

Palestine Focus

No. 35

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE PALESTINE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

July-August 1989

Editorial:

50¢

Shamir's "Peace" Plan

"Elections" and Massacres

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir came to Washington in April 1989 to unveil his long-awaited peace proposal. When the veil was removed, Shamir revealed his moldy, Camp David-style election plan, which President George Bush immediately covered with effusive praise. Meanwhile, under continuing Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, deliberate massacres of Palestinian civilians were implemented as Israeli policy.

Shamir's election proposal is primarily a public-relations ploy aimed at international opinion, especially in the United States. For many Americans, the idea of "elections" is an appealing notion. While the PLO has rejected Shamir's proposal, Palestinians do not reject elections per se; they call for genuine elections under international supervision without Israeli occupation.

Shamir's elections, however, are carefully crafted to be rejected; the *New York Times* commented that the Israeli government is "taking positions that, if unchanged, virtually assure that elections will never be held." Election procedures are to be drafted by the Israeli military administration. Shamir said there would be no need for observers or international supervision. Residents of East Jerusalem would not be allowed to participate. Shamir's chief of staff, Yossi Ben-Aharon, said there would be little campaigning because the candidates would be well-known. Candidates who display Palestinian flags or make statements Israel considers inciteful would be arrested. Defense Minister Rabin added that any candidate identifying him or herself with the PLO should be immediately arrested.

Further, as Ben-Aharon told the *Times*, "There is one option we won't countenance; the one thing we will insist on preventing is a Palestinian state." The *Times* commented: "All options are open except the one that virtually all Palestinians who express a political opinion say they must have."

The Israeli prime minister did not hide his real intentions very well. According to Israel Radio, Shamir told his



Children's demonstration in Ramallah, West Bank, December 1988.

Photo: Neal Cassidy/Frontline

cabinet that "adoption of the peace initiative would enable the government to undertake a harder line in suppressing the uprising." The *New York Times* reported that "Israeli officials say they feel justified in increasing the military pressure on Palestinians involved in the uprising now that they have offered them the political alternative of elections in the territories."

Yasser Abed Rabbo, a senior PLO official in Tunis, dismissed Shamir's plan as an attempt to sell "the shabby cloth of Camp David ... as the latest in Yves Saint Laurent." Eighty prominent Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza issued a statement rejecting the plan.

Thus the Israeli election proposal is a farce, a crude

Continued on Page 6

Intifada Advances Palestinian Peace Agenda

By Riyadh Khoury

Eighteen months after the start of the Palestinian uprising, the cumulative political gains by the Palestinians have been impressive. The uprising has, in fact, created a new political situation that no one could have imagined a year and a half ago. These gains and opportunities have pushed the issue of Palestine and Palestinian national rights to the forefront regionally and internationally. Most important of all, the central demand of the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising for freedom and independence, which once was considered a distant dream, now appears as a realistic possibility. For the first time in many decades, the Palestinian people and their leadership find themselves in a unique situation with many opportunities.

The balance of power and the relations inherent between occupiers and occupied are changing dramatically in favor of Palestine. There are no illusions within Palestinian ranks; difficult times lie ahead. This set of

"We shoot tear gas at them, and all the gas seems to blow back on us."

— Dov Fixman, Israeli Reservist

relations needs to change still more as a prelude to transforming the dream into reality. Still, the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising has succeeded beyond any doubt and passed all the difficult tests. It continues to be the unifying voice of all the Palestinians against the occupation. In essence, it is becoming the alternative and viable authority of the Palestinians in occupied Palestine. All Israeli attempts to stop the intifada by arresting some of its leaders have proven futile. Over time, the Palestinian leadership has become the real and legitimate authority in the West Bank and Gaza, while Israeli authority and control over the Palestinian people have eroded significantly.

In fact, the only control Israel has left is

its control over the land. The apparatus of the occupation has been significantly disrupted over the last few months. Much of

the infrastructure that Israel built over the years has been lost. In its place, a Palestinian infrastructure is taking hold, made up of a vast array of popular committees that span every aspect of life under occupation. It is a telling story of organization, broad support, and Palestinian democracy at work.

All the power and might of military occupation have proven no match for this

Continued on Page 2

PALESTINE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE/
PALESTINE FOCUS
P.O. Box 27462
San Francisco, CA 94127

Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed,
Address Correction Requested

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 181
San Francisco, CA



Brian Willson...Page 4

Trade Union Delegation...Page 5

Yigal Arens ...Page 8

Letters to the Editors

Dear Palestine Focus:

Why spend so much space on "peace" talks when it's been made abundantly clear that Shamir will never engage in peace talks? And why so little, if any, space for the continuing atrocities visited daily upon Palestinians—with special emphasis on destroying the very young?

Edna Toney
Katonah, New York

Dear Palestine Focus:

I truly believe in your work and through your paper have had my consciousness refined so much. My heart goes out to the Palestinian cause. At least 20 to 30 sisters here have access to your paper. Several of us wrote letters to Congresspeople or others that are suggested in your paper. During the past year, I have written at least 20 to 25 letters in behalf of the Palestinians. And whenever I write my Congresspeople, I always include this: "Please stop all aid to Israel so they can use it to kill Palestinians. I've seen enough of that sinfulness and want it to stop immediately. Please do all you can to give the Palestinians their homeland on their terms and not everybody else's terms. They deserve it, and the U.S. is the villain in this trouble by making Israel the darling all these years. That's a big sin. Please stop it now. I'm sick and tired of reading about Palestinians killed by Israel with our money."

I feel so bad about this I could cry. All I can do is write these letters and help raise consciousness around me. God bless you for your wonderful work. I pray that it will bear fruit in a homeland and peace for the Palestinians.

Sister Madeline Clifton
Fort Smith, Arkansas

FOCUS ON ACTION

By Ginny Kraus

NACC Initiates Petition Campaign — The North American Coordinating Committee (NACC) of Nongovernmental Organizations (NGO) on the Question of Palestine, composed of eleven national organizations, recently initiated a petition campaign: "Peace for Palestine and Israel in 1989." Their goal is to deliver a half million signatures to Congress on November 15 of this year, the anniversary of the declaration of independence of the state of Palestine. The petition calls for the recognition of the independent Palestinian state, recognition of the PLO, support for an international peace conference, and an immediate end to the occupation. For more information or copies of the petition, write to NACC, c/o P. O. Box 576, Cambridge, MA 02140. The Palestine Solidarity Committee is actively involved in this campaign. Petitions may also be obtained from PSC, P. O. Box 27462, San Francisco, CA 94127.

Bay Area Artists Organize Mural Project in the West Bank — Four women artists of the San Francisco Bay Area are planning a trip to Jerusalem to paint a mural in support of the Palestinian intifada. The "Break the Silence Mural Project" is intended to express solidarity with Palestinians under occupation and to protest the Israeli oppression of Palestinian cultural expressions. The trip is planned for the summer of 1989. Poet and author Margaret Randall, who faces McCarran-Walter deportation proceedings, headed up a cultural benefit for the project in May in San Francisco. To contribute, send donations to Break the Silence Mural Project, 1442 Walnut Street, #252, Berkeley, CA 94709.

Deportation Hearings for L.A. Eight Resumed in

Intifada Advances ...

Continued from Page 1

popular power and organization. The network of informers and collaborators has been weakened substantially, as have the local police, the tax collectors, and many other instruments of the occupation. The economic self-help that Palestinians have devised, in addition to the boycott of Israeli goods and the marked decline in Palestinian labor working in Israel, has contributed to significant economic losses for Israel.

A sense of accomplishment and purpose fills Palestinians. Many social barriers have been broken, and a sense of cooperation and collective sacrifice is taking hold. Israeli attempts to punish the Palestinians have not succeeded in breaking their will. On the contrary, the more Israeli occupiers violate Palestinian rights, the more they kill, injure, imprison, demolish homes, and carry out other measures on a daily basis, the more the Palestinians are determined to resist.

At the same time, Israel is experiencing a crisis in its response to the uprising, which has created a no-win situation. Israel's top military brass, including none other than Dan Shomron, the chief of staff of the Israeli army, has on several occasions confided to the political leadership the futility of attempting to crush the intifada. The state's intelligence apparatus reached the same conclusion. What is taking place obviously defies all military logic, and that is one reason for its success. The uprising is not a military act requiring a military response; it is a civil act of people's collective will to resist occupation on a large scale.

