

Without Future: The Plight of Syrian Jewry

Saul S. Friedman



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Friedman writes that the 4,500 Jews left in Syria--virtual hostages in Syria's conflict with Israel--live under conditions that have been compared to those of Nazi Germany. He details the suffering and persecution endured by Jews living in Damascus, Aleppo, and Qamishli during the last 30 years. He includes first-hand accounts of Jews oppressed by the Syrian government, including the torture of Jews in Syrian prisons. Friedman urges putting pressure on the Syrian government through petitions to government representatives, the United Nations, the International Red Cross, and the Vatican. *Booklist*

Of the 40,000 Jews who lived in Syria prior to 1948, some 4,500 remain as virtual hostages in Syria's conflict with Israel--under conditions that have been compared with those in Nazi Germany. Friedman describes the experiences of this persecuted group in the hope that the pressure of public opinion will persuade the Syrian government to put an end to the torture, killing, and harassment and allow Jewish residents to emigrate.

The author recounts the suffering and injustice endured by individuals and families living in Jewish sections of Damascus, Aleppo, and Qamishli over the past thirty years. The book includes several moving first-person accounts that graphically reveal both the systematic oppression that characterizes the Syrian government's treatment of Jewish citizens, as well as the government's tolerance of acts of violence against Jews committed by members of the Arab majority. To safeguard those who have been left behind, the author conceals the identities of both Jews still living in Syria and the rescuers who have been working to get them out, and he withholds specific information about escape methods and routes. This book carries an important message that will be of interest to general readers as well as students and specialists in Near Eastern affairs.

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