

# Palestine Focus

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JANUARY 1984

## Editorial:

# Israel's Illegal Settlements: U.S. Funds Annexation

Imagine that strangers arrive in your neighborhood one day, evict one of your neighbors by force, insist that your neighbor's land and home belong to them, and warn that your home could very well be next.

These strangers walk down your main street with submachine guns, publicly declaring that you and all your neighbors should be expelled so that more strangers could move into your homes, despite the fact that your neighbors have lived together for decades. You are afraid and angry. Children begin throwing rocks at the strangers' cars, and entire families and neighborhoods are punished. Your schools are shut down. The strangers declare that anyone who objects to their plans will have their homes suddenly torn down or be forced to leave town or thrown in jail.

Many of the strangers appear to be deeply religious, but they refer to you and your neighbors as "cockroaches" and "two-legged beasts." When someone puts a bomb in your mayor's car, strong evidence points to the strangers' guilt, yet no culprit is found and you and your neighbors are told not to leave your homes for days on end.

More and more housing tracts are built for the strangers. Soon you have no more water for your crops, while the new tract homes have lush lawns and colorful gardens. Your livelihood is ruined, while soldiers walk through your streets ready to shoot if anyone protests, ignoring the laws in your community and the entire world.

A horrible nightmare? Perhaps, but one all too real for those living in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967—the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza Strip, along with the Syrian Golan Heights. If you strip away the constant invocations of the Bible, all the "diplomatic" talk about "Israel's security," all the tortuous mystification such as "autonomy for the people but not for the land," what you find is a brutal attempt by Israel to force out the native Palestinian population and to annex these territories as part of "Greater Israel."

This policy of occupation and annexation has been condemned as illegal and immoral by people and states throughout the world. Until recently even the United States government formally agreed with world opinion that this policy violates United Nations resolutions, the Geneva Conventions, and other international accords. But even this figleaf was dropped when the Reagan administration issued statements denying that Israeli settlement policies are illegal and vetoed a U.N. Security Council resolution on the settlements on August 2, 1983. Although it is distressing that the Reagan administration no longer officially opposes the settlements, this formal shift in U.S. policy comes as no surprise, for the United States has allowed—and even encouraged—these settlements for many years.

Recent disclosures have revealed that without U.S.



West Bank Palestinians demonstrate against Israel's occupation.

subsidies Israel would not be able to pursue these policies. The United States provides massive amounts of foreign aid to support Israel's faltering economy. Approximately \$925 million a year in economic aid is provided to Israel by the United States and most estimates indicate almost half goes for settlement programs. The additional almost \$2 billion in military aid also frees up Israeli funds, allowing the government to provide its own subsidies—running as high as \$150,000—for each family that illegally settles in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Professor Seth Tellman of Georgetown University, a former Mideast staff expert for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, stated, "In effect, we indirectly support the settlement program by the sheer volume of our aid." The United States also provides generous tax benefits for private contributions to Israel, an estimated additional \$2 billion per year. These donations are used by the World Zionist Organization and others to provide essential economic support to the Israeli settlement program. Only with massive U.S. aid can Israel afford its huge military budget, conquest in Lebanon, settlements, three-digit inflation, and rising personal income—all at the same time.

Israeli policy makers have been totally frank in their declarations that the political objective behind Israel's massive settlement policy is to guarantee its permanent and irreversible rule over the occupied territories. For

example, shortly after the 1967 war, Y. Ben-Porat, a well-known Israeli scholar, openly declared, "There is no Zionism, no settlement, no Jewish State without evacuation of the Arabs and confiscation and enclosure of their land." Recently, Professor Yerval Ne'am, Acting Head of the Ministerial Committee on Settlement of the Israeli Cabinet, unambiguously discussed Israeli aims behind settlement: "Our effort in colonizing Judea and Samaria [biblical names for the West Bank]... is to create as soon as possible the fact that there is no place for a Palestinian Arab state."

To "create these facts," successive Israeli governments have had to simultaneously isolate and depopulate the area's Palestinians and move in Jewish Israeli settlers. In 1967 approximately 50 percent of the 2.65 million Palestinians lived in the occupied zones. Fifteen years later, 1983 figures show approximately 1.3 million Palestinians remaining in the occupied zones, only 29 percent of the current 4.5 million worldwide Palestinian population.

Without the 1967 war and subsequent occupation, the natural increase of Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza should have yielded a 1983 population over 2 million. Israeli policies directly or indirectly resulted in the dispersion of over 700,000 Palestinians.

This large-scale depopulation of the West Bank has only been achieved through massive expulsion of Palestinians. The Israeli pressures on West Bank and Gaza Palestinians bear a striking parallel to apartheid South Africa. The impact of the occupation on the demography, economy, and legal system of the West Bank and Gaza makes it clear that Israeli settlements are the skeleton upon which an apartheid society is being built.

In South Africa Black men live a makeshift life as wage laborers are separated from women, children, and stable family life by the pass laws. On the West Bank and Gaza, Palestinian family life is under a similar attack.

For example, a striking imbalance in the male to female ratio results from selective expulsion, emigration, and incarceration of adult men (75 males to every 100 females). Palestinian men who resist the occupation of their homeland run the highest risk of selective expulsion and imprisonment. In addition, discriminatory hiring practices often preclude any opportunity to work in their own homeland, forcing Palestinian men to emigrate to find full employment.

Wherever the settlements go up, Arab farmland, fruit trees, and crops disappear. Israeli policy seeks to shift the Palestinian economy from small farms and trade to a cheap labor pool for Israeli industry and agribusiness. Through the massive confiscation of land for settlement and deprivation of water to Palestinian farms, agricultural

Continued on page 4

## Inside the Lebanese Resistance

# Standing Up to the U.S. and Israel

By Douglas Franks

Israel, the United States, and the confessionally spawned government of Amin Gemayel pose seemingly insurmountable barriers to Lebanon's independence—until one measures the extent of resistance against them. In an interview in Rome, opposition leader Walid Jumblatt characterized Lebanese resistance as "a broad alliance of communities and political forces" constituting "the spinal cord of the ongoing resistance in Lebanon." This alliance, writes Mario Rossi, *Christian Science Monitor* Mediterranean affairs analyst, has been "successful to a greater extent than is generally believed."

What distinguishes Lebanese resistance to both the occupation by Israeli and United States forces and the faltering Gemayel government is the diversity and sophistication of its resistance network. Military resistance is primarily, although not exclusively, under the aegis of the Lebanese National Resistance Forces. The political branch of the resistance movement is the Lebanese Salvation Front, the "parliament" of Lebanese opposition. These organizations are joined by a vast and sympathetic periphery of civil resistance.

### Confessionalism and the Gemayel Government

The domestic target of Lebanese resist-

ance is Lebanon's confessional system of government headed by Amin Gemayel. Born of French colonial rule, confessional-

ism endowed a small segment of Lebanese society, the French-oriented Maronite Chris-

Continued on page 7

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# El Salvador: FDR Targets Israel's Role



Steve Goldfield, *Palestine Focus*

**“Like the Palestinians, in El Salvador we had ten or twenty Sabras and Shatilas.”**

*Interview with Francisco Herrera, Representative for Switzerland and Austria, FMLN and FDR, El Salvador.*

## Israel in El Salvador

Israel has a long tradition of military aid to the dictators of Central America. We saw this quite clearly when the Nicaraguan people were fighting the last battles against the Somoza dictatorship. To Guatemala, Israel sends arms, uniforms, and financial aid. Last year General Sharon visited Honduras.