What follows is a brief summary of testimony by Israeli soldiers of the elite Golani unit from an article in the *New York Times Magazine*. It shows beyond doubt the level of frustration and failure of the military response to the intifada. One private said, "Sometimes you have the illusion you're controlling it in there. But then you start

thinking something bigger than you is working the streets." Sgt. Elad Ben-David described another situation when he and his company tried to arrest a boy in Gaza. Suddenly they were surrounded by a large crowd of women, men, and children. He said, "All of them stood at the end of the street. They were stoning us, and they put the women and children in front so we couldn't shoot, while the men threw stones from the back. We fired into the air, but they didn't go away. We didn't know what to do. After a minute, we let the boy go. We climbed the wall and started running away. I felt terrible. I had the weapon; I was supposed to be in control. But they were stronger than we."

In contrast, the army commander of the West Bank, Amram Mitzna, urged his soldiers to "stand in front of them. Go forward. Assault. You need to attack. Be offensive. This is the main thing we are facing." In addition to talking about the unity and sophistication on the Palestinian side, the soldiers contrast this to the daily debate that is under way among them regarding their individual presence and that of Israel in occupied Palestine. Dov Fixman, also a reservist in the Golani unit, summarized the situation in this metaphor: "We shoot tear gas at them, and all the gas seems to blow back on us."

In essence, the situation on the ground has undoubtedly developed beyond Israel's policy of "Law and Order." Every day Israeli authorities have to reimpose their occupation. In doing so, they confront the collective will of the Palestinians and their undiminished quest for national freedom. But after all these months of bloody Israeli response and after several massacres, many Israeli leaders are not yet convinced that their strategy is failing. Some cabinet ministers demand even harsher measures. Defense Minister Rabin, the mastermind of the iron fist policy, threatened Palestinians with still more violence. He said, "We will use whatever is needed, more force to put down the violence and with greater justification." Some of the nonmilitary meas-

Continued on Page 6



Demonstration against Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, New York, April 1989.

Photo: Judy Janda/Impact Visuals

May — On May 3, deportation hearings resumed for Palestinians and a Kenyan targeted for deportation by the Immigration and Naturalization Service in Los Angeles. Although a federal district court judge in Los Angeles declared on December 22, 1988: "Aliens within the United States are protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and this protection is not limited in the deportation area," the government has been trying to find some of the eight "deportable" because of minor visa violations. The government is also appealing the judge's decision. The INS actions are continued harassment of the Palestinian-American community and an attempt to intimidate all immigrant communities. Donations may be sent to the Committee for Justice to Stop the McCarran-Walter Act Deportations, P.O. Box 4631, Los Angeles, CA 90051.

Jewish Organizations Demonstrate for Peace — On April 16, several Jewish organizations sponsored a rally for peace in New York City. Sponsored by the Passover Peace Coalition, a group of over 25 Jewish organizations, the rally called for support for Israel and the forces for peace in Israel, support for an active American role in promoting the peace process, negotiations between the Israeli government and the PLO based on the principles of mutual recognition and self-determination for peace, security, an end to the occupation, and a mutual end to violence. For more information, write to the Passover Peace Coalition, 122 W. 27th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10001.

Music for Palestine — "Salsa for Palestine," a benefit dance, featuring Conjunto Cespedes, to raise funds for

Continued on Page 6

Intifada Chronicle

This new column highlights recent events of the intifada that convey the magnitude of repression and the breadth and depth of the resistance. It is a continuing chronicle of what ordinary people can do in an extraordinary time. And because the gains of the day-to-day resistance in Palestine are registered as well on the political and diplomatic fronts, our aim is to provide our readers with reports not only of the clashes on the ground, but also of their repercussions around the world.

March 1989 One month's toll: 35 Palestinians killed by Israeli forces (bringing the total number since the beginning of the uprising to 681); 1,944 wounded (an estimated 46,000 injured in the first 12 months of the uprising); 113 tear gas injuries, including 68 women who miscarried; 1,231 detained without trial; 108 houses demolished or sealed, making 972 people homeless; 1,710 trees uprooted by the Israelis, 1,820 dunums of land expropriated.

April 2 Israeli occupation authorities uprooted another 140 trees, in Asaqreh village near Nablus, claiming that the trees were used as cover by stone throwers.

April 13 In the early morning, Israeli troops and border police went on a shooting rampage in the West Bank village of Nahalin, massacring at least 6 people and injuring 30 more. Survivors reported that the quiet village of 3,000 was sprayed with bullets without provocation following a week of escalating harassment by soldiers and police. Several of the seriously wounded were detained and those coming to their aid were injured before police finally permitted their evacuation to a hospital.

Dr. Gabor Maté, a physician from Vancouver, B.C., visited Makassed Hospital in Jerusalem on the night of April 13 and spoke to many villagers and several physicians. He told *Palestine Focus* he saw one victim who was brain dead. Maté was told the man had driven several wounded to the hospital and that on his return to Nahalin, he was shot pointblank in the head with a pistol at a roadblock. We later learned the man, 23-year-old Walid Mohammad Abdallah Najajri, died at Makassed April 21.

The British government termed the incident in Nahalin "tragic," proving "it is vital negotiations should be got under way between Israelis and Palestinians." And in an unusual move, the International Com-



Israeli soldiers harass Palestinian woman in Ramallah, November, 1988.

Photo: Neal Cassidy/Frontline

mittee of the Red Cross in Geneva issued an "urgent appeal" for an end to such incidents. But observers in Palestine report that the army appears to have adopted this kind of terror tactic more broadly.

Since the massacre, Nahalin villagers have received many delegations from other West Bank communities, who come to pay tribute and express condolences. Visitors are taken to the village school, which is decked in Palestinian flags. Black sashes flutter from rooftops, while a large pro-PLO placard is displayed in the village center. The Israeli-appointed mayor of Nahalin resigned effective May 1. He had tendered his resignation four months earlier, but it was rejected by Israeli civil authorities. Since January, he has refused to perform official duties for the occupation.

April 18 An Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced Omar Zeiden, secretary general of the Union of Construction Workers in the village of Deir Al-Ghusoon, to 30 months in jail. The trade-union leader, who is 30 years old, was indicted on charges of attacking Israeli troops with stones and bottles and resisting arrest.

Meanwhile, his village remained without electricity and running water in a standoff with the Israeli army. The army says the village will continue to be deprived of these amenities until the villagers take down Palestinian flags and erase pro-intifada graffiti. After more than two months, the villagers remain steadfast.

Last week in April Jordanians took to the streets of several major cities to protest government-imposed price increases of 15 to 50 percent on basic commodities. The price hikes were dictated by the International Monetary Fund, as a requirement for dealing with Jordan's \$6 billion foreign debt. Eight people died as the army and police brutally put down the protests. As well,

over three hundred activists suspected of membership in the banned Jordanian Communist Party, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine were jailed without charge.

King Hussein returned from a state visit to the United States to dismiss Prime Minister Ziad al-Rifa'i and his cabinet. During Rifa'i's tenure, the value of Jordanian currency had plummeted as the foreign debt skyrocketed. Jordan's annual balance-of-trade deficit is presently close to \$1.5 billion. Although most observers agree that these protests resulted from the deteriorating economic situation, political issues simmer just below the surface. Jordan's professional associations issued a joint statement calling for general elections, which have not been held since 1966.

April 26 Responding to Israeli Prime Minister Shamir's proposed elections in the occupied territories, 80 prominent Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza issued a statement calling for Israeli withdrawal from the territories as a precondition for Palestinian acceptance of elections. Rejecting Shamir's current proposal as an attempt to divide Palestinians, the statement said, "At the Algiers PNC sessions, our people proved its love for, and practice of, democracy. The PLO in general and the uprising in particular have completed the establishment of an internal democratic structure. Our rejection of the election proposal does not indicate a rejection of elections as democratic practice, but is the rejection of a project which ignores the essence of the conflict. The elections proposed by Shamir do not constitute democratic practice within an entire political process with clearly defined principles; this isolated occurrence of elections does not illustrate how it will lead to the end of the occupation and to Palestinian national independence." The statement went on to assert that real peace can be achieved only through direct Israeli-PLO negotiations within the framework of an international conference until the establishment of a Palestinian state.

