

West Bank and Gaza living alongside Israel—it now seems unlikely that it will have any chance to negotiate for such a settlement.

Meanwhile, the Begin government has been able to rush full-steam ahead with its determined plan to create Jewish settlements throughout the occupied Arab-Palestinian lands. The Israelis have all but annexed the West Bank and Gaza and have already officially annexed the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem. All that remains is to carry out the final and most brutal phase of the hardest of the hard-line scenarios: the expulsion of hundreds of thousands

of Palestinians from their homes in the occupied territories.

Many of those who only a couple of years ago thought that eventually the Israelis would be persuaded or pressured into dismantling Jewish settlements in the West Bank, as Begin promised to dismantle Jewish settlements in Sinai, are giving up that idea. Now, they say, no Israeli government could remove Jewish settlers from the West Bank and Gaza without a civil war. That is probably true. As the Israeli people have become more deeply divided over the tragic losses and the disappointing results of the invasion of Lebanon, the

government and its hawkish followers have not become more inclined toward conciliation with the Arabs. Yet, in the long run, their scenario won't work either.

There remains to be explored, seriously and in depth, the possibility of a comprehensive negotiated confederal arrangement for peace that respects the rights of all the peoples of the region—yet binds them all together. There are many people in all camps, among all the peoples involved, who are willing to consider so drastic a solution. Maybe the time has come to give Charles Malik's heroic vision a chance. □

OUR CHILDREN'S FEARS



"How old will I be
when the world is destroyed?"

a boy asks his mother.

Bombs replace the devil
in his nightmares.

I remember climbing
under my desk,

knees tucked under skirt,
arms over head—

duck-and-cover drills

they called them. Even then

TV spots showed black clouds
creeping over houses

before the explosions,

families gathered around supper tables
swallowed up in flames.

Every night to the darkness

I threw my prayer:

"Don't let us go to war."

That was thirty years ago—

now my generation continues
the suicidal defense

with no way yet open

to calm our children's fears.

—Alice Amber Carlton