

**INTERNAL ARAB REFUGEES AT THE MONASTERY  
OF THE CARMELITE FATHERS, MOUNT CARMEL,  
HAIFA (ISRAEL) <sup>1</sup>**

JANUARY 1948 - July 1948

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*Background to the Episode*

On the 29 November 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution recommending the partition of Palestine into an Arab state, a Jewish state and a corpus separatum for Jerusalem. The immediate effect was to aggravate the military tension between Jews and Arabs as the two parties jostled for position in view of the approaching termination of the British Mandate.

In Haifa, bursts of fire were exchanged across the line dividing the principal Jewish quarter in Hadar Kakarmel and the Arab quarter below it. Sniping, bombing and attacks on transport became the order of the day.

On the 29 December 1947, Arab workers in the Petrol Refineries, incensed by a grenade attack, killed thirty-nine of their Jewish fellow-workers in a singularly brutal assault. The Haganah <sup>2</sup> retaliated in kind two days later.

On the 10 January 1948, a car-bomb, planted by Arabs, exploded in the town. In consequence, four religious from the Christian Brothers school sought refuge in the monastery, feeling their lives to be in danger <sup>3</sup>. Soon they were followed by Arab fa-

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<sup>1</sup> The original name was «Monastery of the Carmelite Fathers»; between 1955 and 1960, the then Vicar, Anthony Stantic, Yugoslav, adopted the name, «Stella Maris Monastery».

<sup>2</sup> Moshe Dayan defined the Haganah as «the underground self-defence force of the Jews in Palestine». It operated between 1920 and 1948, when it was incorporated into the Israel Defence Force.

<sup>3</sup> The Brothers later left Haifa. The site which belonged to the Spanish Government was sold and is now occupied by a branch of the Bank Le'umi.

milies, desparately in search of shelter.

Responding to the dramatic circumstances of the time, Fr. Thomas OCD, Vicar of the monastery<sup>4</sup>, convoked a conventual chapter, where it was decided to throw open the monastery to these internal refugees from strife-torn Haifa. It was question of giving them temporary permission to occupy the first floor, which had once served to lodge pilgrims; the upper floor would be reserved for the religious. The refugees then began to settle into the rooms and corridors of the space allotted to them, the overflow spilling into the grounds around the monastery. Fr. John OCD, Maltese<sup>5</sup>, was appointed to take charge of them, which he did until replaced in April by Fr. Clemente OCD<sup>6</sup>.

On the 15 February 1948, Fauzi Kaukji crossed the Jordan at the head of a column of Syrians and Palestinians, in view of esta-

<sup>4</sup> Fr. Thomas was Flemish; his civilian name was ARTHUR SOETAERT. Ordained as a diocesan priest in 1900, he subsequently entered the OCD, in which he made his profession in 1908. He arrived at the monastery in 1939, to replace Fr. Edmund as Vicar (26 June 1939), a charge he held until March 1948, when he was succeeded by Fr. Germanus OCD. In 1953, he succeeded Fr. Germanus as Vicar Provincial of the semi-province of Palestine-Egypt, holding his new charge until his death in 1955. The semi-province Palestine-Egypt was then suppressed. Fr. Thomas died in Jerusalem, 4 February 1955, leaving behind him the memory of a distinguished religious.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. John was born in Malta, 1909. His civilian name was CARMELOS LEONE ENRIQUEZ. Ordained priest in the OCD, 1933, he became conventual at the monastery in 1938, where he taught scholastic philosophy at the International College. He left the country in April 1948.

