

A TALE OF TWO HAMLETS

BEREM AND IQRIT:
SYMBOLS OF ISRAEL'S INTENTIONS FOR ITS CHRISTIAN CITIZENS

Edwin M. Wright



THE NORTHEAST OHIO COMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST UNDERSTANDING, INC.
Position Paper #4

Cleveland, Ohio

A TALE OF TWO HAMLETS

Berem and Iqrit: Symbols of Israel's Intentions For Its Christian Citizens

The heated controversy over the tragedies of two hamlets continues to smolder in Israel. Centering around the right of the peaceful, hardworking Christian villagers of Berem and Iqrit to go home, it flared up most vigorously in July, 1972, when the Israeli cabinet denied that right. Its first sparks, however, had been kindled much earlier.

It was back in November, 1948, that nationalist Zionist troops had evacuated those Galilean householders - "for only a couple of weeks," they had promised. When those weeks became months, then years, the evictees went through the prolonged red tape of securing a High Court ruling. Their right of return to their homes was eventually confirmed by law but prevented in fact. Nonetheless, supported by prominent Jewish intellectuals, demonstrative youth, the daily newspaper *Ha'aretz*, and others, they persisted in hope.

But Prime Minister Golda Meir had different ideas. She pointed out that the villagers were gentiles - Maronite and Greek (Melkite) Catholics. Their lands were now occupied by Jewish immigrants. Allowing the original residents to return and rebuild, she noted, would therefore be "an erosion of Zionist values." The Cabinet agreed - and acted accordingly.

The full significance of that decision requires a review of the history of Berem and Iqrit in their larger Palestinian setting.

THE BACKGROUND OF A POLICY OF EVICTION

The villagers of these two Christian communities had lived for centuries unmolested by the Muslim Ottoman authorities. But at the League of Nations Versailles Peace Table in 1919, they became objects of a tug-of-war between France and the United Kingdom. France claimed a Mandate over Lebanon, and Great Britain over Palestine. Great Britain won and included them in Palestine, though they were very close to the Lebanese border. Unsuspectingly, therefore, they were being foredoomed to suffer with the Palestinians whose tragic history after World War II can be re-summarized only briefly here.

In November, 1947, against the unanimous will of the 66% Christian and Muslim majority of Palestine, the mandated territory was partitioned after a bitter debate in the United Nations. 56% of Palestine was assigned to a "Jewish State" which included most of the fertile land and water resources, although Jews were but 33% of the population. The balance of 43% of the less desirable land was assigned to a phantom Arab State dreamed up in the halls of the United Nations. Proponents of the Jewish State projected in that plan, however, had clear intentions for the future and laid plans to drive out the Palestinians.

The code name for the overall plan was *Daleth* (D). Its purpose was to "cleanse" the Jewish areas of their gentile population, estimated at 49% of the whole, and then move into adjacent Arab areas as rapidly as possible. Leonard Slater's book, *The Pledge*, states that the Jewish Agency had been operating for over a year in the United States to raise money, smuggle arms and gain political support for the anticipated war. Some 600 American Jews also volunteered for this war and served in the Israeli Army in defiance of U.S. law.

The Plan *Daleth* and its operations are described in a two-volume history of the Palmach commandos. The author, Gilad Zerubgavel, titled the book in Hebrew *Ha-Sepher-Ha-Palmach*.¹ Yigal Allon, the founder of the Palmach unit, is frequently quoted in this document. Under Plan *Daleth*, there were fourteen different operations carried out, each with a sub-code symbol. Six of these were to cleanse the areas assigned to the Jewish State, and eight were in areas assigned to the imaginary Arab State for which no one had bothered to provide a governmental structure, let alone an army. Plan *Daleth* went into operation the moment the British Mandate forces withdrew from any part of Palestine.

The best known of these operations took place near Jerusalem on April 9, 1948. David Ben Gurion assigned the village of Deir Yassin to the extremist terrorist arm of the political party, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, under the command of Menachem Begin who published his version of the massacre there in his book, *The Revolt*. Another version - a more objective one - is told by Collins and LaPierre in their recent best-seller, *O Jerusalem*, in which Chapter 22 is titled "The Peace of Deir Yassin." They quote the official British investigation, the report of the International Red Cross representative Jacques de Reynier and, especially, an Israeli officer Shaltiel (page 584) who knew beforehand of the plan and that the Arab community of Deir Yassin "was friendly to us" and practically unarmed. The reward for their friendly attitude was a local case of genocide - the killing of 254 men, women and children whose bodies were thrown into wells or in the stone quarry. Then a few women and children were paraded in the streets of Jerusalem, and a press conference was called at which the Jewish spokesman stressed that Arabs should at once leave Palestine or suffer a similar fate.