May 12 Consideration of a Palestinian application for membership in the World Health Organization was deferred until next year in a compromise aimed at heading off a financial crisis for the UN agency. The United States, which contributes one-quarter of WHO's budget, had threatened to

withdraw its funding if the state of Palestine was admitted. The vote was viewed as a gain by the PLO and its supporters. By leaving the door open in "hope that the Palestinian people will be fully represented," WHO member states signaled they may be searching for a way around U.S. dollar diplomacy. The PLO said it will continue its efforts to seek membership in the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization and other international bodies.

May 15 In apparent retaliation for Palestinian rejection of the latest election plan, all 650,000 residents of Gaza were placed under 24-hour curfew. The following day, workers who had remained overnight in Israel were rounded up and transported home. The New York Times reported that Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin said he was trying to demonstrate that working in Israel is a "privilege" that can be taken away at any time. Rabin said he was considering denying Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza the right to work inside the green line if they refused Israel's offer for elections in the territories. About 60,000 residents of Gaza work in Israel.

May 21 Although curfews in Gaza have usually lasted only a few days in order not to disrupt Israel's construction and service industries, which rely heavily on Palestinian labor, the curfew imposed May 15 was not lifted for two weeks. At least five people were killed when they ventured from their homes in search of food. More than 200 Gazans were arrested and charged with directing the uprising.

May 320,000 elementary and high school students and 18,000 college students in the West Bank and Gaza marked the end of their second academic year with only clandestine popular classes that are routinely shut down by Israeli authorities. Israel has kept schools closed since the beginning of the intifada. Recently, a United Nations-initiated home-teaching program for first, second, and third grades was forbidden by the army. The policy has provoked wide debate in Israeli academic circles, as 400 university professors petitioned the Defense Ministry to reopen the schools, declaring that the real motive for the continued closure is collective punishment, not security concerns. □



Palestinian demonstration in Sa'ir, West Bank, October 1988.

Photo: Neal Cassidy/Frontline

Israel: Death-Squad Government

Brian Willson is codirector of the Institute for Practice of Nonviolence and chair of the advisory board of Veterans Peace Action Teams. He came to national prominence when he lost his legs while attempting to block a weapons train bound for Central America from Concord Naval Weapons Station in 1987. Willson was interviewed by Palestine Focus editor Ginny Kraus upon his return from a visit to the West Bank and Gaza as part of a delegation sponsored by the Middle East Children's Alliance.

PF: Why did you go to occupied Palestine?

BW: I cannot say I have had sufficient information and knowledge about the situation in the Middle East, except that it was a horrendous situation, not necessarily any more horrendous than other situations, such as Ireland. I was aware of the intifada mostly from the newspapers and was intrigued by the intifada as a pretty profound model for an uprising for other people, especially tax resisters' boycotts, strikes, and the popular movement. It is similar in many ways to the FMLN in El Salvador, but the Palestinians do not use guns, which to me makes it all the more profound. They have stones, but these tools are not separate from the boycotts, the strikes, the tax resistance, and the beginning of an understanding of self-sufficiency from the Israelis.

I have a lot of Jewish friends, though I am clearly not Jewish. We talked a lot about Zionism, and whenever I speak, almost always the question comes up: "What do you think about the Israeli-Palestinian question?" It's like a trap question. Either they want to get me on alienating Jews or make an exception for my nonviolence. I always say that it is obvious that everybody needs human justice and dignity in their life. That includes the Palestinians and the Israelis, and everybody else, no matter how they describe themselves on religion, ethnic background, etc. Justice is something we all need, and we need to make sure each other have it. Otherwise, we are going to have wars. So when I was asked to go to the Middle East, I felt it was an opportunity to get introduced viscerally, which is the only way I really learn anything.

PF: What were your impressions of conditions in the West Bank and Gaza?

BW: I had two overall impressions from my trip to Israel/Palestine. These overriding impressions are the same ones I have when I go to El Salvador or Nicaragua. One is the repression carried out by and promoted by the Israeli government and the people. The Israeli army is so incredibly barbaric, diabolical, that is beyond the understanding of most North Americans to comprehend just how much the Israelis use terror and incredible policies of repression to keep the Palestinians in some kind of subservient position.

I find that true of the Salvadoran army and government toward the Salvadoran people who are interested in a justice model, and I find that true of the contras, the U.S.-financed terrorists. It is unbelievable what they do.

The other overriding impression is how spirited and empowered are the people, who are struggling to no longer be oppressed. In fact, they have decided that they are not cooperating. The way you really stop the oppression is to no longer cooperate, and you have to pay the price: death, torture, and imprisonment. The same thing happens in El Salvador, the same thing happens with the Nicaraguan people that stay with



Brian Willson and Nabulsi Mayor Bassam Shaka'a, both of whom lost legs because of political activities. Willson was injured while attempting to stop a train carrying U.S. arms for Central America. Mayor Shaka'a was the victim of an assassination attempt by Israeli settlers who planted a bomb in his car.

Photo: Barbara Cross

The Israeli army's policy of terror is equivalent to the Salvadoran army's.

the revolution. They are shot, tortured, or captured.

The same thing happens in the West Bank and Gaza. If you are considered to be part of the intifada or in any way sympathetic with the Palestinian uprising, you are a target. The spirit and dignity that the people have—because they are now empowering themselves to no longer be oppressed—is so incredible that it is beyond the frame of reference of most people in this country to understand why people are willing to put up with so much pain and suffering in this struggle. Somehow or other, it is perceived that if they do not struggle, they will have less pain and suffering. Even though it is a terrible situation, why put your life on the line?

It is the same thing people all over the world are struggling to do. It was the same with the Vietnamese. Once people around the world who have been oppressed realize that they are going to stand up straight, that they want to be friends and not slaves, that is where dignity comes in. You are no longer going to be pushed around. You do not need to push other people around. In fact, that would destroy your dignity. Dignity comes from standing up straight and being clear about what justice is all about, and you have to be willing to pay the price for that. I learned this lesson from the Vietnamese, the Salvadorans, the Nicaraguans, and now the Palestinians.

Most of us North Americans would not think of putting our lives on the line for a different model for living because we have not felt the oppression here. In the West Bank and Gaza, in the refugee camps and outside the camps, in the villages and cities, there is an element of terror present all the time. Palestinians have their own license plates. Everyone has to have an ID

card. The Israelis have 26 prisons just for the Palestinians. Most Palestinians who have been active have been in those prisons one or more times, in some cases many times. Many of them have been tortured.

The presence of the military is astounding; it is a wholly militarized society. The contrast with the Israeli settlers on the hilltops with their plush and affluent buildings with the life of the Palestinians in the refugee camps is overwhelming. It is so obvious just from looking at it, you do not even have to ask questions. It is extremely telling—the lack of justice and the apartheid, if you will.

It is true even in Jerusalem, and the army is everywhere. There is this feeling that, any time, a Palestinian can be shot for a minor provocation or for no reason at all. I found the Israeli army to be carrying out a policy of terror that is equivalent to what the Salvadoran army does. There were moments I thought I was in El Salvador.

PF: What do you think of the relationship between U.S. policy toward Central America and U.S. policy in the Middle East?

BW: All over the world we fund these models of societies that support highly capitalistic, highly industrialized technological systems, which means funding oligarchs everywhere, which means funding death-squad governments. Or if there are revolutionary governments, such as Nicaragua, it means funding death-squad terrorists who are trying to overthrow those governments. Israel has been our number-one ally in the world in arming and making deals with other death-squad governments or death-squad terrorists such as the contras.

Israel has been very involved in supporting the Guatemalan army and making

sure the contras have been supplied and trained when the United States could not do it up front and did not want to appear to be associated closely with the contras. Israel is very involved in South Africa in maintaining apartheid there. Somoza had a lot of uzis before the triumph of the revolution in Nicaragua. There are still uzis everywhere, even some uzis among the Nicaraguan government because these were captured from Somoza.

Israel has a pattern of association—as we do in the United States—with some of the worst governments and movements in the world. I found Israel to be like a mini-North America, a little society wanting to have affluence and money. Its prevalent value is not justice.

The Palestinians are people who wish these values would change. Quite frankly, the Palestinians are a threat to the Arab states because the Arab states are old feudal monarchy systems, and the Palestinians are democrats. They are much more interested in a model for self-determination ruled by democratic principles, which is a threat not just to Israel, but also to the other Arab states and to the United States.