<sup>6</sup> Fr. Clemente's name in the world was ANTONIO CASINELLI. Born in ARPINO (Italy) 1902, he entered the OCD and was sent for his studies to the monastery, arriving 24 December 1920. After courses in theology and philosophy, he was ordained to the priesthood in the Basilica of the monastery, 11 July 1926. He forthwith left for Lebanon, where he taught school in Bisheri and Tripoli, becoming Director at KUBAYAT. On the day Italy joined the war against the Allies (7 June 1940), he found himself at the monastery waiting to embark for Italy. He was seized by the British Military Police and interned. He re-entered the monastery in 1946 and was sent to El-Muhraqah. In 1947 he succeeded Fr. Felix Quaggotti OCD as Superior of El- Muhraqah. In April 1948, he returned to the monastery to take over from Fr. John, the Maltese. In 1950, 2 December, Fr. Clemente became Procurator at the Latin Parish Haifa and later became Parish-priest there. He subsequently became Superior of the Community at the parish. He died in Haifa, 2 April 1985 He is affectionately remembered for his amiable manner and musical gifts.

blishing a bridgehead for a future assault on Haifa. After bitter fighting, the Haganah forced him to withdraw, thus eliminating a danger to Haifa from the east.

Two months later a Druze column advanced from Shefamar with the intention of cutting off Haifa from the north; it retreated after suffering severe losses at the hands of the Haganah. The action was decisive for the outcome of the battle for Haifa which began a week later.

### *The Battle for Haifa 21-22 April 1948*

During the morning of the 21 April, the rumour spread that the British intended removing their forces from the positions they held in the centre and eastern parts of Haifa. In fact, the withdrawal had begun during the previous night. Later in the morning, General Stockwall, Commandant of the region, issued a statement that he would hold, thenceforth, only the western quarter of the town, notably the French Carmel, including the Carmelite monastery, the port area and the roads connecting the two sites. The new disposition of the British forces was clearly in view of their total evacuation from Palestine, which took place on 22 June. It followed, that for the time being, the British would remain in occupation of the camp to the south of the monastery, the «Stella Maris» Hospice opposite the monastery and the International College of Philosophy, housed in the eastern wing of the monastery until August and September 1940, when it was requisitioned by the British Army; the students were transferred to Muhraqah, instead<sup>7</sup>.

Jews and Arabs were stunned by the British move, for the secret had been well kept. General Stockwall made it plain to them that what happened in the centre and eastern parts of the town was, henceforth, no concern of his. They became, at once, the battleground for the possession of the town.

At 10 p.m. that same day, 21 April, a bomb exploded close to the parish-church of the Carmelites, signalling the onset of a savage confrontation between Jew and Arab, which lasted until the following day, when the Arab resistance unexpectedly collapsed, precipitating a flight of panic-stricken refugees, most to Lebanon,

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<sup>7</sup> The new wing was inaugurated in 1933, prior to which date, the students occupied quarters on the second floor of the western (older) section of the monastery. Occupied by the British Army, 1940-1948, the wing was never re-opened for its original purpose. It now houses the Carmelite Pilgrims Centre.

some to the monastery of the Carmelite Fathers.

The strategy of the Haganah involved sending a diversionary column to hold the eastern approaches to Haifa (Halisa and Wadi Rushmiah), while the main thrust was made from the Hadar down into the Arab quarter below. There it joined forces with another column mounting from the new commercial centre near the port. The effect was to split the Arab defences wide open. Demoralized, the Arab commanders fled to Lebanon, ostensibly to bring back reinforcements. They were followed by thousands of Arabs, who, abandoning homes and property, rushed with their families to the port in search of a ship to carry them to Beirut. Others travelled overland to the same destination by bus or taxi, in which they were assisted by the British.

At 11 a.m., 22 April 1948, the Haganah overran the Arab military headquarters near the Old Market and the fighting was all but finished. Leading Arabs approached General Stockwall, who, at their request, arranged a meeting with the Haganah leaders in the Town-Hall, to discuss the terms of surrender (4 p.m. 22 April). To the dismay of the General and the Jewish mayor of the town, the Arabs, after consultation with the Mufti of Jerusalem, rejected any idea of surrender in favour of a departure en masse. The Mufti, in advising the latter alternative, had in mind the imminent invasion of Palestine by Arab armies, which he expected would speedily crush the Jews and permit the return of the refugees.