Thereafter, vans with loud-speakers were sent to other Arab villages warning them of a similar fate. Menachem Begin, a Polish deserter from the Allied forces and commander of these Jewish forces, was rewarded by being elected to the Knesset (Israeli parliament). He has been the spokesman for Israel's second largest political party, now called Gahal, and served for nearly three years in the Israeli Cabinet (1967-70).

With this precedent in mind, Yigal Allon,² now Deputy Prime Minister of Israel, followed up the victories of the Jewish armed forces elsewhere by leading his Palmach troops into the phantom Arab State in Galilee. By May 1, 1948, he was sending Jewish *Mukhtars* (village mayors) into neighboring Arab villages to spread panic among them by telling them that a large Jewish military force was approaching, that if they fled at once they could save their lives but, if they waited, their houses would be blown up and they would be driven out. He boasts that this combined deceit and terror was completely successful and the Arabs fled by the myriads.³ This was *before* the State of Israel was proclaimed and *before* the armies of the Arab States moved into Palestine on May 15, 1948.

Collins and LaPierre state that a British officer who was pro-Jewish (and had a Jewish mistress) had given to Zionist authorities a copy of the schedule for British evacuation from Palestine. Thus the Zionist military had the advantage of moving in the moment the Mandate forces departed, leaving a vacuum of any responsibility for the local population - of which the Zionist armed forces took full advantage.

Thus Palmach, the Irgun and the Stern Gang had penetrated territory the United Nations had designated for an Arab State and were advancing to engulf Iqrit, Berem and other villages *before* May 14, 1948, when the last British troops left Haifa.

GENTILE RIGHTS: PROMISES VS. FACTS

On that day, in a museum in Tel Aviv, with an enlarged portrait of Theodor Herzl (the Austro-Hungarian founder of the World Zionist Organization and the philosopher of exclusivist and expansionist Jewish nationalism) hanging above his head, Premier David Ben Gurion proclaimed the establishment of the Jewish State "Israel." Conscious of a world audience, he also promised equality and security to all Arabs who remained in Israel and desired to live in peace. However, at that very moment, Israeli generals were "cleansing" the land of its Arab inhabitants as fast as possible. Herzl's plans to create a *goyimrein* (gentile-free) Jewish Fatherland by ruthless deportation of the "miserable inhabitants" of Palestine were gaining momentum.⁵

Leonard Slater's book, noted earlier, illustrates the capability of a world-wide organization of Jews in developing leadership and rushing the arms to Palestine while a communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia supplied valuable military materiel, especially war planes.

In contrast, Palestinian Arab forces were poorly trained, disorganized, badly led and woefully inadequate in any intelligence as to the situation. The Arab armies, which came to their aid from neighboring states, knew little of modern warfare. The ceasefire of June, 1948, was a blessing to Israel, which used the opportunity to violate its terms by importing large quantities of war materiel and recruiting volunteers into the army. Thus by July, 1948, Israel was prepared to break the truce, go on the offensive and clear the Palestinians out of central Palestine around Lydda and Ramleh.



JEWS AND ARABS join in a protest against the Israeli Government discrimination against non-Jews.

The farmers and artisans of Berem and Iqrit were soon to learn that nearby Nazareth, a Christian town assigned to the Arab State, had been captured. Farther south, Lydda and Ramleh fell to Israeli forces led by Moshe Dayan and Yitzak Rabin. The campaign is described as follows (emphasis added):

In the wake of the sudden Israeli triumph tens of thousands of Arabs began swarming up the hills toward Ramallah. This time their flight was not a result of fear, *but a calculated Israeli policy to drive them out.* The earlier Arab departures had made it all too clear that the land sized by the Israelis *was more valuable without the embarrassing presence of its Arab inhabitants.* Loudspeaker vans roamed the streets telling the Arabs to leave. Arab leaders were summoned to Israeli army headquarters and bluntly advised to get out. In Lydda large parts of the population were physically evicted from their homes and ordered on to the road to Ramallah.

