

CRITICAL MOMENT

FREE

ISSUE #7

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2004



AFTER ARAFAT

AFTER KERRY

ISRAEL & COLONIALISM

MIZRAHI LIFE

PALESTINIAN LESBIAN ORGANIZING

HEEB MAGAZINE

SETH TOBOGMAN

EDWARD SAID

GOLAN HEIGHTS

PALESTINIAN POETRY & FICTION

CRITICAL MOMENT

Issue #7
November-December
2004

Editorial Collective

Andy Clarno • Joel Devonshire
Andrea Dewees • Tarek R. Dika
Yoni Goldstein • Sarah Herard
Michelle J. Kinnucan • James Leef
Kate McCabe • Mike Medow
Erick Michael • Max Sussman
Bashar Tarabieh

Critical Moment is an Ann Arbor-based journal working to provide a forum for education, debate and dialogue around the political issues effecting our communities • an independent media project that aims to support movements for social change by giving voice to those excluded from and misrepresented by the dominant media • a free journal available at community spaces and shops throughout the Southeast Michigan area.

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From the editors

When we chose to do a Palestine issue for Critical Moment #7, we thought we'd be flooded with submissions. Few issues are as contentious within the US as the question of Palestine. Our editorial collective was disappointed, however, when we only received a small number of submissions as the deadline for this issue rolled around. We received far fewer submissions for this edition of the paper than we did for our recent issues on the elections (CM #6) and the "war at home" (CM #5).

Amidst the noise of the elections, the war in Iraq, and the many domestic crises afflicting this country, have we forgotten Palestine? Or are we just scared to talk about it? Has Palestine become an untouchable issue, an issue where even those with articulate opinions on the subject are afraid to speak up publicly? We hope that this edition of Critical Moment will help to break the silence around Palestine.

We are indebted to our authors who helped us pull this issue together against the odds. A little over half of the articles in CM #7 are original submissions written for this paper. Other articles have been previously published in other sources. We are confident, however, that everyone who picks up CM #7 will find content that is new to them.

As this Palestine issue demonstrates, the Critical Moment editorial collective is not averse to printing previously published material from non-local sources. But we would absolutely prefer that the majority of our content be original writings by local authors. That however, is up to you. We need you to write for us and to tell your friends and associates to write for us as well. Please check out our calls for submissions for our January-February "Education" issue and our March-April "Sex" issue and consider sending us your writings. As always, we invite articles which are outside the suggested issue theme.

We also look forward to developing a stronger letters section in CM. We want to hear your responses to the articles contained in the paper, as well as your thoughts on the Critical Moment project in general. We would also like to hear suggestions on what sort of issue topics you'd like to see CM cover in the future. You can send letters to momentboard@umich.edu.

Sincerely,
Critical Moment

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Upcoming Issues - Calls for Submissions

January/February: **Education**
Deadline: November 30, 2004

Education systems are powerful mechanisms of socialization that can either challenge or reproduce dominant power relations - especially along the axes of class, race, gender, nationality, and (dis)ability. As education within the United States and around the world becomes increasingly privatized and corporatized, more and more children and youth are being 'left behind' - especially those from marginalized communities. Recognizing the overwhelming importance of education in today's world, Critical Moment challenges our contributors to explore the theme of education through local, national, and international analysis.

March/April: **Sex**
Deadline: January 30, 2005

Critical Moment invites our readers to submit articles on topics including, but not limited to: BDSM, bisexual identity/politics, body image, erotica, family, female sexuality, feminism, femininity, fetishes, "free love," gay identity/politics, gender, HIV/AIDS, intersexual identity/politics, laws and sexuality, lesbian identity/politics, male sexuality, marriage, masculinity, masturbation, media representations, menstruation, midwifery, monogamy, non-monogamy/open relationships, orgasm, patriarchy, pornography, pregnancy & birth, polyamory, polyfidelity, queer identity/politics, radical intimacy/non-traditional relationship structures, reproductive rights/freedom, sex toys, sex workers (rights, criminalization, organizing), sexual anatomy, sexual education, sexual ethics, sexual health, sexualized violence/sexual assault/rape, STDs, transgender identity/politics, women's self-defense, and other topics not listed here.

The content of Critical Moment consists primarily of works submitted by local writers, artists, and activists. Submissions are not limited to our theme. We welcome news, analysis, commentary, art, short stories, poetry, music, book, and movie reviews, and other forms of expression that fall outside of this theme yet are still reflective of the political nature of Critical Moment.

Suggested length for submissions is 800-1,200 words. Please email text submissions, questions, and/or feedback to the editorial collective at momentboard@umich.edu. Calendar submissions should be sent to momentcalendar@umich.edu

Why Palestine?

BY BASHAR TARABIEH AND ANDY CLARNO

In a tribute to the late Edward Said, Graham Usher, Jerusalem correspondent for *The Economist*, noted that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict “is never simply a dispute over territory; it is always a struggle of narratives. Our job as reporters is not to cover Palestine, but to uncover it for a Western audience.” It is the obfuscation and silencing of the Palestinian narrative and the persecution of those who dare to uncover it that make writing and talking about Palestine a radical act.

Behind a façade of objectivity, Western intellectuals and the corporate media consistently distort the reality of imperialism, oppression, and exploitation in the global South. In the case of Palestine, this distortion is compounded by a concerted effort on the part of a powerful Zionist propaganda machine to disseminate the official Israeli narrative and to undermine and silence its critics.

To begin with, Western media persistently conceals the military occupation of Palestine. Consider Israel’s latest deadly adventure in northern Gaza. Supported by an American veto at the UN Security Council, the bloodshed began on September 28th. In three weeks, this full scale military assault claimed the lives of over 150 Palestinians, mostly civilians, including more than 35 children. As many as 500 people, primarily civilians, were injured by shrapnel. During the month of October 2004, more than 800 Palestinians in northern Gaza were made homeless after the Israeli army destroyed the homes of 192 families (UN Relief and Work Agency Report October 2004).

This campaign is by no means exceptional or unique in the history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It is business as usual, and it has been going on since the beginning of British colonialism. With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the British and the French occupied what is known today as the “Middle East” and drew the boundaries of what eventually became the Arab states. Colonial domination of Palestine enabled the British to provide institutional backing for their declared support of the project known as Zionism: “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.”

Zionism developed in late 19th century Europe among Jews facing racist persecution and rising anti-Semitism. Surrounded by the emergence of nationalist movements throughout Europe, several Jewish intellectuals began to argue that Jews would never be accepted in Europe and that the only possibility for Jewish salvation was the development of a nationalist movement and a state of their own. Built on racist and imperialist assumptions about the right of Europeans to establish colonies throughout the world and to dominate or displace non-white peoples, the Zionist movement began colonizing Palestine. Still, Zionism remained unpopular among European Jews until the Nazi holocaust devastated European Jewry, generating a mass exodus of Jews from Europe and lending support to the idea that Jews

needed a homeland of their own. In 1947, the UN voted to partition Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state.

The pro-Israel camp has always justified the atrocities and ethnic cleansing of 1948 on the basis that Palestinians rejected the UN partition plan. But by any logic, the Palestinians could not have agreed to a plan that unjustly allocated only 44% of the land to the Arab state, despite the fact that Palestinian Arabs were by far the majority of the population (1.2 million Palestinians vs. 600,000 Jewish settlers) and owned nearly all of the land (Jewish settlers owned only 7% of the land).

It is specifically the silencing of the Palestinian narrative that makes writing and talking about it a radical act.

Soon after the UN partition plan was rejected, a civil war broke out among Jews, Arabs, and the British. Jewish forces perpetrated a series of massacres and assaults on Palestinian villages, such as Tantura and Deir Yassin, with the intent of driving Palestinians off of their lands. When the British withdrew in May 1948, the Zionist movement declared the establishment of a Jewish state. Arab armies attacked and the civil war became a full scale war. In 1948, the Israeli army destroyed as many as 470 Palestinian towns and villages. Over 750,000 Palestinians were violently expelled from their homes and villages in order to create the demographic conditions for the establishment of a Jewish state. Now numbering five million, Palestinian refugees are the oldest refugee community in modern history. Over the past two decades Israeli revisionist historians have been rewriting the history of the 1948 war, based on official declassified archives. These historians have been affirming what Palestinian historians have said since 1948: that the creation of Israel depended on the massive dispossession of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs, that the Zionist militias committed scores of massacres, and that the Palestinian refugees were forcefully expelled from their lands.

As a result of the 1948 war, Israel emerged controlling 78% of historic Palestine. In 1967, it occupied the rest of Palestine, along with the Syrian Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula. Since then, Palestinians have been living under the yoke of one of the most violent military occupations of the 20th century. With complete disregard for international humanitarian law and the laws of war, Israel immediately began confiscating Palestinian land; constructing illegal settlements; destroying the local Palestinian econ-

omy as well as local political, cultural, and educational institutions; establishing a military government that operated through mass arrests and torture; and systematically violating Palestinian freedoms of expression, assembly, press, etc.

Palestinian resistance movements emerged in the refugee camps of the diaspora and eventually coalesced under the umbrella of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which has been led by Yasser Arafat since 1969. As the occupation continued, resistance intensified and the oppression became unbearable. This culminated with the eruption of the first popular Intifada in December 1987. Because the Palestinians had no access to arms and faced Israeli tanks and bullets with stones and their own bodies, the international media could not ignore them. The territories became unmanageable, forcing Israel to seek an avenue to pursue a different strategy for governing the rebellious Palestinian population. At the same time, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) faced a serious financial crisis stemming both from its support for Iraq during the first Gulf War and from the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. This presented Israel with just the opportunity it was looking for. While the US mediated official negotiations between Israeli, Palestinian, Syrian, Jordanian, and Lebanese delegations,

continued on next page

LETTERS

Dear Madams and Sirs,

Several articles in the previous issue of Critical Moment (*CM Issue #6, September-October 2004*) reiterate claims that 1) the two viable candidates lack sufficient differences to justify voting for one over the other and 2) that not voting is a legitimate form of protest. These views are problematic.

Voting has its limits. Yes, there has been a fairly constant bipartisan consensus on a resource-grabbing, market-expanding foreign policy for around half a century. This election probably won't upset that trend.

This is not the case with domestic issues (remember those?). Talk to any teacher about Bush's education policy, ask a grandparent how much their medical expenses have increased in the past four years, watch your paycheck as you buttress a tax cut for your boss, find out what your parents think about the looting of social security. Issue after issue, from the environment, to civil liberties and abortion, there are clear differences.

Those who want evangelicals on the Supreme Court aren't protesting the ballot box.

Whoever you vote for, we can look forward to deposing legitimately elected left-leaning governments, funding cloven-footed despots, and more or less perpetual war.

Voting has its limits, but don't exaggerate them.

ARI SUSSMAN

CRITICAL MOMENT welcomes letters and comments from our readers. Please submit letters to momentboard@umich.edu



PALESTINIAN FAMILIES LEAVING BEHIND THEIR HOMES, OLIVE TREES AND PLANTED FIELDS IN AL-FALUJA VILLAGE, 1948.

continued from previous page

Israel reached out to the PLO in secret negotiations that formed the basis for what became known as the Oslo 'peace process.' In 1994, this process led to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Officially, the PA is the partially autonomous governing body of the Palestinian residents of the occupied territories. In practice, it immediately became the Israeli proxy in the populated areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, suppressing resistance to the occupation and shattering the organs of civil society and the network of popular committees that had made the first Intifada such a popular and participatory uprising.

The official Israeli narrative about the 'peace process' depends on the hypocritical assumption that Israel is making concessions to the Palestinians, rather than returning to them a fraction of what is rightfully theirs. The course of negotiations was dictated by Israel's insistence that guaranteeing Israeli 'security' was the top priority. Rather than seeing the occupation itself as the true threat to the security of everyone in the region, Israel insisted on maintaining control



DISPLACED REFUGEE AND HER CHILD AFTER THE 1967 WAR.

over the borders, water, and other resources in the occupied territories; the 'right' to send its army into the occupied territories whenever it deemed it necessary; and final say over any piece of legislation or other decision passed by the Palestinian Authority. Israel also refused to dismantle the settlements, all of which are illegal under international law. In fact, Israel continued building settlements, confiscating lands, setting up checkpoints, and constructing the notorious Jewish-only road network which suffocated Palestinian cities and towns, turning them into large prisons.

More land was confiscated during the Oslo 'peace process' (1993-2000) than between 1967 and 1993. More restrictions were imposed on movement and travel under Oslo than during the first Intifada. The 1990s also saw the highest unemployment rates since the occupation began – sometimes reaching 80%. In addition, Israel made extensive use of what it calls 'closure' (and Palestinians call 'siege'), encircling towns with checkpoints and roadblocks, isolating villages and cities, halting all trade and economic activity, turning villages and cities into large prisons, and preventing travel for employment, education, medical emergency, or any other purpose. In short, Israel made sure that Palestinian life deteriorated under the rule of the Palestinian Authority. It is no wonder that the first suicide bombing in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict took place in 1994, during peace negotiations.

The 'peace process' finally collapsed when the head of the PA, Yasser Arafat, rejected the so-called 'generous' Israeli offer at Camp David in August 2000. During the 1990s,

Palestinians were struggling to establish a state on precisely 22% of historic Palestine. At Camp David, they were offered some 84% of the occupied territories, the 'right' to establish a capital in the village of Abu Dis and to rename the village 'East Jerusalem,' and the dismantling of a few small settlements. In return, the Palestinians were expected to give up

Now numbering five million, Palestinian refugees are the oldest refugee community in modern history.

the right of return for the Palestinian refugees and to accept Israeli sovereignty over most of the illegal settlements in the occupied territories.

The popular reaction to this offer emerged in the form of the second Intifada, but this time weapons were readily available in Palestine. Israel took advantage of the armed struggle as well as the increase in suicide bombings to justify its use of disproportionate military power against all Palestinians, non-civilians and civilians alike. After September 11, 2001, Israel gained strength from the 'war on terrorism' and took every opportunity to collectively punish all Palestinians. Israel has destroyed over 2000 homes, uprooted thousands of acres of trees, and systematically destroyed Palestinian civil, political, and economic infrastructure. The number of security prisoners held since the beginning of the second Intifada has risen from 800 to more than 8,000. One in eight prisoners is an administrative detainee, held without charge or trial. Israel has destroyed all of the Palestinian police stations, and then condemned the PA for its inability to control the Palestinian resistance.

The extreme policies of Ariel Sharon's government – whose impressive resume qualifies him to occupy a cell next to Slobodan Milosevic in the Hague – culminated in the



building of the Apartheid Wall. Once finished, the wall will allow Israel to de facto annex some 40% of the West Bank and split it into two large Bantustans, putting the majority of the Palestinians into the largest prison in the history of human kind.

The death of Yasser Arafat has important implications for the dynamics of the ongoing conflict. Most immediately, it will mean that Israel has to transform its approach

to managing the Intifada. Throughout the second Intifada, and to justify building the Apartheid wall, Israel has held Yasser Arafat personally responsible for the violence – accusing him of rejecting the 'generous' offer at Camp David, of starting the uprising to put pressure on Israel, and of directing the violence. Without a convenient scapegoat, Israel will have to find another explanation for the intense resistance to



the occupation. If the Israeli government is unable to install a compliant Palestinian leadership, it will almost certainly resort to the strategy it used during the first Intifada: promoting conflict between rival Palestinian groups and using the resulting violence as evidence that there is 'chaos' and a 'power vacuum' in the occupied territories. In fact, denunciations of the chaos in the West Bank have already begun, with descriptions of Arafat's burial in Ramallah and the attempted assassination of Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) in Gaza. With such chaos and violence, the pundits will tell us, only the completion of the wall can ensure the security of Israeli citizens.

Today, the Palestinian version of history has gained legitimacy. But that is not necessarily reason for hope. In the United States, public perceptions and media representations continue to be strongly biased in favor of the Israeli government. The Palestinian narrative of the present continues to

be de-legitimized as extremist, exaggerated, and biased. The violence that Palestinians confront as they struggle to live their daily lives and to challenge Israeli military domination is immense. But the desire for freedom is overwhelming. Solidarity is growing stronger throughout the world. And the Palestinian struggle continues.

Andy Clarno is a graduate student at the University of Michigan.

Basbar Tarabieh is an activist from the occupied Golan Heights, and is currently a graduate student at the University of Michigan.

BASIS FOR

COEXISTENCE

BY EDWARD W. SAID

It has been a year since the renowned Palestinian intellectual Edward Said died. His absence we feel, and his voice we miss. The following essay was written by Said in 1997 for the London-based Arabic daily al-Hayat. It reflects the humanity, compassion, eloquence, and originality that characterized all his writings.

One of the most important differences between Arabs in the Arab world and those who live in the West is that on a daily basis the latter are forced to confront the Jewish experience of anti-Semitism and genocide. Year after year new books, films, articles and photographs pour out in ever-increasing volume. Last year was the year of *Schindler's List*, the Steven Spielberg film that put the horrors of the Holocaust before literally hundreds of millions of people. There have been numerous controversies about the reasons for the German catastrophe, how an eminently civilized nation that had produced Europe's greatest philosophers and musicians, and among its most brilliant scientists, poets and scholars, could have descended not just into the madness of Nazism but in the most awful program of human extermination in history. Anyone who now lives in the United States, France, or elsewhere in Europe cannot ever escape the pictures of Auschwitz and Dachau, the constant reminders of Jewish suffering and torment, the ceaseless evidence of mass inhumanity directed against principally one people, the Jews, who despite their achievements and contributions to culture were reduced to the status of mere animals, to be gassed and cremated by the millions.

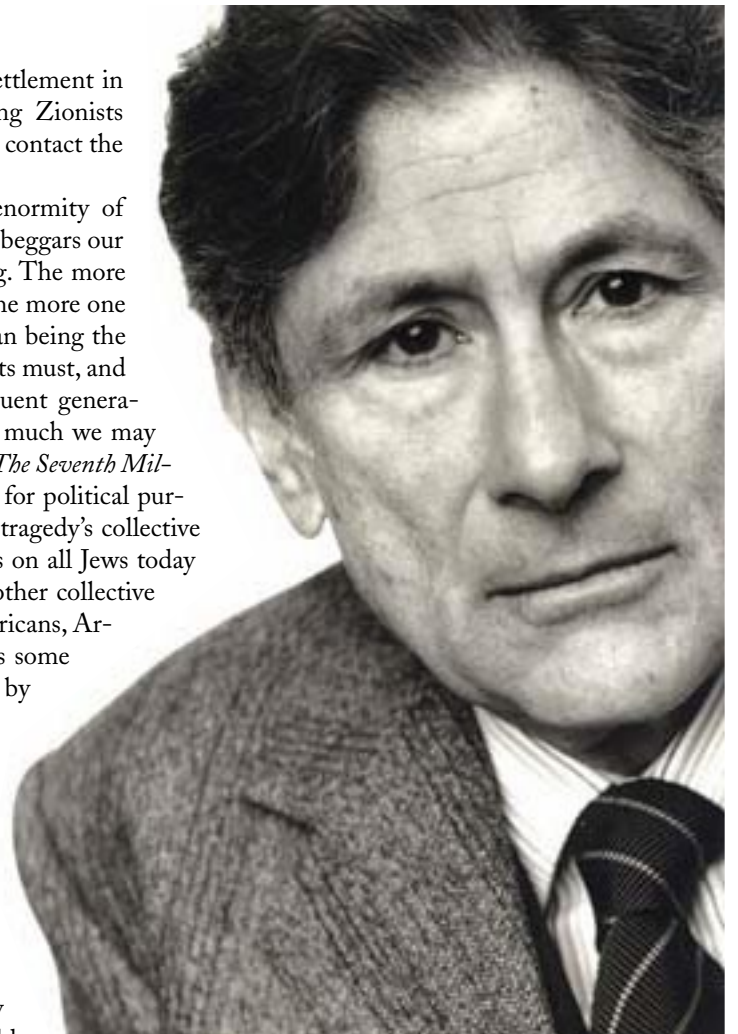
The only way of rising beyond the endless back-and-forth violence and dehumanization is to admit the universality and integrity of the other's experience, and to begin to plan a common life together.