The extent of the Arab débacle in Haifa can be judged from the statistics: In 1944, of a total population of 128,000, Jews numbered 66,000 (52%); in 1948, of a total population of 98,284, Jews numbered 94,718. Of the residual 3,566,521, mostly Christian Arabs, sought refuge in the monastery of the Carmelite Fathers.

The figures for the Latin Parish of Haifa, directed by the Carmelites, show a drop from +4,000 to +500 for the period under discussion. Since then the figure has risen slowly, so that at the time of writing, the number of parishioners stands at +1,500.

### *The Refugees in the Monastery*

At the onset of these troubles, the Vicar Provincial of the semi-province of Palestine and Egypt was Fr. Edmund O'Callaghan, OCD<sup>8</sup>, English by nationality. Fr. Thomas Aquinas was Vi-

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<sup>8</sup> Fr Edmund was born in Brentwood, England. His name in the

car of the monastery being replaced by Fr. Germanus OCD on 16 March 1948<sup>9</sup>. Fr. Bernardino OCD was Subprior, a charge he held for many years before being named Superior of the Carmelite residence in Jerusalem (Nov. 1943)<sup>10</sup>.

Towards the end of April, Fr. Clemente Casinelli OCD, Superior of the Carmelite sanctuary at El-Muhraqah; replaced Fr. John as Procurator of the monastery, taking over, at the same time, responsibility for the care of the refugees. In his latter capacity Fr. Clemente was to display rare qualities of initiative and decision.

Fr. Clemente discovered the first floor of the monastery to be filled with men, women and children. They were mostly Catholics, some three or four families were Greek-Orthodox, and one family was Muslim (the Sabas). The overflow spilled into the grounds of the monastery.

On the morning of the 22 April, Fr. Clemente celebrated Holy Mass for the cloistered Nuns in Tchernichovsky Street. Coming

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world was Frederick O' Callghan. Professed in the Anglo-Irish Province, 1911, he was ordained to the priesthood, 19 March 1919. He was sent to second Fr. Francis Lamb, Vicar of the monastery in 1920 and succeeded him as Vicar in 1935, a post he held until 1939. He became the first Vicar Provincial of the semi-province of Palestine-Egypt in 1939, holding the charge until 1948, when it was taken over by Fr. Germanus. Fr. Edmund was then sent to Cairo as Superior. He was responsible for the building of the famous sanctuary of the Little Flower (St. Thérèse) in Shubra, Cairo, where he died in 1971, leaving behind him the reputation of an excellent religious and able administrator.

<sup>9</sup> Fr. Germanus was Spanish by nationality. His civilian name was AMANDO MANSO MEDINA; Ordained priest in the OCD 1932, he became conventual at the monastery in 1935, where he taught philosophy at the International College. In 1945, he was named Superior of the Carmelite residence in Jerusalem. In 1948 (16 March), he took up the charge of Vicar of the monastery of Mount Carmel and Vicar Provincial of the semi-province of Palestine-Egypt in succession to Fr. Edmund. He left Mount Carmel to take up an appointment in Rome.

<sup>10</sup> Fr. Bernardine is Hungarian by nationality. His civilian name is István Molnár. Born in 1905, he made his profession in the OCD, 11 August 1923 and was ordained to the priesthood, 20 September 1930. He arrived at the monastery, 14 June 1933, to take up the post of Subprior and Master of Students. After World War II, he became Superior of the Carmelite residence in Jerusalem, and was wounded by a stray bullet in the leg, during the War of Independence, 1948. At present he is conventual at the monastery of Mount Carmel, where he has been residing for many years.

out of the chapel after Mass, he was able to observe the battle for Haifa from the garden of the Nuns and the advance of the Haganah in the direction of the Maronite Church in the Arab quarter.