Under a broiling sun, clutching what few possessions they had had time to gather, with an occasional bullet whistling overhead to keep them moving, a miserable column of human beings stumbled over rock and thorn-strewn hillside toward Ramallah. An unknown number of the aged and young died during their trek.⁶

EXTENSION OF TERROR

The Israeli military campaign was fulfilling Herzl's dream of an enlarged Israel, (almost) cleansed of its Arab "miserable inhabitants," and the triumph of his brand of Zionism.

Each week saw the occupation of more of the territory assigned to an "Arab State" seized by the Israeli army. Dispatches from the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem and the U.N. reports of early November describe the final advance to the Lebanese border. The Israeli army would enter a village, often unopposed, then demand the surrender of quantities of arms. In several cases, when the village *Mukhtars* (mayors) stated they had no such number of arms they were summarily shot and the rest of the villagers threatened with a like terror unless they moved out at once. With gun muzzles nudging their backs, reinforced with an occasional bullet fired over their heads, they moved across the border into Lebanon.⁷

On November 8, as the Israeli army entered Berem and Iqrit, the villagers came out with symbolic bread and salt, the customary token of welcoming a guest and showing hospitality. The Israeli officer in charge was Yaakov Kara. What followed was the beginning of a long and bitter lesson in Israel's treatment of its Christian subjects and how far they can trust the laws and promises of the Israeli State.

The following narrative is based on four main sources: an article in the *New York Times* of August 19, 1972; the official report of the Israeli government in late August, 1972; an article in the *New York Times Magazine* of October 22, 1972, by Amos Elon; and a statement issued by the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jerusalem, dated August 27, 1972.

The villagers of Berem and Iqrit, having trusted the promises of Ben Gurion and having had friendly relationships with nearby Zionist settlements, found their hopes dashed. Yaakov Kara ordered them to leave their villages and move south into villages largely empty because their occupants had been driven out. The villages of Gush Halav and Rami were assigned to them. The order was verbal and stated that their eviction was for only 15 days, after which they could return. Another officer, Major Krasnanski, later contradicted this statement under oath by asserting the order of eviction was phrased "return would be permitted when security conditions prevailed." The Israeli Supreme Court in 1951 declared the verbal order illegal and noted that even then it was for only fifteen days.

Those fifteen days had stretched out to nearly three years, while the villagers were denied any means of civil or legal protection and lived under the harsh Military Emergency Provisions prohibiting them freedom of assembly, petition or movement - prisoners in their own area. Despite frequent efforts to get a hearing, the Military Administration had turned a deaf ear to all their petitions. The charge that Arab pleas are ignored so long as they use peaceful and legal means to redress injustices is thoroughly documented in the Berem-Iqrit case history.

THE "RIGHTS" OF NATIVE PALESTINIANS IN ISRAEL

By 1951, the villagers had been accepted as Israeli citizens and had participated in elections. This had given them the incentive to take their case to court and, on July 31, 1951, the Supreme Court gave its decision that "the authorities had no legal right in the circumstances to prevent the return of the villagers." On September 10, 1951, the Military Governor of Galilee served a set of written orders - ordering them to leave their villages from which they had been evicted almost three years before! The villagers then appealed against the written orders to the Security Zone Appeals Committee, but it refused to hear the case. Again they presented a second appeal in late September to the High Court, consisting of Justices Olshan, Assaf and Chesin. It delivered its finding on February 25, 1952, stating that the three-year-late orders to evacuate were not to be voided.

In December, 1951, and before the decision of the High Court, the military proceeded to demolish all the living quarters, leaving only the church - without worshippers - intact. On January 16, 1952, again before the decision of the High Court, Prime Minister Ben Gurion announced the evacuation had been done 'for reasons of security' but the villagers would be assigned new homes seized from those who had fled in November, 1948. Again on May 7, 1953, the Prime Minister reiterated that the villagers would never be allowed to return to their



ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH Raya (left) is joined by Israeli M.P. Uri Avnery (right) in a recent protest march against Israeli treatment of Arab Christians.

homes, but by this time there were no homes and the land had been assigned to Jewish settlements.

On September 3, 1953, the lands of Iqrit were transferred to the State Development Authority, which involves restrictive clauses declaring it inalienable from Jewish ownership, never to revert to gentiles. Berem had been so transferred on August 27, 1953. Thus, 16,012 dunums (about 4000 acres) of Iqrit land were made “eternal Jewish property” as well as 12,214 dunums (about 3000 acres) formerly belonging to Berem. Although the government of Israel offered compensation to the evicted families, only six accepted such a substitute, the rest still clinging to the forlorn hope that Israel might fulfill its laws and the promise made in 1948.

