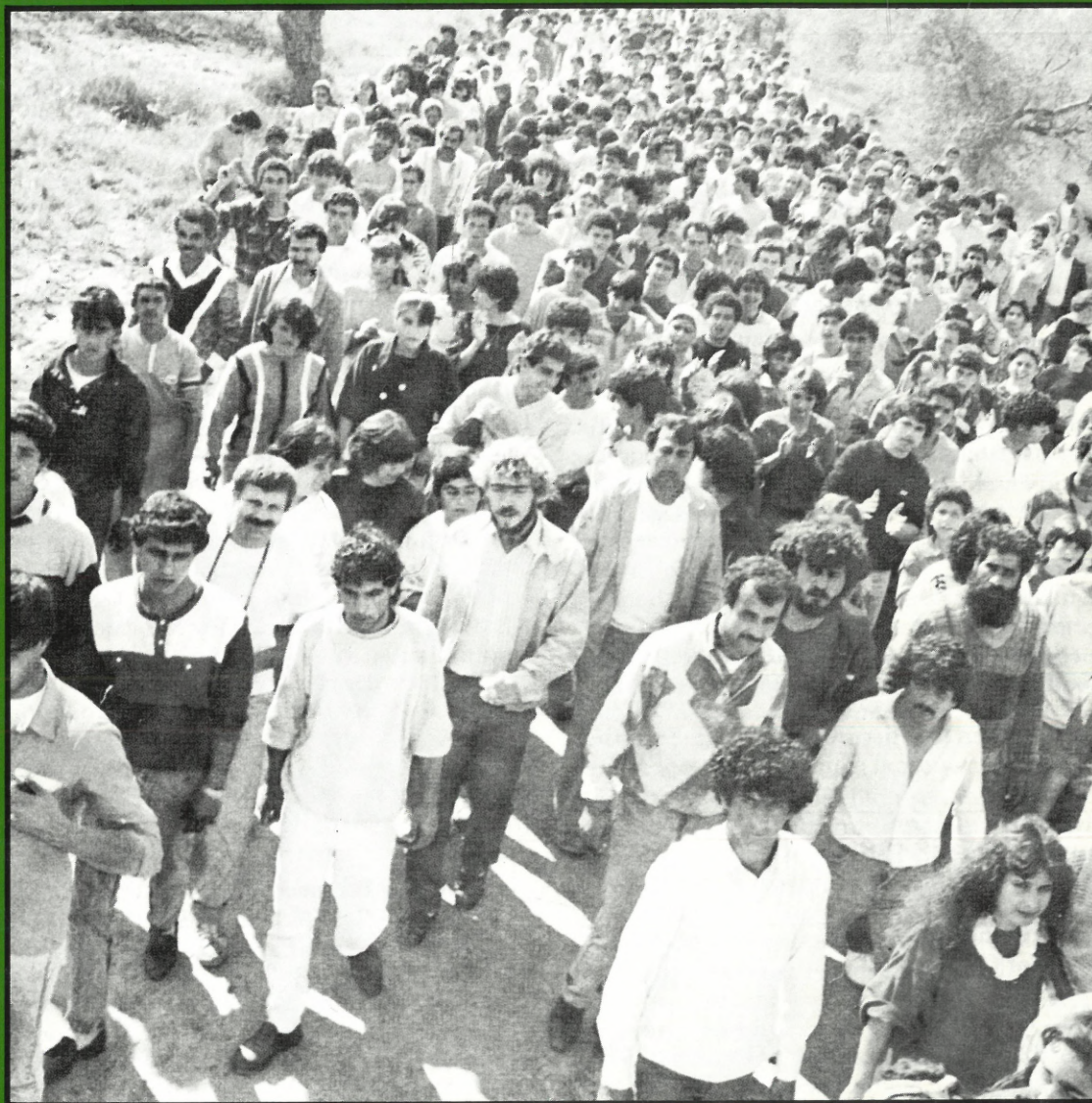


Palestine Perspectives

Number 31

September/October 1987



PALESTINIANS IN ISRAEL

Strangers In Their Own Homeland

Inside . . . PALESTINE
INFORMATION OFFICE
ORDERED CLOSED

Editorial Editorial Editorial

THE CURSE OF SISYPHUS

No one knows for sure how many people died in Lebanon when Israel decided in 1982 to institute its own version of a thousand-year reich...of durable and uncontested hegemony over its surroundings. The only sure thing is that those who died paid for a very costly fantasy.

Five years later, as the anniversary of the massacres of Sabra and Shatila came around again, news of Israeli air raids on "Palestinian positions" in the south of Lebanon came with increasing frequency. Sounds familiar? Of course it does. Surprising? Of course not. Thousand-year reichs are notoriously ephemeral. Israel's is no exception.

Israel never tires of preaching to the Arabs that the use of force does not pay, that military options are no options, and that the Arab-Israeli conflict can be settled only by political means. The Arabs obviously got the message and have been trying to get Israel to heed its own advice by agreeing to an international conference for peace in the Middle East. Equally obvious is that Israel does not believe in its own sermons, and it continues to reject the international peace conference. Its emissaries to the Arab world still arrive in bombers.

In the case of another conflict in the Middle East, the Iran-Iraq war, the international community proposed a

cease-fire and resolved on sanctions against the party which rejects that call. Why not apply the same logic to the Arab-Israeli conflict? Why not impose sanctions against Israel, which has been refusing to respond to the UN call for a peace conference? What message is Israel supposed to get from this double standard except that it is above the law?

But, if Israel is not getting a proper message from the UN, it ought to understand the message from its neighborhood. That message has "The Curse of Sisyphus" written all over it.

Ancient Greek legend tells us that Sisyphus (believed to be the father of Odysseus and founder of Corinth), was a particularly wicked man. He was fated, as punishment, to roll a boulder up the slope of a hill. The stone, as soon as it neared the top, always escaped and rolled to the bottom again. Sisyphus, after much effort and pain, always had to go back to square one.

Peace does not sprout out of bomb craters.

Israel needs to ponder this fable as it returns to square one in Lebanon and resumes bombing "Palestinian positions." It needs to rethink its often-disproven belief that peace sprouts out of bomb craters. It needs to understand that the way to rid itself of The Curse of Sisyphus is to understand that its problem arises from the fact that it had dispossessed another people. Then the conclusion would not be too difficult to grasp: that peace in the Middle East is a by-product of justice for the Palestinians...not of their annihilation. □

M. Hallaj

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Palestine Research and Educational Center and Palestine Perspectives are moving to new offices at the end of September 1987. Our new address is 9522A Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA 22031, and our new telephone number is (703) 352-4168.

THREE MONTHS IN THE WEST BANK

By Gayle Benzra

[Gayle Benzra is a member of the November 29th Committee for Palestine in Seattle, Washington. She spent three months in the summer of 1986 studying in the foreign exchange program at Birzeit University and traveling in the occupied territories. She published an account of her experiences in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer]:

My first night in the West Bank, an American friend and I shared a taxi with two women we had never before met. Overhearing our discussion about finding a night's lodging, the women invited us to stay in their homes. Over dinner, I explained that my last name was Hebrew of Greek-Jewish origin. Um Mohammed, my host, turned and hugged me warmly, saying, "Habibtee (dear), we love you for coming. Welcome to the Jewish people who want to know what is really happening here."

As we sipped tea, I recalled a discussion with a Zionist in the States in which he had insisted that Arabs and Jews were "natural enemies." During the weeks that ensued, I discovered that the profound cultural values of the Palestinian people had survived the challenges of the last decades. These people, rich or poor, had remained attentive to the needs of others, hospitable and generous, attending to the needs of their community and of those who come in friendship.

The first coherent picture of the West Bank that formed from my experiences there was that of a garrison state. One could not but notice the constant presence of soldiers and the close proximity of machine guns. Most frightening were the groups of Israeli settlers, often in their teens, wandering through the streets with machine guns casually slung over their shoulders. Many of these settlers, guns in hand, support the Gush Emunim or Kahane, who openly advocate the expulsion of all Arabs from Israel and the occupied territories.