Any true democratic model is a threat to the United States. We are not a democratic model despite what we have been taught in grade school and high school. We are a democratic model only on paper, not in practice. We could not afford to have one-twentieth of the world's population consuming half the world's resources if most of the rest of the world was democratized because then we would not be able to have what we want on our terms.

The Palestinians in a way are a threat to Israel and to the United States because they threaten our model. Our model is exploitation, and Israel has been supporting exploitative governments and death-squad governments as our closest ally. In the United Nations, when only two states vote against a UN position related to third-world countries, it is usually Israel and the United States. We are in cahoots to dominate and exploit in order to maintain our manifest destiny. Israel has a manifest-destiny mentality. Who knows where that will take them? In a way, the Central America issue and the Middle East issue comes out of this mentality of wanting to maintain the notion of who is supreme, and other people just better get out of our way or we are going to kill them.

PF: What were your impressions of the Palestinian method of creative engagement?

BW: First, it is not appropriate for me to tell any people how to struggle. With that, I was very impressed with the Palestinian struggle. I discussed nonviolence with Palestinians, but I am not sure if it is a word that is discussed commonly or examined. But they are very aware of the imagery of children with stones in opposition to Israeli soldiers with M-16 machine guns and grenade launchers and tear-gas cannisters. Certainly the components of the intifada are rooted in classic examples of withdrawing consent from the oppressor: boycotting Israeli goods, withholding taxes from the Israeli government, imposing the strikes, and closing down their own stores for periods of time. They also have the element of self-sufficiency, where Palestinians are raising chickens to have their own food sources and supplying their own clothes. Ghandi once said that it was very important for the Indians to spin their own cloth so they would not be dependent on the British textile industry for their clothing.

That element of increasing self-reliance

Continued on Page 7

Bernard Demczuk is a former national political organizer for the American Federation of Government Employees (AFL-CIO) and is presently a labor advisor and coordinator for Rev. Jesse Jackson and the National Rainbow Coalition. He gave the following speech at the annual conference of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee in April 1989. His speech has been considerably condensed; for a complete copy, send \$2.50 to Palestine Focus.

I am honored to appear before you, but I am equally humbled because I just returned from Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. Last week I led a delegation of ten trade-union leaders from the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) on a fact-finding mission to analyze workers' rights in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. What I saw crushed my heart, brought tears to my eyes.

I have done a lot of international travel. I have seen a lot of pain and poverty and abuse of workers' rights. I have been all through El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Mexico. I have been all through the Soviet Union and Poland during the height of martial law. I was just recently in Armenia with Jesse Jackson, witnessing the devastation of Spitak and Leninakan by the earthquake and visiting the few survivors of that horrible catastrophe. Somehow we come to understand and rationalize a natural tragedy like an earthquake.

But when you see the kind of devastation and pain that exists in a refugee camp in Gaza or the West Bank, you cannot come to rationalize or understand that kind of pain and devastation. In the Jabalya refugee camp in Gaza, you somehow cannot rationalize the heat, dirt, dust, disease, and open sewers and the thousands of children with the brightest eyes and quickest minds but with no place to go.

You cannot rationalize seeing the children in the intensive care units of the Makassed Islamic Charitable Hospital with extensive head wounds, amputated legs and 20-inch stitches across their chest and stomach, the army's bullets ripping indiscriminately into a 13-year-old girl.

It becomes even harder to rationalize all this after visiting the Kfar Etzion settlement outside Bethlehem to see the lush green fields of vegetables in the valleys, the over-abundant orange groves where 13-year-old children play and pluck oranges at their pleasure and go to air-conditioned schools to learn piano, violin, and three different languages and where the sunsets are a thing of beauty atop a mountainside to inspire poetry, not a relief from the day's heat in the refugee camp.

These are humbling experiences to go from Jabalya camp to Kfar Etzion in the same afternoon. They are experiences that also produce outrage to anyone who loves justice, who believes in the words of the great prophets of Mohammed, Jesus, and Isaiah, who has children of their own and yearns for all children to have the same opportunity to learn violin, to pluck oranges, and to play in green fields without the fear of an armored personnel carrier striking against their family.

I am honored to be here. I am also humbled to be here. Yes, I am outraged by what I saw, but I am also excited about what the future holds for the world as a result of the "children of stones"—the intifada.

I am speaking to you today as a trade unionist. I hold two union cards. I am from a working-class family from Baltimore. I come from the mainstream of labor. The award given to me this year by the Washington Area AFL-CIO for being the outstanding trade unionist of the year was given by the mainstream of labor. I am speaking to you from this perspective today—the mainstream of labor—that great

American workers want to know why 4 billion dollars goes to Israel while the army of occupation closes union offices in Nablus.

mass of working men and women who do not know much about the Middle East but know a lot about Judaeo-Christian values, those who know the difference between right and wrong.

[Editor's Note: In the next section, Mr. Demczuk explains the historic changes in the labor movement on foreign policy, especially on Central and South Africa. He notes (1) that new leadership—African-Americans, Hispanics, Asian-Americans, progressives, and women—is emerging at every level of the trade-union movement. Further, (2) the experience of the Vietnam War changed the American working class. At the same time, (3) the old guard of labor is retiring and passing away, while (4) bold leadership and long, tedious organizing efforts

these questions. And when we do, we become outraged. At the same time, however, we are excited about the changes we see occurring in our own ranks on issues of foreign policy.

Central America and South Africa have given us breakthroughs, achievements, and reasons for hope. The next frontier for the American trade-union movement to understand is the Middle East.

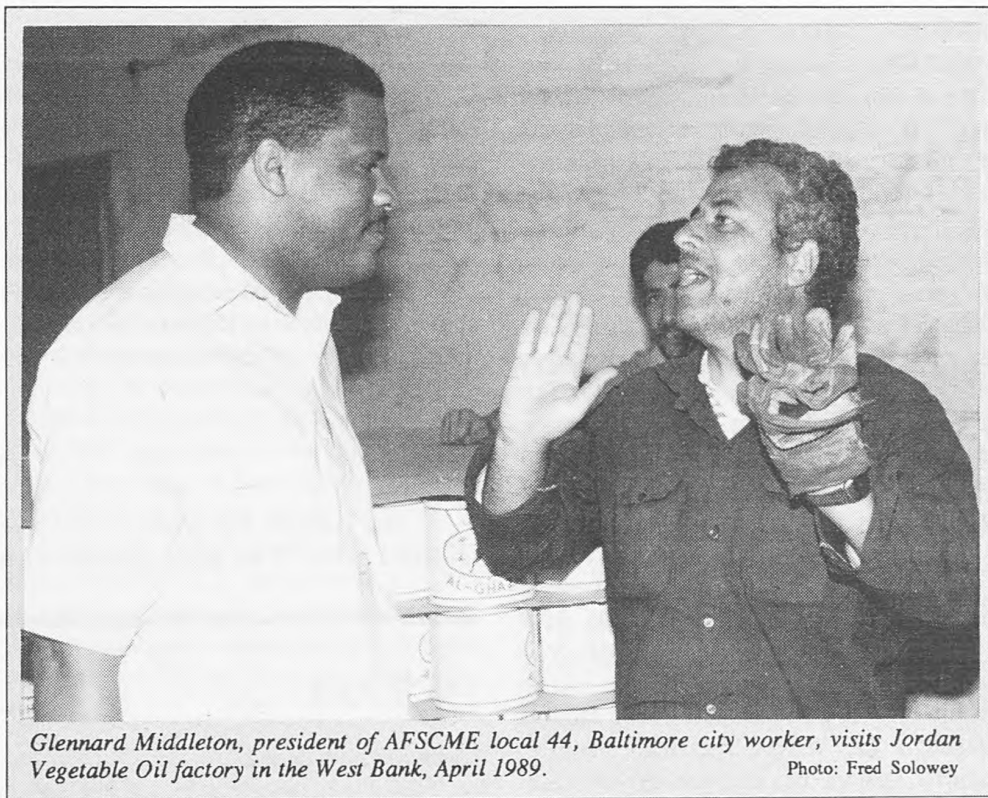
Will U.S. trade unionists seek peace and justice in the Middle East? I believe so. Why do I say this? For three simple reasons:

First, the five points I outlined above have fundamentally altered the foreign-policy consciousness of trade unionists.