It is certainly true that a great deal of this history is not only circulated everywhere in universities, schools, museums, and public discourse in the West but is also the stuff of controversy, provided most recently by Daniel Goldhagen's book *Hitler's Willing Executioners*. Goldhagen's thesis was that every German, not just the Nazi party nor only the psychopaths among Hitler's entourage, was prepared to and indeed did carry out the genocide against the Jews. Most historians have disagreed with this extreme view, but the question of European and more particularly Christian mass guilt continues to exercise the Western world. Among Jewish Americans whose community was spared the horror of what happened in Europe, the Holocaust is fervently studied and memorialized; it is noteworthy, for instance, that Washington is the site of an extremely lavish Holocaust Museum and not the place where the extermination of native Americans or millions of African slaves is commemorated. To some extent, therefore, the Holocaust is used retrospectively to justify contemporary political actualities. Routinely a connection is made by critics between the history of Jewish suffering and the triumph of the American Jewish community, or between the Holocaust and Israel, one leading to and vindicating the other. And certainly there has been enough history uncovered to show that the mainstream Zionist movement was at times less interested in saving the whole Jewish people from

elimination than in rescuing some for settlement in Palestine; by the same token right-wing Zionists (e.g. Shamir) during the Nazi period did contact the Germans for support and help.

All in all though, the sheer enormity of what took place between 1933 and 1945 beggars our powers of description and understanding. The more one studies this period and its excesses the more one must conclude that for any decent human being the slaughter of so many millions of innocents must, and indeed should weigh heavily on subsequent generations, Jewish and non-Jewish. However much we may concur, say, with Tom Segev in his book *The Seventh Million*, that Israel exploited the Holocaust for political purposes, there can be little doubt that the tragedy's collective memory and the burden of fear it places on all Jews today is not to be minimized; yes there were other collective massacres in human history (native Americans, Armenians, Bosnians, Kurds, etc.) And yes some were neither sufficiently acknowledged by the perpetrators nor adequately compensated, but there is no reason at all, in my opinion, not to submit oneself in horror and awe to the special tragedy besetting the Jewish people. As an Arab in particular I find it important to comprehend this collective experience in as much of its terrible concrete detail as one is capable: this act of comprehension guarantees one's humanity and resolve that such a catastrophe should never be forgotten and never again recur.

Such a view of Jewish suffering was afforded Arab commentators during the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Israel early in the 1960s when the trial was used by Israel to lay out the full horrors of Nazi genocide. Right-wing Lebanese Phalanges commentators claimed that the whole business was baseless propaganda, but elsewhere in the Arab press of the time (in Egypt and in the mainstream Lebanese press) the Eichmann affair was reported with due consideration given to the appalling events in wartime Germany. Yet according to a study of the period by Dr. Usama Makdisi, a young Lebanese historian at Rice University in Houston, Texas, Arab reports of the trial concluded that though what was done to the Jews in Germany was indeed a crime against humanity, Israel's crime of dispossessing and expelling an entire people constituted no less a crime of the same kind. Dr. Makdisi discovered that there was no attempt to equate the Holocaust with the Palestinian catastrophe, only that judged by the same standards, Israel and Germany were both guilty of heinous crimes of enormous magnitude. My own feeling is that perhaps the Eichmann trial was useful to the Arab side dur-



ing the psychological battles of the 1960s as a way of exposing Israeli callousness to the Arabs and not especially as an attempt to acquaint Arab readers with details of the Jewish experience.

I have mentioned all this in an article on coexistence because it underlines the historical irony of the present impasse, which perhaps only Arabs and Jews in the diaspora are capable of fully appreciating and in a sense transcending. There is now no real peace, as all but the most stubborn and naive observers will concede. As I said in my last article, Israel's recent behavior as embodied in Benjamin Netanyahu's erratic but regularly unprovoked brutality stretches in a continuum from the country's earliest days, in which contempt, the deployment of raw power and systematic brutalization of the Palestinians constituted the central premise. On the other hand, this lamentable policy does not in any way justify the retrospective attempts made by Israelis or Palestinians to use the Holocaust to justify Israeli cruelty or to dismiss the Holocaust as totally irrelevant or even implausible. Cynicism does not help; as Oscar Wilde once said, a cynic knows the price of everything but the value

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On January 27th, 2002 the world's terrorist profile shifted from "man" to "woman," and the racialized marker "irrationally violent Muslim extremist" was feminized with the emergence of "the first female suicide bomber" Wafa Idris.

In the aftermath of September 11th, with the reduction of the world to "those who are with us" vs. "those who are with terrorism," and the US media portrayal of Wafa Idris as brainwashed by Islam, will radical women of color shift the dominant discourse from a focus on whether we agree with Palestinian methods of resistance to a focus on what are the historical conditions that produce female-led martyr operations?

We have learned from African slavery and the colonization of the Americas that when women's options are limited they will continue to resist. Idris worked as a volunteer for the Palestinian Red Crescent Society. She carried children on stretchers, witnessed brutal deaths and injuries, and evacuated bodies literally in pieces daily. A friend of Idris who also works as a volunteer for the Red Crescent Society found herself holding the brain of a young boy in her hands. Today, children's games in Palestine mean making victory signs while playing on a stretcher carried by playmates, or playing dead in an alley several yards away from a place where older children are clashing with Israeli soldiers...

In spring 2001, journalists from the Egyptian newspaper *Al Ahram Weekly* interviewed international photographers who had been in Palestine to develop an art exhibit about children. According to the photographers:

The streets looked like a football match between kids and soldiers but the kids were being shot...it was surreal...the rules of the game: get shot or don't get shot. [...] Kids stand up and curse Israeli soldiers or they go in front of them and lift their shirt to bare their chest as they are shot. One kid had two bullets in him...he lifts his shirt and then points to the center of the chest calling, 'Give the third...come on...give me the third!'

The photographers were there taking pictures and would see kids dropping and being shot at with no sound. They explained, "Israelis were shooting at them from behind us...from a bridge with sniper rifles—with silencers. You couldn't hear a thing. They just started dropping."

Since the Intifada began four years ago, over 3,500 Palestinians have lost their lives and 27,500 have been injured. Palestinians have been locked up in ghettos controlled by the Israeli army—equipped with US supplied Apache helicopters and tanks. F-16's mow down people, houses, olive groves and fields on a daily basis. Babies die at birth at civilian check-points as Israelis shoot and kill ambulance drivers and target paramedics saving the injured.

Massacres sponsored by Israel cannot be viewed as accidents of history. They are systematized in an integral policy of the military. Israel was created by a process of war, by pillaging the very fabric of the indigenous Palestinian population; their land, their national identity and the Palestinian interpretation of honor (the violation of which has included violating mothers and daughters in front of their fathers, brothers or husbands). When we look back at the Israeli historical narrative we see how the massacres encouraged migration through fear. Moshe Dayan, the former prime minister and ex-Israeli general, admitted that every Israeli town in every Israeli neighborhood was built on the remains of a Palestinian village that had an Arab name with Arab people and an Arab history associated with it. Yitzhak Rabin, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate and the revered "martyr for peace," massacred civilians in villages during the 1967 wars. Ariel Sharon, who the Israeli public chose to elect in order to send us a message, was responsible for many massacres, including the massacre of Kibya in 1953, of Sabra and

Shatilla in 1982, and of Jenin in 2002.

Massacres were first instituted by Abba Eban, the cherished dove of Israel, in order to isolate the Palestinian guerilla from the Palestinian masses by targeting the masses instead of the guerrilla. Massacres were often accompanied by violence against women—particularly of pregnant women as a symbolic gesture of uprooting the child from the mother or the Palestinian from the land—and body mutilation. Today, Israeli soldiers forbid pregnant women in labor from crossing borders for medical care and few newborns survive these circumstances.

Palestinians are clear about the message behind Israeli massacres because the Israeli army advertises it on

re-creation of everything that is indigenous to the land of Palestine. The creation of Israel entailed a process of usurpation of indigenous cultural characteristics, including dance, food, clothing and the arts...all was renamed as "Israeli culture" and denied Palestinians. For the past fifty years, 70% of the Palestinian population has been forced into exile. Despite United Nations Resolution 194 that defines the right to return as an inalienable human right, Israel continues to deny and violate the right to return every time it confiscates land, every time it displaces a Palestinian family, every time it demolishes a home, every time it harasses civilians at checkpoints, every time it holds up workers, and every time it imposes closure upon the occupied territories. For those of you

The silencing of Palestine

Trying to locate Palestine in today's discussions of colonialism

BY NADINE NABER

bullhorns during massacres to trigger panic and fear. "If you surrender yourselves and leave your homes, you will not be hurt. If you don't, remember what happened in Deir Yassin." In Deir Yassin approximately 460 Palestinians, most of them women and children, were executed *en masse*, some tortured, some beaten to death. The survivors recounted the mutilation and torture of their own family members. As we look at the prospects for the future, we cannot forget the women and children executed in Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps in Lebanon in 1982—some of them killed using glass bottles instead of bullets so that the pain can be felt for hours. We cannot separate this from the current leader of the state of Israel, Ariel Sharon, for Israel is truly a democracy and the people have spoken, and they have said: "We have elected your killer and we know better—that Israel is a democracy for Jews and for Jews only—particularly white Jews, and particularly white Jews with money who come from Brooklyn, NY." Most of us here in the US are subsidizing this with six billion dollars a year of our tax money. And it cannot be separated from the colonization of the Americas wherein US democracy is founded on the genocide of African Americans, Native Americans, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and the list goes on...

Contrary to the US media's propaganda that portrays the occupation as a conflict between violent Palestinians and peaceful Israelis, as a religious war, and Palestinian deaths by "cross-fire," there is a massive disparity in the balance of power. Israel is a settler colonial state with the intention to colonize the entire region economically with the help of its military arm. Today, Palestinian people can no longer exist within the dominant Israeli national consciousness in order for this economic project to succeed. Today, the dominant view emerging in Israel is: Kill Palestinians until they say "Uncle."

According to this colonialist vision, the Palestinian people will become a relic of the past, at best, incorporated within a new Israeli construct as a minority, despite the fact that Israeli national and cultural consciousness is a European



PALESTINIAN WOMEN SALVAGE WHAT THEY CAN FROM THE REMAINS OF THEIR HOME IN KHAN YOUNIS CAMP, APRIL 2001. PHOTO BY AHMAD JADALLAH

who wondered about the peace process, more land has been confiscated from 1993 until now than from 1967-1993.

Palestine is not an anomaly that stands outside of history. Israel, the US imperial partner, has been an executor of discrimination and racism internationally. For example, Israel has provided its military expertise to other abusive undemocratic regimes in South Africa, Uganda, Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Indonesia.

What is missing in much of progressive activism in the US is a critique of colonialism that links the Palestinian struggle to other indigenous struggles and all struggles against imperialism. Where then, do radical feminists of color, with our focus on intersections of race, class, gender, sexism, homophobia, colonialism and imperialism locate Wafa Idris? Will we explore the impact of colonization on Idris' family? Palestinian families? Palestinian communities? increases in domestic violence? shifts in women's labor? Will we take interest in Palestinian feminists' analysis of women's resistance?

Where do we locate Wafa Idris in terms of feminist

theorizations of women's desperation and women's agency? Where do we locate her in the context of feminist heroine metaphors that highlight women's transformations from passivity to agency? How might we address Wafa Idris through feminist lenses that explore the ways that women who have no options take extreme measures? How might feminist theorizations of the body grapple with a woman who deploys the body as a weapon against an unstoppable military machine?

Radical feminisms of color provide useful frameworks for historicizing Wafa Idris' power-laden realities. Yet as long as we buy into the dominant corporate media propaganda that devalues Palestinian lives, blames the victim, and victimizes the oppressor, we will fail to recognize her struggle against the intersecting axes of colonialism, racism, classism, and sexism and we will fail to see her humanity. Let us explore more closely why we haven't seen consistency among progressive people of color and women of color in their critiques of colonialism so that they call Zionism out just as they call out other colonialist projects.

Cultural biases that are colonialist in nature often play themselves out even in some of the most radical political circles. The racist notion that Arabs are close to Islam and that Muslims are backwards and uncivilized often leads to the conclusion that Arab politics can never be progressive because they are "Muslim" and therefore support patriarchy, violence, savagery, barbarism, etc. A racist logic homogenizes all Arabs and Muslims, constructs them as inferior to whites/Europeans, and assumes that "Arab" and Islam are inherently backwards and patriarchal. Cultural biases create a sense of discomfort when it comes to "working with Arabs" and leads to pushing Arab/Arab Americans out of leadership, speaking

on their behalf, and rendering their struggles for liberation illegitimate. Among Arab/Arab American activists, a great deal of work is committed towards simply exposing the Palestinian struggle as a legitimate anti-colonialist struggle.

US progressive politics of color that seek acceptance in US society are an additional site of exclusion for those seeking national liberation. For decades, Arab activists (and Puerto Ricans, Filipinos, etc.) living in the US have said to US progressives: "I am not asking to become American. I'm not asking you to redefine me as a (US) 'person of color' or a 'woman of color.' I'm asking you to recognize our struggle for liberation and our desire to return home." Whether those seeking national liberation in the homeland might find solidarity among radical people/women of color spaces in the US has yet to be seen.

Moreover, by rendering any and all critiques of Israel anti-Semitic, the Zionist project has played a key role in silencing Arab/Arab American voices in the US. Whether in labor, media, education, politics—or even among radical women of color—the maintenance of a pro-Israeli position silences critiques of Israeli policy and demonizes its critics. An additional strategy through which Zionist discourses derail scholarly debate about the Palestinian struggle is to label the discussion as "too political."

Despite these struggles, several coalitions between radical people of color and the Palestinian struggle have come into their own. "Incite! Women of Color against Violence" and the "Women of Color Resource Center" are two organizations that have traced similarities between Palestinian women's struggles and indigenous women's struggles within the geographic borders of the US and abroad. In these spaces, groups of women of color and immigrant and refugee

women came together and affirmed that we will continue to fight against violence and colonization no matter how much they try to destroy us.

Post-September 11th, Sharon used Bush's rhetoric of the "war on terror" to intensify its ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people. As Israel slaughters Palestinians while the rest of the world sits back and watches, let us assert that Palestinians exist! And let us continue this struggle until Palestine is liberated from occupation and until all Palestinians are granted the right to return to their original homes or town of origin. Let us continue this struggle until all peoples are granted the right to negotiate their destiny on their own terms.

This essay was first presented as a speech at the INCITE! Women of Color against Violence! Color of Violence II Conference in March, 2002.

Nadine Naber is a board member of INCITE! Women of Color against Violence!; the Arab Women's Gathering Organizing Committee; and Radical Arab Women's Activist Network (RAWAN). She is an Assistant Professor in the Program in American Culture and the Department of Women's Studies at the University of Michigan. Her work focuses on negotiations of race, gender, and sexuality among Arab youth in San Francisco, California and shifts in the gendered-racialization of Arabs and Muslims after September 11th. Her writing has been published in The Journal of Asian American Studies, The Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies, and Meridians: Race, Transnationalism, and Feminism.

Existence and (in)visibility Part 1

BY TAREK R. DIKA

It is often said of Israel that it is the only democracy in the Middle East, the faithful seat of humanism amidst the undemocratic political culture of the Arabs, who are either incapable and/or ignorant of understanding, let alone implementing such values. I am interested in questioning the nuances of this approach; the subtleties through which it rhetorically, as an argumentative strategy, excludes and represses, i.e. makes invisible, the Palestinian.

Israel already exists. Why, then, is it ritually required of the Arabs, as a sort of pre-requisite to 'peaceful relations', to recognize this fact?

Despite the fact that it is highly problematic historically, let us take the argument on its own terms: 'Israel is a democracy.' Now, of course, we must mark the distinction between what is often called 'Israel proper' and the 'Occupied Territories.' Clearly, when we speak of Israel and democracy, we are making a reference to 'Israel proper' and not the Occupied Territories. This too is untrue, for even within 'Israel proper' one finds numerous discriminatory laws against non-Jews. What is important for our purposes is that this distinction has already begun to play into the rhetorical mechanism by distinguishing the 'Jewish' realm from the 'Palestinian.' The Jewish identity of Israel contains within itself that of the Palestinian, and is in fact inseparable from it. It is precisely this that the distinction between 'Israel proper' and the 'Occupied Territories' seeks to repress.

Israel, as a state, but also as a political, cultural, and religious identity or 'subjectivity', already exists. Why, then, is it ritually required of the Arabs, as a sort of pre-requisite to 'peaceful relations', to recognize this fact? When Yasser Arafat recognized Israel's 'right to exist' he gave de facto legitimacy to the historical claims of Zionism. The consequences of this choice are seen in the current intifada, which can partly be seen as a Palestinian refusal to accept this ambiguous and violent political/metaphysical category called 'existence.'

Only an identity that is perpetually unstable consistently requires the recognition by others of its right to exist; it seeks to accomplish rhetorically what has yet to be historically accomplished. Allow me to be crass: Israel already exists! It exists in a very real, tangible, and destructive way. It is at the same time a state that has no internationally recognized, definable borders (its being an expansionist state), a somewhat interesting allegory: its existence itself has yet to be defined.

In another sense, Israel does not exist, not as it would like to, for its existence necessitates the invisibility of the Palestinian, and we can only think of Israel as a democracy on the basis of this mystifying, disappearance effect. There is a subtle complexity here that must be attended to if we are to have a serious understanding of this conflict. It can be introduced with the question: is the Palestinian really invisible? For it is clear that the representation of the Palestinian is something that is managed through the media. In such a situation, the Palestinian is only made visible when s/he commits the act of suicide. But what sort of visibility is this? This making visible is also a making invisible, for this narrow visibility of the Palestinian is effectively one that restricts the wider, historical invisibility of the Palestinian people.

The Palestinian refusal is a refusal to disappear and an affirmation of the reality of the visible, for it is their existence that always seems to bear the marks of uncertainty.

The separation barriers, military incursions, total disregard for civilian life, destruction of civil institutions, and the segregationist legal codes (within 'Israel proper') are the tools by which one is made to disappear. But Palestinians still own the keys and deeds to homes that have long been colonized (or, to use the politically correct term, 'settled') and/or demolished, that is, they persist not only in their phenomenal or perceptual visibility, but historical visibility: the intifada is the battle of the visible and the invisible.

Jewish identity, in the context of Israel, has been repressing the visibility of the Palestinian since the birth of Zionism in late 19th century Europe, although it has yet to recognize that it is the Palestinian who partially makes the consolidation of Jewish identity possible. It is dialectical, that is, oppositional: Jewish identity now emerges in opposition to that of the Palestinian – it defines itself by not being Palestinian, which is the classic model of colonial hegemony.