I had always been told that the military "regretfully" carried out its duties, imposed upon it by the "unavoidable" occupation. Yet my experience revealed that decades of occupation of Palestinian land had fueled the forces of racism and left both the general Israeli population and the military callous and indifferent toward the Palestinian population they control.

One day, while walking in the Old City of Jerusalem, I noticed a Palestinian boy who had separated from a group of children playing in the courtyard. As I watched him jump over the cracks in the stones, an Israeli soldier appeared and smiled at the boy. The child's face remained expressionless. The soldier stuck out his index finger, cocked his thumb, and pulled an imaginary trigger, all the while smiling. The child's eyes opened wide; he stood for a moment staring at the soldier and then turned and ran away. The soldier laughed loudly; it was only in jest. How easy it was for him to make light of a situation felt in deadly earnest by those who looked up the barrel of an Uzi machine gun.

As experienced by the Palestinians, military occupation, in its most benign form, is a never-ending series of petty harassments and inconveniences. I visited West Jerusalem



"We have no rights here. We are in prison. In jail, the cell is only smaller."

with a Palestinian friend. Stopping at a crosswalk, we saw a policeman across the street. When the light turned green, we crossed and upon reaching the other side were stopped by the policeman and asked for our identification.

He looked at my U.S. passport and told me to move aside. Then, he turned to my friend and wrote him a citation for crossing on a red light, despite my protestations that the light had been green. Later, sitting in a Jerusalem cafe, we discussed the incident; I was angry at what I perceived to be an injustice and a gross abuse of the policeman's power, whereas my friend was concerned only to the extent, which in fact was considerable, that he didn't know where he would find money to pay the fine. "It happens all the time. I'm used to it. It's nothing compared to all the rest." Suddenly my friend realized how late it had become. He informed me that as a Palestinian from the West Bank it was illegal for him to be in Jerusalem after midnight, that for so-called security reasons the government carefully monitored and controlled the movements of Palestinians. We rushed down the street in search of a taxi.

The more blatant forms of oppression arise out of a situation in which all Arabs, by the mere fact that they are not Jewish, are seen as a potential threat. Abusive treatment is thus indiscriminate, with a violence designed to terrorize the whole Palestinian population into submission. I had studied several reports on systematic torture of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons, a very common occurrence. I also visited offices of Palestinian and Israeli lawyers who document human rights violations.

These facts haunted me a short time later when Ali was taken. One morning, Ali, a university student, told me he had been ordered to go to the Israeli interrogation center. They had taken his father and said they would continue to hold him until Ali reported to the authorities. Ali went to the Israeli military headquarters that morning and was not heard from for thirty days. Ali's lawyer could not obtain information of Ali's whereabouts.

In the days following Ali's disappearance, I would often ask myself, "Where is Ali, and what are they doing to him

(continued on page 3)

THREE MONTHS (continued from page 2)

now?" Ultimately, we were informed that Ali was sentenced to six months imprisonment. The charge was not known. According to the Administrative Detention Law, reimposed in the summer of 1985, individuals are subject to up to six months imprisonment without being charged. I remember I had once said to Ali, "You know that you may be imprisoned and tortured for speaking out. How do you mentally prepare for imprisonment?" His reply, in its stark simplicity, was a searing indictment of the conditions maintained by Israel in the occupied territories: "We have no rights here. We are in prison now. In jail, the cell is only smaller."

Discriminatory allocation of government funds, land, and water is a widespread form of oppression, largely unnoticed here in the West but no less serious in calling into question the very survival of the Palestinian people. Allotment of water and municipal funds to Palestinians was reported to be minimal in an attempt to make life unbearable. Water, a limited resource in the region, is critical to the traditional agricultural economy of the Palestinian people.

As we drove through the region near Jericho, the contrast between Palestinian villages and Jewish settlements was startling. It was as though a clear line demarcated Arab land from settlement land; the Palestinian area was dead and barren, the settlements burst with dense green foliage. We stopped to take photographs and spoke with Palestinian farmers.

One villager sat at the edge of his field surrounded by boxes of shriveled cucumbers. He told us that the water used by his family for generations was no longer available. The neighboring settlements had dug deep wells which lowered the water table, forcing Palestinian farmers to purchase even their water from Israelis. Introducing us to his family, the farmer insisted we take coffee, tea, and sweets as we gazed at his now useless field.

Gaza

Traveling on to Gaza, as we entered Jabalia refugee camp, images of Soweto came to mind. We walked between houses on dirt pathways about two feet wide, stepping around streams of dirty water. I stared at the one-room houses with roofs of corrugated metal, held in place by broken pieces of cement. We stopped a man in the road and asked if we could visit his home. He turned to us, his face drawn, "You want to see my home? Come, come and see it."

As he led us to his house, his voice grew louder and increasingly shrill, "Is this a home? Tell me, is this a home?" We entered a single cement room, approximately twelve feet square. On a mat lay a multihandicapped girl of about seven years. A woman sat at her side. The father turned to us, "Ten of us live here. My daughter can't move, and I can't find work so I can't send her to a doctor or to a school. And my mother, she's blind. She lives here, too. Do you know the Israelis only turn on the water for two hours a day? We fill these jugs and save the water. Is this a home? Tell me, is this a life?"

His children, embarrassed, stared at the ground. His wife nervously patted the dirt floor. His young son, Osama, led us to a large body of water, approximately fifty feet wide, from which a terrible stench rose. Because the camp is unable to obtain funds for sanitation, this pool contained

the camp sewage. We watched the children running in and out of their homes, approximately fifteen to twenty feet from this pit. As we walked away, the barefooted children ran back to the riverlets leading to the sewer hole, jumping across the streams in children's games.

One of the most personally frightening experiences occurred toward the end of my stay, on my second trip to Gaza. Traveling with a group of Palestinian and foreign exchange students on a Birzeit University bus, we were immediately ordered to pull to the side of the road as we

"What are you doing on a bus with Arabs? You disgust me!"

stopped at the Israeli military checkpoint at the edge of the Gaza Strip. . . .

During the discussion that ensued, the soldiers decided the foreign students could enter but the Palestinians were to remain outside. Insisting we all had the right to enter, we asked to speak with the commander or the one in charge. We were told to wait. One of the soldiers, reacting to the fact that some of the individuals in our group were Jewish, turned to us yelling, "What are you doing on a bus with Arabs? You disgust me!" At the end of an hour and a half's wait and much discussion with the soldiers, students consulted and agreed; joining hands in front of the bus, we began to sing protest songs to pressure the soldiers to allow us to enter Gaza.

About thirty minutes later a car approached the Gazan border and crashed through the checkpoint without stopping. We watched from across the street as two soldiers slid their machine guns from their shoulders and began firing at the vehicle. Never having heard gunfire before, we hugged each other close and began to sing, "We shall overcome." Suddenly the sound of gunfire was louder. We turned to see a soldier, his machine gun pointed in our direction, firing above our heads. A soldier with whom we had spoken earlier swiftly approached us, identified himself as the one in charge and ordered us to leave the premises.

Frightened and angry, we asked for the name of the soldier who had fired over our heads. "Forget it!" we were told. "He just lost control." Staring at the spent cartridges which had fallen only a few feet in front of us, a student from our group countered angrily, "So this is what the Palestinians have to live with; soldiers who 'lose control?'" The officer just looked at us and ordered us onto the bus.

As I waited to board my flight back to the States, I gazed around at the crowded airport and was filled with grief. The Zionist experiment had resulted in the creation of a garrison state. In its zeal to artificially ensure the rights of Jews, it had trampled over the rights of the native inhabitants of the land. The "benign" occupation in the "only democracy" in the Middle East was, in reality, a travesty of all that Judaism stood for.

The Palestinians would endure; they are a courageous people fighting for an ideal, a purpose. But for the Jews in Israel, the Zionist program has left them with an ideal gone awry; there can be no safe haven for those who act with such total disregard for the basic human rights of another group. The holocaust has saddled Jews with deep-seated fears that are not easily overcome. It will take courage to eradicate the causes. As I looked around the airport, I saw soldiers everywhere; the Zionists did not give the Jews courage, rather the arrogance of might. □

“DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS”

By Matti Peled

[The following is the text of a letter sent to the members of the United States Congress by Major General Matti Peled, a retired Israeli general and present member of the Israeli parliament, expressing opposition to the closure of PLO offices in the United States]:

I am writing to you concerning the bill known as ‘The Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987,’ which is aimed at closing down the PLO offices in the United States. This is being presented as a ‘pro-Israel’ bill, and for that reason U.S. senators and representatives who consider themselves friends of Israel are being urged to support it.