Second, our strong sense of justice. We

The Next Frontier

The American Labor Movement and the Middle East



Glennard Middleton, president of AFSCME local 44, Baltimore city worker, visits Jordan Vegetable Oil factory in the West Bank, April 1989. Photo: Fred Solowey

are creating progressive steps in labor structure and policy. Leaders are standing up and speaking out on foreign policy. Finally, Mr. Demczuk notes, (5) the objective conditions of U.S. domestic policy are forcing trade unionists to look critically at U.S. foreign policy. The standard of living of the American worker is decreasing.]

American workers want to know why millions of dollars have been appropriated to support the contras when 30 billion dollars is being cut from the housing budget.

American workers are beginning to ask why three-quarters of a trillion dollars is going to weapons in space when workers are being thrown out of jobs in textile mills in South Carolina with no future in front of them.

They want to know why 4 billion dollars is going to Israel when the army of occupation is closing down union offices in Nablus.

Today trade-union leaders are asking

are workers. Whether we are conservative, moderate, or liberal, trade unionists live in a constant struggle for justice, against unsafe working conditions and exploiting employers, and for dignity on the job. The man who polishes the brass in this hotel at 3 am and the woman who cleans the toilet in your room have a strong sense of justice, safety, and dignity. It is easy for us to transfer that sense of justice to Palestinians.

Third, new and more accurate information is reaching them every day. The intifada has intensified the flow of facts. People see on TV with their own eyes the results of the occupation. Trade unionists are disseminating new and accurate information as the search for peace broadens and deepens into American soil, into American kitchens, into American workplaces.

What did we see as a trade-union delegation? We saw genuine trade-union principles, programs, and activities being destroyed by the occupation. Most union

officials in the United States receive a distorted view of trade unionism in the West Bank and Gaza. We are told that the unions there are organizational fronts for terrorist-political operations. What we saw, however, was:

- Trade unionists being detained for organizing for health and safety and wage improvements;

- Trade-union offices being closed and leaders deported for trying to elect their own officers;

- Trade-union contracts being ignored and rendered null and void as a result of the 1967 occupation;

- Trade-union leaders not being able to hold office because of administrative detention, while their files are confiscated and union dues expropriated with no accountability by the occupation authorities.

We saw genuine trade-union activities being thwarted by the occupation. As trade unionists in America, we abhor this kind of repressive activity. If these actions are enough to outrage American trade-union leaders against the Polish government, or against the death squads in El Salvador, or against the exploitation of farmworkers in California, or against the union-busting tactics of Lorenzo toward the Eastern Airline workers, or against PATCO workers by Ronald Reagan, then these actions by the Israeli government against Arab workers in the West Bank and Gaza should be enough to outrage the American trade-union movement.

These kinds of facts, these stubborn things called facts, are finding their way back to the U.S. worker. A new day is dawning for labor and the Middle East. A new frontier for justice is opening in front of our eyes. But what do we as trade unionists want in the Middle East?

Can we say we want a two-state solution? Can we say we want the PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of Palestinians? Can we say we want Yasser Arafat as the president of Palestine? Maybe yes, maybe no. But maybe we do not know enough yet about the situation in the Middle East.

But what we do know is what we want in both America and in other countries as well. To paraphrase our great founding father of the American trade-union movement, Samuel Gompers, we want: more books and less bombs; more schools and less jails; more gardens and less open sewers; more health clinics and less refugee camps; more teachers, daycare centers, and jobs with justice and less police, repression and armies of occupation.

What we do know is that the road to peace and jobs with justice comes not from military occupation but from dialogue with elected representatives—the same way that we in labor demand that we workers choose our representatives to the union, not allowing management to choose our representatives.

This convention this weekend is about breakthroughs, achievements, and hopes. We have succeeded to a significant degree in Central America and South Africa with breakthroughs, achievements, and hopes. Now we look to the Middle East and see peace rising like a bright sun and justice raging like a forest fire.

The AFL-CIO is a great force for social justice in America with a high level of moral courage. American labor loves justice. It remembers the holocaust and it will never forget. It loves justice and will never let Israel and the Jewish people be insecure and at risk. But it also wants justice for Palestinians as well. And it wants peace in the Middle East. But there can be no peace without justice and no secure Israel without a homeland for Palestinians. The American worker wants an Israel secure and flourishing, but he and she also want a Palestine free and flourishing.

It is only a matter of time before the American worker looks into the eyes of Palestinian children and sees the eyes of our

Continued on Page 7

Intifada Advances ...

Continued from Page 2

ures Rabin outlined include: "Reduce our dependence on their labor in Israel and take other economic steps against them. Interfere with their freedom of movement between Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip. Suspend some laws." Israeli journalist Peretz Kidron, however, noted in Middle East International that "a total shut-out of workers from Gaza [and the West Bank] would wreak havoc in vital areas of the [Israeli] economy."

The Palestinian national option, on the other hand, has advanced markedly over other alternatives, the most important of which is the U.S.-promoted "Jordanian option." King Hussein had to retreat in the face of the Palestinian will for political independence and their stated goal of establishing an independent Palestinian state. In this light, the severing of Jordanian ties to and controls over the West Bank Palestinians is one of the most positive and substantial gains of the uprising to date. This development gave the stated aims of the uprising for freedom and independence more substance, credibility, and inevitability.

For the first time, all the interested parties in the conflict find that dealing with the Palestinians is inescapable. The Palestinians had for a long time been considered to be on the political periphery by some major players, notably the U.S. government. Now they have been propelled to center stage of the Middle East conflict. Palestinians are not reacting to their adversaries' agenda but are rather putting forward their own agenda of peace based on justice.

Palestinians have shown a willingness to be flexible and, most importantly, to make hard concessions in a genuine move toward peace. The Palestinian initiative received overwhelming international support, except for Israel and the United States.

Israel was caught unprepared by the new situation. Its leadership was unable to justify to many of its soldiers and certainly to most of its friends its bloody response to a civilian revolt. Israel's international isolation is a direct result of its own unrealistic policies of keeping a nation captive under its guns.

As a price for agreeing to dialogue with the PLO, the United States wants to exact one-sided and unacceptable concessions from the Palestinians. The United States-PLO dialogue is certainly an important result of the intifada, even though there is much to question about the seriousness of the American side. The dialogue has dealt a serious blow to the Kissinger prohibition regarding U.S. contacts with the PLO. This prohibition was at the heart of Israeli strategy for close to 15 years. Suddenly, Israel and its powerful friends in America found themselves at relative odds with their ally and major backer, the U.S. government. Also, daily reports of Israeli practices against the Palestinians have increased American sympathy and support for the Palestinians and, at the same time, generated resentment and frustration at Israel's harsh measures and intransigence.

The Israelis have been forced to present some political initiative to address mounting world criticism. What Israel has in mind is a make-believe peace plan to satisfy the urging of its friends, blunt criticism everywhere, and offer nothing to the Palestinians. Israel has launched a political campaign to rescue its failed military response. Shamir pro-

posed an "election" plan. Shamir and his government are trying to stall for time, win some support, and drive a wedge into the Palestinian ranks.

In summary, Shamir's scheme is directed at influencing public opinion, dividing the Palestinians, and crushing the intifada. His plan is nothing more than the self-rule plan of Camp David that was rejected by the Palestinians and their leadership ten years ago. His plan offers the Palestinians literally nothing: no self-determination; no PLO; no state. In essence, Shamir says to the Palestinians: You have to accept the plan because it is the only thing offered.

However, Shamir's real intention was to make the plan blatantly unacceptable so it would be rejected by the Palestinians. Israel wants to make it appear Israel is for peace and is flexible and that the Palestinians are the rejectionists. Shamir's maneuver is yet another cynical act of twisting reality to fit Israeli dreams of taking over all Palestinian land. It also demonstrates Israeli callousness and disregard for Palestinian aspirations and world public opinion.

All Palestinians, whether living under Israeli occupation or in exile, reject such proposals. Shamir's "peace initiative" not only falls extremely short of Palestinian goals and ideals, but the whole purpose of the exercise is to finish off the intifada. Without increased pressure, Israel will not walk away from its occupation of the Palestinian state. On this score, the United States, if it is truly interested in achieving peace, must stop treating the victim and the victimizer as equally wrong. It must have the moral courage and political will to address the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people to live in freedom, dignity, and independence. □

Shamir's "Peace" ...