Tarek R. Dika is a student and activist at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

This is an interview conducted across an ocean with Shlomit Yosef. She is a young Jewish woman whose family fled Iraq for Israel in 1951, and who I met recently on the Chinatown bus from Boston to New York. We continued to travel down the East Coast together, and spoke a great deal about her position as a Mizrahi (Middle Eastern or North African Jew) in Israel, as well as about her thoughts and actions with regard to the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. For those unfamiliar with the term, "Ashkenazi" refers to a European Jew; "Ashkenazim" is the plural. "Knesset" is the Israeli legislature.

*Her uncle, mentioned in the interview, is the late Samir Naqqash, one of the most highly acclaimed writers in the Arabic world. He was, and remains, sadly under-read – both within Israel, as a Jew who wrote in Arabic, and in the Arab world, as an Israeli Jew. He is featured in the film *Forget Baghdad*, a documentary on the lives of several Iraqi-Israeli Jews.*

What is the day-to-day climate since the second Intifada began? Five years along in this Intifada, how does the Israeli Left feel with regard to Palestinian resistance to the occupation?

Ever since the second Intifada started, the left-wing is in the process of dying. There is actually no real opposition to the right-wing in the Knesset or among the people. Left-wing people have lost their hopes for peace and no longer trust Palestinians.

I myself met many left-wing people who "converted" to the right because of the Intifada. In the years since it began, the climate is very pressing: being pro-peace with Palestinians is exceptional. Before the second Intifada, it was an acceptable way of thinking in the eyes of the public, but after the intifada started things changed, and being a leftist is not something to be proud of, in the eyes of most people.

While the right-wing consider the Palestinian resistance to be terrorism, no matter if it's against the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) or just civilians, the left see it as legitimate when it's against army targets but as terrorism when it's against civilians. The left believes in the Palestinian right to fight against the occupation, as long as it is against soldiers inside the territories.

What exactly is the work that you do with regard to Palestinian prisoners in Israel? Is there a feeling of double-consciousness, being an Israeli Jew and yet hailing from an Arab country, growing up surrounded by the Arabic language?

Along with my mother, I translate testimonies of Palestinian prisoners, who tell about the treatment they receive while held in Israeli prisons, the conditions they were under and how the investigators treated them. I also translate announcements of the killing of Palestinians by Israeli forces, and reports from hospitals about the conditions of injuries sustained. These translations are used by organizations struggling against torture.

About double-consciousness: being dark is something I get remarks on once in a while, and people sometimes say things regarding my Arabic ethnicity. Just last Friday, I got this racist remark about my color from an Ashkenazi Jew.

At many levels, I'm Israeli, like all Israelis. I feel close to the Hebrew language, to Israeli culture and Jewish heritage. But on other levels, I listen to Arabic music, to

singers who are known all over the Arab world, I watch Arabic movies at home—I grew up on that. In many cases, I feel much better—and much more comfortable—when I am with Arab friends, because it opens up another side of me that is locked whenever I'm with my Jewish friends. Many times, I don't feel like I'm at home in Israel, it happens quite a lot that I feel far from Israeli values and closer to Arabic values. If I want to drive in my car and listen to Arabic songs, I can't do that if I have someone with me, because it'll make them feel uncomfortable. Also, some of the Arab customs we have are considered to be primitive and most Mizrahim feel ashamed of it.

So, when I am with Arabs, I feel much more comfortable. But growing up in Israel has had an influence on me. I am not Arabic like Arabs.

In some sense, I feel like I am under occupation: the fact that I can't listen to Arabic music without being considered strange, or crazy, and the fact that when my uncle passed away, the Israeli newspapers hardly wrote about him, despite him being Israeli, just because he wrote in Arabic, while in Arab countries they dedicated full front-pages to his death, and the fact that some people in my family are ashamed of their own customs, really makes it clear to me: it's the Mizrahim cultural occupation as well. Of course, there's no room for comparing who's the real victim here, that's clear, but my point is that being Mizrahit in Israel makes me feel even more obligated to resist the occupation. It's like the name of Huntington's book, "The Clash of Civilizations" – you are

Multiple Occupations and Mizrahi Life: An Interview with Shlomit Yosef

BY GAURAV JASHNANI

in a Western country that hates everything which has to do with where you came from, and you are caught in this clash. These things really make you develop double-consciousness.

Every Israeli citizen is required to serve in the armed forces for two years upon reaching the age of eighteen. What was the mandatory service you did with the IDF? What was the situation concerning your army service with regard to your Arabic skills?

I served in the IDF as a secretary. The fact that I speak Arabic was useful for the army, but I refused to take part in [doing intelligence work] out of choice. At that time, it wasn't an ideological reason. It was other reasons – I just didn't want to serve in the army at all. In the end, my role wasn't related to my knowledge of the Arabic language.

What is the situation for you, being Mizrahi and participating in the resistance against both occupation of Palestine and anti-Arab prejudice? Are you perceived differently, in your opposition to the occupation, than you would be as an Ashkenazi?

A few days ago, the Knesset voted for clearing out Israeli forces from Gaza, but that was forced on the Israeli government by pressure from the White House, and not out of free will. If you asked the people in the streets, they'd say they support the occupation

Generally, if you are against it, no matter if you are Ashkenazi or Mizrahi, you get this look like you fell from the moon. The Mizrahim in some cases get an extra bonus: some will see them as Arabs, who cooperate with their Arab brothers, the Palestinians. More of the people who support an end to the occupation are Ashkenazim and less Mizrahim.

So as a Mizrahit who is against it, I get surprised looks: from Mizrahim in the right wing – an accusing face for ruining the Mizrahim efforts to show how much they hate the Arabs – and from the Ashkenazim in the right wing – a patronizing face, saying I am an Arab, and I am against the Israeli state and pro the Arab countries.

Most of the Mizrahim are anti-Arabs themselves. I think it's because they come from Arab countries and don't want to be identified as Arabs, for Arabs are the enemy. Most of them feel ashamed with their ethnic background and want to prove to the Ashkenazim that they are Western-oriented (the East is grasped as primitive). Therefore, they reject their own cultural identity and go more extreme and hate the Arabs; I believe it is more common among less educated people.

Acting against prejudice is hard: you grow up on phrases like, "This shirt is Arabic" (when you want to rip on someone's shirt cause it's ugly), or "Ibrahim and Yusuf" (when someone farts, he gives it an Arab name), and stuff like that. Even left-wing people use these phrases, because it is so common that they don't even pay attention to its meaning. Being Arab is something bad. If I connect myself in some way to the Arab culture it automatically creates antagonism in the person that stands in front of you. This is hard. Sometimes people rip on Palestinians or just Arabs and their customs because they look at them through Orientalist lenses. I can understand their behavior and can't do anything about it, except for resenting them and arguing with them.

Did you feel a personal connection to the war in Iraq when it began? Do you still identify to some extent with Iraq as your homeland, or worry about Iraqis dying under sanctions or occupation, beyond the basic sense of human tragedy and suffering?

When the war in Iraq started I felt so sad. And I do think that it was sadder for me because it was in Iraq and not in some other place. I couldn't stop thinking about my mother's cousin who stayed in Iraq, and is maybe still there today. How did she feel, did she survive? There was always the hope to be able and go back to Iraq, to visit the houses my parents grew up in. And then I heard on the news that the neighborhood where my mother grew up was exploded, around the house she used to live in and loved so much. This house is probably gone now.

This is sad. What's more sad is that I'm sure after this war, Iraqis hate Jews more than ever before (because Israel supported it). This war was another step towards taking away the good memories Iraq has from the Jews that lived there. Iraqis don't know anymore what it's like to live with Jews, because the last time it happened was fifty years ago, and the ones who experienced it aren't alive to remember how good the relations were between Muslims, Christians and Jews there. Just from my mother's stories, which I have heard all my life, I feel like it's my home in a way. And it's hard to see it in a war.

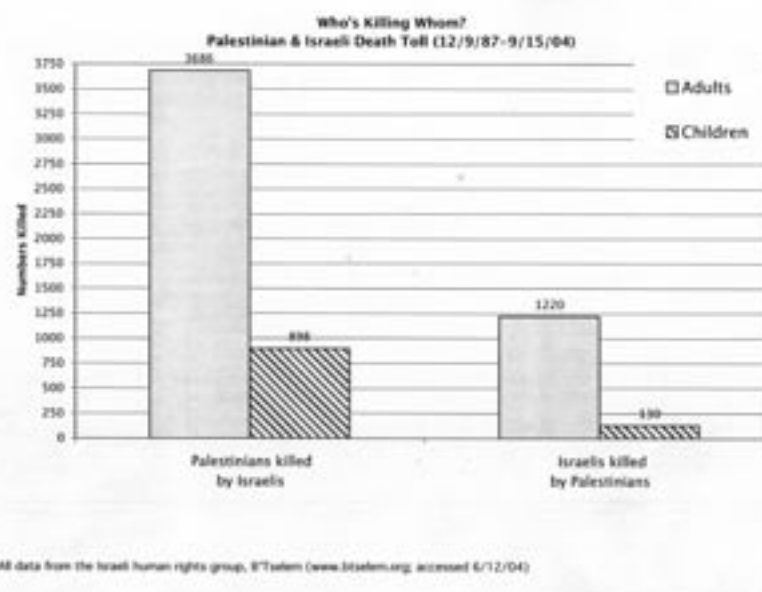
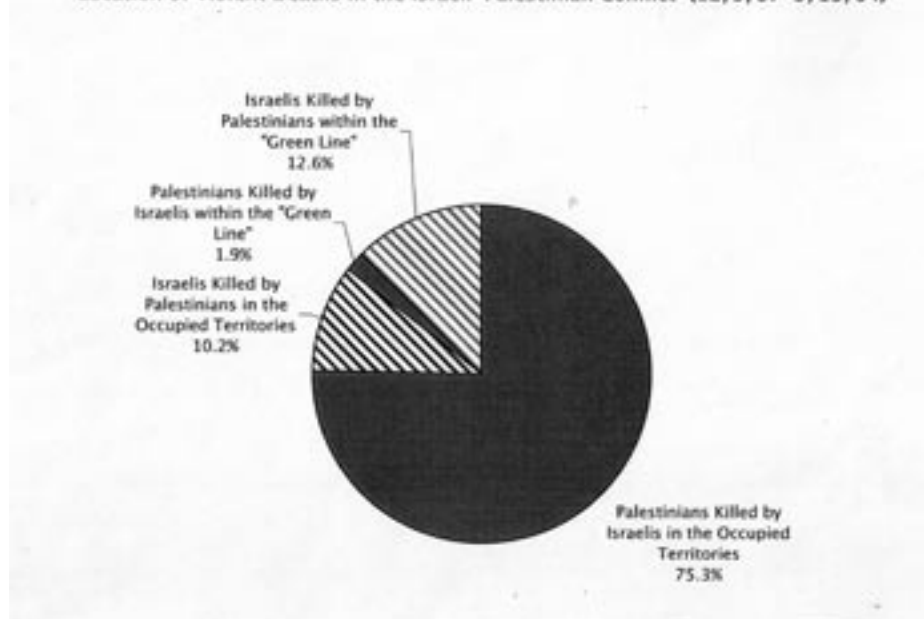
Gaurav Jashnani is a somewhat recent college graduate, fascinated by grassroots efforts at broad-based social transformation. He currently resides nowhere in particular (though he prefers Ann Arbor, Chicago and Richmond), and is praying nightly for the grant he applied for to come through, so that the government will pay for him to study the death of capitalism in Argentina.

Unequal Power, Unequal Suffering

Human Costs of the Israel-Palestine Conflict

BY MICHELLE J. KINNUCAN

Location of Violent Deaths in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (12/9/87-9/15/04)



Death Toll

Number of Palestinian children, aged 16 years or younger, killed by Israelis from 1987 through 2000: 386.

Number of Israeli children, aged 16 years or younger, killed by Palestinians from 1987 through 2000: 18¹.

From December 9, 1987, through October 15, 2004:

- Israelis killed 3,686 Palestinian adults and 898 Palestinian children; “more than fifty percent of the Palestinians killed” by Israelis through 2003 were unarmed.
- Palestinians killed 1,220 Israeli adults and 130 Israeli children.
- 77.2% of all those killed have been Palestinians; 22.8% have been Israelis.
- 87.4% of all children killed have been Palestinians; 12.6% have been Israelis.
- In 2002, the worst year for the killing of children on both sides, Israelis killed 153 Palestinian children; Palestinians killed 37 Israeli children².

Children's Health:

Prevalence in 2002 of moderate and severe malnutrition among Palestinian children, aged 6-59 months: 19.5%.

Prevalence in 2002 of moderate and severe malnutrition among Israeli children, aged 6-59 months: 0.0%³.

Infant mortality per 1,000 live births of Palestinian children under five years old (2002): 25.

Infant mortality per 1,000 live births of Israeli children under five years old (2002): 6⁴.

Percentage of Palestinian children under five years old requiring oral rehydration therapy for diarrhea in the last two weeks (1994-2002): 43%.

Percentage of Israeli children under five years old requiring oral rehydration therapy for diarrhea in the last two weeks (1994-2002): 0%.

Widespread Palestinian malnutrition is the result of what a UK Parliamentary committee concluded called “a deliberate Israeli strategy of putting the lives of ordinary Palestinians under stress as part of a strategy to bringing the population to heel.” The oral rehydration therapy rate is an indication of access to clean water⁵.

Water Consumption:

Palestinian per capita water consumption in the West Bank for domestic, urban, and industrial use: 70 liters per day.

Israeli per capita water consumption for domestic, urban, and industrial use: 350 liters per day.

World Health Organization and US Agency for International Development recommended per capita water consumption for “basic consumption”: 100 liters per day. The Israeli government controls all of the water resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including rain water collection⁶.

Home Destruction:

Number of Palestinian homes destroyed by Israelis since September 29, 2000: 2,202 (14,436 partially destroyed).

Number of Israeli homes destroyed by Palestinians since September 29, 2000: 1⁷.

1. Based upon data from the Israeli human rights group, B'Tselem (www.btselem.org; accessed 10/28/04).

2. Ibid.

3. Nutritional Assessment of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. US Agency for International Development, Sept. 2002. (www.carewb.org); UNICEF (www.unicef.org/infobycountry/israel_statistics.html); “Mission to the Occupied Palestinian Territories” Addendum to “The right to food.” UN Commission on Human Rights.

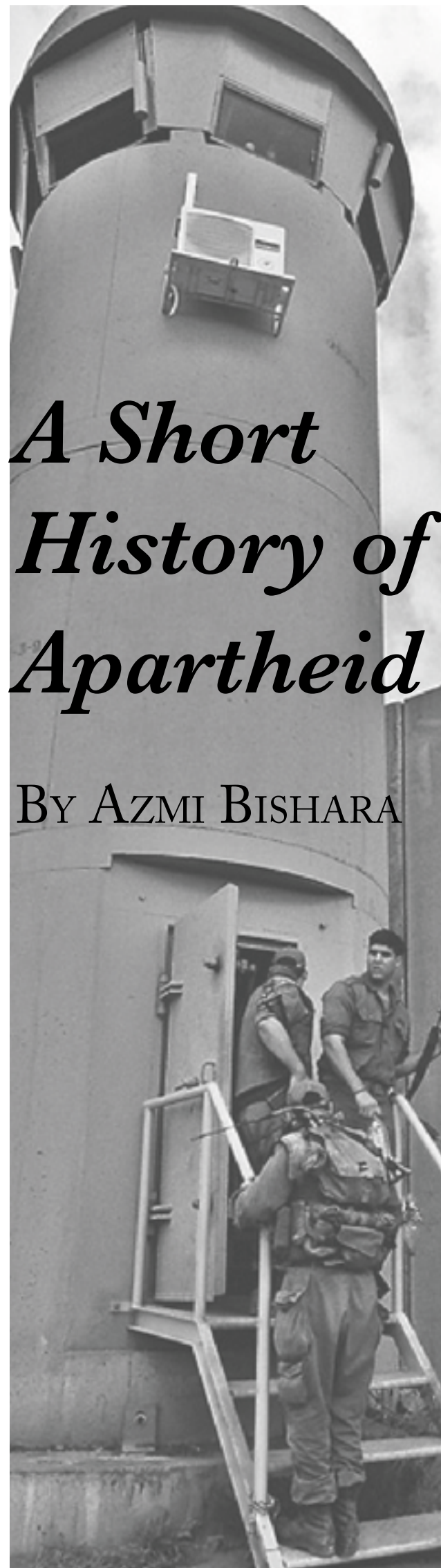
4. Ibid.

5. UNICEF (www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ ; accessed 10/7/04).

6. B'Tselem.

7. If Americans Knew (www.ifamericansknew.org ; accessed 10/7/04).

Michelle J. Kinnucan is an independent scholar whose work has previously been published in Agenda, CommonDreams.org, Nonviolent Resister, PS: Political Science and Politics, and The Record. Her 2004 article on the Global Intelligence Working Group is featured in Project Censored yearbook, Censored 2005: The Top 25 Censored Stories. She can be contacted at: haymarketgal@yahoo.com.



A Short History of Apartheid

BY AZMI BISHARA

Rhetoric about demography so dominates Israel's political discourse that one might be tempted to assume that Israel has abandoned its preferred designation as the Jewish democratic state in favour of the Jewish demographic state. The condition has reached the stage where it might be diagnosed as an advanced case of demographomania. The mania, of course, is rooted in Zionist principles, in the need to maintain a Jewish majority capable of implementing a democracy that will absorb the Diaspora, accommodate pioneer settlement and the assumption of a common history, and that allows for the fetishisation of military service. For without any of the above Israel would have to practice government by the minority, which inevitably leads to apartheid or racial segregation, to government by a national minority that sees the state as the embodiment of its legitimacy. Such practices demand dual sets of legality.

Because a state with a Jewish minority in Palestine was never on the cards displacement always lay at the core of the Zionist project for a Jewish state located in a country with an Arab majority and in the midst of an Arab region. It is no coincidence that the portion of land that was initially supposed to host the Jewish state was "ethnically cleansed" early. Along the once flourishing Palestinian coast only two Arab villages remain today.

The first task, then, was to cleanse the areas of the Jewish state -- as defined in the partition resolution -- of Arab inhabitants. This was followed by the displacement of Arabs from the Galilee and other parts of the presumed Arab state. The result: a large Jewish majority made it possible to impose the democratic sovereignty of the Jews, albeit in a non-liberal manner and with military and settler values. Thus did Jewish democracy turn religious commitment into a tool of national formation while it pillaged the Arab Palestinian people. The uprooting of Palestinians in 1948 was an exercise in demographic separation through displacement.

Today's plans for demographic separation -- now called peace initiatives -- invariably acknowledge the impossibility of repeating that particular process. That much, at least, was acknowledged by Igal Allon in the Allon plan following the 1967 War. He then suggested that populated areas be returned to Jordan. Ehud Olmert spoke in similar vein in defending his recent initiative on separation, or unilateral disengagement. "Transfer is no longer possible. It is neither morally defensible, nor realistic to start with."

So long as transfer is impossible, then, it becomes necessary to find another model of segregation. Which is why Israel's Chief of Staff Moshe Ya'alon has no qualms describing the current phase as "the second half of 1948".

The displacement of 1948, and the post-1967 occupation -- an occupation that shirks annexation by preferring a formula that includes "the application of Israeli law in the West Bank and Gaza" though without, of course, granting citizenship and political rights to the occupied -- are two cases of demographic segregation undertaken on behalf of a Jewish majority.

The ugliness of the contradictory ideology of the Israeli right may have been thrown into greater relief by Sharon's statements of last year but the truth had been there for all to see since Likud came to power in 1977.