As a member of the Israeli Knesset (Parliament), I would like to dispute that view. I believe that achieving peace is a prime requirement for Israel’s long-term survival and prosperity. There can be no peace without negotiations between the Israeli government, representing the Israeli people, and the representatives of the Palestinian people. Such representatives can only be chosen by the Palestinians themselves, and on each occasion that the Palestinians were asked for their opinion, they unequivocally expressed their support for the Palestine Liberation Organization, the PLO. Such for example, was the result of the 1976 municipal elections on the West Bank, which were the last free elections to be held there. Similar results were the outcome of a public opinion poll, held in the Occupied Territories in August 1986. Indeed, the Government of Israel itself, in refusing to permit new municipal elections on the West Bank, admits that in its view such elections would be won by supporters of the PLO.

Together with many of my fellow citizens of Israel, I have been urging the Israeli government to reconsider its policies and to agree to negotiate with the PLO in the context of an international peace conference. Recently this idea has been spreading; not only opposition members such as myself, but also Ezer Weitzmann, member of the Israeli Cabinet, as well as several Knesset Members from the Israeli Labor Party, have publicly voiced their support for Israeli negotiations with the PLO.

Passage of the [Kemp-Dole] bill closing the PLO offices in the U.S. would, in my view, constitute a grave setback for the Middle East peace process. It would mean total abdication by the U.S. of any role as a mediator in the Middle East conflict. Hardliners in the Israeli Cabinet would be encouraged to persist in their intransigent position and their refusal to talk with the PLO. Far from ‘stopping terrorism,’ as it is supposed to do, this bill would further escalate the cycle of bloodshed and violence in the Middle East.

Therefore, as an Israeli concerned with the well-being of my country and my people, I urge you to voice your opposition to this so-called ‘Anti-Terrorism Act.’ By so doing, you will not be taking an ‘anti-Israel’ stand; on the contrary, the rejection of this bill will be compatible with the long-term interests of the State of Israel and will be seen as such by a substantial number of Israel’s citizens.

Yours Sincerely
Major General,
Matti Peled
Member of Knesset

In Brief

NO HOSPITAL FOR JERUSALEM

Israel’s Health Minister Shoshana Arbeli-Almoslino announced that she will not allow the opening of a new Palestinian hospital in occupied East Jerusalem. The new hospital was to be established to replace the Hospice hospital which was closed down by the Israelis two years ago.

LET THERE BE LESS LIGHT

The Israeli occupation authorities decreed the reduction of the area served by the Arab-owned Jerusalem Electric Company by one-third. This latest move fits into Israel’s long-standing attempts to cripple and eventually take over the Palestinian company, which has been supplying the Jerusalem area and much of the occupied West Bank with electric power for more than half a century... before there was a state of Israel.

GAZA PHYSICIAN DISMISSED

The head of the Israeli military government in Gaza ordered the dismissal of Dr. Zakaria al-Agha, the Palestinian head of the internal diseases department at Nasser Hospital in the town of Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip. The doctor, who had worked in Gaza Strip hospitals since 1966, was being punished for making political statements in support of the PLO.

NAZARETH PAPER CLOSED

The Israel Ministry of the Interior has ordered the closure of the Arabic-language weekly *Al-Jamahir*. The 14 August order came after the publication’s editors did not take the “advice” of the northern district commissioner who wanted them “to change their tune,” and presumably to follow his. The paper, an Israeli official explained, had expressed opinions “similar to the PLO’s political line.”

JOURNALIST RESTRICTED

Palestinian journalist Mahmoud Abu Zuluf, publisher and editor-in-chief of *Al Quds* Arabic daily (Jerusalem), has been forbidden from traveling outside the occupied territories for a period of one year. The restriction on his freedom has been imposed by an order signed by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in his capacity as Interior Minister. Although the order gave no reasons for the restriction, Israel Radio said that Abu Zuluf had met with PLO activists while abroad.

PALESTINIAN ACADEMIC CONVICTED

A political science instructor at Najah National University, Sa’eb Erakat, has been convicted for “incitement” by an Israeli court. Erakat was found “guilty” of writing an article in which he said that “Palestinians must learn how to endure and reject and resist” the occupation. His lawyer’s arguments that Mr. Erakat is known as a believer in nonviolent resistance and that his article was written in English and not for a local audience, and therefore cannot be understood as incitement, were rejected by the court.



STATE DEPARTMENT CLOSES PALESTINIAN OFFICE

Action Called Illegal, Lawsuit Anticipated

In a curious move described by a representative of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) as “a scene from Alice in Wonderland,” the State Department glorified the Palestine Information Office in Washington as a “Foreign Mission” then ordered it closed. The 15 September 1987 order to close the Palestinian office has been expected for some time, but not the comical way in which it happened.

Basing its decision on the President’s broad power to conduct foreign affairs, including “his authority to receive ambassadors,” the State Department designated the Palestine Information Office in Washington as a “Foreign Mission” (i.e. embassy) and ordered it closed within thirty days. The State Department had never before recognized the office as a “foreign mission” and had ruled a few months ago that it was legally instituted and operated, and that its closure would violate First Amendment freedoms. The reversal of its position is widely perceived as a thinly-disguised legalistic cover for its surrender to Zionist pressure to silence Palestinian expression in the United States.

The dubious action of pinning the label of “Foreign Mission” on a U.S. organization registered since 1978 with the Department of Justice, and which had not been accused or found responsible for any illegal activity, is seen as an excuse for closing it down without due process of law.

The closure of the office was the result of a campaign spearheaded by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the rest of the Zionist lobby in Washington to gag the Palestinians in this country in order to ensure that the Zionist/Israeli point of view continues to monopolize access to American public opinion. Certain members of the U.S. Congress, led by Congressman Jack Kemp and Senator Robert Dole, both of whom are declared candidates for the presidency, adopted the Zionist demand and sponsored legislation to curtail political expression and activity by Arab-Americans and their supporters in the United States. [See *Palestine Perspectives*, No. 30, July/August 1987]. The action by the State Department came as a compromise with these congressmen over this matter.

P.I.O. Statement

The Palestine Information Office issued a press statement, read by its Director, Hasan A. Rahman, in a press conference in Washington on 16 September. The statement described the State Department’s order as “a broad assault on Palestinians and on Palestinian political activity” in the United States. It is tragic, the statement said, that “the greatest and most powerful country in the world,

can be transformed into a banana republic, subject to the political whims and the influence of an outside power [Israel], ready in an instant to abandon its own constitutional principles to cater to those whims.”

The P.I.O. statement accused the politicians who sponsored the Zionist lobby’s demand for the closure of the office of surrendering to Zionist pressure. “It is shameful,” the statement said, “to watch American politicians cower before the threats of financial retaliation by the Israeli lobby.” It condemned such politicians for lending “their names to a McCarthy-type effort to silence even the tiniest voice of the Palestinian people.”

The statement said that the closure order would also deny the American public the right to hear the other side of the story on the Arab-Israeli conflict. “It is a fulfillment of the Israeli dream—to limit the flow of information to the American public to only that information which the Israelis want heard.”

The P.I.O. said that this attempt to stifle free speech was illegal and unconstitutional, and would not go unchallenged in the courts of law. The Director of the office said: “I have great faith that the courts of this country have the ability to withstand temporary political pressures.” He also said that he intends to “seek political support from every segment of American society that believes in the right of free speech, of political expression.”

In Solidarity

Several Arab-American and other groups have expressed support for the Palestine Information Office and its right to fight the closure order. Barry Lynn, a representative of the ACLU, condemned the State Department’s act as illegal and said that his organization, if requested, would be willing to participate in any legal action against it.

Arab League Ambassador Clovis Maksoud called the State Department’s order “regressive and unjustified.” He said that “The Palestine Information Office has neither been accused nor found to be in violation of any U.S. laws,” and the decision to close it “can only be described as arbitrary and without legal justification.”

