

ANERA *Newsletter*

American Near East Refugee Aid

Number 89 Spring 1990

SHALOM, SALAAM, PEACE

A number of Palestinian and Israeli grassroots organizations are dedicated to cultivating a just and equitable solution to the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. This newsletter highlights examples of these laudable efforts. Legacy International and the House of Hope attempt to bring individual Palestinians and Israelis into interactive contexts. Their philosophy, simply put, is that if Arabs and Jews get to know one another at a personal, positive level, they can help lead their societies on the next steps to peace. The Center for Jewish-Arab Economic Development takes a different tack: helping Arabs and Jews in Israel to prosper side by side. Peace Now is more overtly political: it sees the necessity for peaceful negotiations between Israel on the one hand and the Palestinians who have chosen their own representation on the other. In addition, they have a focus on the elimination of human rights abuses.

LEGACY INTERNATIONAL

Legacy International, an American organization founded in 1979, teaches that cross-cultural understanding and conflict management training are essential tools needed to create and sustain Arab and Jewish coexistence. With headquarters in the United States and an office in Jerusalem, their projects illustrate Legacy's focus on behalf of Arabs and Jews:

Youth Leadership Club (YLC) is for Arab and Jewish students between the ages of fifteen and twenty. Sponsored by communities that have already reached out to the other side, these youths show initiative and willingness to begin reconciliation activities. YLC holds biweekly meetings in Jerusalem, and around the region, where its members participate in conflict management workshops and learn cross-cultural understanding and leadership skills. Those who show great enthusiasm and promise come to Bedford, Virginia to attend a **Summer Training Program** for six weeks of intensive training in conflict



Israeli Arab and Jewish students get to know one another through Legacy International's Dialogue program.

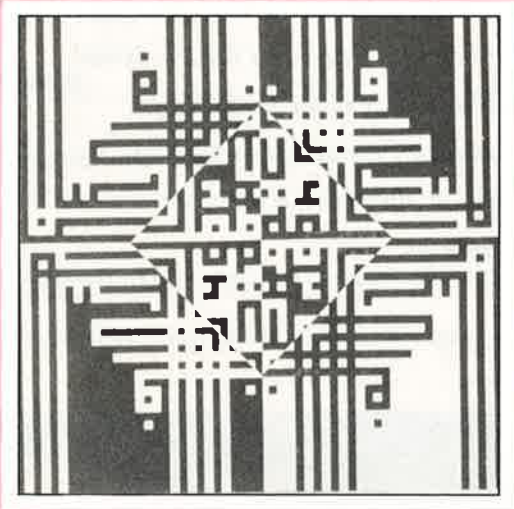
management, leadership, cross-cultural understanding, and community involvement. After training, two youths are chosen to travel to Pittsburgh, at the invitation of an inter-faith committee interested in the dynamics of the peace process. They discuss the Arab-Israeli conflict and its impact on their lives with religious and civic organizations, business leaders and students. The youths stay with Pittsburgh families, which gives them a chance to experience American community life.

Young Leadership Forum (YLF) is for Arab and Jewish professionals between the ages of twenty and thirty-five. Once a month young lawyers, government employees and others gather to discuss pertinent issues facing communities within Israel. The insights gleaned from these meetings serve two important purposes. First, these young community leaders return to carry out their jobs with a new sense of balance and fairness. Second, they continue to participate and contribute to other Legacy programs such as **Special Seminars**. These are held once every four months and give participants an opportunity to delve deeper into critical socio-economic and political issues. There are usually 120 attendees, mostly YLF members and other young professionals.