The Palestinians, apparently, live beyond the pale of citizenry and political life. They dwell beyond a political system based on a Jewish majority, and this without the benefit of a wall. Once this society that lived -- and still lives -- under occupation evolved its struggle for national sovereignty and for separation in an independent state comprising Palestinian citizens Israel responded with plans to separate from the Palestinians on its own terms. What Israel wants to separate itself from is the largest possible number of Palestinians living on the smallest possible area of land. The self-rule plans negotiated with Egypt in January 1980, the Oslo Accords, the Camp David proposals, the unilateral withdrawal schemes by Sharon

and Olmert, the Geneva initiative by the Zionist Israeli left, and the separation wall, are merely different manifestations of such thinking.

The flaw at the heart of all such initiatives, the clear evidence that they are destined not to lead to any real peace, is that they are rooted in a process of separation made necessary by the demand to maintain a large Jewish majority in the Israeli political entity.

This is the demographic context within which Zionism deals with the question of land. For some reason Zionist political culture and symbols are steeped in an unwavering conviction that any unpopulated land is ripe for confiscation and annexation. This assumption is so blatant that Arabs feel guilty when they leave a plot of land vacant for any vacant land is threatened with confiscation, either to become part of a settlement, a road to a settlement or a natural protectorate.

Any uninhabited land is land fit for carving off. Here lies the iniquity of the demographic argument. On the one hand it is racist. On the other it has nothing to do with land. Segregation may take place without land, as in the case of displacement. Or it may take place on the smallest possible piece of land, as Sharon wants.

Some Arabs and Palestinians have internalised the logic of Zionist demographic scare tactics to the extent that they see the slur of "demographic bomb" as something good. They boast of the Palestinian woman's womb, for lack of anything better to boast. Is this what our unified strategy has come to? Aside from the primitiveness and backwardness of regarding women as wombs the demographic factor is not, in itself, conducive to righteousness. It embraces a racist vision that is not driven towards just solutions. Racism is the basic motive for separation.

"They are there and we are here," Barak's electoral slogan once announced. Struggle is being waged so that the terms of this separation are not overly comfortable for Israel, not terminally tragic for the Palestinians living under occupation.

That internalising the colonialist vision has led to the cult of numbers, of quantity not quality, is saddening. Often even progressive political and social forces, people who want a truly better future, such as a bi-communal state, use demographic scare tactics: unless withdrawal is implemented to the lines of 4 June 1967, and unless the Palestinian state is established within this border, we will become a demographic majority, and you will have no alternative but to agree to a bi-communal state.

Those who want to persuade people of the merits of a bi-communal state should not be scaring people with the demographic argument. The argument is embedded in racist soil. It can never sprout a healthy plant.

Perhaps many Arab leaders are unaware that the idea of racial segregation came first from the Labour Party. The first to call for Israel's unilateral separation from the Palestinians, under the highest possible wall, was Hayim Ramon. Likud adopted the proposal and went, literally, to the wall. The left is using the demographic threat to scare Israelis. It is trying to convince the Palestinians to abandon all other logic, through a virtual agreement that serves the segregationists. A worthier left would have sought peace in power and fought racial segregation in opposition. The left should fight the wall rather than draw up virtual agreements. This is the litmus test.

So long that the logic of any settlement remains demographic, so long that it all boils down to separation from the largest possible number of Palestinians, land remains a secondary issue in the creation of a Palestinian entity.

Zionist colonialism inhabits the space between two extinct models -- those provided by South Africa and French practice in Algeria. It is not a blend of the two, but rather a distillation of the worst in each.

In South Africa, that pioneer of apartheid, racial segregation was not absolute. It took place within a framework

of political unity. The racist regime saw blacks as part of the system, an ingredient of the whole. The whites created a racist hierarchy within the unity, according to their own vision of the universe. They interpreted Christian religious texts accordingly. Blacks and whites, then blacks and whites and coloureds, were given different ranks and legal status within a frame of a unified system -- apartheid.

Apartheid is one system for whites and blacks. The whites did not think for a moment of creating separation walls running along entire provinces. Assaulting nature in such a pattern was unthinkable. What they did was circumvent entire black towns, ghettos, and squatter camps, and restrict the movement of their inhabitants. The only walls they created were those to their own private dwellings. Behind these walls they retreated, in their gardens, with their black servants.

The struggle for freedom in South Africa was a struggle against segregation and discrimination within the same political entity. Demographic segregation was not even considered. The entire logic of the struggle was to fight racism and segregation -- the goal to create one nation of blacks and whites, a South African nation, a single democratic and sovereign state. This endeavour is still underway and it is premature to judge its outcome. Yet such is the thinking behind it.

French colonisation presented an opposite model, replete with geographic, cultural and societal separation between two entities, the occupier and the occupied. Whereas the Boers saw South Africa as their home and fought a ferocious war against what they considered British occupation, the colonisers of Algeria had a "mother country", an offshore home to look to. The impulse of French colonialism was to achieve unity within the separation between France and

Algeria, not separation within the unity, as was the case in South Africa.

This is why French colonialism was accompanied by the hectic quest to give Algeria, and its inhabitants, a French makeover. This is why the liberation movement adopted pure separatist dogma, with a stress on identity that still marks Algerian society. Even class conflicts and domestic politics in Algeria resemble a conflict of identity, one parodying the experience of the struggle against colonialism. The separation achieved through independence was a full one, of land and people. Over a million settlers left the country, even though they were given the choice of remaining as Algerian citizens.

The case of Palestine is not an attempt to achieve separation within unity, as was the case with apartheid, nor is it an attempt to unify what was originally separate, as was the case in Algeria. The Israelis identify with the land, but keep away from the locals. The Israelis want to stay in the country and deny citizenship to its inhabitants. Or they want to be separate but hold on to the settlements. Barriers and walls are the rule, not the exception.

This unique type of colonialism does not seek to "develop" the inhabitants, as other colonialists once did in homage to the "white man's burden". This colonialism displaces people, confiscates their land or bypasses them (the term, often applied to roads, is pertinent). It "develops" the land for settlement, but not for the inhabitants. Because of this Moshe Dayan and his aides adopted a policy of open bridges after the 1967 War. They wanted the Palestinians to have an economic and demographic outlet to Jordan, the Gulf countries, and other parts of the region, so as to free Israel from the economic and other responsibilities commonly assumed by occupying authorities. These open bridges helped

the occupation endure, and helped the people endure it.

In all former colonies one comes across traces of French, English, Dutch, Belgian, or Muscovite architecture. One can find hospitals and administrative offices, prisons, railways, even universities built by the occupiers. Not in the areas seized in 1967. Not one Israeli building, not even a prison, is to be seen in Ramallah, Nablus or Gaza. Everything there was built by Arabs. There is not a trace of an Israeli building in Arab areas, apart from the settlements and their related infrastructure.

Separation, within separation, is the logic of Zionist colonialism, the thinking behind the wall of racial segregation, where Israel continues its crimes of barbarism. Separation is the logic underlying Sharon's recent proposals for further obstacles east of the wall, where Israeli forces will be stationed to oversee the outskirts of Palestinian towns and villages.

It is difficult to describe the maze of walls and barriers constructed around the villages in the vicinity of Jerusalem. It is difficult to imagine the ugliness brought about in the course of controlling people and land: gates and observation towers, double walls, barbed and electrical wires. What we have here is a wide-scale recreation of the detention camp which Giorgio Agamben called the essence of the modern fascist state. This is a place where the exception becomes the rule, and the state of emergency becomes permanent, to use the words of Walter Benjamin.

Azmi Bishara is a leading Palestinian political activist and member of the Israeli Knesset.

CAUSE OF DEATH: ANTI-TRANSGENDER VIOLENCE.



6th Annual Transgender Day of Remembrance Saturday, November 20th UM Michigan League 911 N. University, Ann Arbor

6:00 PM--Gather in front of the Michigan League (south entrance) at the University of Michigan for a short march (the march will be canceled in case of rain, snow, or extreme cold)

6:30 PM SHARP--Begin march (unless canceled)

7:00 PM--Public reading of the names and brief biographies of those being remembered and a "Speak Out".

This portion will feature a talk by K. Foula Dimopolous and open reflections to audience members who would

like to share additional thoughts. Refreshments will be provided.

Location: Koessler Room, 3rd floor, Michigan League.

8:15 PM--Showing of the award winning documentary film, *Ke Kulana He Mahu* (2001, 67 mins). **Location:** Koessler Room, 3rd floor, Michigan League.

For info., call WRAP at 734.995.9867 or e-mail TransgenderAdvocacyProject-owner@yahoo.com

Pictured above are Reshae McCauley, Precious Armani, Toni "Delicious" Green, and Bella Martinez. These four people lived in different cities, had different friends, and lived different lives.

Yet each of them have one thing in common: Each was killed to due anti-transgender hatred or prejudice.

These four are not alone: every month, at least one person is murdered due to anti-transgender violence. These are just four of the nineteen deaths attributed to anti-transgender violence since the end of last November.

This violence has continued for years, and is expected to continue at this rate — unless we take action.

We come together this November to say no more to this violence!

Data: Remembering Our Dead, <http://www.rememberingourdead.org>

Sponsored locally by:

The Transgender Advocacy Project of the Washtenaw Rainbow Action Project with the UM Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Affairs; Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG) Ann Arbor; Rowan Educational Network; Oasis Ministry of Michigan; UM Transforum; Triangle Foundation; & Gay Lesbian Straight Educational Network (GLSEN)-Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti, Eastern Michigan University Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Resource Center

From Kippenheim to Palestine

A Holocaust survivor speaks out

BY HEDY EPSTEIN

In 1939, I left the village of Kippenheim, Germany, on a Kindertransport with a small group of children allowed to go to England and, thus, I survived the Shoah, or Holocaust, as it is also known. I never saw my parents, Ella and Hugo Wachenheimer, again; they did not survive the war against the Jews. Deported first to Vichy France, they were then sent in boxcars by French collaborators to the Nazi killing center at Auschwitz-Birkenau where they were both murdered in 1942. The French government recently sent me \$29,180 as reparation for its complicity in this atrocity--\$14,590 for each parent. Unwilling to spend this tainted blood money on myself, I gave it instead to Israelis and Palestinians who are working courageously to find a wise solution to the conflict that has torn their communities apart for decades.

In December 2003 and January 2004, I went to Israel and the occupied territories. I laid flowers and lit candles for my parents at a monument near Jerusalem to the memory of the Jews deported from France to the death camps. I visited with some of the peace activists I had supported financially and I went to Palestine as a member of the International Solidarity Movement to observe the difficult conditions of daily life experienced by the Palestinians living under military occupation. It would have been enough to reach out and touch just one Palestinian and place my hand on her shoulder and tell her, "I am with you in your pain" but I saw and did much more.

Near Der Beilut, I saw the Israeli army turn a water cannon on our nonviolent protest and I remembered Birmingham, Alabama in 1963. I wondered why a supposedly democratic society responds to a peaceful demonstration by trying, literally, to drown out the voice of our protest.

In Bethlehem, I saw a Caterpillar bulldozer ripping up centuries-old olive trees to clear a path for rolled razor-wire and anti-tank trenches dividing the town where Jesus was born.

In Qalqilya, I was dwarfed by an ugly wall that rises over 25 feet, keeps farmers from their fields, and hems in 50,000 residents on all sides.

In Masha, I joined a nonviolent demonstration against the Separation Wall. My eyes fixed on a red sign warning of "MORTAL DANGER" to any who dare cross this "fence." Israeli spin doctors often cite Robert Frost: "Good fences make good neighbors." They, apparently, have never read the next lines of Frost's poem:

Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out
And to whom I was like to give offence

My ruminations on a New England stonewall were shattered by gunfire. I saw Israeli soldiers aiming at unarmed

Israeli and international protestors. I saw blood pouring out of Gil Na'amati, a young Israeli whose first public act after completing his military service was to protest against the construction of this wall. I saw shrapnel lodged in the leg of Anne Farina, one of my traveling companions from St. Louis and I remembered Kent State and Jackson State, where National Guardsmen opened fire in 1970 on protesters against the Vietnam War.

I knew that Palestinians--whether citizens of Israel or not--are routinely subjected to private and rigorous questioning and inspection whenever they pass through Ben-Gurion Airport but nothing prepared me for what I experienced at the end of my journey. I knew that what I had said and done could be viewed by some as controversial but surely, I thought, it was not threatening. Thus, I did not imagine that airport security forces would single out a 79-year-old Shoah survivor for despicable treatment--holding me for five hours and performing a strip and cavity search. The only shame these security officials expressed was to turn their badges around.

Did my small voice of protest really necessitate such treatment in order to protect the military superpower of the region? The only conceivable purpose for this gross violation of my bodily integrity was to humiliate me and to terrify me. Of course, I felt humiliated by this outrage but I refuse to be terrified by cowards who hide their identity when they engage in such unnecessary disrespect. So, I am speaking out against their brutality, which will remind me constantly that

immoral. So, I grieve the loss of life in Israel from the latest suicide bomb and I would never give a cent to the groups that organize this cruel and random violence.

Likewise, I reject Israeli state terrorism. How else does one describe the dropping of a one-ton bomb on an



We Jews who survived the Shoah know all too well that the intentional targeting of civilians is illegal and immoral.

I have been privileged to share in a very small way the inhuman and degrading experiences that I saw Palestinians suffer regularly in this utterly unnecessary occupation.

Peace will come to the Middle East only when both sides stop the killing and make compromises. For Israel, this means ending its military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. For Palestinians, this means living in peace with their Jewish neighbors. This view is widely shared in both communities but some cannot stand that I, a Holocaust survivor, would dare to articulate it, let alone financially support it. I am accused of "disloyalty" to Israel, of being a "self-hating Jew," and of supporting "terrorism."

I most emphatically do not support terrorism of any sort, by anyone--not the terrorism of Hamas, Islamic Jihad, or the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade. Suicide bombings kill and maim innocent people riding in buses or taking a meal in a restaurant. We Jews who survived the Shoah know all too well that the intentional targeting of civilians is illegal and

apartment house in Gaza to assassinate a terrorist suspect when that same massive bomb kills nine little Palestinian children? I grieve the loss of these lives, too, and reject wasteful military expenditures that sustain the violence and postpone a just resolution of the conflict.

*Hedy Epstein is a Shoah survivor and educator who lives in St. Louis, Missouri. She was a research analyst for the prosecution of Nazi doctors at the Nuremberg trials. Her story is featured in the Academy-Award winning film, *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport*. She recently spoke at Ann Arbor's First Presbyterian Church after standing vigil with Jewish Witnesses for Peace and Friends at Beth Israel Congregation in Ann Arbor. Her web site is at www.hedypestein.com and she can be reached at hedy@hedypestein.com.*

Good Shabbos: Holding Vigil at Beth Israel

BY HENRY HERSKOVITZ

The synagogue vigil in front of Ann Arbor's Beth Israel Congregation by Jewish Witnesses for Peace and Friends (JWPF) has entered its second year. Many indicators suggest it is a very effective method of bringing Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian land to the public eye. News articles have been written about our group, some of them front page stories. The Ann Arbor News, Oakland Press, Michigan Daily, and the national magazine, Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, are a few of the publications which have reported on our message.

Our group's activities have been the topic of local community meetings, including the Jewish Federation of Washtenaw County's "Jewish Conversation"--attended by over 300 Jewish residents. Letters to the editor and "Other Voices" pieces have flooded the opinion pages of our local newspapers. Our vigils have also attracted the support of folks like Holocaust survivor and activist, Hedy Epstein, and the noted intellectual, Noam Chomsky.

Our simple goal is to stop U.S. aid to Israel, which is now at \$15 million per day. To get Congress to stop the funding and to stop signing all those "we support Israel no matter what it does" letters we need to convince the American Jewish community to stop their unthinking support of the Israeli government--directly and through powerful lobbying organizations such as the American-Israel Political Affairs Committee (AIPAC).

In 1997, in the National Review, the neoconservative hawk Elliot Abrams, lamenting weak "support for Israel" by secular Jews, wrote, "Where is it possible to find a group of Jews who are committed to Israel ... ? The answer is, in a synagogue on the Sabbath." We don't usually find ourselves agreeing with people like Abrams and aren't too comfortable doing so but we reached a similar conclusion. Thus, we have gone where Jews congregate--Sabbath services--to appeal to them to discontinue their support of a state that claims to act in the name of Jews everywhere but which does not.

The genesis of the vigils was simple and for this I need to switch to a first person, singular narrative. My first trip to Israel and the Occupied Territories was a January 2002 tour sponsored by the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice's Middle East Task Force. The living conditions under occupation were shocking and my first reaction was entirely selfish: "When the eyes of the world open enough to pull the sheep's clothing off this wolf called Israel, anti-Semitism is going to flow like lava," is the mixed metaphor that appears in my notes of the trip.

On this first trip, I met university presidents and professors, teachers and religious leaders. I visited the offices of B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights group, and Yossi Sarid,

former head of Israel's Meretz (Labor) party. The trip, however, did not supply me with enough "on the ground" information and eleven months later, I returned to the occupied West Bank to work with the International Solidarity Movement (ISM). Meeting and talking with ISM co-founder Huwaida Arraf at the second international Palestinian Solidarity Conference in Ann Arbor in October 2002 was critical to my decision to return.

Three weeks in the Balata refugee camp clearly demonstrates that the situation in Palestine is not a case of chicken-and-the-egg, where the beginning is indistinguishable from the end. It is extremely clear that the situation is one of cause-and-effect. Illegally constructed Jewish-only settlements (the cause) are resisted by the locals (the effect). Israel "needs" to protect these settlers by a vast military occupation. Superhighways are built for Jews only to travel freely to the settlements from Israel proper; these are resisted as well. Illegal checkpoints are used by the Israeli Defense Forces--called the Israeli Occupation Forces by the locals--to break the spirit of Palestinians. However, even thirty-seven years of brutal occupation have not broken the Palestinian resolve to resist.

A sad effect of occupation is the taking of life. Occupation is violence and Americans need to understand this. Regrettably, they only understand the violence of a small part of Palestinian resistance, which is overwhelmingly peaceful. Also sad is the overwhelming number of U.S. Congress members who have NOT traveled to the Territories to witness what the ISM sees daily. Yet, under the pressure of the



light of scrutiny, which jeopardizes support for them. Protecting the status quo--U.S. support for Israeli policies and \$15 million a day in aid--is what silence protects.

When this silence is broken, as JWPF has done, then the second card is played: Personally disparage the messengers. Challenge our Jewish credentials, claim our tactics are childish, claim victim status for all the congregants, pity the poor Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebrant who has to put up with our "antics." Attack us as individuals or as a group but NEVER confront the issue of Occupation, its violence, and its context, which is necessary to explain (but not excuse) the resultant and horrific suicide bombings. These tactics were clearly explained at AIPAC's February 2004 conference in Chicago: "The Israel Summit--Tools for Action", which was attended by this writer.

Statements critical of our actions typically have a common deficiency- they lack any mention whatsoever of the Occupation or its devastating effects on average Palestinians.

Israel lobby, they vote repeatedly to continue and even increase support for Israel's larceny.

After returning to Ann Arbor, I was eager to share my stories with the most influential community concerning peace in the Middle East--the American Jewish community. Visiting Rabbis Goldstein, Dobrusin and Levy, at Ann Arbor's Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform synagogues, respectively, I was told the same thing, very politely: No, you cannot bring your stories from the West Bank into our synagogues. So, a few of my friends and I decided to form a group made up of concerned Jews but that, unlike Israel, would also welcome our non-Jewish brothers and sisters into our midst. Jewish Witnesses for Peace and Friends was formed in August 2003, and our first vigil was held September 3rd at Hillel's annual open house.