### *Lodging.*

The battle precipitated a wave of internal refugees in flight to the monastery, creating a dilemma for the newly-appointed Procurator, since space in the monastery was at a premium. Recall that the British Army was still in occupation of the International College. True, Fr. Clemente managed to persuade the Commander to free a couple of rooms in the new wing, into which he introduced a family or two; but his intention, on that occasion was less to find more accomodation for them than to nip in the bud a romantic attachment between the soldiers worked there and the charming daughters of some of the refugees.

Fr. Clemente's first major decision was therefore to place the newcomers in the cemetery of the Carmelites, across the way from the monastery. To their dismay the refugees found themselves passing the cold nights in the empty niches designed for the internment of the religious. They lamented to him, not without bitterness, how, only the night before they had slept in warm beds in their own homes, whereas now they were obliged to pass their nights in the company of the dead.

Fr. Clement's move did not escape criticism from certain members of his community; these resented the presence of the refugees in their cemetery, which they saw as profanation of holy ground and demanded their immediate eviction. The Vicar, ceding to pressure, gave the order for them to leave; but Fr. Clemente defied him, protesting that under the circumstances, the law of charity should prevail over all other considerations. He was confirmed in his stand by the Procurator-General, Fr. James OCD, who came from Rome at that time on a pastoral visit to the community.

### *Provisions: Food*

Many families brought provisions with them, each preparing its own meals.

As for the poorer families, they were supplied with provisions by Mrs Victor Khayat, wife of Victor Khayat, well-known entrepreneur in Haifa. She arranged for supplies of conserved meat and ham to be sent up to the monastery. Her efforts were

seconded by an Arab gentleman of means, resident of Jaffa, who furnished a large quantity of victuals for distribution among the poorer refugees.

The Red Cross likewise contributed large amounts of provisions with the same intention (30 April).

To meet his increased expenses, Fr. Clemente sold off to the refugees the monastery's remaining stock of the celebrated «eau de melisse», a herbal liqueur, formerly prepared by the Carmelites, until the British taxed the distillery out of existence.

### *Water*

The refugees drew water from the cisterns under the monastery. Though capacious, the cisterns were unfortunately not full at the time and a serious situation developed in which care had to be exercised to avoid waste.

As a solution to the problem, it occurred to Fr. Clemente to connect his water-supply to that of the neighbouring military camp, which was furnished by the municipality. No sooner said than done! He summoned one of the refugees named Saluti, a mechanic by profession, who forthwith welded the two networks together without the military becoming aware of the manoeuvre. Later on, a municipal inspector, an oriental Jew, came around enquiring what arrangements had been made to supply the refugees with water. He kindly suggested that, in case of a shortage, the monastery might think of drawing on the municipal network, through the military camp. Fr. Clemente replied, smilingly, that he had already carried the idea into execution.

### *Religious Services*

The refugees assisted regularly at Sunday Mass. Victor and Fred Khayat set a good example by first putting their contributions into the plate and taking it around the congregation at the Offertory.

During the month of May, the refugees assembled for the daily prayers in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, at 7 o'clock each evening to recite the Rosary together and attend the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

### *Schooling*

As from the 31 May, the Sisters of Charity opened classes in the monastery to assure the education of the children.

*Departure of the British*

Representatives of the British Government met the Carmelite Superior at the monastery to discuss the return of their property apparently in view of the ultimate evacuation of the British from the country. The Carmelites dispatched a telegram to the General of the Order in Rome, to inform him of developments.

The State of Israel was declared by Ben Gurion on the 14 May; the next day, the British troops, still in the International College, hoisted the Union Jack over the monastery, without consulting the Carmelites. They explained that the International College was regarded by them as part of their General Headquarters.

The 18 May, Fr. John Tomb OCD, parish-priest of the Carmelite parish in Haifa, realized that his remaining flock, over 200 souls, had all sought shelter in the monastery and decided he could best pursue his pastoral activities by joining them there.