The State Department’s order has also been condemned by the Council of Presidents of Arab-American Organizations, the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee, the National Association of Arab-Americans, the Palestine Congress of North America, the Association of Arab-American University Graduates and others. During the past few months, as the campaign against the Palestinian office mounted, editorial expression throughout the country was overwhelmingly against this slap at the constitution in the year of the constitution. □

- *The Palestinian people struggle “to provide our children, like the children of the world, with dignified and free life.”*
- *“The Palestinian people have had no alternative but to insist on life and survival whatever the price might be.”*
- *“From here we declare, in front of you, our acceptance of all international initiatives for realizing just and durable peace in the Middle East, at the top of which is the convening of the international conference.”*

[From speech by PLO Chairman Arafat before the International Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 7-9 September 1987]

ANALYSIS... NO SUCH THING AS PARTIAL DEMOCRACY

[The crackdown on the freedom of expression—represented by a wave of repressive measures against professors, researchers and journalists by the Israeli authorities—has reached new heights (or lows). Until recently, this form of repression has been reserved for Palestinians under Israeli rule. The recent closure of the Jerusalem-based Alternative Information Center and the arrest of its director, Michel Warschawski, and other workers at the center confirmed Lincoln's well-known warning that a house cannot long stand half-slave and half-free. Israeli repression has begun to touch Israeli Jews, which prompted an Israeli newspaper to comment that "there is no such thing as partial democracy in the same way that there is no such thing as partial pregnancy." Here is the text of a commentary from *Al Hamishmar* of 20 February 1987]:

The Israeli Journalists Association, which stood idly by when Palestinian press freedom was under attack, should look upon the closure of the Alternative Information Center and the arrest of its workers and director as a serious development. This closure is a bad reminder of the view I have been trying to put across to the Israeli public for years: there is no such thing as partial democracy in the same way that there is no such thing as partial pregnancy.

Whoever thought that it was possible to continue forever in a situation of a military dictatorship for Arabs and democracy for Jews, this week received another blunt hint that it won't work. Twenty years of occupation are slowly penetrating and permeating Israeli society, destroying the democratic cells of this society and, like a malignant growth, releasing savage cells.

True, the Alternative Information Center's activities angered and annoyed the Israeli government. The center released and distributed information which was not to the liking of the government and which it had an interest in concealing. The best proof of the indispensability of the center was that Israeli journalists and foreign correspondents found the information services it provided to be necessary for their work. And what is democracy if it is not the right of the public to know about the very things the government is not interested in circulating?

There is no doubt at present that the occupied territories constitute the backroom of the government of Israel and that grave things are taking place there. Many incidents came to the knowledge of the public on account of the Alternative Information Center. The pretext used to close the center can be used tomorrow for the closure of newspapers, research centers and the confiscation of entire libraries of researchers who deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Anyone whom the government does not favor can be arrested because he has in his possession "material published by a terrorist organization."

The assault against newspapers and journalists has not confined itself to the occupied territories. Now is the time to warn that the assault within the green line will not remain the fate only of those known to be "leftists." It's a slow process, one slice after another. And the circle of victims will grow. Every time it will edge a bit closer. And when the police and the Shin Bet arrive at *Al Hamishmar* in order to "confiscate PLO publications," and arrest its editors and reporters, it may be too late to cry out. And the staff of *Davar*, the next victim, will not be able to do anything but wait in sorrow and fear for their turn.

We, therefore, must cry out and protest and demonstrate today to demand the release of the detainees and the reopening of the Alternative Information Center. And the most important thing is to end the occupation, for it vouchsafes our destruction.

One last point: if there were no occupation, the Alternative Information Center would find itself unemployed." □



WOMEN AND CHILDREN UNDER OCCUPATION

By Linda Clair

[The following article was published by Women of the Whole World, the journal of the Women's International Democratic Federation, No. 2/1987. The author was sent with a West German journalist, Sabine Rosenblatt, by the Federation to study the conditions of Palestinian women and children in the occupied territories]:

A young woman sat facing me calmly, recounting her experience of torture by the Israeli soldiers in Gaza. She spoke of being made to stand for three days, holding a chair above her head, faced by a soldier holding a gun. After three days they removed the chair, stripped her naked and brought male prisoners in to look at her. They then took hold of her by her long hair and threw her against a brick wall. This was just one of the horrific accounts I experienced on my investigative trip in the last week of August [1986] to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which have been occupied for the last 19 years by Israel since the 1967 war.

The WIDF sent me there with Sabine Rosenblatt, a West German journalist, to investigate the conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, particularly of the women and children.

For four days we travelled hundreds of miles through Gaza, Nablus, Jericho, Hebron, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah, guided by two of our sisters from the Union of Palestinian Committees for Working Women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. We visited five refugee camps. I was particularly shocked by the Jabalya camp in Gaza where 50,000 people live in crowded conditions that could make it the highest popula-

(continued on page 7)

WOMEN (continued from page 6)

tion density in the world. Everywhere we went, the story was the same, constant harassment, imprisonment often without charge or trial, and torture. The people there also suffered from malnutrition and diseases of epidemic proportions, such as scabies, scurvy, renal hypertension, diabetes and worms, which choke the intestines, resulting sometimes in death.

We interviewed many families whose children had been tortured and imprisoned, as well as parents who had been beaten to make them admit to active resistance to the occupation. There are many children in jail, many of them very young. Parents told us that all the children imprisoned had been transferred to the prison in Hebron where they were being brutally treated, including being isolated from the older prisoners. . . .

The Red Crescent clinics and blood banks are run by volunteers, trying to care for the Palestinians, as the occupation forces are closing the hospitals that exist in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. There are now fewer hospital beds than in 1967, according to the Medical Relief Committee. Patients needing blood have to rely on relatives bringing the required amount from the voluntary blood bank.

We talked to doctors working for the Medical Relief Committee in Gaza. They told us about the diseases from which people suffer in refugee camps and about their attempts to educate the people on preventive medicine, because they have relatively no facilities or medicines available once diseases are

contracted.

A doctor told us of open sewers in the camps, this together with the lack of food and clean water, is a cause of the spread of diseases. We later witnessed such an open sewer which Israeli authorities refuse to allow to be filled in or cleansed. We were horrified by the smell in what was about 40 degrees centigrade temperature. It was located in the middle of the camp and next to a school.

The people are allowed only one barrel of water a week. We saw the pumps taking the water away from the Arab camps and villages and directing it to the Israeli settlements, the latter being strategically placed high up where Israeli soldiers in watchtowers could continually survey the Palestinian people.

We interviewed a number of women who worked in sewing factories, hospitals, and on the land. This is a new experience for most Arab women, who before normally worked only in the home. Now they have to support their families, as so many of their men are in prison, deported, or unemployed. They told us of how they earn approximately 50% of the average Israeli wage, of long hours of work, of discrimination and denial of any health or social benefits.

In the camps and villages we saw hundreds of houses demolished and entrances to the camps sealed up, often leaving only one gate for thousands of people to go in or out of the camps. This is part of the policy of collective punishment, often meted out when one child has been accused of throwing a stone at an Israeli. . . . □

PALESTINIANS IN ISRAEL

In an unprecedented show of unity, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians with Israeli citizenship since 1948 participated in a general strike in June to protest Israeli discrimination. Throughout occupied Palestine, Palestinian workers refused to report to work, and schools, businesses, and city councils closed down in support of a massive protest against inequality in Israel. Israeli officials were dismayed but admitted that public support for the strike among the Palestinians was almost total.

The organizers of the strike used familiar political slogans—such as “one man one vote,” and “no taxation without representation” to demand from the Israeli government services equal to those it provides to the Jewish population. The Palestinians have always complained of receiving insufficient budgets for their local governments, inadequate educational services, substandard health care, and other forms of discrimination.

Although the “Day of Equality” strike focused on discriminatory practices and policies of the Israeli authorities, traditional complaints against the government were also voiced. These included the continued Israeli confiscation of Arab land, the demolition of Arab homes arbitrarily classified as “unlicensed construction,” the lack of local and regional planning for the development of Arab villages and towns, the wide budgetary disparity between Arab and Jewish local councils, the inadequate supply of water, the lack of adequate sewage system in most Arab villages, the absence of community centers, recreational facilities and municipal parks in Arab areas, and others.