Among the reasons given for prohibiting the return of its owners, the State of Israel cites “the Zionist Reason” - that Jewish families have been settled on the land - “and even if a wrong was done in 1948, it cannot be put right in 1972 by causing a new tragedy, this time the evacuation of Jewish farmers.” A wrong done in Israel is therefore not reversible - if done to a Christian or other gentile. The *Law of Return*, a fundamental concept of Zionism, does not apply to Christian communities. It is an exclusivist doctrine allowing all Jews, and only Jews, to settle in territory controlled by Israel.

THE MILITARY DEFY THE COURTS

Amos Elon, in discussing these events, states that the “military authorities” ignored the Supreme Court ruling of July 31, 1951, and prevented the return of the villagers. The High Court then considered the three-year-postdated written order “legal” and retroactive (thus telling us a lot about how law operates in Israel). Whereupon the military chose Christmas Day to bomb Iqrit’s homes out of existence.⁸

When questioned in Parliament, Ben Gurion passed the buck by saying he as Commander in Chief had not given the order; but he did nothing to rectify this high-handed injustice. Ata'allah Mansour, a Berem victim, has stated that the ruined village is their Wailing Wall - to which they are refused permission to return.

From time to time, questions asked in Parliament about the right of Return to Berem and Iqrit were always answered by an adamant refusal of the government to allow any discussion. But, for reasons not clear to this author, in 1972 a mass movement began to grow of which the spokesman was Archbishop Joseph Raya, a Greek Catholic cleric who had lived long enough in the U.S.A. to learn something about civil and human rights. The question of gentile rights of Return appealed to some Israeli Jews, splitting the Yishuv (Jewish settler) community into two camps.

There seems to have been no ideological basis for this split; but some Israelis, including a sprinkling of "intellectuals," seemed to have developed a twinge of conscience at the arbitrary injustice involved in the government decisions and actions. During the summer of 1972, Archbishop Raya led a movement to reopen the right of Return as applying to Christians as well as Jews. But the use of Christian symbols of protest angered many Jews.

When he suggested that Christian churches ring their bells as a sign of protest, Jews recalled that in Eastern Europe bells had been tolled in Roman Catholic or Greek Orthodox churches when Jews were suffering attacks. When he suggested carrying a cross down the Via Dolorosa, Jews revived the charge that they had been persecuted for 'deicide" in Europe for centuries. When he announced services would be held in the abandoned Iqrit church, the police moved in and arrested the worshippers for "trespassing."

With the advice of his Jewish supporters, he finally organized a mass march to Jerusalem to present "the petition to return" to Mrs. Golda Meir. Her comments are clues to her attitude toward this issue. She is reported to have said that:

First of all, it was nothing but an effort on the part of the Communists to stir up trouble (an echo of the Joe McCarthy era in the U.S.A. Actually, every effort had been made to exclude the extreme left.)

Secondly, it was a dangerous precedent because she had petitions from many other villagers, and to grant one precedent would open up the whole question of the eviction of Arabs and displacement by Jews in many other villages.

Thirdly, it was an erosion of Zionist values to allow Arabs to return where Jews had been settled.

In the clash between the belief in Jewish superiority (a phrase often used by Zionist writers) and human rights, Mrs. Meir has made it clear where she stands.

CABINET WITHHOLDS CIVIL RIGHTS

With many Israeli Jews giving support to the request of the villagers of Berem and Iqrit, Prime Minister Meir finally agreed to allow the Israeli Cabinet to review the case - but only on the condition that the decision of the Cabinet must be accepted as irrevocable and final. On the eve of the Cabinet meeting the last week in July, 1972, the two communities addressed a long appeal to Mrs. Meir.

They recalled how hospitably they had greeted the Israeli army in November, 1948; that in illegal violation of the promises made by the government of Israel they had been evicted from their homes; that the Israeli Supreme Court had vindicated their right to return but they had been prevented from so doing; that their sons had served in the Israeli army and police and some had been killed in the service; that many Israelis recognized the justice of their plea and had testified to their loyalty.