At the same time the United States is building a very strong military base in El Salvador, modernizing airports, training Salvadoran and Guatemalan soldiers, and preparing for further aggression against Nicaragua.

Israel is thus collaborating with the United States in Central America. Israel appears determined to intervene in a shameless manner in our business. Salvadoran officials are visiting Israel for training. President Alvaro Magaña, who totally represents North American interests, is an old friend of the Israeli military.

After the 1973 war with Egypt, Israeli officers arrived in El Salvador to hold seminars on lessons from their Egyptian campaign. Alvaro Magaña was one of the organizers.

Today the Reagan administration is having difficulty with public opinion, with the Senate, and with Congress. Israel serves

as the bridge to resolve these difficulties by directly assisting the oligarchy and the Salvadoran army. Israel is supplying planes to El Salvador. One of the big problems of the Salvadoran army at the present time is communication and information on the diverse resistance. The Israelis are helping them a great deal on this matter, providing detection equipment and training technicians to operate it.

Much Israeli support to El Salvador is through secret agreements which are difficult to document. Nevertheless one Israeli journalist with access to information has denounced Israeli intervention in El Salvador. We have had difficulty obtaining precise data on the Israeli involvement. The press has the task of investigating and denouncing it. They must go to El Salvador to corroborate what our people experience in the flesh.

In addition to Israeli government involvement in El Salvador, some private organizations who have relationships with the extreme Salvadoran right—merchants with political objectives—are involved in our country. The Israeli government cooperates with them. Since the fifties Israeli arms have been sent to our region. These groups are based in Miami from which they ship arms unofficially and surreptitiously. What we see are the results. These shipments—to both Guatemala and El Salvador—must be denounced and stopped.

## Refugees: Salvadoran and Palestinian

After bombing raids, the army comes and destroys everything in its path, killing animals, burning fields, and naturally killing the people. So our people flee, looking for places with better protection. Some go to guerrilla zones; others leave the country.

The United States knows that where there are people there are seed beds for

## Editorial:

# Tripoli: Implications of the Fatah Split

The fighting inside al-Fatah, the largest organization in the Palestinian resistance, has important long-term significance for the Palestinian people and their supporters. For the first time, a dispute within the PLO umbrella is being fought with arms, a matter of grave concern for all Palestinians and all who support Palestinian rights. Given this internal strife, now, more than ever, is a time to support the PLO.

Because this is primarily an internal question, our role as Americans is limited. The issues at stake are real and complex: internal democracy, style of leadership, and Palestinian strategy. Reliable information is hard to come by, and rumors circulate freely. *Palestine Focus* has avoided becoming embroiled in internal PLO matters, and we will continue to do so. However, we strongly oppose the use of violence, especially when it causes civilian casualties or is fought in urban areas. We believe it appropriate to join those who call for a peaceful and democratic resolution of any and all differences and for the maintenance of Palestinian unity.

This dangerous conflict opens breaches in the Palestinian movement at a particularly sensitive time. The danger is more foreign intervention, Arab and non-Arab, in Palestinian affairs. The U.S. government, which used differences in Grenada as a pre-

text to invade, continues to oppose the aspirations of the Palestinian people. The Reagan administration is once more encouraging the hopes of King Hussein of Jordan to take over the Palestinian question, and once again the United States proclaims that the PLO does not exist.

Until now, internal PLO disputes were generally resolved through democratic dialog. But virtually all liberation movements have had internal disputes. Many have resorted to violence or even taken up arms in attempts to settle them. We did not lessen our support for FRELIMO in Mozambique, MPLA in Angola, the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe, or other movements simply because of internal strife. We owe no less to the Palestinians and the PLO.

Some may use this dispute as a convenient excuse to refuse to support or to end support for the PLO and to push Palestinians to unite with King Hussein. We must not be misled.

We remind non-Palestinians that although individuals, organizations, and governments may have all sorts of opinions on the issues of this conflict, self-determination for the Palestinian people means it is up to the Palestinians to resolve this dispute. Our role is to continue our work, which means to continue to strengthen support for the PLO. We will be judged, and rightly so, by how well we perform that task. ■

guerrillas. To them, human life is not important. With the excuse of annihilating the guerrillas, they assassinate women and children. If they kill twenty, they believe they have eliminated one guerrilla, at the very least. This is truly inhuman; the Salvadoran army and the United States are massacring the population. To them, this is just another aspect of war, coldly calculated.

Like the Palestinians in El Salvador we have had ten or twenty Sabras and Shatilas. The same is true in Guatemala. In Costa Rica, Mexico, and, above all, in Nicaragua, the situation is much better for our refugees. Although the Nicaraguan government is weighed down with great difficulties of its own, trying to build its country, nevertheless it is giving as much help as it can to the refugees.

The United States on the other hand, has a very repressive policy against the Salvadoran refugees; they are considered illegal. To recognize the existence of political

refugees would be to recognize the situation in El Salvador.

Our task is to provide protection, not only material but national and cultural, for our refugees. The popular Salvadoran church has done good work with the refugees. The church, particularly the National Coordination of the Popular Church of Monsignor Romero (CONIP), works inside the country as well.

What I wish to emphasize, despite the refugees and the tremendous disruption of our country, is that the program of the Salvadoran army has failed. Our people have a high level of political development. The refugees are not a passive, resigned population. Therefore, the United States is reevaluating its plans and considering a so-called Pacification Zone where they will supply some health care and food. However, they do not deal with providing a minimum social basis without which they cannot maintain power. ■

# FOCUS on Action

By Steve Goldfield

Apparently Ariel Sharon hasn't abandoned his political ambitions and has to demonstrate American support. Presumably that's why he chose to address a Hebrew Academy banquet in San Francisco last November 6. Sharon unified Bay Area groups around Middle East issues more than ever before. Over 2,000 demonstrators gathered at the Hilton Hotel on a drizzly Sunday evening. Organizers included the November 29th Coalition, National Lawyers Guild, New Jewish Agenda, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, Committee for Academic Freedom in the Israeli Occupied Territories, the Livermore Action Group, and many other organizations. Speakers who addressed the crowd included former Berkeley City Councilperson Ying Lee Kelley and two deposed Palestinian mayors, Fahed Qawasmeh from Hebron and Mohammed Milhem from Halhoul. The focus of the event was anger at the Israeli government, represented by Sharon, the architect of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the butcher of Sabra and Shatila, and the chief arms salesman in Africa and Central America. The demonstration also called for "U.S. and Israel Out of Lebanon" and "No Settlements in the Occupied Territories."

\* \* \*

Last spring the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) applied to join the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, a national coalition of mostly Washington and New York-based groups. Recently the verdict came in: the ADC received 18 of 30 votes, two short of the necessary two-thirds. Excluding the ADC is like excluding the NAACP, the comparable organization for Blacks. Even though the ADC works on peace, human rights, and other issues, it seems some in CNFMP fear issues concerning the Middle East, or at least a pro-Arab perspective. Such discrimination is deplorable, and the idea of a new foreign and military policy for the United States which excludes the Middle East seems pretty strange to us.

\* \* \*

National demonstrations against U.S. intervention in Central America on November 12 went off as scheduled, fueled by the outrage at the invasion of Grenada. Our coalition was again active in organizing for some of the events. We passed out *Palestine Focus*. In San Francisco a supporter of the Lebanese progressive forces spoke. In Washington we marched in a sizeable U.S. Out



2,000 demonstrate in San Francisco against Sharon visit.



West Bank mayors, Mohammed Milhem (L) of Halhoul and Fahed Qawasmeh (R) of Hebron, address 2,000 demonstrating in San Francisco against Sharon visit.

of Lebanon Contingent along with the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, the Association of Arab-American University Graduates, and others.