The Jerusalem Post (4 July 1987) commented on the strike by saying that “For the first time since 1948, Israeli Arabs are united in their demand for a bigger slice of the national pie.” A Palestinian striker was quoted as saying “We are citizens of Israel. We pay our dues and taxes the same as everybody else. All we want is to be treated as equals with same rights, facilities and services as everybody else. . . . We don’t want to feel like outsiders in our own land.”



DEMAND EQUALITY

Although the Israeli authorities tried to discredit the strike by labeling it a "political strike" and said that the best way to deal with it was to ignore it, Israeli voices were heard to warn against this long-standing Israeli policy of discrimination. Writing in the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* (24 June 1987), Gideon Samet said that "discrimination also runs rampant in the allocation of state-run social services. If, for example, you visit the 'village' of Umm El-Fahm... you will see some of the most backward sights in the entire Israeli urban landscape. Sure there are some nice homes which these Arabs have actually dared to build for themselves, but the streets are open running sewers. Some Arab villages still haven't been hooked up to the national electricity grid, while other villages have yet even to be recognized as officially existing."

Israeli Knesset Member Shulamit Aloni wrote the following article in *Yediot Ahronot* of 30 June 1987:

"Many Jewish politicians weren't too pleased with the general strike that Israel's Arab community staged last week to demand equal rights, equal opportunity, and equitable allocation of state funds. These politicians were uncomfortable with having to grapple in public with the pervasive discrimination that is practiced against Israel's Arab citizenry. Seasoned politicians that they are, they resorted to an old tactic: don't explain, don't apologize, don't admit a mistake. Instead, go on the offensive. Thus, we heard Minister Moshe Arens (inter alia) say that the strikers and their demands should be ignored, because theirs was a 'political strike,' thereby trying to place the strike in the worst possible light. In a country where the price of eggs is set by political criteria; where the registration of adopted children or of immigrant converts in the population registry is a political act; where the paving of roads, the investment of millions in the caprices of Gush Emunim, and the decision on the Lavi project are all political acts, in this country, according to him, the fight for equal rights may not be a political act!



"We don't want to feel like outsiders in our own land."

"First of all, it's strange that politicians, who have attained positions of power thanks to their political activity, should condemn someone else's taking political action. Secondly (and this is, perhaps, primary), no political issue is more important or more justified than the fight for equal rights. It is an issue over which coups have been staged and revolutions and civil wars fought: the French Revolution, the American War of Independence and Civil War, the Russian Revolution, the Spanish Civil War, and other conflicts too numerous to mention.

"Last week's Arab strike was subdued, painful, and authentic. Those who are deaf and blind; those who think that Israel's Arab citizens, insofar as they are Arabs, don't deserve equal rights; and those who repress the issue and view it as a partisan provocation by the Rakah Party are, in effect, asking for a future civil uprising... They forget the lessons of all such struggles throughout history, in which the ruling classes always defended and justified their discriminatory practices, and always—in the end—lost the battle." □

PEOPLE WITHOUT LAND

A recent conference on the conditions of Palestinians in Israel graphically demonstrated the impact of dispossession on the lives of the Palestinian people. One of the papers submitted to the conference, prepared by Ibrahim Malek, discussed economic conditions.

The most serious problem faced by the Arabs in Israel, the paper noted, is the loss of land confiscated by Israel for the use of Jews. Although the Arab population of Israel quadrupled since Israel was established in 1948, the share of Arabs per capita had fallen 16-fold. The Palestinians, who make up more than 16% of Israel's population (excluding the territories occupied in 1967), own only 4% of the arable land. In the Galilee area of northern Palestine, the Arabs are 50% of the population but own only 8-10% of the land. Arab farmers have access to only 1% of the water for irrigation. □

[From *Tanmiya*, Geneva, July 1987]

GAZA PUNISHED

After Israeli Captain Ron Tal was killed by resistance fighters in Gaza, the occupation authorities imposed various forms of collective punishment against the Palestinian population. Among the measures adopted was that Palestinian fishermen were forbidden to put to sea.

This form of collective punishment, frequently applied by the occupation authorities in the Gaza Strip, "cost Gaza fishermen the whole of their peak-season catches this year," according to the *Jerusalem Post* (international edition, week ending 15 August 1987).

Israel, which characterizes all acts of resistance as "terrorism," also denied 45,000 workers from the Gaza Strip the right to travel, instituted road checkpoints causing traffic tie-ups "stretching over two kilometers," and clamped a curfew on Gaza. □

MOSQUE THREATENED WITH DEMOLITION

The Arab residents of the village of Rahat in the Beer-sheba district were compelled by an Israeli court order to tear down their own mosque on 23 August 1987. The infuriated Arab residents charged the Israeli authorities with discriminatory practices. One of the residents, Nuri el-Okbi, was quoted by the *Jerusalem Post* (international edition, week ending 29 August 1987) saying: "Where in Israel do the residents want a synagogue and the government stops them?"

The order to destroy the mosque was based on the pretext that the villagers lacked a permit to build it. In fact, the mosque was built on the site of an older one which had existed for many years.

An earlier attempt to destroy the mosque, a week earlier, failed when 1,500 residents of the village filled the mosque and the surrounding area to protect it. Later, the villagers agreed to the demolition "to prevent bloodshed." About 1,000 Israeli soldiers and policemen were on hand for the occasion. □

EXPULSION OF PALESTINIANS PROPOSED BY ISRAELI OFFICIAL

Israel's Deputy Defense Minister Michael Dekel called for the eviction of the Palestinians from the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza. In a recent speech, Dekel said that the inhabitants of the occupied territories should be "transferred to Jordan with Western aid."

In Washington, strong objections to the idea were voiced by the State Department. The department's spokesman, Charles Redman, said "We utterly reject any notion that Palestinian residents of the occupied territories including the West Bank and Gaza should be encouraged or forced to leave their homes."

The Israeli official wants the world community to sponsor—and pay for—his fiendish proposal to expel the Palestinians from their country. He told Israel Radio that he wanted the Palestinians "transferred" to Jordan by an international agreement. "The world should get used to the idea," he said.

"Transfer" is the Zionist euphemism for the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their homeland. The expression was always used by Zionists as a solution to the problem of how to create a Jewish society in a country already densely populated by "non-Jews." Dekel's recent proposal shows that Zionist aggression against the Palestinians neither dies nor fades away.

It is widely believed in Israel that several years ago, when Menachem Begin was Prime Minister, the Israeli government had approved a plan to use a future war with the Arabs as a pretext and a cover for the mass expulsion of Palestinians from occupied Palestine.

A recent article in *The New York Times* (31 July 1987) suggested that the election of racist Rabbi Kahane to the Knesset "broke the taboo" on anti-Arab expressions in Israel and explains why "senior Israeli officials suddenly felt comfortable enough" to advocate publicly the expulsion of the Palestinians. It also cited a recent study of 10th grade Israeli students as evidence of rising Israeli extremism. "The

study found that 76 percent of the students supported restricting the rights of Arabs living in the occupied territories."

The High Court Rules

In a related move, the Israeli High Court of Justice issued a ruling removing restrictions on the advocacy of the expulsion of the Palestinians. In a unanimous decision, the court ordered the state-run Israel Broadcasting Authority to drop its boycott of the ideology of fascist Knesset member Rabbi Meir Kahane, who publicly advocates the expulsion of all "non-Jews" from all of the territories controlled by Israel. □

PAX WORLD APPALLED

Participants in a recent Middle East Friendship Tour sponsored by Pax World Foundation, an organization based in Bethesda, MD, which "encourages international understanding, reconciliation, and development on behalf of world peace and the world's poor," were "appalled by life in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip under Israeli military occupation." A news release by Pax World said that the appalling conditions included "arrests with no appeal process; evictions and housing demolitions; refugee camps under guard and curfews; illegal Israeli settlements; deportations of local politicians; censorship of publications and closing of universities; killing of student demonstrators; land expropriation."