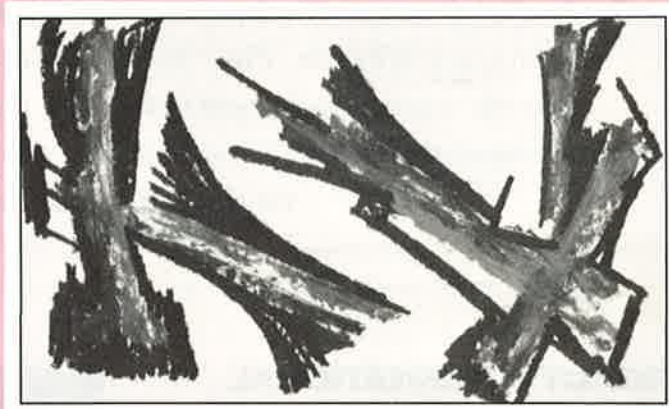
One of Legacy's programs for the general public, **Global Viewpoints Forum**, is held monthly which presents current topics of concern in the region prompting dialogue and discussion. Speakers at a recent forum entitled "Israeli-Palestinian Economic Relationship: Problems and Prospects" included a senior economist from the Bank of Israel, a reporter for the *Financial Times of Israel*, and a Palestinian professor of economics from Al-Najah University. Also attending were Palestinian and Jewish community leaders and members of the diplomatic corps.

THE HOUSE OF HOPE

Elias Jabbour, an Israeli Arab, began The House of Hope in Shefa Amr, Galilee, Israel, over twelve years ago. The organization's goals are to promote cross-cultural understanding and eliminate conflict in the area through education and hands-on



In the beginning was The Word, 1983 Kamal Boullata



Language, 1988

Koki Doktori

حَقًّا مُمْكِن

IT'S POSSIBLE

יה / יא / יב / יג

"It is possible today for an Arab and a Jew belonging to this ancient land to come together in a moment of creation," observes Kamal Boullata, one of 24 Israeli and Palestinian artists participating in a group show entitled, "It's Possible." Exhibited in nine U.S. cities in 1989 and now touring Europe, this is the most recent in a series of joint exhibitions by these artists, and the first such show to travel outside Israel and the Occupied Territories. "It's Possible" was organized by the Jerusalem-based Ad-Hoc Committee of Artists and Writers for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, after over 1000 Israeli and Arab artists, writers and scholars signed a symbolic peace treaty in Jerusalem in June 1988.

"This coming together is what I like to think that Martin Buber, the noted Jewish theologian, meant when he said, 'Whenever we come near one another, we are bound up in relation to the same center,'" continued Mr. Boullata, a Palestinian artist residing in Washington, D.C., who curated the show along with Yona Fischer, senior curator of the Israel Museum.

training. Its members believe and practice the principle that eliminating ethnic and religious tensions is imperative for world peace.

The House of Hope is a place where Arab and Israeli youths can come, out of curiosity or hope, to meet each other for the first, or hundredth, time. They hold lectures, meetings, and symposia with officials, often including Knesset members. The most important concept is that these youths have taken the critical first step: accepting that their future lies in their own hands and determining to better themselves instead of waiting passively. Each realizes that the "other" is an individual with the same needs: food, shelter, dignity, self-esteem and safety. An expanding library provides materials in English, Arabic and Hebrew and allows visitors and members a chance to study peace movements in the Middle East and the rest of the world.

SHALOM ACHSHAV: PEACE NOW

A more avowedly political group is Peace Now (Shalom Achshav). Peace Now began as a movement in March of 1978, after Anwar Sadat's historic visit to Jerusalem, when 348 army reserve officers wrote to then Prime Minister Menachem Begin, entreating him to steer Israel towards peace. Peace Now was revolutionary as a direct challenge to the pervading theme of "ein breira" or no choice, that is, no choice but continuous violence and war until Israel was secure and recognized by the

ANERA SUPPORTS:

Legacy International summer training programs for Palestinian and Israeli youth and the seminars held by the Global Viewpoints Forum.

The House of Hope in its efforts to support productive dialogues among Israelis of the Muslim, Christian, Jewish and Druze faiths.

The Center for Arab-Jewish Economic Development in its efforts to establish Arab-Jewish joint enterprises, where members of both groups equally share ownership, responsibilities, authority and obligation.