\* \* \*

Linking nonintervention in the Middle East with Central America and the Caribbean has been impressive in Austin, Texas, reports the November 29th Coalition chapter there. From October 31 until November 12 the Austin Coalition Against U.S. Intervention picketed the Federal Building every day, opposing U.S. Intervention in Grenada and Lebanon. Every day, human "billboards" with the same message stood at major Austin intersections. Austin's November 29th teach-in at the University of Texas campus was cosponsored by the Austin Peace and Justice Coalition, Texas Mobilization for Survival, Democratic Socialists of America, CISPES, Vietnam Veterans Peace Project, the Alternative Middle East Studies Seminar, and, of course, the November 29th Coalition. ■



# Building the Movement for Palestinian Rights

*The November 29th Coalition sponsored a series of educational forums to commemorate November 29th, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, in New York, San Francisco, Chicago, and Austin, Texas as well as events in other cities. Knowledgeable speakers addressed such topics as "The Question of Palestine," "Israel and the Third World," "Judaism, Zionism, and Anti-Semitism,"*

*and "The U.S. Peace Movement and The Question of Palestine."*

*At each event, the November 29th Coalition discussed how we can help build the movement for Palestinian rights. Excerpts from our statement follow. We will publish more presentations from these important forums in future issues of Palestine Focus.*

The United States is at war. Not only in the Middle East, "that vital and strategic area of the earth," in the words of Ronald Reagan, but in "any other part of the earth" where our government declares we have interests. Whether in Lebanon or Grenada, in Central America, southern Africa, or the Middle East, the Reagan administration has moved from supporting allies and surrogates such as Israel, South Africa, and Honduras, to "covert actions," to direct intervention and invasion. With its deployment of missiles in Europe—against the opposition of an enormous and growing peace movement—the United States is squaring off against the Soviet Union. The Reagan administration is becoming more and more warlike, threatening movements of national liberation, heightening the cold war, and attacking democratic forces in Europe, Japan, and the United States, all at the same time.

The present agenda facing the broad peace and anti-intervention movement is a long one. Our tasks are great. Can we throw a wrench into Reagan's war machine? Or will more Americans—not to mention thousands of Lebanese, Palestinians, Grenadians, Nicaraguans, and others—become the victims of a strategy of world war with the risk of escalation to a nuclear confrontation?

We must build a multifaceted peace movement which can grapple with the issues of nuclear disarmament, U.S. intervention around the world, and the impact on the social fabric of our society resulting from militarism. These are questions of our very survival. To confront these issues we must build a movement at once broad yet focused.

If we are to build this movement, we must understand our weaknesses along with our strengths. We must subject ourselves and our history to analysis in order to build a movement for peace that will force the Reagan administration—or any subsequent administration—to stop in its tracks before it gives the green light for Israel to invade Syria...for Honduras to invade Nicaragua...for South Africa to invade Mozambique, Zimbabwe, or Angola...or before the United States itself embarks on another adventure such as the invasion of Grenada.

On June 12, 1982 hundreds of thousands marched in New York to protest the threat of nuclear war, but few were able to link their peace demands to the ongoing war then being fought in Lebanon. On August 27, 1983 over 250,000 gathered in Washington, D.C. to demonstrate for Jobs, Peace, and Justice and to continue the legacy of Martin Luther King's struggle against racism. The Coalition of Conscience, which organized the event, issued a statement condemning U.S. intervention in the Middle East and in Central America.

This coalition was shaken when several Zionist-led organizations from the Jewish community withdrew from the event. In their view, even the vaguest mention of the Middle East was taboo. Still, the August 27th March on Washington stood its ground on responding to the actual threat of war and maintained its stand on the Middle East.

On November 12th, thousands more marched in Washington and other cities against U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean, particularly against the invasion of Grenada and the threat to Nicaragua. The issue of U.S. intervention in Lebanon was also prominent.

In this brief summary of recent national actions, we can see the motion within the peace and anti-intervention movements over the past eighteen months. As U.S. intervention in Lebanon has escalated, more and more progressive Americans have begun to confront the issue squarely.

The Reagan administration's war strategy is called into play whenever and wherever any people seek justice, independence, and the right to build their own national institutions without outside interference; any movement for liberation and democracy is Reagan's target, whether in the Philippines, Chile, or Lebanon. The Middle East, in this sense, is not—and ought not to be treated as—a special case.

Yet we draw attention to the recent positive development within the peace movement to highlight a problem: there has been an historic blindness toward the issues of the Middle East, particularly and most centrally concerning the issue of the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and a homeland. Many people within the peace and nonintervention movements have had trouble seeing the fundamental similarities between the struggle of the Palestinian people for their land and national exist-

ence and the fight by the African people of South Africa or the indigenous people of Guatemala for precisely the same things.

At a cost of tens of thousands of Palestinian and Lebanese lives, lost during the Israeli invasion, the armor of illusions, misinformation, and lies about the Middle East was punctured. At the beginning of the invasion, when the June 12th demonstrations were held, many progressives could still turn away from the Middle East conflict. Today the reality of direct U.S. intervention has overwhelmed us, and a majority of the U.S. population calls for a pullout!

Now that Marines are dying in Lebanon in large numbers, Americans have awakened to the costs of intervention. The question is whether the American people will continue to be led by the flag-waving jingoism of



*Berkeley Mayor Gus Newport welcomes Bay Area teach-in. Other speakers in national teach-ins included Mark Solomon, Uri Davis, Naseer Arouri, Noam Chomsky, Rabbi Elmer Berger, Sheila Ryan, Rev. Don Wagner, and Samih Farsoun.*

Reagan or by the outrage and commitment of the peace movement. And to answer this literally life-and-death question, the question of Palestine must be confronted head on.

Years of virtually unchallenged pro-Israel propaganda in the media and from government officials have molded the thinking of many people who think Israel is only a small, brave country seeking peace but threatened by bloodthirsty Arabs. In this Alice-in-Wonderland, topsy-turvy mindset, Israel only seeks "peace" (as it invades Lebanon), "secure" borders (as it annexes the West Bank, the Golan Heights, Gaza, and southern Lebanon), and protection from a PLO that seeks to "push the Jews into the sea" (as Israel continues to drive Palestinians into refugee camps).

The victims—those who have had their land seized, their culture expropriated, and their lives and identity officially negated—these victims are regularly portrayed as victimizers.

For too long the peace movement has allowed such myths to go unchallenged—myths permeated with the perceptions and assumptions of the Zionist movement. The real threat of war demands that these myths be exploded. We must not be stopped by the fear that the peace movement will be split if we demand that the United States stop its intervention in the Middle East, if we demand that the United States stop funding the Israeli war machine. We cannot allow such fears to prevent us from preventing war. The Middle East is not a liability to be shoved aside or hidden in a dark corner. The peace movement can only grow stronger by forthrightly grappling with the actual threat of war. It can only grow weaker if it remains paralyzed with apprehension.

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon was a watershed. It galvanized all people who seek peace and justice to oppose Israeli brutality armed with U.S. weapons. Outrage over the invasion, with its cluster and phosphorus bombs, the siege cutting off water and medical supplies, the Sabra and Shatila massacres, and the imposition of the fascist Phalangist government under Israeli occupation; outrage at the continued Israeli settlement of the West Bank and Gaza, and other Israeli transgressions has created a new political climate—a climate in which a strong national Palestine solidarity movement can be built as a wing of a broader peace and nonintervention movement.