Our detractors call our vigils a picket. Picketers usually wish to keep people out. By contrast, we welcome congregants to enter Beth Israel, to read our signs, and to contemplate our message as they enter the Sanctuary. We don't block the sidewalks and we greet congregants with "Good morning" or "Good Shabbos." Many of our critics have not even witnessed our vigils; otherwise, they could not, in good conscience, write much of what they do.

Statements critical of our actions typically have a common deficiency--they lack any mention whatsoever of the Occupation or its devastating effects on average Palestinians. The reason is simple: Silence is the first card played by any Zionist when attempting to defend Israel's policies. Engaging criticism of Israeli policy only turns on the bright

The American Jewish community has a golden opportunity. By withdrawing their crucial political, financial, and moral support for Israel's misguided policies, they can insist that Israel become a true democracy recognizing the human and civil rights--including the vote--of all people under its control from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River. As Israeli scholar and activist Jeff Halper argues, one democratic state for Arabs and Jews could still be a Jewish homeland and a place of refuge but it cannot remain an EXCLUSIVE Jewish state. Jews in Palestine can live in peace and dignity with Arab Palestinians but only as neighbors and not as masters.

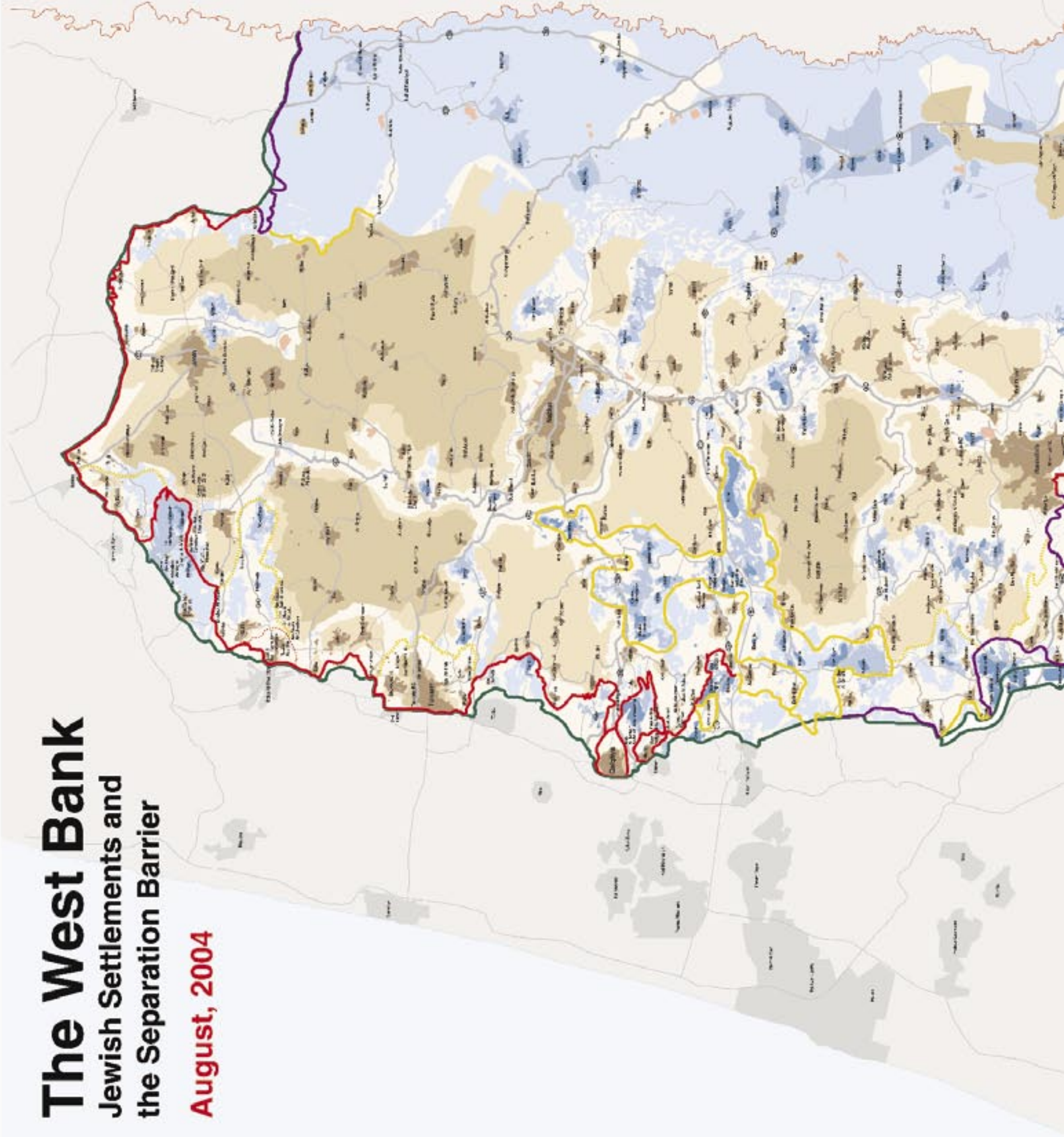
Conversely, American Jews can squander this opportunity by ignoring the true "facts on the ground" and their own professed values of democracy and social justice; and, then, foolishly wonder that Israel is not a safe haven but one of the most dangerous places in the world for Jews as Jews. The choice is present and palpable. Jewish Witnesses for Peace and Friends will remind Jews and non-Jews alike every Saturday that this golden opportunity exists but time is running out.

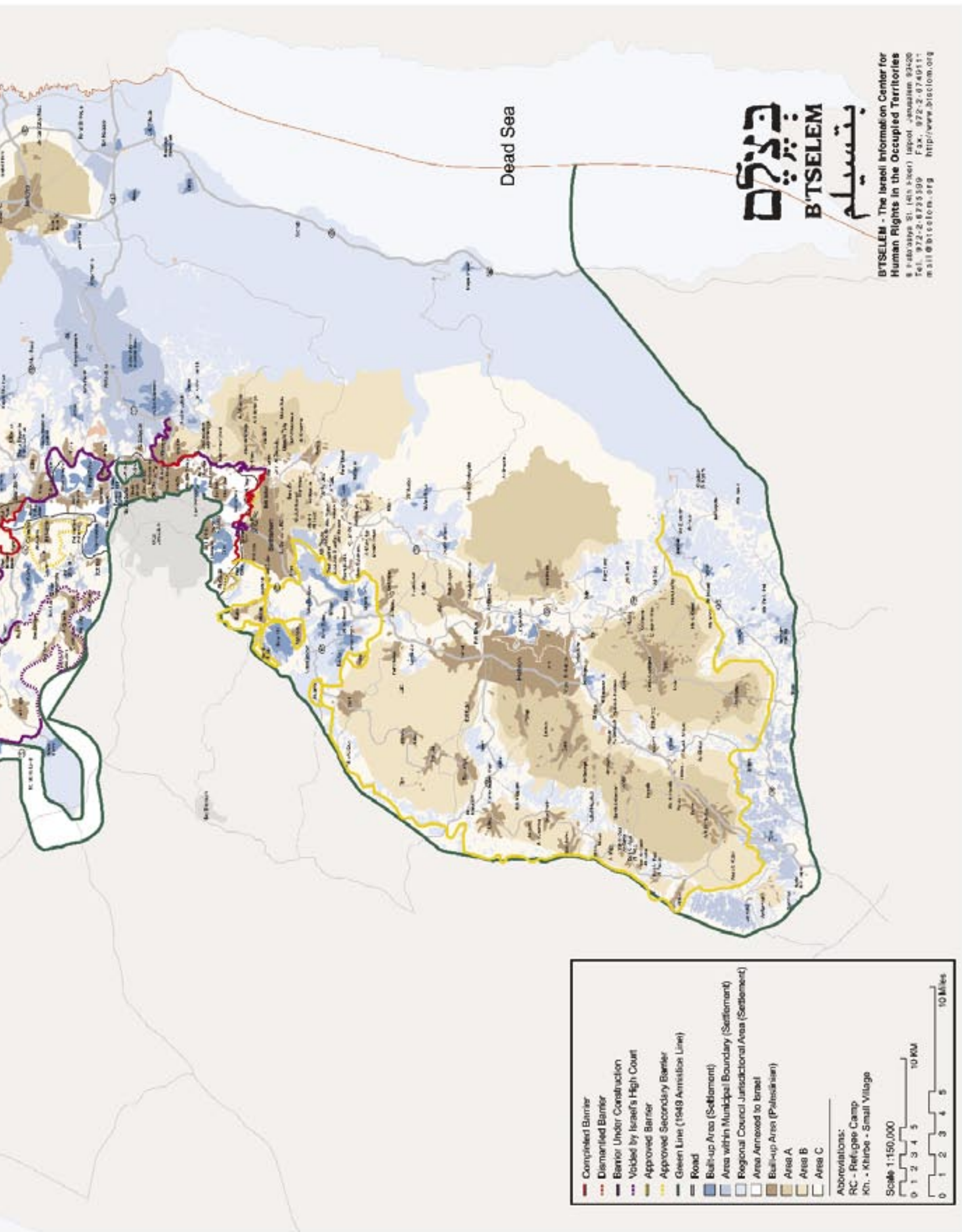
Henry Herskovitz attended Hebrew school from 1955 until 1959 when he celebrated his Bar Mitzvah. He is a retired mechanical engineer who lives in Ann Arbor. He and other members of Jewish Witnesses for Peace and Friends stand vigil in front of Beth Israel Congregation every Saturday at 9:30 AM and Hillel's market every Sunday at 2 PM. He can be contacted at (734) 663-3649 or henryherskovitz@hotmail.com.



The West Bank Jewish Settlements and the Separation Barrier

August, 2004





The Forgotten Occupied Territory

BY BASHAR TARABIEH

Under the cover of darkness, 19-year-old Izzat Abu-Jabal approached the cease-fire line near his hometown of Majdal Shams in the occupied Golan Heights. It was a few weeks before the 1973 Yom Kippur/Ramadan War and Izzat's mission was to leave information gathered by an underground spy network in a hiding place in Syrian controlled territory. Unbeknownst to him, the Israeli military had extracted details of Izzat's mission from a captured comrade and had set an ambush for him. As he approached the cease-fire line, Israeli soldiers opened fire and killed him; he was unarmed. The next morning about fifty men from Izzat's network were rounded up from Majdal Shams and three nearby villages. Meanwhile, Izzat's body, torn

largely unknown in the West. This article outlines the history of the occupation of the Golan and tells part of the story of a resistance full of victories and losses, of moments of hope and disappointment for a community largely ignored and forgotten.

According to the 1962 Syrian census, over 140,000 Syrians lived in 129 towns, villages, and farms in the part of the Heights that was captured. By June 1967, just after the Israeli invasion, only 6,396 people remained in six villages in the northern Golan. The official Israeli account claims that Syrian radio ordered all civilians to evacuate the Golan prior to the eruption of war. However, it is well established that the war was initiated by a sudden, "preemptive" attack by Israel against

reflects a previous Israeli awareness of these villages and a conscious attempt to prevent refugees from returning to their homes.

There is also strong circumstantial evidence that Israel was engaged in ethnic cleansing during the war. If the Syrian government had called upon the Golanis to evacuate or if they have voluntarily fled, some people should conceivably have stayed behind due to physical disability, old age, lack of transportation, or to resist. Of 129 pre-existing communities, 123 were completely depopulated. The fact that 96% of the Golan population fled, or was forced out, makes this the largest ethnic cleansing campaign in the history of the Israeli-Arab conflict.



DEMONSTRATION IN THE TOWN OF MAJDAL SHAMS IN 1993, CELEBRATING SYRIAN INDEPENDENCE FROM FRENCH COLONIALISM.

apart by hundreds of bullets and covered with a mixture of dirt and dry, blackened blood, was tied to a wooden ladder. The ladder was then tied to an Israeli jeep and, accompanied by two armored vehicles, dragged for hours through the streets of Majdal Shams. The grisly spectacle was meant to teach the Syrians the futility and high cost of resistance to Israeli occupation.

Of all the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, the Syrian Golan Heights has received the least attention from the international media, especially the American media. To this day, the story of the Golan is

its Arab neighbors. While most Israeli military records of the 1967 war remain classified, the few documents that have slipped through the Israeli government's tight grip give us hints about what happened. A declassified map prepared by the Israeli military in early 1960 highlights exactly the territory that eventually was occupied, suggesting that the occupation of the Golan was premeditated and carefully planned. Within weeks of the occupation, the new military governor of the Golan decreed 103 villages to be closed military areas; his decree was backed by a shoot-on-sight order. This re-

From the first day of occupation, Israel engaged in gross violations of international humanitarian law in the Golan. Within a short period after the occupation, the vast majority of the depopulated villages were razed by Israeli bulldozers. The only communities not immediately erased were six villages in the northern tip of the Golan. All lands of the destroyed communities were expropriated by Israel.

Two weeks after the occupation, the first Jewish settlement sprouted up, provocatively, in the east-

continued on page 27

The news from Palestine is so bad, and the process of strangulation applied by Israel so constant and murderous, that one expects the worst. But I always find silent resistance, the natural tenacity of life, and the stubbornness of the Palestinians erasing my mental pictures of doom. Still, the disastrous applications of the Israelis take my breath away.

door is controlled by soldiers who stop each person, searching their pockets, packets, and purses. The funnel fills, the people press, fret, and suffer; the children cry. I worry about the children more because it is very dark, and hard to see the short little children. I am glad they can cry. I see people are kind to each other but probably not always.

search table. His box just barely fits his body parts whose shapes betray decadence of thought and life. On his face is a smile, frozen; a mask. He is enjoying himself, enjoying being looked at, unable to hide his smugness. Palestinians he enjoyed torturing were his audience and he performed for us. To see with such graphic power this face of Zionist reality, to appreciate its place in the history of fascism, and to tell about it is my privilege. His, the settler's, is the privilege of propping up his ego by enjoying torture.

But things do end and I do get out of the cage and again try to walk my way through the damage. I see the wall just feet from the cage; I see the soldier tower that is built into it; I see the soot on all its sides from burning garbage. The soup of destruction includes people calling to offer their minimal wares for sale, drivers seeking passengers, people

STRANGULATION

WORDS AND PHOTO BY SAMIA A. HALABY

It has been eight months since I last took the service to Kalandia from Jerusalem. As we drove, I saw a wall, *the wall*, running right down the middle of the road. Sometimes our bus drove on one side and sometimes on another. It was clearly incomplete but under construction. I could see that it would simply divide all the neighborhoods surrounding this main artery into two. All the human connections across any main road running through a community would have to be abruptly severed. There is a disturbing sense of the death-wishes of the Israelis made visible in the body of the wall slicing right through Palestinian life -- a knife cutting the throat till the victim bleeds to death. This is why I call it the "Strangulation Wall."

This segment of the wall was not as high as the parts that I saw surrounding Qalqilya. Here, like elsewhere, Palestinian boys were clearly testing everything. Plastic soda bottles were stuck into the cement holes of the wall, the end of each resembling the surreal sandworms of Dune. In some holes were stuck bits of wood. There was little graffiti yet, but there was dust, garbage, and the remains of demolition. There were the abruptly cut shreds of residential roads ending in areas of destruction. There was frustration, traffic jams, and pedestrians without sidewalks trying to weave between the beeping cars with highly frustrated drivers. There was pain in the very sounds of the street. Anger was on all of the faces.

We reached Kalandia after many, many kilometers of this wall of destruction and strangulation. The many unfinished sections afforded views and the opportunity, soon to end, to select which side to drive on. Things looked much worse as we approach Kalandia. The traffic, including taxi and bus pick-up areas, was so thick that the crossing point was completely hidden. A newcomer would not know where to go. Finally, after cautious weaving between trucks, busses, and private cars full of angry drivers, I arrived at the crossing. Now, instead of walking like cattle through pathways surrounded by cement walls in order to reach the soldiers, we go through revolving doors and pens.

Departure out of the zone they call Jerusalem is easy, but managed through a wall of metal bars in which there are two revolving doors -- like entering and leaving the subway. The difference is that you have no token to pay (yet), but a soldier with a gun to pass, and many pillboxes full of soldiers with guns eyeing you with ill intent.

Well it was not too bad leaving. But then came my return at night towards Jerusalem. This is a different Kalandia crossing. I was not going to our towns and villages on the way to Jerusalem. No, I was entering their Yerushalayim, and they are going to make all Palestinians pay dearly for their nativity to a land that they want to steal. You approach in darkness carefully choosing your steps as your eyes adjust. You hear the sound of voices, of masses of people. You approach; you see the crowd pressed, waiting in a funnel, at the end of which is a revolving door. The revolving



WATCHTOWER ALONG THE WALL AT QALANDIA CHECKPOINT, NORTH OF JERUSALEM. 27 OCTOBER 2004. PHOTO BY SAMIA HALABY.

My turn comes; I have not wanted to open my purse in the crush of the funnel, so I arrive at the table and begin to open my purse slowly. The soldier indicates that I should just pass by, and says "Tafaddali," an Arabic term of politeness. I automatically reply "Shukran." Why did I do that? Why the hell should I accept this little twerp's politeness? Why should I say thank you? He saw my middle class trappings and decided that I would not be a good victim.

Clearing this first hurdle, I found myself in a cage. A cage! I found myself surrounded on all sides by iron bars, having to walk the length of it to exit at the far corner. Directly in front of me is something that should be on the stage of a Broadway theatre. It is dark. Only two light bulbs illuminate my entire pathway through the Kalandia crossing. One is on the soldier who searched the packets. The other is directly in front of me, directly over the head of a soldier.

It is a middle-aged settler with salt-and-pepper mustache, frowsy, dressed as a soldier, sitting in a box with a window and ledge on which he rests his gun. The light bulb directly over his head gives him a theatrical look. He is posing for the stream of suffering Palestinians departing the

waiting for loved ones on the other side, and more -- one forgets.

But the smiling Israelis, I do not forget. It makes a big impression on me. I feel sad for them that their life's joy is so shallow. I see a pair sauntering through the crowds at the border crossing, smiling to each other wanting people to look at them, conscious of the stares they do get, smiling to each other as though they belong to an elite club. Of course, as they saunter, they do look surprisingly out of place where everyone is trying to deal with fascist bureaucracy.

Samia A. Halaby was born in Jerusalem in 1936. In 1948, she was forced to leave Palestine. Via Beirut, her family immigrated to the United States. She has worked at American universities for years, ending at the Yale School of Art. Her art has been exhibited internationally, including the Guggenheim Museum, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Institute Du Monde Arab.

Power conceding nothing without demand, as usual

BY JENNY LEE

John Kerry's concession speech was almost word-for-word the same speech given by Al Gore in 2000: "I just had a good conversation with President Bush... the most important thing now is for the country to be united... we should all just be proud that we're American, blah, blah, etc." These are profoundly insulting words to anyone who went to the polls on November 2nd thinking that this man had even one or two vertebrae, that he would defend the voting rights of targeted communities or that he actually represented an alternative to George Bush.

There are reasons why Kerry conceded so quickly, never so much as whispering a word of challenge to the massive disenfranchisement that took place on November 2nd, ignoring reports of long lines, faulty voting machines and Republican intimidators. There are reasons why Kerry not only failed to articulate even the slightest opposition to Bush's policies in his concession speech but went on to rally Americans behind Bush and his war.

The reasons are rooted in the fact that Kerry has much more allegiance to elite power in the U.S. than he has or ever will have to the millions of disenfranchised and unrepresented voters in this country. Speaking out against voter fraud would challenge the legitimacy of the whole system and why should Kerry take that risk? He is a pro-war, neo-liberal imperialist of the millionaire class. He has nothing to lose and much to gain from another four years of the Bush Administration.