On the 29 May, the British authorities ordered the Carmelites to submit a complete list of all the refugees in the monastery; they numbered 521, including children.

As the time for the departure of the British approached, Mgr. A. Vergaini, Latin parish-priest in Nazareth and Vicar Patriarchal for the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, met a political representative of the Israeli Government at the monastery and pressed him for an assurance that the property of the Carmelites requisitioned by the British would be restored integrally to them when the latter pulled out their forces from the country. The representative replied that, if the site had been retained by the British for near on ten years it was because of its eminent strategic importance; so that any idea of its restoration to the Carmelites was quite out of the question.

On the 22 June 1948, about fifty British soldiers from the camp, the monastery and the «Stella Maris» Hospice, assembled on the esplanade in front of the Statue of Our Lady of Chile: the Union Jack was hauled down to the sound of trumpets, the soldiers lined up and marched away on foot, down «Stella Maris» Road, through Carmel (now Ben Gurion) Avenue to the port of Haifa, from where they embarked for England. The British Mandate had ended.

Prior to the departure of the troops, their officer in charge came over to the monastery to settle with the Carmelites for any damage incurred to their property during the occupation of the site.



### *The Looting of the Camp*

That night, the refugees swarmed into the abandoned camp laying hands on whatever could be carried away: radio-sets, books, blankets, tables, chairs, benches, lamps, hammers, garage-tools and so on. They left the camp stripped naked.

The Arab cook employed at the camp, appropriated to himself the entire stock of victuals, rice, sugar, potatoes, onions, tinned salmon, tinned meat etc. He made a fortune, retailing the stock to the refugees, some even being sold to the monastery for use in the kitchen.

Prior to the departure of the British troops, the Anglican chaplain of the camp, handed over the keys of the chapel to Fr. Clemente making over its contents to the Carmelites at the same time. On inspecting the place Fr. Clemente came across some woollen blankets and wooden chairs, which he carried away with him to the monastery. The rest had been stolen.

According to the chronicle of the monastery, the Carmelites appropriated, «cum debita licencia», large quantities of wood, iron, paper, envelopes of various sizes, kitchen utensils, such as plates, cutlery, pots and pans and so forth.

The Vatican yellow and white flag was now raised over the monastery (24 June). The French Agency responsible for the lighthouse hoisted the tricolor over its part of the «Stella Maris» Hospice.

On the 28 June, several American representatives of the United Nations occupied the Hospice, though for how long the present writer has not been able to ascertain, nor with what purpose in mind.

On the 30 June, at 4 a.m. in the morning, Israeli soldiers took up stations on the esplanade between «Stella Maris Hospice» and the monastery, thus putting them selves in effective control of the road leading up to the site. It was the first move in the seizure of the camp.

Now that the International College was evacuated, Fr. Clemente was only too happy to transfer some of the refugees to the empty rooms, as their presence at the entrance to the Basilica and to the Via Crucis had proved a sore embarrassment to the Carmelites.

### *Occupation by the Israeli Army of the Camp, 30 June/July 1948*

The Israeli Army took over the military camp evacuated by the British. The first thing they did was to disconnect the water supply to the monastery. Fr. Clemente, roused to indignation,

complained at once to the Commandant of the camp, pointing out that he was leaving the refugees in a parlous plight. The Commandant agreed and kindly ordered the pipes to be reconnected and the supply restored.

A few days later, the Commandant paid Fr. Clemente a visit, during which he accused the refugees of the illegal possession of fire-arms. Fr. Clemente was frankly horrified, as the thought of such a possibility had never crossed his mind. He immediately invited the Commandant to carry out an inspection of the monastery; but the latter was unwilling to take the step and left the premises. Fr. Clemente then undertook to make his own enquiries and, much to his embarrassment, discovered that the Commandant had been only too well informed. He summoned the refugees to hand over their weapons to him. The result was a handsome collection of revolvers, even some hand-grenades, which were then placed in a box and buried secretly, though exactly where, Fr. Clemente refrained from telling the present writer.