The November 29th Coalition has developed in this new climate which has spurred our growth and presented us with a demanding challenge. Our task is to spark and support consistent, far-reaching, and effective activity which brings the issue of Palestine

before the American people and builds a growing and deepening base of understanding.

And we have even broader tasks. Though we focus on Palestine, we cannot and must not remove Palestine from the Middle East. Palestine is at the political and geographic center of the Middle East, but there are many other places where war could erupt. Whether the danger comes from Marines in Lebanon, bases in Egypt or Oman, or oil fields in Saudi Arabia or Kuwait, the United States continues to up the ante, to increase its direct military involvement in the region, thus heightening the threat of war.

U.S. corporate, political, and military leaders regard the Middle East as their private preserve for three principal strategic reasons. First, with much of the oil for petroleum-dependent Europe and Japan coming from the Mid-

dle East, the region is vital to maintain the industrial base and profits of the West. Second, the Middle East forms a bridge between Africa, Asia, and Europe. Successful movements for independence and freedom could spread across these continents; as a result the United States vigorously supports all repressive regimes in the region. Third, the Middle East borders on the Soviet Union; it is a crucial link in the U.S. cold-war chain of encirclement.

The United States intervenes in the Middle East because of compelling geopolitical interests—not because of its so-called moral responsibility to protect Israel, which has the fourth most powerful army in the world. But not all Americans share the same interests. If you own a bank or an oil company, for instance, Reagan is defending your interests. If you don't, you might wonder why your taxes are used to pursue the interests of the rich.

The United States intervenes in the Middle East to promote "stability" as defined by the needs of the multinational corporations. In this sense, stability means the status quo, a region which cannot threaten U.S. political, military, and corporate domination. This sort of stability requires the outright denial of political and human rights and the suppression of all forms of democratic expression.

We must build a movement which refuses to finance U.S. intervention. One of our goals is to stop the nearly \$3 billion dollars the United States gives Israel each year to maintain its "special relationship" with the United States. Israel is the Sparta of the Middle East. Should any of its neighbors be so bold as to challenge U.S. interests, Israel has demonstrated its willingness to intervene.

The United States finances the Israeli war effort and supplies the most advanced weapons of destruction available. Israel is so well-financed that it is able to play an international role much larger than its valuable service as the western outpost in the Middle East. The Reagan administration acknowledges Israel's surrogate role in Central America, aiding Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Costa Rica. Israel also aids the contras attacking the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. Israeli arms sales to Argentina, Chile, South Africa, Zaire, Taiwan, the Philippines—to name only a few of its best clients—are now well-documented.

Only with massive U.S. aid to finance weapons development and to finance purchases from Israeli customers has Israel been able to build its weapons industry. Israel even sells to the U.S. Defense Department, accounting for almost 40 percent of Israeli exports to the United States.

Only with massive U.S. aid can Israel and the World Zionist Organization finance their plans to fill the West Bank and Gaza with Jews-only settlements, stealing more

*Continued on page 6*



# Education Under Siege

By Avi Chomsky

Avi Chomsky is a member of the Committee for Academic Freedom in the Israeli Occupied Territories and editor of their newsletter in Berkeley, California.

In November 1983 Israel shut down all institutions higher learning in the West Bank. West Bank Universities were already subject to frequent forced closures, restrictions, and harassment. Israeli military authorities, who administer the Israeli occupation, have created laws which allow them to control almost all aspects of academic life. In addition to the physical force and terror of the occupying army and heavily armed settlers, Israel seeks to dominate the hearts and minds of the people. Nevertheless, the four universities on the West Bank continue to function and grow.

Before the Israeli occupation began in 1967 there were no four-year universities in the West Bank; students had access to universities in other Arab countries. Under occupation such access has been severely curtailed. All West Bank residents were issued military identity cards establishing the right of permanent residence. West Bank residents thus live in a special kind of legal limbo; they and their land are ruled by a government which does not consider them to be citizens but only permanent residents. Like the U.S. government's immigration card, the identity card can be taken away if one is out of the country for more than twelve months. A student who goes abroad to study may not be permitted to return. And since approximately 10 to 15 percent of West Bank students have been arrested by Israeli military authorities, it is difficult for them to obtain permission to travel.

Along with economic factors, these conditions created a pressing need for a local university system on the West Bank. The West Bank population numbers more than 1 million, with thirty thousand high school graduates every year. Of these, eight to ten thousand are strong candidates for college admission. Because of the significant expansion of the West Bank universities in the past ten years, they can admit about 2,500 freshmen each year, an estimated 40 percent are women. Competition is stiff; Bethlehem and Najah universities accept about one of every four to five applicants.

The West Bank today has one of the most developed university systems in the Arab world. Birzeit University, near Ramallah, is perhaps the best-known institution. Until 1972, Birzeit was a two-year junior college. Now a four-year institution, Birzeit has about 2,000 B.A. students and also grants an M.A. in education. English is the main language of instruction in the sciences, one reason for Birzeit's sizeable foreign faculty.

Najah University in Nablus was a two-year teacher training institute until 1977. Now it is a B.A.-granting, four-year institution with 3,000 students, three times as many as in 1977. Bethlehem University, a high school in 1967, became a four-year college in 1973. Closely tied to the Vatican, Bethlehem University has more than 1,300 students, mainly in business and education. Hebron University, formerly the Institute of Islamic Studies, now has nearly 2,000 students.

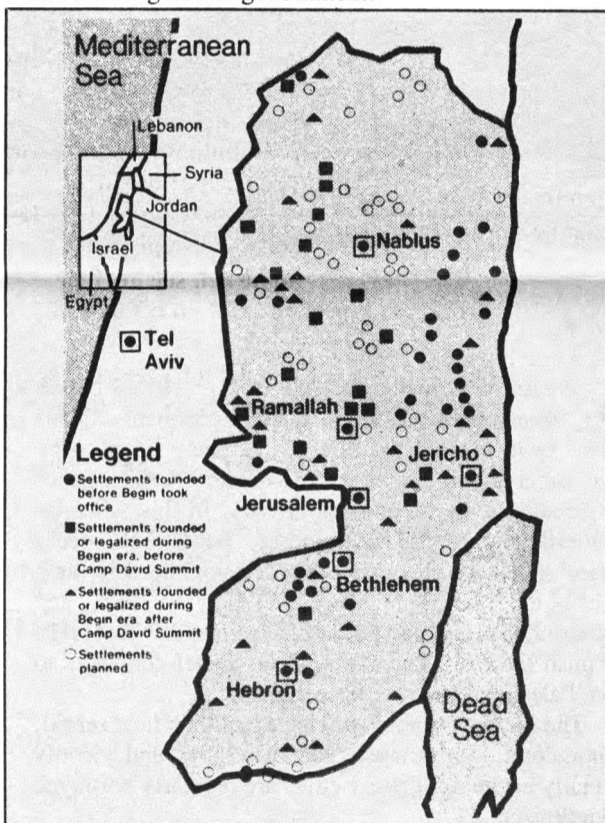
In the first years of the occupation, the Israelis permitted the development of these universities to occur

without active interference, though they never provided any assistance. But in the late 1970s, military authorities began responding to general, and particularly student, protests against occupation policies with armed repression, forced closures of institutions, and laws restricting academic freedom.

In July 1980 Israeli military government control over the universities was formalized with the passage of Military Order 854. To understand the full implications, Order 854 must be seen in the context of Israel's attempts to circumvent international law governing occupied territories and to illegally impose its authority on the population of the West Bank.

