

## Professor won't be deterred by attack on him

# Nusseibeh to continue quest for dialogue

By JOEL GREENBERG  
Jerusalem Post Reporter

Bir Zeit University Professor Sari Nusseibeh says he will continue to pursue contacts with Israelis to promote dialogue between Israel and the PLO, despite the assault on him last week at the campus.

In an interview with *The Jerusalem Post*, Nusseibeh said he would seek more solid commitments from the Israeli side in future discussions, to avoid the flurry of denials that followed the revelations of his meetings with Herut Central Committee member Moshe Amirav. Nusseibeh had been joined in the meetings by Arab Studies Society head Faisal Hussein, and by Salah Zuheikeh, an editor of the *Ash-Sha'ab* newspaper.

Nusseibeh, his head bandaged and his arm in a sling, said the talks between Likud members and PLO backers should serve as a signal to the Labour Party. "My main message to the Labour Party is: Recognize the fact that there has been contact between the Likud and the PLO; it has been legitimized, and this makes it possible for you to hold contacts with the PLO and include it

in your framework of an international conference."

He said similar talks in future should be seen as "a matter of objective reality. As long as there is a conflict, there will be a need for contacts between the two sides aimed at arriving at an equitable settlement.

"It is my duty to continue to extend my hand for peace. It's something we can't afford not to do... Palestinians don't have a choice."

Nusseibeh continued to come under fire from radicals at Bir Zeit University, even as he was recuperating from the beating he received Monday. The university workers' union published a statement Wednesday attacking Nusseibeh for his meetings with Likud members and indicating he had brought the beating upon himself by overstepping the Palestinian consensus. The union is said to be controlled by supporters of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Nusseibeh was expelled from the union after he met Foreign Minister Peres earlier this year.

Nusseibeh said the otherwise broad condemnation of the beating

in the Palestinian community showed that the violence was the work of a handful of people whose methods were widely rejected, even by his critics. He noted that no group had dared to take responsibility for the attack. He said criticism of his contacts was apparently provoked by the misconception that he and his colleagues had been discussing Likud autonomy proposals, which have been strongly rejected by the PLO.

Bir Zeit University president Gabi Baramki said that an administration committee was investigating the attack on Nusseibeh and ques-

tioning people in an effort to find those involved. He said there were indications that some of the attackers may not have been students.

Nusseibeh said his assailants had cornered him in an elevator, and one of them beat him with a club while others wielded a knife and razor blades to keep people away. He said that after he had fought his way free, the attackers pursued him down a stairwell, grabbing at him while he kicked back.

He said he planned to resume teaching at Bir Zeit, though he also hinted that he had given some thought to leaving his job.

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