data on military government employment of West Bank personnel, see Din veHeshbon leShnat HaAvodah 1980, the Military Government in the West Bank, 1980.

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