International law does not recognize the legitimacy of the acquisition of territory by armed force and thus prohibits an occupying power from making any changes in the legal system of occupied territories. In controlling the territories it occupies, Israel has selected laws to serve its purposes from a patchwork including pre-World War II Ottoman statutes, British Emergency Regulations of 1945, and Jordanian law, supplemented by Military Orders imposed for "security reasons." Israel has sought to avoid openly flaunting international standards while violating their intent by creating a new legal system which operates to protect and extend Israeli interests.

Military Order 854 is an amendment to a Jordanian law governing elementary and high schools; it gives the government the power to set curricula; select, review, and supervise the use of textbooks; license and supervise educational institutions; and issue teaching certificates. The Jordanian law specifically did not apply to universities. One aspect of Military Order 854 is simply to extend rules meant to govern public high schools to private universities. It also allows Israel, the occupying power, to act as if it were a legitimate government.



Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

Military Order 854 also prohibits teachers from belonging to political parties or participating in political activities, requires all faculty and students to obtain "a personal permit issued in writing by a military commander" before they can teach or study at a university, and empowers military authorities to cancel the teaching permit of anyone "convicted of committing a crime in accordance with security legislation, or anyone who has been placed under administrative detention."

Thus every aspect of academic life, from subjects taught and books used to professors hired and students admitted, is, in the West Bank, under the direct and complete control of the military government.

In August 1982 a new order was imposed, requiring that all "foreign faculty"—including West Bank Palestinians with Jordanian or other passports—sign a loyalty oath declaring that "I am fully committed against indulging in any act and offering any assistance to the organization called the PLO or any other terrorist organization that is considered hostile to the state of Israel" as a condition for receiving a work permit. Faculty protested, calling the document a "political statement" and saying, "The attempt to link it to the issuance of work permits amounts to coercion of foreign nationals whose only role here is academic to involve themselves in local political issues. We assert our right to refuse to take political stands. There is no political dimension to our contractual agreements."

Twenty-eight professors from Najah and five from Birzeit were deported early in the school year for refusing to sign the oath. At Bethlehem, one faculty member was expelled and eleven were barred from campus. Other foreign nationals—as many as one hundred from all four universities—had to leave and reenter the country every three months to renew tourist visas while waiting for the work permit issue to be resolved.

In addition, traditional harassment measures, such as arrest of students and closure of universities by military authorities, have been a constant infringement of academic freedom. University sources estimate that several hundred students were detained during the past school year, including the entire student councils of both Birzeit and Bethlehem Universities.

Birzeit was closed by Israeli occupation authorities for seven months during the 1981-82 academic year but was more fortunate the following year, closed for only three weeks. After students demonstrated against Jimmy Carter's visit, Bethlehem was closed for four weeks in March of 1983 and Hebron for two months. Najah was ordered closed for three months in June, delaying graduation and complicating the start of the current school year.

This treatment of the universities is representative of Israel's general policy toward the territories it occupies and their population. Attempting to control and destroy Palestinian institutions and organizations is part of the same Israeli policy which settles its own citizens on the land and declares it part of "Eretz Israel." This policy of occupation, settlement, domination, and annexation is as much directed at the intellectual growth of Palestinians as at their economic, political, and social development. And while implementing this policy, Israel continues to rebuff all attempts at a negotiated peace. ■

## Israel's Illegal Settlements...

Continued from page 1

labor has dropped from 50 percent of the West Bank labor force in 1967 to 20 percent today.

In South Africa, Black people live in "illegal" cardboard and plastic shanties alongside the glittering high-rises of Johannesburg. On the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Jewish settlers bathe and take showers down the road from Palestinian farmers whose wells have gone dry and from refugee camps denied basic services.

As a low-paid labor pool, Palestinians are at the mercy of the Israeli economy. Approximately 35,000 mostly male West Bank Palestinians are registered for employment within the pre-1967 Israeli borders. Another 100,000 are illegally working. All these workers are denied benefits and rights accorded to Israeli workers.

The economic strangulation of the occupied territories has enabled the Israelis to exploit the West Bank and Gaza as important markets for Israeli goods. And Palestinian construction workers work for low pay and without rights to build Jews-only settlements, while the authorities refuse them permits to repair their own homes.

Israel has transformed the legal system of the occupied territories into a tool which ensures its goal of settlement and annexation. Since 1967, the Israeli military has imposed over 850 military orders covering every

aspect of economic and political life in the West Bank and Gaza—more than the amount of legislation passed through Israel's own Knesset. International law, including the Geneva Conventions, prohibits an occupying power from altering the laws existing prior to occupation. New laws are limited to promoting the welfare and security of the occupied people. The 850 Israeli military orders blatantly violate these international accords.

Israeli occupation includes collective punishment of entire towns and villages, restrictions on the rights of Palestinians to construct housing or to plant crops, foreign college professors pressured to sign "loyalty" oaths. Wearing a t-shirt with "Palestine" emblazoned on it can mean a jail sentence. The name and the people are both officially denied to exist in the systematic denial of land, rights, and national identity to an entire people while fanatical settlers move in protected by "law" and an occupying army.

In the latest ominous development, Israel is planning to move Palestinians out of Gaza and West Bank refugee camps in the name of "building new housing."

The United States pours money into Israel, perceiving that a well-funded settlement campaign will consolidate Israel's rule over the Palestinians. The United States hopes that its continued covert funding of these settlements will guarantee Israel's continued willingness to serve as a military proxy in the Middle East. The United States is thus an accomplice in Israel's genocidal attack on the Palestinian people. By Israeli logic—shared by the United States—the "Palestinian

problem" will disappear when the Palestinian nation disappears. In such a deadly fashion, "peace" and Israel's ever expanding borders would be protected.

President Reagan's September 1, 1982 "peace" proposal states, "Further settlement activity is in no way necessary for the security of Israel." Calling for a freeze on settlements, Reagan proposed that negotiations be held between Israel and Jordan's King Hussein on the fate of the Palestinians.

The fact that the United States continues to fund the settlements—and has even backed away from its earlier statements "deploring" them—reveals that the United States is not at all interested in achieving peace in the region. The Reagan "peace" plan has only paved the way for further Israeli settlement and annexation.

Yet recent opinion polls show a majority of Americans opposed to continued annexation of the West Bank and Gaza. This sentiment must be mobilized into effective action. We must declare that our tax money should not be used for the destruction of entire communities—of an entire nation's identity. We must demand that settlements not only be halted but also removed.

If strangers began moving into your community, stealing your homes and your land, denying your rights and your identity, you would fight back. Geneva Conventions guarantee the right of an occupied people to resist.

You would not expect the common people of another country to finance your destruction. You would expect them to demand an end to their government's subsidies to settlements. The Palestinian people expect our support. How will we respond? ■



# Poem in Praise of the Tall Shadow

In a culture which regards poetry with great fervor and delight, Mahmoud Darwish is one of the most celebrated of Palestinian poets. "Poem in Praise of the Tall Shadow" is an epic poem of the Battle of Beirut, the PLO evacuation, and the Sabra and Shatila massacres. Read by the author to the February 1983 Palestine National Council meeting in Algiers, the poem received a standing ovation.

This poem explores the meaning of the Palestinian exodus from Beirut as an epic journey. Palestinian experience is a history of journeys, exiles, and conquests along with endurance and strength, an experience which Darwish heightens to a universal

level with his motif of the journey. Images of Beirut—the sea and the trees, the blood and determination—reverberate throughout the poem; the sea is a metaphor for all of life's journey, and the need for continued struggle underlies the rich imagery and themes.

Palestine Focus is delighted to publish a few excerpts from this lengthy, historic poem. While we cannot hope to capture the work's grand sweep, we can at least provide a glimpse of the rich culture Palestinians are producing despite the adversities of war and occupation.