The two-week Friendship Tour, which took place in June, involved visits to Jordan, Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, and Egypt. The group reported on Israeli repression of Palestinians under occupation. It quoted a Palestinian woman saying: "My meeting with you like this is illegal. We cannot raise our flag, sing a national song, and our teachers cannot even write the word Palestine on the blackboard."

The visiting group said that persons with whom it spoke in the occupied territories emphasized the importance of a negotiated solution through an international peace conference under UN auspices that would include all parties to the conflict, including the PLO. □

COMMENTARY... SHULTZ JOINS LIKUD

It appears that U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz has taken another step in his alignment with Israeli policy on the Middle East, moving closer to the position of the rightist wing in the Israeli governing coalition. Until recently, Shultz has made at least verbal pledges on behalf of the idea of convening a Middle East peace conference to deal with the Arab-Israeli conflict. Lately, however, he has been more open about his antagonism to the idea, thus moving away from Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and closer to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. In a recent press conference, Shultz signaled his increasing affinity to the Israeli right by saying that "an international conference in and of itself is of no interest to the U.S."

Israel itself is divided over the issue of an international peace conference in the Middle East. Shimon Peres and the Labor Party he represents favor a version of that idea which would exclude independent Palestinian representation. Yitzhak Shamir and the Likud Party he heads are adamantly opposed to it. The Arab states and the PLO unanimously support the UN call for an international peace conference.

Secretary Shultz initially gave the idea qualified support, apparently to "humor" America's Arab friends, especially Jordan, which clearly and loudly says that it needs international legitimacy for making peace with Israel. He also did not want to appear to be taking sides in the Israeli internal debate over the issue...until recently. Now, Shultz is more openly siding with an Israeli diktat rather than a fair peace in the Middle East, and he is increasingly speaking the language of the Israeli right.

It is possible that the weakness of the Israeli "peace camp" is the reason for this shift in the position of Mr. Shultz. The failure of Shimon Peres to get Israeli cabinet endorsement of an international peace conference appeared to Shultz as an Israeli anti-peace decision, and he took the hint.

It is also possible that the Arabs themselves are to blame. Their inability to translate the widespread international support for a peace conference on the Middle East into a political process left the road wide open for the retreat of George Shultz.

What the Israeli right and its supporters in the U.S. political establishment fail to understand is this: the choice is not between a fair peace and a doctored peace according to their own prescription, but between peace or no peace in the Middle East. □

IGNORANCE IS BLISS

Or Is It?

The Israeli Film and Theater Censorship Board has barred anyone under the age of 18 from viewing a play about Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. The play is called "The Yellow Time" and is based on a new book by David Grossman, an Israeli author.

The censorship board said that younger Israelis would not be able to "deal with the problem of the occupied territories when it is presented in dramatic form."

The author of the book on which the play is based interviewed people in the occupied territories in order to help Israelis understand what they are doing to the Palestinians they rule. In one scene in the

play, for example, a journalist speaks to a 5-year-old Palestinian in the Dheishe refugee camp near Bethlehem.

"What do soldiers do?" the journalist asked.

"Searches and beatings," the boy replied.

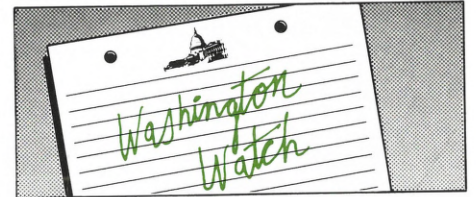
"Do you know who the Jews are?"

"The army."

"Are there other Jews?"

"No."

The story is true. But the Israeli censors do not want Israel's youth to hear it. It makes it easier later to have those youths serve as conquering soldiers...and possibly to say someday: "We didn't know." □



AMERICANS BEATEN IN JERUSALEM

"I Pay For This Occupation"

A group of international students, including American citizens, were roughed up, beaten and arrested by Israeli soldiers in front of the U.S. Consulate in occupied East Jerusalem on 13 August 1987. The students were among 80 international students who were in the occupied West Bank to participate in a cross-cultural program and community work project in Palestinian refugee camps, sponsored by Birzeit University. The group of 80 North American and European students included an 11-member U.S. delegation sponsored by the Association of Arab-American University Graduates (AAUG), based in Belmont, Massachusetts.

BZU Statement

Birzeit University issued a press release on 13 August, detailing the events of that day. "At about 11 a.m. today," it said, "soldiers and policemen in Jerusalem violently dispersed a peaceful protest rally in front of the U.S. Consulate held by 45 foreign students from North America and Europe. The students had been participants in Birzeit University's International Summer Work Camp and were protesting an army raid on the work camp staged at 1 a.m. on August 12. Soldiers and police used rubber bullets, clubs and tear gas against the students, who come from the U.S., Britain, Belgium, Canada, and Norway, among other countries. At least four students are currently in detention and two have been hospitalized...."

"Initial eyewitness reports indicate that soldiers and police approached the gathering of students and immediately began to seize the students' placards and push and hit

(continued on page 11)

"QUOTE UNQUOTE"

"The desire to remain a victim is evidence of disease; yet to become a conqueror after having been a victim is a recipe for moral suicide."

Marc H. Ellis

*Toward a Jewish Theology
of Liberation*
Orbis Books, 1987

"Over the past 20 years, Israel has been creating a pogrom situation in the West Bank."

Jonathan Frankel

Jerusalem Post
15 August 1987

AMERICANS

(continued from page 10)

students with clubs and with the butts of their guns. Soldiers also fired a number of rubber bullets and several students were hit when these bullets ricocheted. At least one of the student detainees was arrested in front of the Consulate, after being beaten by soldiers. Two rounds of tear gas were fired and students began to flee the area. Soldiers pursued a group of students into the nearby YMCA hotel. An American academic staying at the YMCA, Dr. Tony Sullivan, reports that he saw one student being dragged out of the YMCA, beaten with clubs by soldiers, and kicked in the head, leaving a pool of blood on the hotel veranda. Dr. Sullivan also witnessed another student being dragged out of the YMCA and beaten on the shoulders."

AAUG Statement

The Association of Arab-American University Graduates, the sponsor of the U.S. delegation among the international student group, issued a press release on 14 August in which it said that "Leaders of the Arab-American community are angered by the harshness of Israel military response to a small, brief, peaceful demonstration of foreign students in front of the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem on Thursday morning, following which two American and four European students were beaten and arrested."

Alluding to repeated Israeli harassment of Arab-Americans, AAUG president, Dr. Mujid Kazimi, said "We are worried about the well-being of our delegates in light of several incidents of harsh treatment by Israeli military authorities of Arab-Americans and Black Americans visiting the Israeli-occupied territories." The AAUG news release said that Mr. Kazimi, in a separate statement sent to the U.S. State Department, asked for "a full explanation for such anti-American action by the Israeli authorities."

The Way It Began

It all started the previous night, when about ten Israeli soldiers stormed into the hostel where the international students and some Palestinian students were having a farewell party at the end of the work camp. The soldiers searched the dormitory and arrested three of the Palestinian students, two of whom have since been released. The demonstration the following morning was in protest of the intrusion and the continued detention of one of the students, Jamal Abu Dweik.

The English-language Israeli daily, *The Jerusalem Post*, said on 14 August that "The volunteers say that police acted brutally, using tear gas and clubs to break up what was a noisy but non-violent protest against a search of the volunteers' dormitory at Birzeit Wednesday in which three students were arrested." The paper quoted Dr. Antony Sullivan, an American eyewitness, saying that "policemen entered the lobby of the nearby Jerusalem YMCA after the demonstrators had dispersed and severely beat one of the demonstrators, even though he put up no resistance. The volunteer curled up in a fetal position and the soldiers hit him on the back and on the shoulders."

Sahar Bazzaz, 21, a student from the University of Illinois who was a member of the U.S. delegation, told the *Boston Globe* (15 August) that some of the American students shouted at the Israeli soldiers: "I'm an American taxpayer. I pay for this occupation." □

ROCK GROUP STAGES CONCERT FOR PALESTINIAN AND LEBANESE ORPHANS

British rock music group, The Cure, recently staged a special benefit concert in New York to raise funds for Palestinian, Lebanese and American orphans. The concert was held at The Ritz Hotel on 11 August before a capacity crowd of 1,800 fans. Tickets priced at \$22.50 sold out within one hour of a local radio announcement.