The issue could therefore not be one of security. What was at stake was the honor of the State of Israel in its promises. They believed the Cabinet would recognize the justice of their case. On July 23, 1972, their letter of appeal was, however, supported by only four members of the Cabinet. The rest voted with Mrs. Meir, who still argued that the return of land now occupied by Jews was an erosion of the Zionist ideal.⁹ But the Cabinet decision was to prohibit the right of Return for these two Christian communities *forever!* [page 6]

Some writers such as Amnon Rubinstein, Dean of the Law School at Tel Aviv University, had called such action “illogical, Injustice and Foolery” (*Ha’aretz*, June 30, 1972), and asked how Israel ever hoped to get the Arab States to accept Israel's Word of Honor if it was violated in its attitude toward its own Arab citizens. Others referred to Berem as a “Hill of Tears.”

HERZL'S RACISM TRIUMPHANT?

Israeli government offices hang large pictures of Herzl in prominent places. If there was such a picture above the head of Mrs. Meir as she dominated the Cabinet decision, there must have been a perceptible smile on his bearded face, for Israel had taken a further step in his program - to produce a land exclusively Jewish without its former “miserable inhabitants.”

Discouraged by twenty-five years of such discrimination as is illustrated in the Berem-Iqrit incident and disillusioned with empty promises, Palestinian Christians see no hopeful future in Israel and are migrating to other lands where they hope to find equality. The hope that all gentiles under Israeli sway will migrate elsewhere is expressed in the article by Y. Bar Yoseph in *Yediot Aharonot*, July 14, 1972, as follows:

My Zionist conscience whispers to me - that in the neighboring Arab States it is possible to settle tens of millions of Arabs in the empty areas. If you reach a kind of population exchange according to which the Promised Land will be for your sons, and their sons and the Arabs will settle among their brothers in religion and language, then you would have corrected the historical injustice which was done to your flesh of your flesh and at the same time you would not have harmed the Arabs that much.

The article goes on to urge that all Jews “can and must” help encourage Arabs to leave Israel, and the phrase expressing the idea that it does not harm an Arab to evict him from his ancestral homeland is typically Herzl's Zionism. The despairing people of Berem and Iqrit, and all other gentiles in Israel, sense the threat to their future in such expressions in the Israeli press and actions of the government.

Bar Yoseph's paragraph is an echo of Herzl, and it is reinforced by the actions of the Israeli military made “eternal” by the decision of the Cabinet on July 23, 1972.

Herzl's theme can be summarized in eight words, “All Jews migrate to Israel; all Arabs leave.”

Mrs. Meir need not worry about the erosion of Zionist ideals; they are still too much alive in Israel.

* * *

Months before publication, the original manuscript for this booklet was submitted to the Israeli Embassy with a request for comments on its accuracy. As we go to press, we have received no corrections from that source. 1973 articles in the *Jerusalem Post* and *Le Monde* (Paris) are in line with the interpretations given here.

NOTES

¹ *The Palmach Book*, 1953. The passages referred to are in Vol. 11, pages 185 ff. Some details are quoted in John Davis' book, *The Elusive Peace*. Palmach was an elite commando corps within the Haganah, the underground Jewish Army of Palestine Mandate days. The terrorist "wings" were the Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern Gang.

² Zerubgavel, *op. cit.*

³ See, for example, Howard Sachar's *Europe Leaves the Middle East: 1936 - 1954*, page 551. Jews frequently refer to

"an alleged appeal for evacuation by the Arab governments themselves, ostensibly to make way for the impending invasion of Arab armies. This was a frequently repeated Jewish claim after the war. Yet no such order for evacuation was ever found in any release of the Arab League or in any military communiques of the period. Rather, the evidence in the Arab press and radio of the time was to the contrary. By and large - except for towns like Haifa, already captured by the Jews - the Arab League ordered the Palestinians to stay where they were, and stringent punitive measures were reported against Arab youths of military age who fled the country. Even Jewish broadcasts (in Hebrew) mentioned these Arab appeals to remain."

⁴ *op. cit.*, page 372.

⁵ Herzl's policy was to force the Palestinians out by refusing them employment rather than by military action. See his *Diaries*, translated by M. Lowenthal, 1958 (especially Vol. 1, page 88); also his *Der Judenstaat*. In 1904 the Gymnasia Herzlia was founded in Tel Aviv to indoctrinate young Jews in his philosophy. One of its disillusioned graduates, Moshe Menuhin, paints a revealing word picture of Herzl in his *The Decadence of Judaism in Our Time*, pages 31-52.

⁶ Collins and LaPierre, *op. cit.*, page 551.