Drawing by Selma Waldman

By Mahmoud Darwish  
Translated by Mahmoud Hamdan

A sea for the new September  
Our autumn's approaching the gates!  
A sea for the bitter hymn.

For Beirut we recited the whole poem.

A sea for the middle of the day  
A sea for the banners of doves  
For our shadow  
For our individual weapons.

A sea for the borrowed age  
For your hands.  
How many a wave of the sea  
Has robbed your hand of waving,  
Of my waiting?

Cast our shape to the sea!  
Leave the bag of storms by the first rock  
And carry your emptiness  
And my defeat.

And the heart was able to throw  
To a window its last greeting.  
The heart was able to howl  
And promise the deserts hot tears.

A sea for our sake!  
Let your wounded body ring bells  
For the bitter autumn  
The deserts will expand  
In a short while  
When the sky pounces on your steps.

\* \* \*

Now is a sea. Now's a sea  
That is all sea.  
And he who has no land,  
For him there is no sea.  
And the sea's our picture  
So, don't go away totally.  
It's only another exile,  
Don't go away totally.

\* \* \*

And now, when things are masters  
And this silence comes to us like arrows,  
Will we realize the unknown in us?  
Will we sing as we sang?  
Ah! Our blood! The scandal!  
Will you come to them as hail?  
These are nations that pass  
Strike your enemy!  
There is no escape!

\* \* \*

Beirut is our picture  
Beirut's our revealed verse.  
Either we will be  
Or it will not be.

I don't love you.  
How much do I love you?  
Two clouds, you and I  
And two watchmen  
Crowning awareness with a cry  
Stretching the night  
Till the end of night.  
I say, when I say,  
Beirut town is not my woman  
Beirut the place is my enduring revolver  
And Beirut the time is the essence  
Of the moment smeared with smoke.

\* \* \*

Beirut—No!  
My back is a bulwark to the sea, and—No!  
I might lose the world—Yes.  
I might lose words and memory.  
But now I say No!  
Is it the last of the shots?  
No. Is it all that's left  
Of the air of this earth?  
No. Is it all that's left

Of the spirit's ruin?  
No. Beirut—No!

Our stumps are our names.  
No! No exit!  
The veil covering the veil  
That covers the veil  
Has fallen. The veil has fallen.  
You have no brothers, my brother,  
No friends, my friend.  
No mast and no water  
You have no cure and no sky  
No blood and no sail  
No front and no behind.  
So, blockage your siege!  
There's no escape!  
Your arm has fallen off?  
Pick it up and strike your enemy!  
No escape!  
I have fallen beside you?  
Pick me up and strike your enemy!  
You're free now!  
Free  
And free.  
Your dead and your wounded  
Are your ammunition.  
So, strike with them.  
Strike your enemy!  
There is no escape!

\* \* \*

Naked we are  
No horizon covering us  
And no grave hiding us.  
And Oh!  
O day of Beirut, broken at noon  
Hurry a little, hurry  
So we know where's our last cry.

Beirut in the afternoon  
Insects multiply  
Humidity rises  
Muscles relax  
We feel a congestion for the earth  
In our joints, and we scream,  
"O hero, break in us!"

Evening over Beirut  
Marble's exuding blood  
And the doves are killing me.  
To whom shall I raise my words a roof  
While the earth is carried by clouds  
Which move, when they move,  
In the direction of my labyrinth?

I fix my eyes on the revolver  
As it lies on the edge of the bed.  
I crave it, and it will save me.  
Mere talk will save me.  
Darkness is all that's in us.  
Darkness.

Beirut at night  
There is no dark more black  
Than this darkness.  
My death illuminates me.  
Do they from stone carve out drowsiness?  
Do they from psalms beat out armaments?  
A victim  
Has killed  
His victim  
Whose identity is mine.

\* \* \*

Sabra's a sleeping girl.  
The men have parted on their journey  
The war went to sleep  
For two small nights.  
And Beirut offered obeisance  
And became a capitol.  
A long night attends  
Upon the dreams in Sabra,  
While Sabra sleeps.

\* \* \*

How many times will you go away?  
And for how long will you travel?

And to what dream?  
And if you should come back some day,  
To what exile will you return?  
To what exile will you return?

Sabra tears at her uncovered breast  
How many times  
Will the flower have to open?  
And how many times  
Will the revolution  
Have to move on?

\* \* \*

They have parted and said nothing  
About their return.  
They've withered and did not turn  
From the fiery redness of the rose.  
They came back but did not return  
To the beginning of the journey.  
And this age is a youth  
Who has run away from the kiss.

No. I don't have an exile  
So I can say I have a country.  
God! What an age is this?

\* \* \*

People of Lebanon, farewell!  
Thanks for every little tree  
That bore my blood  
To illuminate for the poor  
The feast of bread  
Or to shed light on my face  
For the occupier  
So he can see my face  
And put on his deceit.

Thanks for every cloud  
That covered my hand  
Or wet my lips  
Until it gave the enemies  
A gateway, or a veil.  
Thanks for every revolver  
That covered my exit  
With rice and flowers  
Or that cried, or ululated  
As much as it could.  
O tear that is all  
That remains from a country  
And I use to lean memory on  
And rays of light!  
People of Lebanon, farewell!

\* \* \*

Two bodies in the coffin  
Of this east we are  
Supplying the forgotten bag of  
Provisions with screams.  
Glad tidings of Christmas we are  
And two pictures for a moment of grace  
Which tried, and tried, and tried  
To present the east with  
The notion of collectivity.  
People of Lebanon, farewell!

Two names we are for unity  
We wanted to exist by our own will  
So that people in this world  
Are not turned into chattel.  
People of Lebanon, farewell!

And now, we have finished our mission  
Since the brother has united with the enemy  
And we have not found a land  
Over which we could aim our blood  
And erect it into citadels.  
People of Lebanon, farewell!

Beirut's our haversack  
Beirut's our nativity.

\* \* \*

The sea's our surprise, our gaiety  
Our exile and our game.

And the sea's the original land  
Of our call. The sea's our image.  
And he who has no land  
Has no sea.

The sea in front of you, in you  
The sea behind you.  
Above this sea, another sea  
And a sea under it.  
You are the son of this sea.  
How we used to love dark blue  
Except for our broken shadow  
Over the sea! And how many  
A feast did we prepare  
For the month of September!

\* \* \*

What do you want  
While from one epic to another  
You march like a banner?  
And what use are flags?  
Did they protect the city  
From the shrapnel of a single bomb?

What do you want?

A newspaper?  
Will papers breed a sparrow  
Or weave an ear of wheat?

What do you want?  
Ribbons?  
Does the policeman know where  
This little earth will become  
Pregnant with the coming winds?

What do you want?  
Lordship over the sand?  
You are the lord of our spirit  
O master of this changing universe!

Therefore, go.  
There is no place for you  
Nor dunghill thrones.  
The freedom of bringing into being  
Is yours. The creator of pathways  
You are, and the reverser of the journey.

Go poor, like a prayer  
And barefoot, like a river  
In the path of pebbles.  
And go postponed, like a carnation.

No. You're not Adam so I can say  
You left Beirut, Amman, or Jaffa  
While you are the problem. So, go.  
You are wider than other people's  
Countries. Wider than the void  
Of the guillotine.  
Go in surrender to the rightness  
Of your heart, shedding big cities  
And the sky hanging over.  
Set up an earth under  
The palm of your little hand—  
A tree  
An idea  
Or an ear of wheat.  
How many a prophet has used you  
To gain experience?  
How much did he suffer  
To put his temple in order!  
A waste of time for you, proud one,  
To attempt ownership, or a kingdom.  
So, march to Gogotha  
And ascend with me  
To bring back the beginning  
To the dispersed spirit.