#### *Departure of the Refugees, 3 July 1947*

Three days after accusing them of the illegal possession of fire-arms, the Commandant returned and announced to Fr. Clemente that the refugees would have to leave the monastery immediately. Fr. Clemente first prudently consulted the notables amongst the refugees. Fr. John Tomb, the parish-priest, himself a Palestinian, born in Haifa, opposed the idea, protesting that he would rather die than quit. He even won some of the refugees over to his point of view.

Fr. Clemente however was adamant and imposed his authority, instructing the refugees to make immediate preparations of their departure. If the truth has to be told, Fr. Clemente was mightily relieved by the order of the Commandant. How to persuade the refugees to quit the monastery, eventually, had become a dilemma from which he saw no issue. The Commandant had saved him from the necessity of making some painful decisions.

The departure of the refugees from the monastery of the Carmel Fathers took place on the 3 July 1948. The Israeli authorities thoughtfully placed more than twenty lorries at their disposal; these, shuttling backwards and forwards to the town, transferred all the refugees and their belongings to their designated destination. It turned out that Wadi Nisnas had been set aside for the Christians and another quarter of the town for the Muslims. Wadi Nisnas had been the heart of the battle for Haifa, from whence

its Arab inhabitants fled in panic on the 22 April, leaving behind them homes and property to be had for the taking. The refugees were instructed to move into any lodgings they deemed suitable for their needs. The Commandant pressed them to hurry, as, so he said, a boatload of Jewish refugees was expected who might easily snap up any places they found available.

The policy of concentrating the Christians in one quarter has facilitated the provision of their religious and educational needs. Today, the majority of Christian institutions in the town, churches, schools, orphanages and the kindergarten of the Sisters of St Anne, are within easy reach of Christian families.

#### *Occupation of the Hospice by the Israeli army, 11 July 1948*

On the 11 July, the Israeli authorities advised the Carmelites of their intention to requisition the «Stella Maris» Hospice, evacuated by the British on the 22 June previously. The French and Vatican flags over the Hospice were removed and the Israeli white and blue flag took their place the same day. Notwithstanding, the French Agency responsible for the lighthouse saw fit to restore the tricolor once again over the lighthouse on the 16 July.

That year (1948) the Feast of Elijah was celebrated (20 July), with only twenty or so persons from the town attending Solemn Mass, a sad contrast with the crowds which congregate at the monastery in more normal times.

#### *Occupation of the International College, 21 July 1948*

The next day, the authorities informed the Carmelites of their intention to requisition immediately the International College in the eastern wing of the monastery, unoccupied since the departure of the refugees. They explained that it was required for the General Headquarters of the Marine. The Carmelites insisted that soldiers should avoid entering by the gate leading to the Via Crucis, a favourite corner for the recreation of the religious. Later, they conceded that the soldiers could pass through the gate from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the months, December to April.

#### *Aftermath*

It became known to the Israeli authorities that certain refugees, prior to their departure for Lebanon, had deposited goods and belongings in the monastery, consigning them to the care of

the religious until, at some unspecified date, they would be allowed to return and reclaim their property. Other religious communities in the town were similarly saddled with goods belonging to the refugees.

On the 24 September 1948, three officials appeared at the monastery demanding a catalogue of abandoned material that might have been placed in deposit there.

On the 20 January 1950, two other officials spent several days at the monastery, estimating the value of cloth belonging to the refugees, who had left for Lebanon. They then confiscated the material. Fr. George OCD, a Lebanese himself, and Bro. Joseph, an Egyptian, had, however hidden a great part of these goods and after selling them secretly, transferred the money to their legitimate owners, when the occasion for doing so presented itself.

Several Arab refugees, indeed, returned illegally from Lebanon to reclaim goods hidden for them by Fr. George and Bro. Joseph, which they then sold. The last of these, one named Azam, managed to make a tidy profit out of his transactions, as much as L 1,500.