Given this realization, it's critical that everyone, from the Democrats who actually saw Kerry as an alternative to the liberals who merely wanted "anyone but Bush" conduct a serious interrogation of how the notion of "electability" dominated political discourse leading up to the Democratic primaries. Many people opposed to Bush's policies supported Kerry because of his so-called "electability." At the altar of "electability" many progressive people sacrificed their politics and their self-respect. By the time November 3rd arrived, we were left with the devastating failure of this logic: not only is Bush still Presi-

dent but national political discourse is even more entrenched around a pro-war, neo-liberal agenda. This shouldn't be surprising. We weren't demanding anything different.

It is worth considering what we would be left with other than defeat, had the Democratic Party thrown its support behind Carol Mosley Braun, Dennis Kucinich, Al Sharpton or even Howard Dean. We might still be faced with Bush on November 3rd, smirking and basking in the glow of illegitimate power. But we would also have a country that was at least talking about the possibility of ending the war on Iraq, protecting civil liberties, and challenging the many forms of racial, social and economic injustice that are endemic in this country. Then, after Bush stole the election again, we might at least be in a better position to mobilize resistance.

The Democratic Party would do well to prioritize substance over "electability" in future elections in order to avoid repeating this shame and disappointment at having arrived in 2004 at the exact same place it was in 2000.

But liberals and semi-radicals shouldn't hold their breath waiting for that to happen. If all the "get out the vote" energy that has been mobilized around this election is to have any lasting strength, it is going to have to start building power outside of, even in opposition to, the great farce of national electoral politics. Rather than having coalitions driven by young voters' tepid support for a pathetic Democratic candidate, they should be driven by real campaigns to end U.S. imperialism at home and abroad.

In other words, groups like the League of Pissed-Off Voters should not skip a beat in channeling its energy into the new anti-war movement that is inevitably going to emerge. On regional and city levels the League should engage with local elections and ballot issues. But beyond that, there is no reason why the League, if it stays organized, can't do everything from prevent a hospital from closing, stop an incinerator from being built, demand educational justice, fight the prison system and build powerful

community institutions that will work to end violence against women, police brutality, homelessness and any number of other things.

For radicals who already prioritize community organizing, fighting oppressive institutions through direct action and building visionary structures of mutual aid and empowerment in the ashes of those institutions, November 3rd is a day like any other. Their daily lives are the work of revolution. I'm thinking of the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization, who right now is planning "projects of survival" for this winter, which include public housing takeovers, so that no Detroit resident will face eviction, water shut-offs or lack of heat without community resistance.

I'm also thinking of Sista II Sista in Brooklyn, NY, a freedom school for young women of color that not only builds the political, spiritual and physical strengths of young women, but is challenging patriarchy and violence in their community by creating a collective, women-led, community-based alternative to the police. I'm even thinking of the Indymedia network, which doesn't waste time reforming corporate media, but creates free, participatory media outside of corporate structures. It is one of the world's largest all-volunteer-run, decentralized organizations. As such it presents a formidable challenge to corporate media.

These are models that if supported, studied, replicated and improved upon will bring us to a radically different place in four years. And even if we find ourselves listening to another snivelling Democrat read the same speech that Gore read in 2000 and that Kerry re-read in 2004, with the same shit-eating-I-love-America-grin, it won't really matter because maybe in four years we'll be organized enough to make demands.

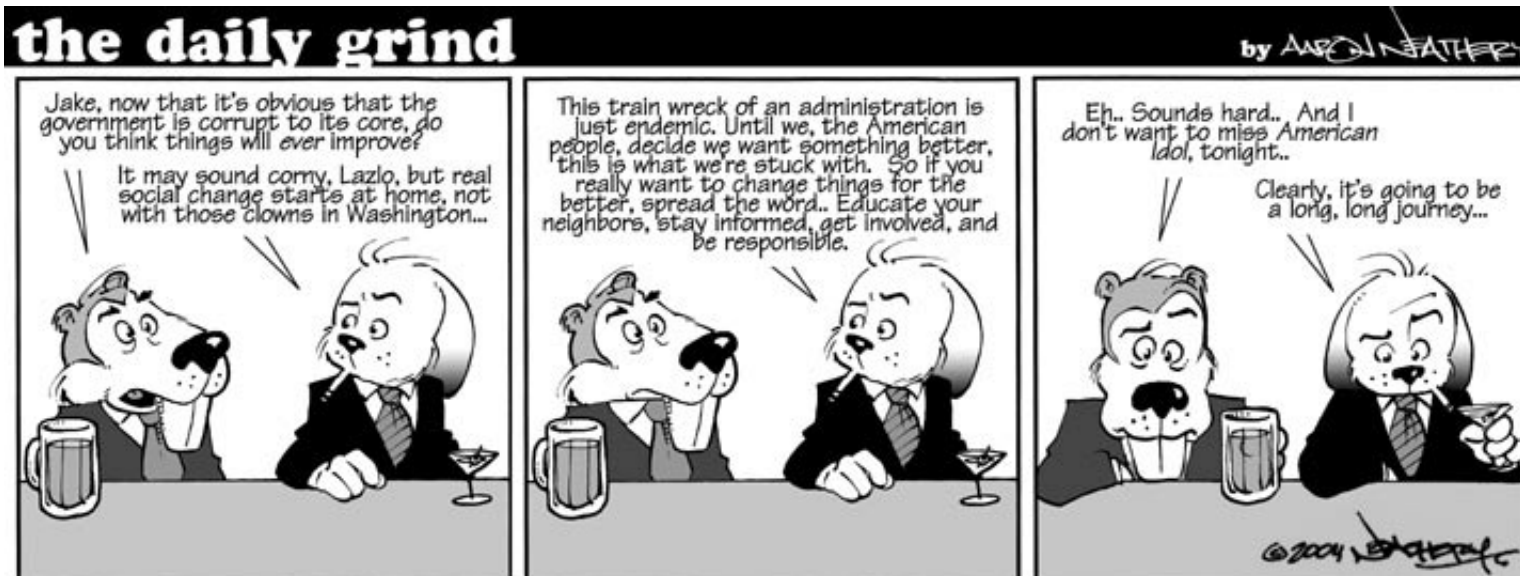
Jenny Lee is a comparative literature student, about to graduate from U of M. This article was originally published on the Michigan Independent Media Center website: <http://michiganimc.org>

On November 2nd, hundreds of thousands of voters were effectively disenfranchised at the polls. These articles provide some documentation of this:

Kerry Won. Greg Palast, Tompaine.com
http://www.tompaine.com/articles/kerry_won_.php

Was the Ohio Election Honest and Fair? Institute for Public Accuracy
http://www.accuracy.org/press_releases/PR110304.htm

Worse Than 2000: Tuesday's Electoral Disaster, William Rivers Pitt, Truthout
http://www.truthout.org/docs_04/110804A.shtml



The Olga Document

Israeli Activists and Intellectuals Recognize the Palestinian Right to Return

BY PROF. ANAT BILETZKI, ANDRE DRAZNIN, HAIM HANEGBI, YEHUDITH HAREL, MICHEL (MICADO) WARSCHAWSKI, OREN MEDICKS

The State of Israel was supposed to grant security to Jews; it has created a death-trap whose inhabitants live in constant danger, the likes of which is not experienced by any other Jewish community.

The State of Israel was supposed to tear down the walls of the ghetto; it is now constructing the biggest ghetto in the entire history of the Jews.

The State of Israel was supposed to be a democracy; it has set up a colonial structure, combining unmistakable elements of apartheid with the arbitrariness of brutal military occupation.

Israel, 2004, is a state on the road to nowhere. Fifty-six years after its establishment--notwithstanding its many achievements in agriculture, science and technology, and albeit a great regional military power, armed with doomsday weapons--many of its citizens are heartsick with existential worry and fear for their future.

Since its foundation, Israel has lived by its sword. An incessant succession of "retaliations", military operations and wars has become the life-support drug of Israel's Jews. And now, almost four years after the beginning of the second Palestinian *Intifada*, Israel is up to its neck in the mire of occupation and oppression, while it goes on extending the settlements and multiplying the outposts, repeating to itself *ad nauseam* that "we have no partner for peace"

Ten years after the Oslo Accords, we are living in a benighted colonial reality--in the heart of darkness. Thirty-seven years after Israel conquered the last of the Palestinian territories in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, over three and a half million Palestinians under its rule are penned up in their towns and villages. The term "Palestinian State"--which for years embodied the peace option--is being used by many Israeli politicians as a mirage phrase, a spin on the reality of occupation: "In the future," they whisper with a knowing wink, "the Palestinian entity in the Territories may



We are united in a critique of Zionism, based as it is on refusal to acknowledge the indigenous people of this country and on denial of their rights, on dispossession of their lands, and on adoption of separation as a fundamental principle and way of life. Adding insult to injury, Israel persists in its refusal to bear any responsibility for its deeds, from the expulsion of the majority of Palestinians from their homeland more than half a century ago, to the present erection of ghetto walls around the remaining Palestinians in the towns and villages of the West Bank. Thus, wherever Jew

The State of Israel was supposed to tear down the walls of the ghetto; it is now constructing the biggest ghetto in the entire history of the Jews.

be called a 'state'." And meanwhile Israel is amplifying the devastation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as if determined to pulverize the Palestinian people to dust

In the face of the large Israeli camp of supporters of the separation walls--those, both right and left, who are terrified by the demons of demography, constantly counting the populace to find out how many Jews and Arabs are born and die every week, how many Jews and Arabs live in the entire country and in each of its districts every month--it is vital to pose an alternative outlook, based on the following principles:

Coexistence of the peoples of this country, based on mutual recognition, equal partnership and implementation of historical justice.

and Arab stand together or face each other, a boundary is drawn between them, to separate and distinguish between the blessed and the cursed

We are united in the recognition that this country belongs to all its sons and daughters--citizens and residents, both present and absentees (the uprooted Palestinian citizens of Israel in 1948)--with no discrimination on personal or communal grounds, irrespective of citizenship or nationality, religion, culture, ethnicity or gender. Thus we demand the immediate annulment of all laws, regulations and practices that discriminate between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel, and the dissolution of all institutions, organizations and authorities based on such laws, regulations and practices.

We are united in the belief that peace and reconcili-

ation are contingent on Israel's recognition of its responsibility for the injustices done to the indigenous people, the Palestinians, and on willingness to redress them. Recognition of the right of return follows from our principles. Redressing the continued injustice inflicted on the Palestinian refugees, generation after generation, is a necessary condition both for reconciliation with the Palestinian people, as for the spiritual healing of ourselves, Israeli Jews. Only thus shall we stop being plagued by the past's demons and damnations and make ourselves at home in our common homeland.

For many years now, Israeli leaders have been exerting themselves to depict the Palestinians as sub-human; and their exertions have been seconded and assisted by members of the cultural elite, media barons, vain functionaries and light-scribblers, right and left. We reject this racist arrogance with disgust, knowing that the Palestinians, as all other people, are neither devils nor angels, but just like us, are humans, created equal.

We are convinced that if we approach peace and reconciliation with the Palestinians with an open mind and a willing spirit, we shall find in them what we bring with us: an open mind and a willing spirit. For we are brothers and sisters, not eternal enemies as the well-poisoners profess.

It is pointless, now, to guess the material future form of the vision of life together: Two states or one?! Perhaps, a confederation?! Or maybe a federation?! And what about cantons?! In any case, the primary condition for advancing the vision of living together is self-evident, both as a supreme moral imperative and as a practical matter of the here and now: An immediate end to the state of occupation.

Only in this way will the Palestinians in eastern Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza Strip be rid of the yoke of settlements, the nightmare of apartheid, the burden of humiliation and the demons of destruction employed by Israel unremittingly, day and night, for 37 years. Only when they are totally free will the Palestinians be able to discuss and decide their future.

We believe that adoption of the principles stated above will lay the foundations on which the people of this country can set up the proper common frameworks for life together. We are not talking of fantasies or of a miracle move that would lead us from our living hell to a heavenly paradise.

We are talking of a road that has not been tried hitherto: Being honest with ourselves, with our neighbors and particularly with the Palestinian people--our enemies who are our brothers and sisters. If we muster within ourselves the appropriate honesty and requisite courage, we will be able to take the first step in the long journey that can extricate us from the tangle of denial, repression, distortion of reality, loss of direction and forsaking of conscience, in which the people of Israel have been trapped for generations.

Whoever has eyes to see and ears to hear knows that the choice is between another "hundred years of conflict" ending in annihilation, and a partnership among all the inhabitants of this land. Only such a partnership is capable of turning us, the Jews of Israel, from foreigners in their country to its real inhabitants.

We do not intend to start another movement against the occupation, or another party (platform, institutions, leaders). We seek to start off a genuine public discussion about the Israeli blind alley in which we live and the profound changes needed in order to break out of it. Every Israeli knows that this is not a matter of political trifles, but concerns the fate of the peoples of this country.

This document was written in a series of meetings in Giv'at Olga in Israel, and was signed by hundreds of prominent Israeli activists, artists, and intellectuals. The document and its full list of supporters appears online at: oznik.com/words/040712.html

The name of the village was Sarkas, which probably refers to the former origin of its inhabitants, Circassians, who came, I would not know how, to the Middle East and settled here. Anyway, when I came to know the village, all of its inhabitants were Palestinian Arabs. In fact, I never came to know the village properly; I was never there, though this is only half the truth, and I shall return to that later.

In our eyes, the eyes of children four or five years old, the village was represented by two women: Khadija and Hanifa. Maybe they were more courageous than the rest, or maybe they served as something like the 'Foreign Office' of the village. They often walked about in the kibbutz, and as far as I can remember they were mainly preoccupied with the picking of khubeiza (mallow) leaves which grew in wild abundance along the roadside. When I asked why they pick the khubeiza, we were told that the Arabs cook the leaves and eat them. And so, the first thing I ever knew about Arabs was that they eat khubeiza. I also knew, of course, that they ride on camels, since the camels used to pass through the kibbutz and occasionally camp there; I knew that they ride on donkeys along the white road which probably stretches up to the very end of the world. But at that time there were also in the area British soldiers (the Mandate) and Australian soldiers (World War II), and thus it was imbedded in my consciousness that Eretz Israel consists of us, as well as passers by, Arabs, British, Australians....

About that time they all disappeared, and I really did not notice their disappearance all that much. Of course, the departure of the British was accompanied by much talk on the radio and in the yard of the kibbutz. But as to the fact that Khadija and Hanifa ceased to show up - well, there are many events that pass through the universe of any child, and he or she accepts their appearance as well as their disappearance as a matter of fact. Later, I came to know that the village had been destroyed by bulldozers, and I was a little scared. And then I forgot, and many years passed before Sarkas again emerged before my eyes as a place where people lived.

The destroyed village was made into the kibbutz garbage dump. I do not know who was the first to discover that in the midst of the ruins and the dust and the stench there remained a mulberry tree. A huge mulberry tree, which, in summer, produced huge mulberries: black and deliciously sweet. The mulberry trees in the kibbutz were grown on much water and their fruit was therefore somewhat watery, and anyway they were much too high to climb. But this mulberry tree was low, spreading wide, and heavily laden with fruit, to the deep delight of a little girl who was rather quiet and clumsy and who loved mulberries. And thus, every Saturday we would go on pilgrimage to the mulberry tree, stand around it for hours and eat of its fruit and return home with hands and faces blackened by the dark dye of mulberry sap. Never, not once, while standing there among the ruins and the dust under the scathing sun did we talk or think of the inhabitants of Sarkas who lived there: where are they? Where did they go? Why?

From the distance of fifteen years of difficult political development, I watch this group of children devouring mulberries in the midst of a destroyed village, and I just cannot comprehend: how? Wherefrom this utter blindness? For many years I would walk on Saturdays to Sarkas. At times with company. At times alone. Now Sarkas was no longer embodied in Khadija and Hanifa. Now Sarkas was reduced to the stench of the kibbutz garbage dump and the mulberries in summer. On either side of the road to Sarkas there were sabr cacti hedgerows along all roads, but today they have all disappeared, except in books and in Arab villages, where they still remain. In summer the sabr would bring forth their fruit, and raise masses of tiny red and orange flags, glued to their rounded green flagpoles in a summer festival. And when the sabr fruit was ripe, the Arab women would appear

out of nowhere, fill their big tin containers with the red and orange fruit and walk away. Today I remember these Arab women and I ask myself: where did they come from? Who were they? Were they exiled inhabitants of the village? And in the evening, when they eat the fruit that they had gathered or when they sell it at the roadside, do they feel the taste of their lost homes?

But at that time I did not think of them in the least. The Arabs were something whose temporary provisional existence was eternal. They pass along the white road on a donkey-cart, emerging out of somewhere and going on to somewhere else. Only once, for some reason... There was a big scout night game, a sort of test of courage. I hid behind the sabr hedgerows and waited for my pursuers to pass by. I sat there in the dark for a long time, quietly. I was not afraid. And all of a sudden they were with me. The women of Sarkas. The women who pick khubeiza along the roadside. The women with the long knives who steal wheat from the fields of the kibbutz. The women with the water cans and the bun-

or since. The debate cut across families, and brought sons to rebel against their parents, brothers against brothers and husbands against wives. The leadership of the Ha-Shomer ha-Tza'ir kibbutz federation was called to present its position (opposed), and threats of leaving the kibbutz on this matter were voiced in both camps. In the end, the 'mixed couple' was not admitted to the kibbutz. Both camps were already tired of endless debates and rows. In a bitter discussion which I (who supported their admission) had with one of the leading opponents he told me: 'DO you know that Rashid is a son of the village of Sarkas? Do you think he can live here, raise his children here and always see across the street the hill which was his village and NOT THINK ANYTHING?'

At that moment, together with the scorching sun and the dust, I felt in my mouth the taste of mulberries, and I understood what homeland means, and also, for the first time, vaguely and at a distance and a little bit afraid, I understood that this homeland, the homeland of the songs and of school textbooks, is simply just the taste of mulberries,

The Taste of Mulberries

By HAVAH HA-LEVI

dles of dry wood on their heads. Slowly, slowly, they slipped by on their bare feet, black and silent. Their round outline, like the sabr cacti leaves, merged with the darkness around, silent.

Today there stands on the site a huge plant for the processing of agricultural products. An exemplary cooperative venture. And the hill? The hill of the village of Sarkas, where is it? The entire area was leveled down, and around the huge factory orange groves were planted, and there is not one single cut stone left as testimony. Yet, I remember. I testify.

In 1961, a very young woman from kibbutz Giv'at ha-Sheloshah married an Arab youth who was employed in her kibbutz. The kibbutz refused to allow them to remain there, and they applied to join 'my' kibbutz. The debate on whether they are to be admitted or whether they are not to be admitted extended over one and a half years and shook the kibbutz in a way that no other subject ever did, either before

and the smell of dust, and the moist earth in winter, and the colour of the sky, and that it is a homeland not only for me, but also for Rashid Masarwa. At that very moment, in the midst of the heated discussion, the taste of mulberries and the shock, I remembered one fearful memory.

It was towards the end of the 1948 war, after we had won the war and defeated the Arab armies and had a state of our own. We were lying in bed. Eight children in the children's house. It was night. From the distance we heard the heavy and rumbling noise. It was not very far away, but one could clearly hear that the noise did not come from inside the kibbutz. And the noise went on and on and on. I asked what this protracted and continuous noise was, and one of the children told me that two kibbutz members had gone with bulldozers to Sarkas to destroy the houses of the

continued on next page

Arabs. In real fear of Arab revenge I asked: 'But what will the Arabs do when they come back and see that we have destroyed their homes?' And he then answered: 'That is why we destroy their homes, so that they do not come back'.