Arabs. These officers firmly believed that there was a choice, and that a change in Israeli policy concerning the peace process was urgently needed.

Peace Now is also very concerned about the staggering number of human rights violations. Its members, and the Israeli people who support them, feel that recognition of the Palestinian people as equals and respect for their human rights are necessary and fundamentally important steps towards a peaceful coexistence. Peace Now has organized massive demonstrations. One in 1982, after the Sabra and Shatila massacres, prompted more than 400,000 people (10% of the Israeli population) to take to the streets in protest. Since the *intifada* began, Peace Now has monitored and documented the government and army's human rights record in the territories.

Peace Now believes that Israel must negotiate directly with Palestinian leadership, especially after its recognition of Israel as a state. Accepting the Palestinian's right to self-determination is critical and unavoidable if both sides are to make peace.

THE CENTER FOR ARAB- JEWISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Center for Arab-Jewish Economic Development addresses Palestinian-Jewish relations from another perspective. Realizing that economic coexistence is beneficial, even crucial, the Ford Foundation gave Interns for Peace (a New York-based organization) a grant to help Palestinians and Israelis find ways to better work together and improve their economic lot. In 1985 Interns For Peace helped Israeli Arabs and Jews found The Center For Jewish-Arab Economic Development as a non-profit organization in the state of Israel.

The primary goal of the center is to promote joint Arab-Jewish economic projects. In doing so it seeks to replace misunderstandings, discrimination and stereotyping in the work place with trust, better work habits, and equal employment and promotion opportunities. This is accomplished in several ways. The first method is through seminars, meetings and symposia where Arabs and Jews voice their problems and concerns and seek answers and solutions.

The second method is more complex. Many qualified and capable Arabs suffer job discrimination and must work in menial positions. As these jobs do not use either their capabilities or training, frustration and bitterness set in. The center addresses this by assisting joint entrepreneurial projects. It maintains a data base with the names of businesses where Jews and Arabs are already working together and of Jews who are looking to work with Arabs. The center also provides technical assistance, brokering, financial assistance through tax information, and funding.

The cultivation of peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Jews is a commendable yet overwhelming task. ANERA grants offer not only financial support, but they also represent our commitment to a just peace and human rights for all.

ANERA has received gifts...

In Honor of:

Cindy and Jehad Ali ■ Mr. Antrainig Bakerjian ■ Mrs. R.L. Fisher ■ The marriage of Mr. & Mrs. John Grace ■ The birthday of Genevieve Janicice ■ Justice ■ Alpha Delta Kappa ■ Mr. and Mrs. Luce ■ Mr. and Mrs. Hans Morawitz ■ The parents of Hilda Pope

In Memory of:

Mr. George Barakat ■ Julius Arthur Brown ■ E.G. Carter ■ Mr. Frank Chiappe ■ Maurice C. Conkry ■ Mrs. Elizabeth Crosby ■ Alphonse DeRosso ■ Robert L. Fisher ■ Mrs. Frederica Parmalee ■ Catherine Radencich ■ Halim Schwary ■ Mrs. Dolphine Strong ■ E.M. Wilson

■
ANERA bids farewell to Ms. Margaret Bay, Executive Assistant and Direct Mail Fundraising director for the past five years. We wish her well in her graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where she has a fellowship to study Water Resource Management and Agricultural Economics. Her successor, Ms. Kathryn Powell, brings to ANERA experience in research, journalism and human rights programs.
■

Enclosed is a gift for ANERA's projects in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Lebanon.

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- I would like to provide a 1-year scholarship for a child in East Jerusalem. (\$100 per child)*

* Sponsors receive a photo of the child and a letter from the school during the year.

Contributions to ANERA are tax-deductible and should be sent with this form to the ANERA office. Thank you for your help!

This newsletter was written by Caroline Houston, ANERA's Administrative Assistant. Produced by Paula Stinson. Photos courtesy of Legacy International and Kamal Boullata.



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