What do you want,  
While you're the lord of our spirit?  
O lord of the changing universe  
Lord of the ember  
Lord of the flame!  
How wide the revolution,  
How narrow the journey,  
How huge the idea,  
And how small the state! ■

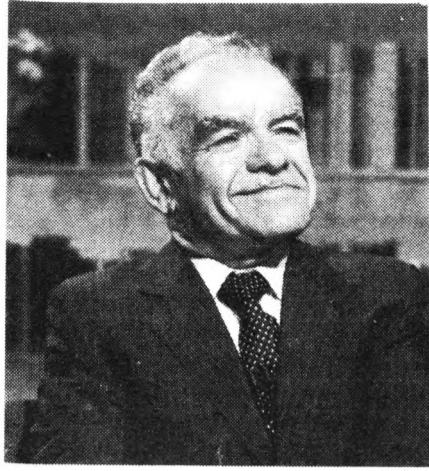


# Yitzhak Shamir: A Profile

By Nanay Gabriel

Yitzhak Shamir was born Yitzhak Yzertinsky, in Poland in 1914. An avid Zionist, he became a member of Betar—the youth movement of Vladimir Jabotinsky's Revisionist Zionism. In the 1930s Shamir emigrated to Palestine and joined Begin's underground militia, the Irgun.

In 1940 the Irgun split, mainly over the issue of accommodation with the British, who had a mandate over Palestine at that time. Abraham Stern led the split, and established LEHI (Fighters for the Freedom of Israel), known derogatorily as the Stern Gang because of its terrorist activities. Fanatic in both ideology and practice, the founding principles of the Stern Gang included calling for a Jewish State from the Nile to the Euphrates, the expulsion of all Palestinian Arabs, and the building of the



**"Today a man who collaborated with the Nazis is Prime Minister of Israel."**

Third Temple in Jerusalem.

However, the Stern Gang was most distinguished for its extreme anti-British position and admiration of Italian-style fascism and conducted negotiations with agents of Mussolini and Hitler. Indeed the Stern Gang went so far as to propose an alliance with the Third Reich.

When the Irgun split in 1940, Yitzhak Shamir, without hesitation, joined LEHI. After Stern's death, Shamir became part of the gang's three-man leadership. From 1942 to 1948 he was operations commander, responsible for planning and carrying out assassinations and other terrorist acts. Shamir is known to have personally organized the killings of Lord Moyne, British Minister Resident for the Middle East, on November 6, 1944 and of Count Folke Bernadotte, UN Special Minister in Palestine, on September 17, 1948.

By 1948, with the British clearly on their way out, tensions between the Irgun and the Stern Gang eased. Together they

jointly planned and carried out the massacre at Deir Yassin and other acts of terror aimed at forcing the Palestinian population to flee.

When the state of Israel was founded, it was clear that Shamir's skills were too valuable to waste: he was promptly recruited into the MOSSAD, the Israeli equivalent of the CIA. In the early 1950s he was known to be posted in Paris, where he posed as an El Al employee. Later he was involved in sending letter bombs into the Gaza Strip, then under Egyptian administration, directed especially against members of the Palestine Liberation Army and Nasser's intelligence officers. Fed up with what he considered the too liberal and mistaken policies of the Labor Party, Shamir retired from politics and became a businessman. However, as the trend to the right accelerated in Israel, Shamir joined Begin's Herut Party in 1976. He was elected to the Knesset in 1977, and Begin appointed him Foreign Minister after Moshe Dayan's resignation in 1979, despite the fact that Shamir was on record opposing the Camp David accords. Today a man who collaborated with the Nazis is Prime Minister: a simple fact which speaks volumes about the Israeli state. ■

After the war a copy of the Stern proposal for an alliance between his movement and the Third Reich was discovered in the files of the German Embassy in Turkey. The Ankara document called itself a "Proposal of the National Military Organization Irgun Zvai Leumi) Concerning the Solution of the Jewish Question in Europe and the Participation of the NMO in the War on the side of Germany." (The Ankara document is dated 11 January 1941. At that point the Sternists still thought of themselves as the "real" Irgun, and it was only later that they adopted the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel—*Lohamei Herut Yisrael*—appellation.) In it the Stern group told the Nazis:

The evacuation of the Jewish masses from Europe is a precondition for solving the Jewish question; but this can only be made possible and complete through the settlement of these masses in the home of the Jewish people, Palestine, and through the establishment of a Jewish state in its historical boundaries...

The NMO, which is well-acquainted with the goodwill of the German Reich government and its authorities towards Zionist activity inside Germany and towards Zionist emigration plans, is of the opinion that:

1. Common interests could exist between the establishment of a New Order in Europe in conformity with the German concept, and the true national aspirations of the Jewish people as they are embodied by the NMO.

2. Cooperation between the new Germany and a renewed volkishnational Hebrum would be possible and

3. The establishment of the historical Jewish state on a national and totalitarian basis, and bound by a treaty with the German Reich, would be in the interest of a maintained and strengthened future German position of power in the Near East.

Proceeding from these considerations, the NMO in Palestine, under the condition the above-

mentioned national aspirations of the Israeli freedom movement are recognized on the side of the German Reich, offers to actively take part in the war on Germany's side.

This offer by the NMO... would be connected to the military training and organizing of Jewish manpower in Europe, under the leadership and command of the NMO. These military units would take part in the fight to conquer Palestine, should such a front be decided upon.

The indirect participation of the Israeli freedom movement in the New Order in Europe, already in the preparatory stage, would be linked with a positive-radical solution of the European Jewish problem in conformity with the above-mentioned national aspirations of the Jewish people. This would extraordinarily strengthen the moral basis of the New Order in the eyes of all humanity. ■

from Lenni Brenner, *Zionism in the Age of the Dictators* (Lawrence Hill & Co.) pp. 266-269

## Palestinian Rights...

Continued from page 3

Palestinian land and terrorizing the people. Both General Accounting Office and State Department documents acknowledge such use of U.S. aid. Now the Reagan administration has dropped its figleaf; it no longer deplors settlements as illegal, but declares that Israel does not violate international law with its annexation of the West Bank and Gaza.

Our movement must demand an end to U.S. aid to Israel because of its effect on Americans as well. Recent statistics show that while some of Reagan's tax cuts have benefited the more affluent, the tax burden has actually increased for most working people, especially the poor. Blacks and other minorities bear the heaviest burdens. This is not just a question of money. The ugly heads of racism and national chauvinism are rising out of the Reagan administration to accompany its war strategy. And with the poverty draft, a large proportion of those dying to defend Exxon and ITT are Blacks, Latinos, and other people of color.

The issue of Palestine is not peripheral; it concerns our very survival. For this reason, the question of Palestine is not simply a question of justice and altruism. It is in our self-interest for Palestinians to regain their rights and thus defuse the dangerous threat of war. Our movement must therefore educate Americans that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, not because its program is just—which it is—but because virtually all Palestinians are on record, recognizing the PLO as the only expression of their self-determination. Their choice deserves respect; if self-determination means anything, it means that non-Palestinians have no right to challenge this choice.

Yet we much acknowledge that the virulently racist mentality which views Arabs as not quite human, as nothing but crazed terrorists, as "thugs" in the favorite expression of the thugs in the Reagan administration, as Soviet proxies, as anything except human beings with understandable aspirations, we must acknowledge that this mentality has infected U.S. society and has even penetrated into the peace movement.