I then knew that the matter was lost. The home of Rashid was destroyed then so that he would not return. So that he, his mother in the long black robe who walks erect with the bundle of wood magnificently balanced on her head, and all his brothers and sisters who run barefoot on the stones would not return. And also now they will not let him come back.

In December 1972, the entire country was shaken with what was dubbed in the press as the 'affair of the espionage and sabotage network'. Some thirty Arab youths and six Jewish youths, Israelis, were arrested on charges of forming a 'sabotage organization', operated by Syrian intelligence, whose object was 'to damage the security of the state'. One of the Jewish detainees, a youth aged 26, was a son of 'my' kibbutz. Another detainee from the Arab village of Jatt, was a youth named Mahmud Masarwa. In his defence speech he stated as follows:

The Honourable Court, Your Honourable Judges, My father was born in the village of Sarkas, near kibbutz...in the vicinity of Haderah. My father was the son of a peasant. In 1948, he was removed from his land, expelled by force. Their lands were confiscated. Their homes were destroyed. On the site a factory for the kibbutz was built. My father was compelled to go out and seek work as a labourer in order to feed...[his family]. We went to live in such a tiny house: twelve people in the space of 2 metres times 3 metres. In 1957, I remember this quite well, one year after the Sinai war, my father told me and my brother who sits here [in the court room]: 'Go out to work in order that you at least help me to finance your studies....' (Quoted from the official Protocol of the court proceedings.)

'My brother who sits here in the court room!' His brother who sat there was Rashid Masarwa who, in 1961, applied to be admitted to the kibbutz together with his Jewish wife. It was Rashid Masarwa who told the members of the kibbutz: 'I want to live here as a loyal kibbutz member like everyone else, but I want my children to know that their father is an Arab, and I want my children to know the Quran, and I want them to celebrate all the Jewish holidays, but also know what Ramadan is, and that their grandfather and grandmother will come to visit them here in the kibbutz, and that my children will also go to the village to be with their grandfather and grandmother in the holidays.'

Now he is sitting here, Rashid Masarwa, and watches his brother being sentenced for wanting to take by the force of arms what he himself had hoped to gain by application and consent, and all the brotherhood among the nations in the world could not be of any avail to them.

In the Ramleh central prison the son of the dispossessed kibbutz and the son of the dispossessed village met again. Only one youth, one Udi Adiv, from that kibbutz resolved in his mind to cross the road. But the road has no space to accommodate the naive.

And if prisoners in jail do dream - both prisoners, no doubt, see in their dreams the colour of the sky, and perhaps they also savour the taste of mulberries.

Havah ha-Levi lives in Jerusalem.

This short story was originally published in Uri Davis: Israel, an Apartheid State, Zed Books Ltd, London and New Jersey, 1987.

Said, continued from page 5

of nothing. We can be as impatient with Israeli posturing about "psychological security" as with recent Arab efforts to enlist people like the degraded Roger Garaudy in order to cast doubt on the six million victims. Neither advances the cause of peace, or of real coexistence between the peoples whose share of historical sufferings links them inextricably.

Yet except for a few Jewish intellectuals here and there -for example, the American rabbi Marc Ellis, or Professor Israel Shahak -- reflections on the desolate history of anti-Semitism and Jewish solitude by Jewish thinkers today has been inadequate. For there is a link to be made between what happened to Jews in World War Two and the catastrophe of the Palestinian people, but it cannot be made only rhetorically, or as an argument to demolish or diminish the true content both of the Holocaust and of 1948. Neither is equal to the other; similarly neither one nor the other excuses present violence; and finally, neither one nor the other must be minimized. There is suffering and injustice enough for everyone. But unless the connection is made by which the Jewish tragedy is seen to have led directly to the Palestinian catastrophe by, let us call it "necessity" (rather than pure will) we cannot co-exist as two communities of detached and uncommunicatingly separate suffering. It has been the failing of Oslo to plan in terms of separation, a clinical partition of peoples into individual, but unequal, entities rather than to grasp that the only way of rising beyond the endless back-and-forth violence and dehumanization is to admit the universality and integrity of the other's experience, and to begin to plan a common life together.

I cannot see any way at all (a) of not imagining the Jews of Israel as in decisive measure really the permanent result of the Holocaust, and (b) of not also requiring from them acknowledgment of what they did to the Palestinians during and after 1948. This means that as Palestinians we demand consideration and reparations from them without in any way minimizing their own history of suffering and genocide. This is the only mutual recognition worth having, and the fact that present governments and leaders are incapable of such gestures testifies to the poverty of spirit and imagination that afflicts us all. This is where Jews and Palestinians outside of historical Palestine can play a constructive role that is impossible for those inside who live under the daily pressure of occupation and dialectical confrontation. The dialogue has to be on the level I have been discussing here, and not on debased questions of political strategy and tactics. When one considers the broad lines of Jewish philosophy from Buber to Levinas and perceives in it an almost total absence of reflection on the Palestinian issue, one realizes how far one has to go. What is desired therefore is a notion of coexistence that is true to the differences between Jew and Palestinian, but true also to the common history of different struggle and unequal survival that links them.

There can be no higher ethical and moral imperative than discussions and dialogues about that. We must accept the Jewish experience in all that it entails of horror and fear; but we must require that our experience be given no less attention or perhaps another plane of historical actuality. Who would want morally to equate mass extermination with mass dispossession? It would be foolish even to try. But they are connected -- a different thing altogether -- in the struggle over Palestine which has been so intransigent, its elements so irreconcilable. I know that at a time when Palestinian land is still being taken, when our houses are demolished, when our daily existence is still subject to the humiliations and captivity imposed on us by Israel and its many supporters in Europe and especially the United States, I know that to speak of prior Jewish agonies will seem like a kind of impertinence. I do not accept the notion that by taking our land Zionism redeemed the history of the Jews, and I cannot ever be made to acquiesce in the need to dispossess the whole Palestinian people. But I can admit the notion that the distortions of the Holocaust created distortions in its victims, which are replicated today in the victims of Zionism itself, that is, the Palestinians. Understanding what happened to the Jews in Europe under the Nazis means understanding what is universal about a human experience under calamitous conditions. It means compassion, human sympathy, and utter recoil from the notion of killing people for ethnic, religious, or nationalist reasons.

I attach no conditions to such comprehension and compassion: one feels them for their own sake, not for political advantage. Yet such an advance in consciousness by Arabs ought to be met by an equal willingness for compassion and comprehension on the part of Israelis and Israel's supporters who have engaged in all sorts of denial and expressions of defensive non-responsibility when it comes to Israel's central role on our historical dispossession as a people. This is disgraceful. And it is just unacceptable simply to say (as do many Zionist liberals) that we should forget the past and go on to two separate states. This is as insulting to Jewish memories of the Holocaust as it is to Palestinians who continue in their dispossession at Israel's hands. The simple fact is that Jewish and Palestinian experiences are historically, indeed organically, connected: to break them asunder is to falsify what is authentic about each. We must think our histories together, however difficult that may be, in order for there to be a common future. And that future must include Arabs and Jews together, free of any exclusionary, denial-based schemes for shutting out one side by the other, either theoretically or politically. That is the real challenge. The rest is much easier.

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A language no one else is speaking

BY GLENN KAUTH

Rauda Morcos is a true radical. She's a Palestinian lesbian activist who next year plans to protest the Pride parade in Jerusalem.

"I'm against the idea of having a celebration at the same time that there's occupation," says Morcos, the 30-year-old coordinator of the first Palestinian lesbian group, Aswat. "We have people being killed 20 minutes down the road at the same time as this racist separation wall is being built," she says, referring to the West Bank towns near Jerusalem that are frequently the site of clashes with the Israeli army and where Israel is building a controversial wall to cut itself off from the West Bank.



RAUDA MORCOS, 2004. PHOTO BY XTRA!

Morcos' discomfort with Israeli Pride festivities is illustrative of the challenges she and other Aswat members face: they're discriminated against as Palestinians living under Israeli rule, as women in a male-dominated society and as lesbians in an Arab community where there's no official word for "gay."

"We're against any type of occupation," she says. "I don't want to be occupied as a Palestinian or as a woman or as a lesbian."

Aswat was formed in 2003 by a group of women who wanted to add a Palestinian lesbian voice to the already thriving Israeli gay movement. The decision to restrict Aswat to women was not a deliberate political act.

"We wanted to find a way to break the silence that so many Palestinian lesbians face," she says. "For this reason, it was important to bring women together in a safe place where they could talk about their own issues. It was natural."

Today, Aswat has grown to 14 women who regularly meet as a group. They don't have an office of their own, so they borrow space from organizations throughout Israel and meet in different cities so people from across the country can take part. The group has several members from the West Bank who have to cross several checkpoints to reach the meeting place and who legally aren't even allowed in Israel. Other women from inside Israel face the challenge of explaining to their families where they're going when they come to a meeting. In many Palestinian communities, women aren't allowed out alone at night, let alone to travel to another city.

Morcos gave up her job as a teacher in order to become the full-time coordinator of Aswat. Just this year, the group got funding from three foundations, al-

We're against any type of occupation. I don't want to be occupied as a Palestinian or as a woman or as a lesbian.

lowing it to start paying Morcos a salary. Currently, she is on a tour of several North American cities to promote her work and raise funds for Aswat.

It's clear that Morcos is overwhelmed by the pace of change she's faced since becoming part of Aswat. "I know I'm leading this boat," she says, "and I'm afraid because it's a huge responsibility. But I also try to remember that I'm not doing this alone."

She regularly gets stared and pointed at while she walks the streets of her small village in northern Israel, Kufer Yassis. She has also received several harassing phone calls at home. A big challenge is working with Aswat's so-called allies. Many Israeli gay organizations, for example, are taken aback by Aswat's strong anti-occupation stance while many Palestinian feminist organizations are afraid to embrace the dyke movement.

"We're still speaking a language no one else is speaking," says Morcos.

Morcos says it was tough at the beginning, with people shutting doors in her face.

"But I'm now at a point where I've stopped caring," she says. "Some doors will shut, but then other ones will open. You just have to remind yourself that it's all worth it because you're doing something for women."

This article was originally published on Xtra! The original version can be found at <http://www.xtra.ca/site/toronto2/arch/body1823.shtm>

REVIEW: HEEB MAGAZINE

ISSUES #5 (WINTER 2004) AND #6 (SUMMER 2004)

Heeb Magazine aims to document the lives and culture of young, hip, and often politically radical Jewish people. The existence of the magazine is itself a reaction to the apparent fragmentation of this demographic of Jews. Although this population of young and mostly secular Jewish activists and cultural producers might have a sense that they are part of a larger tendency within Jewish culture, the project of Heeb Magazine is unique in its aim to give this community greater self-awareness and sense of cohesion. The subtitle of the magazine is "The New Jew Review" and every issue aims to define who the "New Jew" is, and what she believes in and is doing. Throughout the magazine there is a healthy range in tone, from the irreverent and humorous article to those of a politically serious quality.

Each issue of Heeb has articles on Jewish people involved in contemporary music, literary, theatre and art scenes. For example Heeb #5 has pieces on a Jewish graffiti artist, the Jewish members of well-known punk bands Sleater-Kinney and Le Tigre, and an interview with a Hasidic reggae MC, to name a few items in the magazine. All this is especially powerful when it draws out connections between the Jewish identity of these individuals and the cultural work they are involved in. What emerges is a sense that these individuals are not deviants within the Jewish community, but merely components of a larger and more dynamic vision of Jewish life than most people knew existed.

One aspect of Heeb Magazine that I find to be particularly hopeful is the inclusion of Jewish progressive and radical political activists in the community of the "New Jew" that the magazine constructs. I find it especially encouraging that Heeb has included the voices of Jewish activists working for Palestinian liberation within its pages. While Heeb has not always been consistent in its discussions of the Israel-Palestine conflict, printing some material which lacks in progressive values, the preponderance of articles on the conflict do reflect an anti-occupation and egalitarian political agenda.

Heeb #5 contains an interview with the co-founder of Jews Against the Occupation NYC and an article that considers ways for organizations to develop a critique of Zionism while also confronting the reality of anti-Jewish oppression. Heeb #6 has an article that speaks positively of the growth of Israel's Refuseniks, the movement of individuals who break the law by refusing to participate in Israel's compulsory military service. This issue also contains a six-page interview with Noam Chomsky, whom the interviewer describes endearingly as "a smiling and wrinkled old anarchist Jew" and "a sort of lefty Yoda." This piece stands out from your standard Chomsky interview in that Chomsky is directed to address issues of specific relevance to Jewish people. He discusses the question of why Jews who are critical of Israel are marked as "self-hating," how Israel fails to protect Jews from anti-Semitism, and how the apparent rise in anti-Semitism in Europe and the Arab world can find their roots in Israeli government policies.

By including progressive and radical political perspectives within its loose framework of the "New Jew," Heeb Magazine has made an important intervention into contemporary Jewish political culture. Especially in regards to its treatment of the Israel-Palestine conflict, an optimist might see Heeb as both reflecting and advancing a shift in Jewish political culture towards more progressive attitudes in regards to Israel/Palestine. At a minimum, Heeb signifies a break in the illusion of consensus regarding Jewish people's attitudes towards Israel/Palestine. American Jews do not all stand united behind Israeli government policies. Many are fighting those policies everyday. Heeb has helped make this reality more visible.

-MIKE MEDOW

Visit Heeb Magazine online: <http://heebmagazine.com>

The passing of Arafat

With him goes the two-state solution

BY OMAR BARGHOUTI

As the pictures of the human waves have shown, not only his supporters grieved over his death. The more than 100,000 who converged in the Ramallah funeral included many who opposed his political line to various degrees. Even those who categorically opposed his idiosyncratic policy of “la-am,” or yes-no, found themselves sharing in this communal sense of loss and sorrow. Arafat was more than just a leader. He was beyond doubt an emblematic Palestinian phenomenon that will not be replaced anytime soon.

Beyond the typical veneration of symbols, Arafat had another attribute that gave him his revered status in the minds and hearts of a majority of Palestinians: his assumption of the role of the political frame of reference. What Arafat did was, more often than not, perceived as somehow linked to a plan to achieve liberation and justice. People joked about, even derided his tactics at times, but he was the lowest common denominator among the diverse Palestinian political parties. He was the closest to the average person's



analysis of the situation: emotive, not always rational, indulging in an exaggerated, but widely popular sense of autonomy. One Palestinian refugee once put it as such: “He speaks like us, without those big words that meant absolutely nothing to us. He is truly one of us.”

And when you are the reference point, you can afford to shift your position at will. More or less. That's why only Arafat was able to shake hands and sign less-than-just interim deals with Israeli leaders of all convictions -- including accused war criminals -- without being seriously accused of treason. He always commanded the popular benefit of the doubt. This is precisely why only Yasser Arafat could deliver the two-state solution mentioned in numerous peace initiatives. Such a solution, by its very nature, falls far short of the minimal requirements of justice for Palestinians. Besides having passed its expiry date, it was never a moral solution to start with. In the best-case scenario, if UN resolution 242 were meticulously implemented, it would have addressed most of the legitimate rights of less than a third of the Palestinian people over less than a fifth of their ancestral land. More than two thirds of the Palestinians, refugees plus the Palestinian citizens of Israel, have been dubiously and shortsightedly expunged out of the definition of the Palestinians to make this happen. Such exclusion can only guarantee the perpetuation of conflict.

Even that was not on offer from anyone. Israel, with full and unflinching backing from the US, insisted on ban-tustanizing Palestinian territories, feverishly expanding Jewish colonies, stubbornly denying any responsibility for the Nakba (1948 catastrophe of dispossession) and along with

it the right of Palestinian refugees to return, even refusing to recognize the Gaza strip and the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) as occupied territories, as stipulated in international law. What Israel demanded was capitulation. Nothing less. Arafat was not ready to sign on the dotted line, so he was severely punished. He went under with the memorable legacy of refusing to surrender. Thus the outpouring of sincere emotions by the mass of distraught Palestinians bidding him farewell. “He preferred to die than to submit,” many lamented.

Any future replacement of Arafat will have far less tolerance from a battered, impoverished and yet determined constituency. By definition, he will lack Arafat's unique historic clout, will garner less political support and will command far less popular backing; therefore, he will be quite vulnerable to public wrath in case he decides to even match Arafat's compromises, not to mention offer more concessions to Israel, as required to become “relevant” in the Israel-US club. Who would dare?

After Israel wakes up from its delusional euphoria over Arafat's death it will realize that it has lost its very last opportunity to impose on the Palestinians its own peace. Rather than accepting any settlement with the hope that their trusted leader will use it as a launching pad to achieve more far-reaching successes, now Palestinians will start recognizing any peace decoupled from justice for what it is: morally reprehensible and politically unacceptable. As a result, it will be pragmatically unwise as well. It may survive for a while, but only after it has been stripped of its essence, becoming a mere stabilization of an oppressive order, or what I call the master-slave peace, where the slave has no power and/or will to resist and therefore submits to the dictates of the master, passively, obediently, without a semblance of human dignity. This lasts so long as the slave has no power or will to resist. But only until then.

With Arafat's burial, the two-state solution will bite the dust. No one will dare break this piece of news, as too many have too much to lose if they admit it. But Israel will soon have to reckon with more and more Palestinians calling for a democratic, unitary state where Israeli-Jews and Palestinian-Arabs share equal rights and duties, after doing away with colonial oppression, ethnic supremacy and apartheid, and after the refugees are allowed to return. And if South Africa is any guide, such a struggle may exclude armed resistance, favoring non-violent means instead. How will Israel start to counter such a call on the world stage? Insisting on Jewish ethno-religious exclusivity will further entrench in the world public opinion the image of Israel as an anachronistic, pariah state, a new form of apartheid. Evoking the Holocaust may help Israel deflect any serious consideration of this democratic alternative for a while, but this is bound to crack under pressure from many parties interested in reaching an enduring and just peace in this troubled region.

Palestinians realize that a transient phase of chaos, indecisiveness and perhaps internal strife may descend upon them after Arafat's departure from the scene, but no birth comes without contractions. Those may well be the first signs of the next era: the struggle towards a democratic, secular state in historic Palestine.