The concert was part of an agreement reached last December between The Cure and the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) over the rock group's controversial recording "Killing an Arab." Cure manager Chris Parry offered to stage a concert and to distribute the proceeds among Palestinian, Lebanese and American charities.

The group strongly condemned "the misuse and misinterpretation" of their song by the media "as part of a wave of anti-Arab feeling currently existing in some parts of America." As a symbolic gesture of goodwill, The Cure organized the New York concert to express their anti-racist attitude.

ADC Director of Public Relations, Faris Bouhafa, attended the concert and accepted two checks for \$8,679 each on behalf of the Society of In'ash al-Ura (Palestine) and Zahrat al-Ihsan (Lebanon), for their orphanages. Bouhafa praised The Cure "for their sensitivity and genuine sense of outrage at the manner in which a song of theirs was misinterpreted and misused by those who seek to further inflame anti-Arab sentiment in the United States."

Last January, The Cure requested that 800 radio stations in the U.S. no longer play "Killing an Arab" and that Elektra Records place a sticker on the front of all albums, audio-cassettes and compact disks emphasizing that the song "has absolutely no racist overtones whatsoever." The recording was actually inspired by Albert Camus' existentialist novel *The Strangers* and was meant as an anti-racist statement against the senseless killing of an Arab in the novel.

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CASE AGAINST ISRAELI EMBASSY OFFICIAL DISMISSED

*Yaron Uses Diplomatic Immunity To
Evade War Crimes Charges*

A civil complaint for damages brought against Amos Yaron, Israeli military attache in Washington, by three Palestinian survivors of the Sabra and Shatila massacres in 1982 was dismissed by United States District Judge Norma Johnson on the grounds that Yaron was protected by diplomatic immunity.

The lawsuit against Yaron was filed on 4 May 1987 by attorneys Linda Huber and Professor Francis Boyle on behalf of Fatimeh Ali Aidi, Zeineb Sa'ad, and Samia Khatib, three Palestinian women who survived the massacre at the Beirut-area refugee camps. The complaint sought damages for "the wrongful torture and murder" of the plaintiffs' relatives from the former Israeli general who had been the officer in charge of the camps during the massacres. An Israeli-appointed commission, the Kahan Commission, had found him responsible and recommended stripping him of military field command. In 1986, the Israeli government promoted him to Major General and appointed him military attache to the United States and Canada. The U.S. government accepted Yaron, but Canada refused to accredit him.

A news release by the Arab-American civil rights organization, the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), said that the ruling by Judge Johnson "left open the question of Yaron's involvement in war crimes and the effect of such involvement on his right to diplomatic immunity by ruling that such an argument was appropriate to a criminal tribunal and not to a civil action." The ADC statement quoted the organization's president, Abdeen Jabara, saying: "We are disappointed that the court cloaked Yaron's involvement in crimes against humanity with the veil of diplomatic immunity despite the substantial jurisprudence to the contrary. ADC intends to pursue whatever channels are available—political, legal and informational—

(continued on page 13)

CONGRESS PROTECTS ISRAEL

The Cover-up of Its Role in the Iran-Contra Scandal

The select committees investigating the Iran-Contra affair are protecting Israel by throwing a "protective cloak" over its role in the scandal. In one of their columns, titled "Cloak over Israel," published in *The Washington Post* (17 July 1987), Rowland Evans and Robert Novak wrote that Senator Daniel Inouye, "The tough World War II hero who has intrepidly insisted on uncovering every embarrassing detail of the contra support operation so far has flinched when Israel was mentioned." Columnists Evans and Novak said Inouye had "received \$48,825 during the 1985-86 election cycle from fund-raising PACs found in a *Wall Street Journal* survey last month to be linked to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee." AIPAC is the principal Zionist lobby in Washington.

Evans and Novak pointed out in their column several examples of how the select committees protected Israel during the hearings.

They ignored testimony that Manucher Ghorbanifar was an agent of Israeli intelligence, they decided not to summon Michael Ledeen to testify, and they did not call on Al Schwimmer—a dual citizen of Israel and the U.S.—to testify. All of these individuals were reported deeply involved in the scandal.

A recent study of money and politics also noted the \$48,825 contribution to Inouye by pro-Israel PACs and contributions to other members of the select committees and suggested that such contributions "may be responsible for the absence of any congressional investigations into Israel's role" in the Iran-Contra affair. [See *Palestine Perspectives*, No. 30, July/August 1987].

The *Wall Street Journal* (3 August 1987) said that 16 of the 26 legislators on the select committees received a total of \$121,275 in pro-Israel PAC money during the past two years. □

MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE 41st Annual Conference

The Middle East Institute will hold its 41st Annual Conference on 16 and 17 October 1987 at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, DC. This year's conference is titled "Shaping the Future: Forces of Change in the Middle East." Panels will address a number of issues to identify some of the most likely sources of major social and political change in today's Middle East.

Held in conjunction with the Annual Conference will be an extensive exhibit of current books, periodicals, and other publications. Last year, more than 50 publishers participated in the exhibit. Although there is a fee for attending the conference, admission to the book fair is free.

For further details and registration, call Claire Pettengill at (202) 785-1141.

AAUG CONVENTION

The Association of Arab-American University Graduates (AAUG) is holding its annual convention at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel in Arlington, Virginia, 19-22 November 1987.

A special theme has been chosen for this year's convention, which marks the 20th anniversary of the founding of AAUG. The theme is "Arab-Americans and the Arab World: Challenges and Opportunities."

For further information on registration and accommodations contact the AAUG National Office at (617) 484-5483.

DEAR READERS

To ensure that you will continue to receive your copy of *Palestine Perspectives* on time, please let us know promptly if you change your address.

EXACTLY HOW MUCH?

[The following is an excerpt from an article titled "Israel: An Economic Ward of U.S." by Robert W. Gibson, published by the Los Angeles Times of 20 July 1987. Gibson is the Times international economic correspondent]:

"Everyone knows the United States helps Israel. But few Americans know exactly how much. By any meaningful measure, the Jewish state has become an economic ward of the United States, and leaders in both countries are concerned.

"When this year ends, the United States will have given Israel as much aid in inflation-adjusted dollars as all of Western Europe received under the Marshall Plan.

"Yet Israel's population of 4.3 million is barely 1.5% of postwar Western Europe's, and half that of metropolitan Los Angeles today. Moreover, the Marshall Plan was a self-limiting process, designed to end when the European economy recovered from the devastation inflicted by World War II; the commitment to Israel is open-ended." □

CASE DISMISSED

(continued from page 12)

to raise this gross affront to the American people."

Jabara—whose organization is giving legal aid to the three Palestinian women—said that lawyers "are reviewing the opinion to determine the feasibility of an appeal. Yaron could not enjoy this immunity but for the acceptance of his appointment by our Departments of Defense and State. This issue raises important questions of a principled and consistent American policy." □

[For a background article on the lawsuit against Yaron, see "Massacre Survivors Sue Yaron" in *Palestine Perspectives*, No. 29, May/June 1987].

ISRAELI HARASSMENT OF ARAB AMERICANS PROTESTED

Will Travel Advisory Be Issued Against Israel?

In an unprecedented move in U.S.-Israeli relations, the Reagan administration expressed public displeasure with Israeli mistreatment of American citizens of Arab origin who, along with some black Americans, have been subjected to various forms of harassment and discriminatory treatment upon entering Israel.

The problem of Israeli discrimination against Arab-Americans is not new. On many previous occasions, Americans of Arab origin have been arbitrarily denied entry into their native land or singled out for abusive treatment by Israeli officials.

In recent months, complaints of Israeli discrimination and harassment increased considerably, and the U.S. State Department went public with its criticism of such practices, apparently after failing to get a satisfactory response from the Israelis through the normal behind-the-scenes channels.

On 16 August 1987, the State Department summoned the Israeli charge d'affaires in Washington and handed him an official U.S. complaint about Israeli mistreatment of American citizens. The complaint cited 75 incidents of discriminatory treatment against Arab and black American visitors to Israel this summer.