Continued from Page 1

attempt at deception. Israel's object is to confuse international opinion by provoking outright Palestinian rejection. Israel also hopes for splits within the PLO or between the PLO and the people living under occupation; these hopes have not materialized. But the underlying objective of Israel and the United States is to stall for time in which to continue their efforts to stop the Palestinian uprising, the intifada.

Israel's Massacre Strategy

On the one hand, the Israeli political establishment is deathly afraid of a PLO with a clear and reasonable peace proposal. On the other hand, Israel's military and intelligence establishment are virtually unanimous that the intifada cannot be crushed with military force. Still, Israel's political leadership has not abandoned its strategy of wearing down Palestinian resistance through massive repression. They still believe that in another six months or a year they can quell the uprising and eliminate the pressure for peace talks and concessions.

Internationally, Israel has become increasingly isolated. Even the United States has had to pursue a dialogue with the PLO. After a year and a half of Palestinian initiatives—from the intifada to the declaration of independence—to which Israel and the United States have been forced to react, Shamir's elections-under-occupation proposal is his attempt to seize the initiative in the diplomatic, public-relations arena.

At the same time, Israeli leaders have taken the initiative in a more brutal way. Beating and shooting demonstrators has failed to confront directly the emergent infrastructure the

Palestinians are building: schools, health services, popular committees, and the unified underground leadership. This infrastructure, which maintains the Palestinian ability to continue their resistance through the intifada, has become the primary Israeli target. The political strategy of organized massacres—which is not new to Israel but is new in confronting the intifada—most starkly demonstrated in April in the West Bank village of Nahalin, near Bethlehem, is to send in troops to attack Palestinians even when they are not actively protesting in the streets.

The week before the massacre, Palestinian residents of Nahalin underwent severe harassment from Israeli police. On April 13, Israeli troops surrounded the village in the early morning hours. Border guards went in and sprayed gunfire at random through the streets and into people's homes. One victim, who was ferrying casualties to a nearby hospital, was shot point-blank in the head by a soldier at a roadblock.



Middle East International

contributes to the mounting toll of war crimes against Palestinian victims of the Israeli occupation. Bush joined visiting Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in calling for an end to Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. That was a nice gesture, although it has been the official, though rarely stated, position of the U.S. government since 1967. Bush's subsequent support for Shamir's elections, however, was crass hypocrisy: Helping Israel to stall while it tries to smash the intifada means more occupation, more deaths, and more suffering.

Secretary of State Baker went further when he appeared before the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the official Israel lobby in Washington, and called on Israel "to lay aside, once and for all, the unrealistic vision of a greater Israel.... Forswear annexation; stop settlement activity; allow schools to reopen; reach out to the Palestinians as neighbors who deserve political rights." Baker's remarks show that the U.S. government feels the pressure to change its policies but that it is still unwilling to concede that Palestinians also deserve their national rights. Baker's speech also firmly rejected an international peace

Continued on Page 7

Since then, similar incidents have become more common in Gaza and in many other locations in the West Bank. The "massacre in slow motion," which has characterized the Israeli response to the intifada, has speeded up. The number of dead and injured has increased dramatically. Israel's shift in tactics is too widespread and deliberate to describe as an "aberration"; it can only be a policy.

U.S. Role

In this context, the go-slow, go-easy-on-Israel policy of the Bush administration

Action ...

Continued from Page 2

the Latino Task Force of the Palestine Solidarity Committee was held in San Francisco on June 16. The event drew broad community support, including KPFA Radio; Cambio; Jesus "Chuy" Varela, KPFA public affairs director, who was the MC; René Castro, director of Mission Gráfica; Linda Lucero of La Raza Graphics; Martha Acevedo, a member of the Berkeley School Board; and Melba Maldonado, director of the Capp St. Center.

A medical aid benefit for Palestine was held in Tucson on May 19 entitled "Rock for Palestine." Featuring reggae and rock, the benefit raised funds for badly needed medical care in the West Bank and Gaza. More than 400 people attended the event, which was initiated by the Tucson PSC chapter and cosponsored by several local organizations, including Veterans for Peace, Tucsonians Against Apartheid, National Lawyers Guild, Southern Arizona Coalition for the Homeless, and American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. Donations are

to help supply bandages and first-aid kits to the medical relief committees.

Israeli Peace Activists Appeal Convictions—The appeal of Mordechai Vanunu, sentenced to 18 years in prison for spying and high treason, opened in Israel's Supreme Court on May 2. Vanunu is charged with revealing to the world Israel's nuclear weapons secrets, which Israel continues to deny. Vanunu's lawyer argues that either the denials are true, in which case Vanunu is guilty of revealing nothing, or the Israeli government is lying, in which case Vanunu—who gave his information to the press rather than to a foreign government—performed a public service for world peace.

The appeal of Latif Dori, Yael Lotan, Eliezer Feiler, and Reuven Kaminer, convicted of meeting with the PLO in Romania in November 1986, is scheduled to come up in the Supreme Court in July. The defendants, who are appealing both the verdict and the severity of the 18-month prison sentence, argue that subsequent events vindicate their contact with the PLO. □

Join The PSC!

Yes! I Want to Join The Palestine Solidarity Committee!

Name _____

Street or Box # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Enclosed is a check for: \$30 Regular \$15 Student/low-income
 \$50 (or more: _____) sustaining member
 Monthly sustainer: will pay \$_____ per month for the next year (suggested monthly pledge: \$10)

Send your check or money order to:
 Palestine Solidarity Committee
 P.O. Box 27462, San Francisco, CA 94127.

In his keynote address at the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee's convention in Washington, D.C. in April 1989, Glenn Frankel, who won a Pulitzer for his coverage of the Palestinian intifada for the Washington Post, describes an incident in which he encountered Israeli army trainees in a base camp near the Jordan River Valley. When asked about Mousa Hanafi, a Palestinian student shot to death by Israeli soldiers at Bir Zeit University, the soldiers faulted Hanafi for his death. They claimed he must have done something wrong to deserve to die. Furthermore, the young Israelis gave an insight into how Israeli society in fact views Palestinians. They said that the Palestinian people do not value human life, "Not ours, not their own."

In her presentation at the "Road to Peace" conference sponsored by *Al-Fajr* and *New Outlook*, Dr. Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi addressed the Israeli delegation: "For you, the occupation corrupts your morale; for us, it kills, it deprives us of the basic right to life."

How could an Israeli come to understand what it feels like to be a Palestinian? Yoram Binur decided to find out in his new book, *My Enemy, Myself* (Doubleday, New York, 1989, \$18.95). Binur, who writes for the Israeli weekly *Kol Ha'ir*, disguised himself as a Palestinian to get an insight into how Israeli society views the Palestinian people. *Palestine Focus* interviewed Binur in New York in May 1989.

PF: What made you write *My Enemy, Myself*?

YB: I had been working as a journalist for four years; I dealt only with the occupied territories. Before the uprising, the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza was very convenient for us Israelis; the laborers would come to work and the Israelis in Tel Aviv would leave and have fun and stay in Jerusalem. They would get the cheap labor, they would hear about the building of a hospital or a new sewage system and thought everything is fine and business was as usual in terms of the occupation. I saw the Palestinian people getting more united and much stronger, learning many things. Meanwhile, the Israeli public was getting used to the Palestinian presence as depersonalized laborers.

So I saw one society getting stronger and one side, which is mine, the Israeli, getting weaker and in danger,

GETTING IT ALL IN Focus

By Rabab Hadi

which I naturally care more about. I saw that the occupation was very ugly and that nobody was interested to hear about it. Some days I felt like a member of a secret clan, the members of which were a couple of journalists who covered the occupied territories and knew exactly what was going on there, but nobody else cared.

So I decided to do something to attract more attention to the situation of the Palestinian people in the territories. I thought that by posing as a Palestinian, it could be a very good way—I do not deny that it was a gimmick—to attract people's attention. A couple of incidents proved to me that I can pass as Palestinian. Once a Palestinian I was interviewing with another Israeli journalist asked me, "Which family are you from?" I realized he thought I was a Palestinian translator. In another case, an Israeli patrol stopped me in a city in the West Bank, gave me a body search, and asked me for my ID because they thought I was a Palestinian. So I knew I could pass, and this was a very important part of my decision.

PF: What did you conclude from your experience?

YB: If I tell you that I did not know that the Palestinians were mistreated by the Israelis and that the occupation was the main reason, it would be a lie. I knew it as a journalist, so I cannot say I learned something new. What I got is a different kind of knowledge, a kind of a gut feeling. My main conclusion is that the occupation is a huge risk to Israeli society, a bigger risk than the military risk Israel is supposed to have.