Omar Barghouti is an independent Palestinian political analyst. His article “9.11 Putting the Moment on Human Terms” was chosen among the “Best of 2002” by the Guardian. He can be reached at: jenna@palnet.com

Mo(u)rning Sounds
By Nizar Wattad

Tat-tat-tat-ting
The woodpecker
Is woodpecking
A metal pole

The rooster crows, caws
Across the courtyard
The muezzin calls all
The faithful to pray I

Do not go with them I
Do not flock to the mosque I

I arise from the mattress
Feet slap slapping cool tile
Smooth white with black stripes
In the kitchen, a radio is on

But it ain't playing no song
Good morning says my grandma
Two youths shot and killed says the man
On the radio I

Do not go with them but
Maybe I should—I don't know

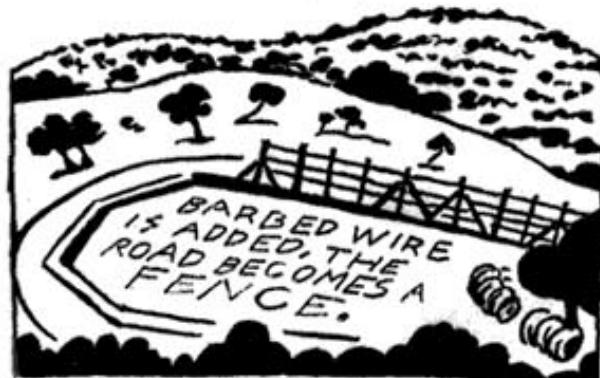
The muezzin's anguish echoes
Across the courtyard
The rooster's bugle-call
Congregates the masses

The woodpecker spits rapid metal bursts
Its rat-tat-tat-ting
Piercing
Two youths I

Do not go with them, no, no I
I turn off the radio

Nizar Wattad—aka Ragtop—is a member of the Palestinian-American hip-hop group the Philistines. This spoken-word piece is from their debut album ‘Self Defined.’ For more info and free music visit www.thePhilistines.com

The SERPENT of STATE

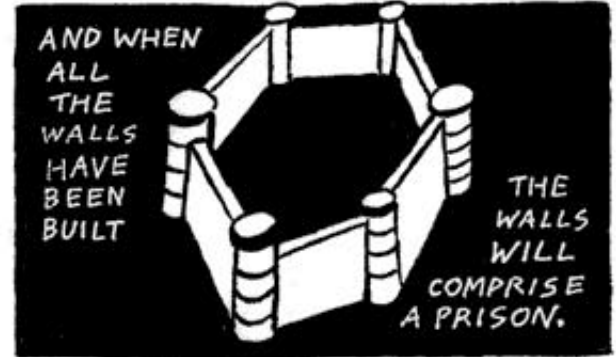
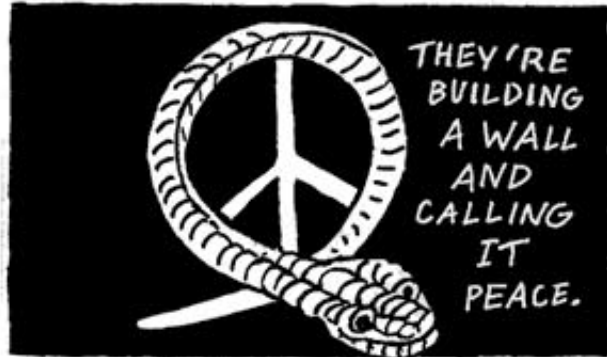
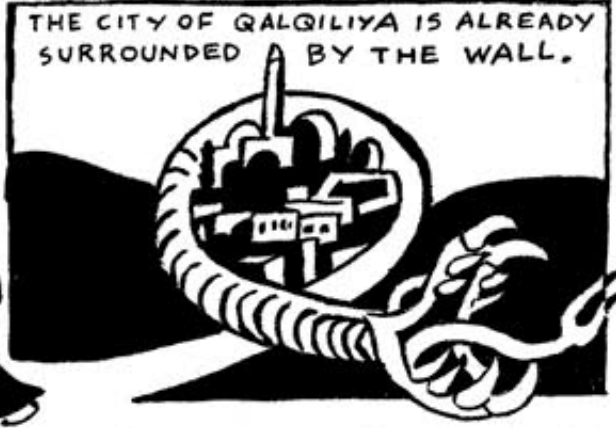
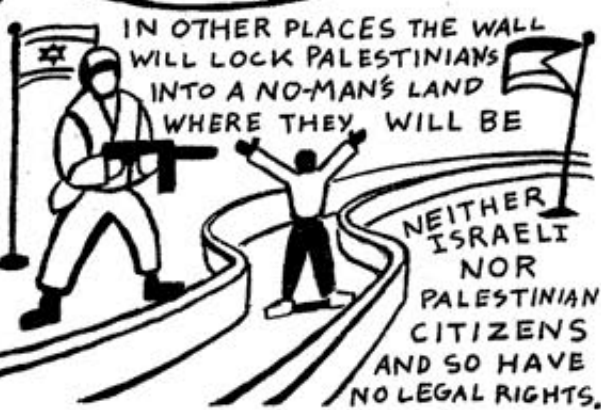


THEN, IN PLACES, CEMENT AND GUARD TOWERS ARE ADDED. THE ISRAELIS ARE BUILDING A WALL IN PALESTINE.



THEY SAY THIS WALL IS FOR THE SECURITY OF ISRAEL.

Comic by Seth Tobocman



A lifelong activist, Seth Tobocman was part of a group that began publishing World War Three Illustrated comics out of the Lower East Side of New York in 1979. His art, which is widely reprinted and recognized, reflects his involvement in struggles against racism and police brutality, for squatters' rights, and around US foreign and domestic policy. Tobocman is the author of *War in the Neighborhood*, *You Don't Have to Fuck People Over to Survive* and *Portraits of Israelis and Palestinians: For My Parents*.

"The Serpent of State" was originally published in World War Three Illustrated. Copyright 2003.

Zochrot: Remembering *al-Nakhba*

Posting Signs at the Sites of Demolished Palestinian Villages

BY EYTAN BRONSTEIN

The Zionist collective memory exists in both our cultural and physical space. Many monuments and road signs point out the loss of Jewish soldiers in wars, yet no indication of the destruction of Palestinian life may be found at all on our cultural and geographical landscape. The heavy price paid by the Palestinians—in lives, in the destruction of hundreds of villages, and by being uprooted from their homes—receives no public recognition. Demolished Palestinian villages are never commemorated, their names often Hebraicized and bestowed upon the new settlements established in their place. These villages are invisible spots on Israel's landscape; only the obstinate sabra bushes serve as their silent monuments.

Palestinian pain, too, is illegitimate; all expressions of pain are considered hostile and threatening. Israel regards its Arab citizens' grief as a threat to Jewish existence here and now. In past years Palestinian awareness of the political importance of collective memory and public commemoration of the Naqba ("disaster"), in opposition to Israeli Independence Day, has risen and become more visible. Visits to demolished villages now take a more central role in shaping the identity of Palestinian citizens of Israel, yet these are made unobtrusively and without demands that the State officially recognize their suffering.

Zionist collective memory also prevents Jews from acknowledging their part in the destruction, from accepting responsibility and, consequently, from achieving real reconciliation with the Palestinians. The Jewish people have not taken and do not take any action aimed at acknowledging their part in the Palestinians' suffering. Any possibility for such action is immediately rejected out of fear that recognition of injustices committed will oblige the Jews to leave Israel. This paranoia is both derived from the Jewish "victim complex" and reinforces it.

Posting signs at destroyed Palestinian villages is part of a larger effort to bring civil and national equality to the country. Physically marking these villages and holding public discussions on the Palestinian Naqba may encourage a more ethical discourse and reveal both the victims and the initiators of the hardships. The act of making the destroyed villages visible is intended to set in motion a process of catharsis within the Jewish public, as well as serve as an expression of humanity.

Though mainly symbolic, posting signs is an act fundamentally connected to the past, as it constitutes recognition of the moral debt that is owed for the injustices

committed in the creation of the Jewish State. The catastrophe that occurred to the Palestinians with the destruction of more than 400 of their villages demands some kind of consideration on the part of the historical victors. Simply erecting a sign that tells the story of a demolished village with dignity is recognition of the wrongs committed and the tragedy.

A sign's existence has both aesthetic and material character. It cannot be ignored on the landscape. It is a physical monument, giving its viewer a new, more critical perspective on the reality in which he or she lives. As long as razed Palestinian villages remain uncommemorated on the Israeli landscape, their existence in the past and their destruction is repressed. Each new sign will change the experience of driving down Israel's roads and walking on its paths. Signs erected over the ruins of Palestinian villages will represent a challenge to written history inscribed on the landscape.

Signs posted at demolished villages will invoke the question of a Law of Return for Palestinian refugees. The signs will place the question of the Palestinians' right to return on the public agenda by testifying to that which existed here, to that which cannot be ignored forever. Jewish recognition of the ongoing refugee problem and determined striving towards an agreement on the issue of return are keys to real reconciliation between the two peoples. Without a fair solution to the problem of return, the conflict can never be resolved.

Posting signs at villages integrates the past, present and future and between the ethical, aesthetic, and political. This is taking action upon the landscape in the hope of rediscovering and remodeling it, creating a renewed landscape that will reveal the traces of what has refused to be wiped out, in spite of so many efforts. In a more just society, the politics of landscape oblige society to morally account for its past wrongdoings, an obligation whose visual expression must be exposed in the light of day.

We are a group of Israelis that aim to raise awareness to the tragedy and suffering of the Palestinian people, particularly among the Jewish population of Israel. Posting signs at demolished Palestinian villages is one way to advance this goal, but is only one element of an expansive effort to commemorate the Naqba in Hebrew. Calling attention to the Naqba in Hebrew—at schools, universities, and in other public arenas—should be an objective of all who desire mutual recognition and peace between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East. At a time when the word "mahsom" (roadblock) is so ubiquitous that young Palestinians are unaware that it's a

term belonging to the occupation, let alone a word in Hebrew, it is appropriate that Israelis think and speak of the Naqba as a way to begin to understand Palestinian suffering.

In addition to posting signs, we also suggest creating children's games on the subject of the Naqba, organizing study tours of villages that were destroyed (including training tour guides for this purpose), manufacturing maps that include these villages, creating a database and documentation of the demolished villages, and organizing exhibitions, among many other possibilities. This will all be carried out in clear and simple Hebrew.



Highest priority for posting signs will be on public spaces such as Canada Park (built on the ruins of Emaus, Yalo, and Beit Nova, which were destroyed in the 1967 war), in cities (such as on Ibn Gvirol Street in Tel Aviv, which borders Sumail), and by major roads, mainly in locations where remnants of the destruction still exist today.

We seek to apply ourselves to these challenges: to commemorate and talk about the Naqba in Hebrew so that our language will be more peaceful and just; to witness what was wiped off the face of the earth in order to understand our neighbors' pain and loss; to acknowledge the Palestinian catastrophes of 1948 and 1967 and, thereby, attempt to mold a peace-seeking Jewish-Israeli consciousness.

Eytan Bronstein is the founder of Zochrot (Remember) which tries to educate Israelis about the history of 1948, including Israeli attacks on unarmed Palestinians and the destruction of more than 400 Palestinian towns and villages. You can visit their website at www.nakbainhebrew.org

Indymedia under pressure

BY MAX SUSSMAN

In the last several years, the combination of efforts working on participatory web-based media, on low-power FM community radio stations, against corporate consolidation of the media, and many other issues have arguably turned independent media into a movement in its own right.

There are many milestones on this path, probably the most well-known being the birth of Indymedia as an independent web-based media outlet for the protests of the World Trade Organization in Seattle in November of 1999. There, a group of media activists decided to make their own media rather than rely on the corporate media to

tell their stories for them. They created a website and publicized it among activist communities and, that week, the website got more hits than CNN.

As independent media grows and expands out into mediums including radio, web, print, video, and cell phones, its power to spread alternative views has similarly grown. Unjust policies are supported by a complacent media that doesn't ask challenging questions or approach issues from the perspective of those that will be directly affected by those policies. On the flipside, those same policies are challenged by an independent, participatory media that facilitates the expression of alternative narratives and analyses to the current paradigm.

That said, it's surprising it took them so long to get to us.

On Thursday, October 7, two Indymedia servers, named Ahimsa, were taken by an unknown law enforcement agency from Rackspace, where they were hosted in the UK.

The seizure caused more than 20 Indymedia sites, including Indymedia's Web Radio Sever, to immediately go offline. The servers have since been returned, and Indymedia volunteers estimate that close to 1 million pieces of information are missing. Many Independent Media Centers (IMCs) have lost months worth of coverage.

Shadowy law enforcement agencies seizing servers belonging to a news organization should be reason enough for uproar. But there are two elements that are particularly disturbing in this case. The first is that no one seems to know who ordered the seizure (or carried it out) or why this happened.

A spokesperson for the UK Home Office said, "I can confirm that no UK law enforcement agencies were involved in the matter." An FBI spokesperson similarly denied involvement. As John Lettice writes in *The Register*, the trail between what scant information there is "is littered with denials." Today, weeks later, the agency that seized the servers and their reasons for doing so are still unknown.

"Were our servers abducted by aliens?", asked Clara, an Indymedia volunteer from the Netherlands. "Two weeks have passed and we are no step closer to knowing who took our servers, why, or even on which continent they were."

The second ominous aspect of the seizure is that it appears to be part of a widespread campaign of repression against independent media. The last several months have seen an unprecedented crackdown on independent media, both in the United States and around the world.

In August, just before the Republican National Convention protests, New York City Indymedia was served a subpoena in an investigation regarding the identity of the authors of several anti-RNC posts that contained the names of 2,200 RNC delegates.

NYC-IMC, like many other IMCs, doesn't log IP addresses, "as a way of protecting the privacy of our visitors."

Then, on September 29, the FCC raided and shut down 10-year old pirate station Free Radio Santa Cruz. In its defense, FRSC argued, "The FCC is charged with regulating the airwaves in the public interest. We believe that it has failed to do so and has proved itself to be controlled by monied interests." The FCC confiscated at least \$5,000 worth of material from FRSC.

On October 21, Indymedia Netherlands refused a public prosecutor's request for IP address logs. The prosecutor was trying to discover the identity of the author of a post to the website. Netherlands IMC also does not record IP addresses.

But don't count the independent media movement out just yet. The Electronic Frontier Foundation recently filed a motion to unseal the secret court order that authorized the server seizure.

"Silencing Indymedia with a secret order is no different than censoring any other news website, whether it's USA Today or your local paper," said Kevin Bankston, EFF attorney.

And a scant month after it was shut down, Free Radio Santa Cruz is on the air again. Santa Cruz Radio Access Movement (SCRAM) has taken it upon themselves to broadcast FRSC's webstream on an FM frequency.

The strength of the modern independent media movement lies in its decentralization. While the server seizure took 20 sites offline, there were over 140 other IMCs operating and offering support to get those sites back up.

So keep your radio dials and web browsers tuned to your local independent media outlet. As the corporate media becomes more and more consolidated, their lies become more and more transparent- and our networks only grow stronger.

Tarabieh, continued from page 16

ern Golan across from Syrian military installations. One of the remaining six villages was later destroyed in 1969 and its population was relocated to two of the other villages. Land surrounding the remaining villages was confiscated. Pre-existing Syrian government institutions were taken over, including the educational system. Qualified teachers were fired and replaced with unqualified people who would collaborate with an Israeli controlled educational system and curriculum.

Soon after the occupation, signs of defiance emerged when Israel discovered that a large espionage network had been transmitting information on Israeli military and settlement activities in the Golan Heights and the other occupied territories. Disguised as construction workers, members of the network were hired to build Israeli military installations in the Golan and along the Suez Canal in the Sinai. They then transmitted the blueprints and locations of these installations to Syrian intelligence, which shared them with Egyptian intelligence. Throughout the 1970s, more underground cells were discovered and their members were tried before military tribunals and sentenced to long prison terms.

By the late 1970s, statements and discussion within the Israeli political community made it clear to Syrian Golanis that the Golan was "destined" to stay with Israel and under Israeli law. The community quickly mobilized to express its intention to fight annexation and any attempts to impose Israeli citizenship. This was met with mass arrest and a wide range of collective punishments. On December 14, 1981, Israel annexed the Golan. In response, the community organized a series of strikes culminating in the declaration of a general strike on February 14, 1982.

During the strike, which lasted for six months, the number of soldiers deployed by Israel outnumbered the Syrian Golan population that remained. Israel also barred the media and humanitarian organizations from entering the Golan. By the fourth month, people were surviving mainly on bread and lentils. Ariel Sharon then invaded Lebanon, thus further diverting media attention from the Golan. Despite this, the community continued to resist until Israel finally agreed not to impose its citizenship on them. Instead, Israel designated Syrian Golanis as "residents" of the Golan Heights and issued to them Israeli travel documents (not passports), which state their nationality as "undefined" and prohibit them from traveling to Arab countries, with the recent exceptions of Jordan and Egypt.

Following this partial victory, Israel again applied collective punishment against Syrian Golanis. Israel imposed unprecedented property and income taxes on the Golan, while exempting Israelis settlers. Additional restrictions were imposed on movement within the Golan and activists were subjected to increased arrests and harsher forms of torture. Schoolteachers who were politically active during the strike were fired and Israel tightened its grip over schools with the goal of transforming the younger generations into obedient subjects who would eventually accept Israeli citizenship.

By the late 1980s, the futility of Israeli policies was evident. In a master's thesis submitted to the University of Haifa in 1989, Aharon Zubeida, a former Israeli military officer in charge of education in the Golan, argued that Israel had failed to win the loyalty of the community because it applied a divide and rule policy in an unwise way. Instead of

distributing bribes among the large families based on proportional size, Israel only bribed the leaders of the largest family in each village. According to Zubeida, this caused other families to adopt pro-Syrian hostile positions. He recommended that the existing system of bribery and corruption be used also with those he describes as "pro-Syrian" to entice them to change their loyalty. He also recommended economizing the repression by targeting those who are outspoken against the occupation and making resistance costly while not targeting community members who "cooperate" with Israel. Also, he recommended that all aspects of life—from paying water bills to getting building permits—be channeled through collaborators ostracized by the community.



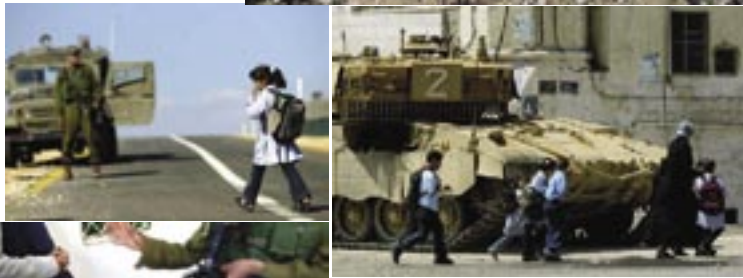
GOLANI FAMILY TALKING TO RELATIVES IN THE "SHOUTING VALLEY" ACROSS THE CEASE-FIRE LINE.

Zubeida's recommendations were adopted by Israel in 1990. Since then, Israel has consistently applied these new policies. Still, there are no visible indications that Golanis have capitulated to occupation. In fact, new forms of resistance emerged in the 1990s partially in response to these policies; these efforts focused on providing self-sustained, community-based services such as health clinics, agricultural labs, and cultural centers. In 2004, the first human rights organization in the Golan was established in Majdal Shams, the largest remaining Syrian town. Its members are attempting to attract more attention to Israeli violations of basic human rights—social, cultural, and economic—as well as Israeli violations of the Geneva Conventions governing the conduct of warfare and the treatment of occupied people.

All occupations are inherently cruel, corrupt, and unjust. In the case of the Golan, occupation has meant the ethnic cleansing of the vast majority of the native population; collective punishment; arrests, torture, and imprisonment of hundreds of activists; land confiscation; and gross violations of basic human rights such as the rights to dignity, personal safety, free movement and travel, as well as freedom from oppression, discrimination and collective punishment. It has also meant the building of some forty illegal Israeli colonies on the remains and lands of destroyed Syrian villages.

In 1983, the community defied the Israeli government and "illegally" built a monument that stands to this day at the center of Majdal Shams. It commemorates the community's ancestors who fought and died in an impressive but failed revolt against French colonizers in 1925-27. The monument is called The March and the significance of the name is unmistakable: neither occupation nor resistance is new to this community; the French came and left and so will the Israelis.

Bashar Tarabieh is an activist from the occupied Golan Heights, and is currently a graduate student at the University of Michigan. To read a more detailed history and discussion of resistance in the Golan under occupation, see http://www.ameu.org/uploads/vol133_issue2_2000.pdf



What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore--
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over--
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

-Langston Hughes