Israeli officials, while acknowledging that 50 U.S. citizens have been denied entry into the occupied West Bank and Gaza, tried to justify such acts as Israel always justifies its misdeeds: on the grounds of "state security." The State Department, not convinced of the Israeli excuse, warned that if discriminatory practices continued, the U.S. would issue a travel advisory warning Arab and black Americans that they "might have difficulty gaining entry into Israel."

State Department spokesman Charles Redman said that of the 75 incidents reported this summer, 40 involved Arab-Americans [of Palestinian origin] and the rest involved black Americans. A case which received some publicity was that of Nawal Hamad and her four children. The Hamads, residents of

Fairfax, Virginia, were separated from other passengers, detained for 12 hours, then denied entry and rudely put on the next flight back to Europe.

Mrs. Hamad, who was on her way to visit her parents in El-Bireh in the occupied West Bank, complained that the Israelis "were trying to make things as difficult and unpleasant as possible." She told *The Washington Post* (16 July 1987) that when she asked an Israeli customs official why she and her children were denied entry, the official quickly replied: "Because we don't want you here." When one of her daughters protested, she was told to "shut up." Mrs. Hamad described in detail how she and her children were kept in an upstairs detention room at the Lydda Airport where she was denied access to a telephone to call her relatives or the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem. Later, on 1 August, the Hamads were allowed to visit their family.

ADC staff members have collected affidavits and details of numerous cases of Israeli harassment, including the confiscation of U.S. passports and return tickets by Israeli airport officials. Some testified that they were required to post large sums of money, as high as \$5,000, to ensure that they do not remain with their families for extended periods. U.S. diplomats in Jerusalem confirmed 50 cases of confiscated passports, and 25 cases of U.S. citizens being required to post bond. □

"No reasonable person expects Israeli officials to kowtow to the United States just because of the billions of dollars in aid that American taxpayers have poured into their beleaguered country. But surely it's not unreasonable to ask that an American passport be treated with respect in Israel."

Jack Anderson and
Dale Van Atta
The Washington Post
2 August 1987

Zionist academics from all over the world met in Jerusalem to ponder "Zionism on the defensive." Speakers from universities around the world told of their experiences in a workshop on Zionism, sponsored by the International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization.

Colin Tatz, from the Department of Politics at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, spoke of how Australia switched from a long history of pro-Zionism "to an almost unchallenged acceptance of anti-Zionism and anti-Israelism" in Australian universities. Australian switch to anti-Zionism, he said, came as a result of the massacres of Palestinian refugees in Sabra and Shatila during the Israeli occupation of Beirut in September 1982.

Harriet Freidenreich of Temple University in Philadelphia said that up to ten years ago most of her students identified themselves as Zionists. Now the majority are pro-Palestinian. Increasingly, she said, she finds herself trying to defend Zionism.

Even in South Africa Zionism looks racist. Milton Shain, who teaches modern Jewish history at the University of Cape Town, said that in South African universities "Zionism is considered a reactionary nationalist movement." Jewish students, he explained, tend to join Marxist and other leftist groups which agree with the "Zionism equals racism" concept, adopted by a United Nations resolution in 1975. □

[Based on an article titled "Zionism on the defensive" by Aryeh Rubinstein, published in the international edition of the *Jerusalem Post*, week ending 8 August 1987].

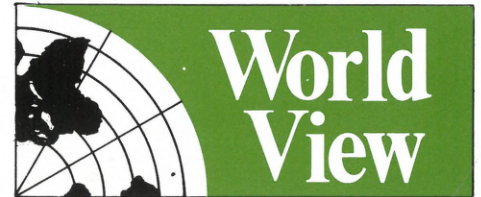
TEL AVIV-PRETORIA

There will be no Israeli sanctions against the apartheid regime in South Africa. A few months ago, Israel leaked—and the U.S. media widely circulated—rumors that Israel was "reconsidering" its broad military and economic ties with Pretoria. The rumors were intended to help Israel's friends in the U.S. Congress to exempt Israel from legally mandated cuts in American foreign aid to countries which deal with the minority government of South Africa. Now that the unlikely threat to Israel has failed to materialize in the U.S. Congress, Israel has shelved recommendations for even token sanctions.

"After many press releases, announcements and leaks 'from sources'—all giving the impression that Israel was moving to restrain its relations with South Africa—" wrote *Israeli Foreign Affairs* of August 1987, "the Israeli government has 'indefinitely postponed' action on a set of mild sanctions recommended by a ministerial committee" last March.

Israel has been for many years, and continues to be, South Africa's principal trade and military partner. □

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NOVEMBER 29: PALESTINE DAY

November 29 of every year was designated by a United Nations General Assembly resolution in 1977 as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The same resolution decided the establishment of a United Nations Special Unit [later enlarged to Division] on Palestine to undertake "the greatest possible dissemination of information on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people." □

Palestinian Rights

[From the operative paragraph of General Assembly Resolution 3236 of 22 November 1974, approved by a vote of 89 to 7]:

The General Assembly

1. **Reaffirms** the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine, including:

- (a) The right to self-determination without external interference;
- (b) The right to national independence and sovereignty;

2. **Reaffirms** also the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and calls for their return;

3. **Emphasizes** that full respect for and the realization of these inalienable rights of the Palestinian people are indispensable for the solution of the question of Palestine;

4. **Recognizes** that the Palestinian people is a principal party in the establishment of a just and durable peace in the Middle East;

5. **Further recognizes** the right of the Palestinian people to regain its rights by all means in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

6. **Appeals** to all States and international organizations to extend their support to the Palestinian people in its struggle to restore its rights, in accordance with the Charter;

7. **Requests** the Secretary-General to establish contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organization on all matters concerning the question of Palestine.

ISRAEL AWAKENS FROM A DREAM

The Government Grounds Lavi Fighter

Israel finally awoke from a seven-year-old dream and decided it couldn't afford to be an industrial giant. Its cabinet decided, by the narrowest of margins, to shut down an ambitious project to build a highly sophisticated Israeli fighter, the Lavi.

In fact, the project has been more American than Israeli. More than fifty percent of the plane was American built, including its engines, wings, and tail assembly. The \$1.5 billion spent on its development so far came from U.S. military assistance to Israel.

After initially supporting the Israeli dream enthusiastically, the Reagan administration finally reached the conclusion that Israel was not up to the undertaking, and that it would be better off continuing to use U.S.-made fighters, such as the new F-16. The Lavi proved to be too expensive, and the project has been continually plagued with enormous cost overruns. A Pentagon study had shown that the cost of producing the plane would be much more than the cost of making comparable U.S. fighters, and at least a third more than initial Israeli projections. *Aerospace Weekly* magazine had called the Lavi project a "white elephant."

Opposition to the Lavi fighter developed and grew in the United States and Israel, especially among people responsible for financial

and military affairs. Most of Israel's general staff, for example, became critical of the project when it became obvious that the Lavi was devouring a great portion of U.S. military aid to Israel, thus jeopardizing Israel's general military capabilities. In the U.S., influential figures in the "military-industrial complex" were also apprehensive about American support of an Israeli project designed to compete with American industry at the expense of the American taxpayer.

The Israeli government resisted American pressures for the discontinuation of the Lavi project for several years. Finally, on 30 August 1987, the Israeli cabinet voted 12-11 (with one abstention) to terminate the project.

As usual, Israel quickly moved to make the U.S. pay for it. It extracted a promise from the Reagan administration that, in exchange for not manufacturing the Lavi, the U.S. government would continue to subsidize continuing research and development. Israel also wanted the United States to allow Israeli contractors to participate in the manufacture of the American F-16 fighter, a request that American and Israeli officials are expected to meet soon to discuss. The U.S. also promised speedy deliveries to Israel of the new American F-16 fighter.

Strong reaction has been expressed in Israel itself to the deci-

sion to terminate the Lavi project. Moshe Arens resigned from the cabinet, and Minister Ariel Sharon angrily accused the Israeli government of "surrendering to foreigners," meaning the Americans. Technicians working at the project demonstrated and many of them threatened to leave Israel to look for jobs elsewhere.

The Lavi fighter had become an emotional issue in Israel because its supporters have equated it with Israel's dream of becoming a technological and industrial power. And Israel never liked being awakened from its dreams. □



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