PF: How do you describe the sentiments of the Israeli public toward Palestinians?

YB: I could give you an easy answer and describe it as racist. But it is not that simple. Of course, there is racism, but it is not the only issue. One way to describe it is to say that the Palestinians, until the uprising, were invisible to the Israelis. They were used for cheap labor, and no Israeli would relate to them in any way other than those who perform work and go home. The Palestinians have been forced unjustly to be in the lower rungs of the social ladder in Israel. They are the street cleaners, dishwashers, and unqualified mechanics: unskilled labor. So you would see a depersonalization and mistreatment of the somebody you are allowed to reject because he is not protected; he has no government and he does not serve in the IDF, which would support him and protect him. If he gives you any trouble, you can go to the authorities, talk about him. You can do with him whatever you want. When somebody is allowed to deal with someone else in this manner, then you will see things like racism and you deny him any expression except the two hands he works with.

I would say that there was dehumanization until the intifada. There was disrespect for the Palestinians because every Israeli knew he could do almost anything to the Palestinian laborers. The Israelis are not different from other people, and they are not worse. There is depersonalization because of the circumstances. So the Palestinian becomes an extension of a broom or a faucet, who can work but he cannot demonstrate. People would never talk about Palestinians demonstrating; they would talk about Palestinian "disturbances of public order." If a Palestinian wants independence or freedom, he is in the best case a nationalist and in the worst case a terrorist, which is not a true thing to say.

People have argued that my book does an injustice to Israel, maybe because I am not talking about the beautiful cultural life of Tel Aviv and the great life of the Kibbutzim, which I do not deny and which I love and am proud of. But this book deals with a problem, with the wound. You cannot deal with the wound in one limb if you waste your time appreciating the beauty of the other limb which is not wounded or hurt. □

Shamir's "Peace" ...

Continued from Page 6

conference, negotiations with the PLO, and a Palestinian state.

The U.S. government is feeling the pressure. It has expressed some dissatisfaction with the terms of the Israeli election plan. The United States is forced to present an image of balance. But an image is not enough. What is needed is real balance.

It is time to turn up the heat on Israel by turning up the heat on the U.S. government. What the intifada is doing with rocks and health clinics, we must accomplish with grassroots organizing and political action. The status quo of U.S. government support for Israeli occupation must be challenged in every arena available.

In February, the chairmen of Congressional committees that appropriate foreign aid, Representative David Obey and Senator

Patrick Leahy, said that Israel's treatment of Palestinians in the occupied territories is unacceptable and could weaken Congressional support for American aid to Israel. "They will get their money this year," said Leahy, referring to the \$3 billion in this year's budget, "but they build up enormous resentment in the United States, and in the future it will hurt them."

The signs of opinion shifting away from Israeli repression and toward Palestinian statehood are everywhere; and it is clear that public education is having a dramatic effect. Secretary of State Baker's remarks to AIPAC show that public pressure is making itself felt. If Americans keep the pressure on the U.S. government, internationally supervised elections leading to an international peace conference and an independent Palestinian state can become a reality. □

Willson ...

Continued from Page 4

is clearly present in the intifada. The underground popular movement is developing a network of health clinics and schools, since the government schools have been shut down. The children represent the Palestinian spirit by saying, "We won't be occupied anymore. Army, get out of our streets, or you are going to be stoned." The Palestin-

ian people are empowered to no longer fear despair. It has given them new dignity and hope.

My own opinion is that violence against violence is so insane that although it may make people feel a little better for the moment, it does not do much for the future. So if violence and retaliation is the obsession of the people, I do not have much hope for the people. I did not find that was an obsession of the Palestinians. □

American Workers ...

Continued from Page 5

own children in urban centers across America.

It is only a matter of time before the American worker sees the women toiling in the hot sun outside Ramallah as the same women toiling in the hot sun in the fields of Napa Valley, California.

It is only a matter of time before the American worker sees the Palestinian day laborer searching for work in Jerusalem as the same day laborer searching for work in Pittsburgh.

Not too much separates the American worker from the Palestinian worker. It's just a 5,000-mile gap that is closed instan-

taneously with TV and communications systems. We are not a world apart anymore. We are all workers, sisters and brothers, working the same work, digging the same dirt, lifting the same crates, side-by-side, shoulder-to-shoulder—looking forward to the end of the day to spend some time with our families, our kids, our gardens, hoping for jobs, peace, and justice.

We look forward in labor to more breakthroughs, achievements, and hopes.

I am pleased to report back to you from Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza, from a mainstream delegation of trade-union leaders that we are breaking through, achieving anew each day, and keeping hope alive. □

PALESTINE FOCUS (415) 861-1552 P.O. Box 27462 San Francisco, CA 94127

Palestine Focus is the national newspaper of the Palestine Solidarity Committee (formerly November 29th Committee for Palestine). The newspaper is an activist vehicle tied to an activist movement, yet aimed at a general audience with little background knowledge. We report on activities, not only of our Committee, but of other groups; and we provide consistent commentary and analysis of events in the Middle East.

The Palestine Solidarity Committee's task is to spark and support consistent, far-reaching, and effective activity which brings the issue of Palestine before the American people and builds a growing and deepening base of understanding. Our Committee organizes to stop U.S. intervention in the Middle East and to cut off U.S. aid to Israel. We educate Americans on the need to support the Palestine Liberation Organization, which is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and to oppose Israeli policies of discrimination which deny the Palestinian people their rights.

Signed articles are not necessarily the opinion of the Palestine Solidarity Committee. Letters, opinions, and other contributions are welcome.

Editorial Board: Douglas Franks, Steve Goldfield, Riyad Khoury, Ginny Kraus, Hilton Obenzinger, Sharon Rose.

Contributing Editors: Jeanne Butterfield, Rabab Hadi, John Masterson.

Design and Layout: ZesTop Publishing

National Executive Committee of the Palestine Solidarity Committee: Richard Becker, Jeanne Butterfield, Douglas Franks, Yolanda Garza-Birdwell, Steve Goldfield, Rabab Hadi, Riyad Khoury, Ginny Kraus, Julie Nalibov, Barbara Nelson, Hilton Obenzinger, Leticia Peña, Richard Reilly, James Starks.

PSC Regional Addresses

West Coast: P.O. Box 27462, San Francisco, CA 94127 (415) 861-1552.
Midwest: 1608 N. Milwaukee, #404, Chicago, IL 60647.
East Coast: P.O. Box 372, Peck Slip Station, New York, NY 10272 (212) 964-7299.
South: P.O. Box 6582, Houston, TX 77265.

Telex Number 6503177279-SF ISSN 0883-8577

Subscription Form

Enclosed is \$ _____ for a one-year subscription (six issues) to *Palestine Focus*. For a free list of *Palestine Focus* publications, send a self-addressed stamped envelope with request to the address given below.

Subscription Rates: \$10 (U.S. 1st class, Canada and Mexico)
 \$15 (Overseas) \$20 (Institutions)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP:** _____

Please make check or money order (in U.S. dollars only) payable to *Palestine Focus* and mail along with this form to:

PALESTINE FOCUS P.O. Box 27462 San Francisco, CA 94127

Thirty Hours in the Occupied Territories

By Yigal Arens

Yigal Arens is professor of computer science at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles and a member of the advisory committee of the Jewish Committee on the Middle East. His first-hand report of a trip to the West Bank, which happened to coincide with the Nahalin massacre, has been considerably condensed.

On April 8, 1989, I arrived in Israel for a two-week visit. I had left Israel in 1974, and this visit was only my third since then. During my previous two visits I had made a point of not entering the occupied territories. I had no personal contacts there, and I felt that I could not avoid being perceived as a representative of the occupying force.

This time was different. Muna, a Palestinian who has been living in the United States for the past 11 years and a friend of mine, is currently visiting with her family in Beit Jala—a town in the West Bank. She agreed to act as my guide and to introduce me to other people.

East Jerusalem

All Israelis I met were very scared of travel in the occupied territories. They feared that they and their cars would be targets of stones or molotov cocktails. There was absolutely no difference between East Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied territories in this regard. The Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem is meaningless.