⁷ Dispatches #116 and following from the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem, dated November 12 to 16, 1948, are in U.S. State Department Archives.

⁸ From Israel, John Cogley (later the religion editor of the *New York Times*) wrote for the January 22, 1954, issue of *Commonweal*:

"There are recurrent cases, too, of churches in Israel being desecrated - and this also, in many instances, can be ascribed to the kind of bigotry which in America is responsible for the desecration of synagogues and Jewish graveyards. (An added Christian complaint in Israel is that the authorities seem to take no measures to stop these outrages.) In a word, it seems that the same kind of fanaticism and almost psychotic ill-will that are turned into anti-Semitic channels in the U.S. are manifested in anti-Christian outbursts over here.

"More serious because it is more official is the periodic destruction of Christian Arab villages by Israeli military authorities. Just two years ago, the Catholic Arab village of Ikret, for instance, was wholly demolished. The people of Ikret had been sent away from the village, by military order, for "security" reasons. They were promised that they would be permitted to return in only a few weeks. A couple of years passed while these Arab Catholics - themselves Israeli citizens - waited in their bare, comfortless temporary quarters. Finally they took the matter to the highest court of the land and were given a court order permitting them to return to their homes. That was just shortly before Christmas, 1951. But before they could move back to their homes, Israeli airplanes dropped bombs on their abandoned town, destroying everything.

"Whether from malice or not no one can say, but the date chosen for the destruction of this wholly Christian village was December 25th. This may have revealed no more than an utter lack of sensitivity on the part of the military authorities, but certainly it added insult to injury. The "incident" brought forth a formal letter of protest from Archbishop George Hakkim of the Greek Catholic diocese of Acre, Haifa, Nazareth and the rest of Galilee to the Israeli Minister of Religions. The "Christmas present" of 1951 will long be bitterly remembered by Israel's Christians.

Only within the past few weeks a similar incident was publicized, though it took place last September. Kafr-Biram, another Catholic village, was destroyed. Here again the parish church was violently pillaged, as in Ikret, and the debris sold for junk. Israeli Catholics regarded the destruction of the church as a wholly unnecessary desecration.

"In both cases, the reason offered for the destruction of the Catholic villages was "military security." This, of course, is a military question. The layman hesitates to offer an opinion. As is so often true in such matters, the Israeli military's reasoning sounds plausible. Nevertheless the repetition of such drastic "security measures" does not make the small Christian minority in Israel feel very secure."

⁹ The full text of this letter is quoted in *Ha'aretz*, July 28, 1972, under the headline, "Iqrit's Uprooted People - A Strong Blow."

* * *

The cover sketch is reproduced with the permission of *Commonweal*. Photo credit: Union of Liberal Students, London.

[Back cover, inside]

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Edwin M. Wright was born in Iran and later served seventeen years as an educator in the Middle East. His government service began in 1941 with the Office of Strategic Services, and from 1941 to 1945 he served as a U. S. Army Intelligence Officer stationed in Cairo and Tel Aviv. In 1946 he was appointed to the staff of the U.S. Department of State, Division of Middle East Affairs, and in 1955 became Assistant Dean of the Foreign Service institute. He received the Superior Merit Award of the Department of State in 1964.

Since his retirement in 1966, he has taught at several colleges and universities, including Johns Hopkins and the University of South Carolina. He has published articles in U.S. journals and is widely known as a lecturer on Middle East history.

Dr. Wright holds the A.B. degree and an honorary doctorate from Wooster College and the M.A. degree from Columbia University.

[Back cover, outside]

**THE NORTHEAST OHIO
COMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST
UNDERSTANDING, INC.**

Early in 1970 a group of persons, concerned with the worsening conflict in the Middle East and the danger that the United States might be drawn into a catastrophic war, joined together to form The Northeast Ohio Committee on Middle East Understanding. Recognizing that judgments, policies and actions in respect to such a complex human problem could be disastrous if made in the absence of the most complete and objective understanding possible, and further recognizing the lack of completeness and objectivity in much of the news and other information media's communications to the general public for over two decades, the Committee endeavors to help citizens acquire a more balanced view of the history, values, religions, and social and economic conditions of the Middle East. To this end, the Committee collects, prepares and distributes interpretive writings; it brings qualified speakers to various platforms, and it furnishes from its membership speakers for groups interested in this problem.

The Northeast Ohio Committee
On Middle East Understanding, Inc.
Post Office Box 16094
Cleveland, Ohio 44116

April, 1973