Again, on 13 Novembre 1950, the authorities sent four officials to search the monastery for goods deposited there by refugees. They pretended that they were acting with the permission of Mgr. Vergani, a statement which turned out to be false.

On the 14 November, the officials returned to confiscate the material they had found the previous day. In addition to commercial goods, which the Carmelites reckoned they were more or less entitled to take away with them, they laid their hands on the personal belongings of the refugees, such as carpets, silverware, and the medical and dental equipment of Dr. Sayun. They proceeded, in spite of the vigorous protests of Fr. Vicar and Fr. Sub-prior.

When they returned the following day (15 November) to continue the work of confiscation, the officials encountered Mg Vergani at the door of the church. He had been brought there by the Carmelites. When the present writer arrived for the first time at the monastery, six years later, the events were still fresh in the minds of the religious. He was told that Mgr. Vergani had put on his priestly robes and seated at the entrance to the Basilica, refused to allow the officials to enter. As the present writer remembers him, Mgr. Vergani was certainly capable of defying the Government of a country, though usually diplomatic in his relations with the authorities, by whom he was much admired and even trusted. In this particular case, the Catholic religious authorities and the Carmelites considered that an evident injustice was

being perpetrated, when the personal belongings of the refugees confided to the Carmelites in a bond of trust were being seized and removed from the monastery. The Carmelites addressed their complaint to the chief of the department concerned, who, in fact, had no difficulty in agreeing with them, and ordering his agents to restore to the monastery the non-commercial items they had carried off.

Some time after his arrival in 1954 the present writer saw the dental applicances of Dr. Sayun (he supposes) stored in a room and condemned to rust from disuse. Later they disappeared, why, how and to where, he never knew.

At the time of writing, some chairs and tables belonging to the refugees are still in use in the parlour of the monastery, waiting for their owners to return and reclaim them. Sadly, that moment has not yet arrived, if ever it will.

*Evacuation of the International College by the Israeli Army, 1 June 1959*

In 1958, an eminent member of the Brazilian Parliament happened to visit the monastery of the Carmelites on Mount Carmel, and was made acquainted with the problem of the International College. The religious had no objection to letting the Israelis continue their occupation of the military camp, nor that of the «Stella Maris» Hospice; but the occupation of a part of the monastery by soldiers, both male and female, was another matter. It was felt by the Carmelites that the prolonged presence in the principal sanctuary of their Order of military personnel, and that in times of peace, was undesirable.

Euripides Cardoso Menezes, the Brazilian member of Parliament, was an ardent Catholic, a convert from Protestantism. He promised to do whatever was in his power to work for the evacuation of the International College. On two occasions he raised the subject in the Brazilian Parliament. It was said, at the time, that John Foster Dulles, whose son was a Catholic priest, had also been persuaded to throw his weight behind the demand of the Carmelites, though we cannot affirm it to be a fact. What the religious were given to understand was that so long as General Dayan was Minister of Defense, he persistently refused to permit the evacuation of the College and that permission was granted only when General Rabin took over the Ministry. In any case, it became necessary for the Israeli Army to construct a double-storied building in the camp prior to its departure, to which men

and material could be transferred.

The official act of transfer of the Israeli Army from the International College of the monastery took place on 1 June 1959, at 10 a.m. in the presence of Fr. Riccardo OCD, then Procurator Provincial and Fr. Bernardino OCD, Subprior of the monastery. These two, together with Bullos Karram, secretary of Fr. Riccardo, signed the documents of transfer, which made provision for compensation to be paid for damage done to the property during its occupation.

The Carmelites celebrated the occasion by holding a Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in thanksgiving to God and to Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

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- 3) THE EDGE OF THE SWORD (English)  
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*N.B.* The present writer engaged Fr. Clemente in a series of conversations, and took copious notes concerning the episode of the refugees.