Fifteen years ago Jews from the west side of the city traveled freely in the Arab part. I would casually go there with friends to eat at restaurants or to shop. Things are very different now. In several hours of walking in East Jerusalem that day, I noticed only a handful of Israeli civilians in the streets. Police and soldiers were stationed on various street corners—in groups, and usually near vehicles. All police and military vehicles had heavy metal grates covering their windows, giving them the appearance of enlarged insect eyes. (I later found out that this was standard for security forces vehicles in the occupied territories.) There was a palpable sense of danger.

Salah Eddin Street was blocked off with a metal barrier guarded by police. The barrier prevented cars, but not pedestrians, from entering this main street. I was later told that this was punishment for the fact that some stones were thrown there the day before. This kind of collective punishment seems to be routine. The street would remain blocked for a day or two.

Bethlehem

The stores were shuttered, and the walls were covered with slogans and pictures of Palestinian flags. Many of the slogans had been painted over, but they were often still legible. Occasionally, I was told, soldiers on patrol order passers by or local residents to paint over the slogans. Since it is entirely up to them to get the job done, many people keep some paint at home just in case. The slogans were mostly in favor of the unified leadership of the uprising. Others supported the various Palestinian factions, such as Fatah, the PFLP, or Hamas. Some slogans stressed the importance of education for the young. Occasionally one would see a Star of David with an X drawn through it. I found such graffiti everywhere I went.

About two blocks up that street we saw a woman walking, in a somewhat confused state. She was holding out her hands, which seemed to have blood on them. The woman was sobbing quietly. She said she had just held a boy who was shot in the head by soldiers.

We walked about a block further, and then Muna said that "something" was hap-

pening there. There is a set pattern to many incidents in the occupied territories: Palestinians set fire to tires; the smoke attracts Israeli patrols; when they arrive they are stoned; the soldiers fire at the rock throwers. In the street ahead of us we saw burning tires. The soldiers were not far behind.

A short distance further was Madbasa Square. When I entered it I saw what I had until then only watched on TV. There were about two dozen young people with rocks in their hands. Most young males had black masks over their heads, but the young women did not. They ran toward one of the street corners, threw stones and shouted at soldiers I could not see from where I was standing. Shots could be heard. A girl shouted, "Leave us alone and we won't throw stones at you!" Occasionally the youths would run back from the corner—apparently when the soldiers down the street aimed, or started coming, in our direction. At one point the whole street suddenly emptied of people, with everyone running towards entrances to

the buildings. Muna and I ran to one, too, but there was no room for us there. We remained in the street, standing behind a small kiosk, and wondering aloud if it were bullet proof.

No soldiers arrived, and a few moments later the stone throwing began again. I walked toward the corner where the youths were and saw a soldier standing a few hundred feet away, aiming his rifle, and firing up a street perpendicular to the one I was looking down. The next day I found out that one person was shot dead by soldiers on that street where the soldier was shooting.

Beit Jala Hospital

Beit Jala Hospital is a government hospital, run by the Israeli "Civil Administration." People brought in with gunshot wounds are more likely to be reported to the army there than in the private Makassed Hospital, in East Jerusalem. For this reason, doctors at Beit Jala hospital will send any patient they think will survive the trip to Makassed, instead of treating him/her locally. Sometimes they provide emergency treatment and then send the patient on.

Makassed Hospital

After lunch Muna and I went to Makassed hospital in East Jerusalem, to which the more seriously injured people from Nahalin and elsewhere had been transported. Many foreigners come there for visits, and there were at least three other groups of people visiting that afternoon. The hospital administrators and doctors are used to giving tours and presenting their case.

Makassed is the largest (250 beds), most modern, and best-equipped Arab hospital in the occupied territories. It is private and is thus slightly freer from Israeli military supervision than the government-supported ones. The Kuwaiti government pays for all treatment to casualties of the intifada. Most of the doctors on the staff are Palestinians who received their training in Europe or the United States.

The chief doctor of the intensive care unit took us through his ward. He said



Palestinian girl hurls rock at police in East Jerusalem, December 1988.

Photo: Neal Cassidy/Frontline

eleven casualties from Nahalin had been brought in that morning. One had died and two were in the ICU, the rest were either in surgery or had been released. One in the ICU was a 24-year-old man who had been shot in the head. The doctor explained that this patient was brain dead, was living only thanks to the machines he was connected to. Even so, the chief of the ICU said the man would live no more than two weeks. (The *Los Angeles Times* of April 27 reported that the man had died.)

The other patient in the ICU was a 14-year-old boy who had been shot through both kidneys with the same bullet. When he was first brought in only the injury to one kidney was noted. The boy was operated on and the kidney had to be removed. After the operation they noticed that the other kidney was damaged as well. A second operation took place and the kidney was saved.

After the ICU we were taken to "The Intifada Ward." There are 30 to 40 patients in this ward, who are receiving longer-term care. There was a child in the "Intifada Ward" who appeared to be 13 or 14 years old. One of his legs was amputated below the knee. He said that soldiers had grabbed him in the street and ordered him to get rid of slogans on the walls—a fairly common occurrence. He explained to the soldiers that he didn't have anything to do with it, but that did not matter to them. When he thought the soldiers were not looking he tried to run away, and was shot in the leg.

Dheisheh Refugee Camp

Dheisheh is a refugee camp of about 10,000 residents. It has existed since 1948 and has a reputation as a strongly nationalistic camp. The homes of the Dheisheh camp reach right to the Jerusalem-Hebron road. Following demands of Israeli settlers whose cars were stoned in the area, the military erected a 15-foot-high chain-link fence separating the camp from the road. Almost all the buildings facing the road itself housed businesses which were forced to shut down since patrons can no longer reach them. Since people cut holes in the fence, an additional layer of barbed wire was added at the bottom. As a further measure of collective pun-

ishment, the army has blocked all entrances to the camp, except one, with oil drums filled with cement, piled to a height of about 10 feet. From many places in the camp it now takes about half an hour just to get out, only adding to the difficulties faced by the mostly poor residents.

Ahmed, whom I had met the previous night, joined us and gave a short presentation about the camp's history. Dheisheh did not fare well under the Jordanians either, but they never felt as if they were living in a zoo, surrounded by fences, as they do now. Camp residents repeated again and again that they were just regular people, and that their description as "radicals" was without basis. I understood that they were afraid the Israelis would try to use their "reputation" to dismantle the camp and relocate them, and that is why they were so eager to have visitors get to know them as human beings. A long list of Israeli groups had already been invited there on visits, including representatives of Peace Now, RATS, the Communist Party, and others.

We went on a tour of the camp. Signs of harassment by Israeli soldiers were evident all around. There were broken windows in the homes. Bullet holes in people's water tanks were everywhere. As we walked around I could see water tanks with small pieces of wood plugging the holes; once in a while I could see a person on the roof fixing a tank.

The army allows water to flow into Dheisheh only about one day a week. People have water tanks on their roofs where they store water for the times when it is shut off. A common method of harassment by Israelis is to shoot holes in the tanks. By doing so they deprive the household of water at least until the next time it is turned on—if they can get it fixed in time.

Soldiers had been there shooting earlier that morning.

A man about 60 years old approached us as we walked past a store. After saying hello to Muhammad he told us about his experiences with the soldiers that morning. He said they had come to his home again looking for his son. His son does not live with him, but since the soldiers have been searching for him for some time, they come to the father's home, too. He said he didn't know where the son was. The man claimed that he was beaten by the soldiers when they searched the house. He asked that we come over to see what else they had done, and that I tell people in the United States how residents of the camp were treated.

Muhammad told me that every home in the camp had a story like the man's, or worse. He said I could just pick anyone I wanted and we would go in and ask them. I declined the offer.

Epilogue 1

During the three days that followed my visit to Dheisheh, two people were shot dead there by soldiers. One of them was a 13-year-old girl.

Epilogue 2

The events in Nahalin were covered widely in the Israeli press that Friday. The way *Ma'ariv*, a conservative, mass-circulation daily newspaper, reported what had happened was quite remarkable.

At the top center of the first page there was a headline in one-inch-high letters that read, "AT LEAST SIX KILLED BY BORDER GUARDS IN NAHALIN." Looking more carefully one could notice that above this it said, in quarter-inch-high letters only, "IDF claims 4 dead, but Palestinian sources report."

So *Ma'ariv* devoted its main headline to what Palestinians had to say, not to the official version of the events. I found that this was not unusual and reflected widespread skepticism of the army's awareness of the facts in the occupied territories. □