The PLO is the defender of the rights of the Palestinian people. As an institution it encompasses schools, health care, and political organization. And without apology, the PLO also defends the lives of the Palestinian people with arms. Despite internal conflicts, the PLO is the

independent expression of Palestinian aspirations and identity; there is no other! The PLO mobilizes resistance to the ongoing expropriation of Palestinian land and rights and affirms Palestinian identity as a nation which refuses to be negated or annihilated. So long as the United States and Israel attempt to destroy the PLO, in effect to eliminate the Palestinian people, the region will remain embroiled in conflict, the United States and Israel will remain partners in a despicable attempt at genocide.

To build an aware and effective movement, we must also educate Americans about the nature of the Israeli state and the Zionist movement. The peace movement has

**"We must not be stopped by the fear that the peace movement will be split if we demand a stop to U.S. intervention in the Middle East."**

been fearful to face this question, assuming that a critique of Zionism would lead to the charge of antisemitism. The Zionist campaign to equate all Jews and all of Judaism with Zionism swept aside any serious opposition for decades. Many people have been reluctant to criticize Israel out of sympathy for the Jewish victims of Hitler's terror. Such views have penetrated deeply into the peace movement. Yet Israel has committed the same types of crimes, and now many Jews, precisely because they hold painful memories of the Nazi genocide, feel compelled to protest Israeli aggression.

When we criticize Zionism, we are not dealing with a group of hazy, mystical ideas; we are speaking of something very concrete. We speak of the Israeli Law of Return by which an American or French Jew can become an Israeli citizen while Palestinians, driven by force from their land and their homes, remain in refugee camps in a shadow existence, unable to return despite international laws and United Nations resolutions guaranteeing and demanding their right to do so. We speak of discriminatory laws stipulating that land owned by the state of Israel or by Zionist institutions—the bulk of the land in Israel's pre-1967 borders—cannot be sold to or rented by any non-Jew, i.e., to or by any Palestinian Arab. We speak of a system that destroys Arab homes and orchards in order to build Jews-only settlements. We speak of a state in which the issue is whether or not to drive all West Bank

and Gaza Palestinians out of their homes to "purify" the land. Such imperial fantasies translate into a modern version of "the only good Indian is a dead Indian," a sentiment often voiced by Israelis toward Palestinians. Israel is an exclusivist Jewish state, one in which Jews have rights and privileges while Palestinians have virtually none. Israel's so-called democracy is stamped with its own form of Jim Crow marked "for Jews only."

We can only succeed in building a broad movement if we oppose all forms of racism and discrimination, whether based on skin color, nationality, sex, or religion.

When we bring this case, these goals and issues, before the American people in general and before the peace movement in particular. While many are outraged over Israeli and U.S. actions in the Middle East, some still do not fully understand the struggle for self-determination of the Palestinian people and the need to support the PLO. Many are still confused about the nature of the Israeli state and the inherently discriminatory character of the Zionist movement. Among the many points that require systematic education, these in particular often present roadblocks in translating concern into action.

It is possible to build a movement against U.S. intervention in Lebanon while avoiding the difficult issues of the Palestinians, the PLO, and the Israeli state. We are committed to joining with others to build the broadest possible opposition to U.S. intervention, but we are also committed to consistently raising these thorny issues in our independent work. No broad movement can be effective or stable without a core of activists equipped to educate and organize around these issues.

This is the context we work in and how we frame the issues. We want to build a movement which will increasingly define issues and initiate actions rather than just reacting to actions by those in power. We need an organization which can survive the current period of uncertainty and sense of marginality which has surrounded work around the Middle East. The November 29th Coalition has, therefore, begun a process of transformation from a loose, decentralized coalition into an activist, membership organization. We hope to maintain the organizational and political diversity which has thrived in our coalition, but we believe that only an activist, membership organization with a clear political perspective can provide consistent education and organization. With this coherent national organization we hope to promote and develop the Palestine solidarity movement as a vital contingent of the broader peace and antiintervention movement. ■



## Getting It All In FOCUS

Marcel Khalife is one of the foremost musicians in Lebanon. Performing with his group, Al Mayadeen (meaning both the central square of a village and a battlefield), Marcel Khalife's music has become immensely popular throughout Lebanon, expressing the hope and determination of both the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples to resist occupation and fascism. It is a music that is not couched in simple sloganeering, but in songs which reflect the daily life and language of the common people—the fishermen, taxi drivers, students, and children. Traveling throughout the neighborhoods of Beirut and the villages of Lebanon—as well as throughout the Arab world, Europe, and the Americas—Marcel Khalife's music speaks directly to the hearts of the people.

Now, for the first time, people in the United States have the opportunity to hear Marcel Khalife in a new record, "Promises of the Storm," produced by the Marcel Khalife Cultural Project in conjunction with Paredon Records. In this album, the widely acclaimed artistry of Marcel Khalife is combined with the poetry of two outstanding Palestinian poets, Mahmoud Darwish and Izzidine Al Manassrah. (An accompanying booklet includes translations and articles on the artists.)

Marcel Khalife renders such famous poems reflecting the Palestinian experience as "My Mother" and "The Passport" into passionate songs accompanied by the oud, a distant cousin of the lute and a cornerstone of Arabic music. Artistically, "Promises of the Storm" is both moving and enlightening.

But for Americans this record has particular value.

It opens a long-barred door behind which lies a world of Arab culture long hidden by both ignorance and racial stereotypes. Marcel Khalife—along with Mahmoud Darwish and Izzidine Al Manassrah—represents the development of a socially conscious cultural movement that has grown from the pivotal Arab struggles of Palestine and Lebanon. This movement closely parallels the "New Song" movement of Latin America.

To order "Promises of the Storm," write to Paredon Records, P.O. Box 40268 San Francisco CA 94140.

\* \* \*

"Ruin, Jesse, Ruin!" mocks the ad which appeared in the November 11, 1983 *New York Times*. The ad announced the formation of "Jews Against Jackson," a creature of Meir Kahane, founder of the Jewish Defense League and the West Bank vigilante settler group Kach. "We believe that Jesse Jackson is a danger to American Jews, to the State of Israel and to America itself. And we are appalled at the absolute silence of the liberal community and, most importantly, of Jewish leaders and organizations," the ad exclaims. Then, expanding their poison

pen in a more explicitly racist bent, they ask, "How can Jewish leadership be so utterly silent? Had Jesse Jackson been white, would the liberal establishment and Jewish leadership be so cravenly timid?"

Why have these fanatical gangsters—who walk through the streets of West Bank towns with Uzi machine guns on their backs proclaiming that all Arabs should be expelled from their homes—why have they launched such a campaign against a contender for the Democratic Party slot for President?

Because of his forthright support for a Palestinian homeland, self-determination, and recognition of the PLO. Undoubtedly, Jesse Jackson's emerging "Rainbow Coalition" will be subject to many similar media smear campaigns for his stand on the Middle East. Jesse Jackson has already made a considerable impact on the national political scene by joining forces of the Black, Latino, and other minority communities with the peace and nonintervention movement. Keep your eyes open for the media fireworks! *Palestine Focus* readers need to keep monitoring the media for such ads or for biased reporting. Write letters to editors denouncing such racist attacks and distortions.

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Speaking of the press, we should alert readers to three new collections of articles on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon covering Israeli objectives, conditions under occupation and U.S. policy. *The Invasion, The Beirut Massacre* and *The Occupation* are valuable compendiums which draw from over one hundred publications in the United States, England, and the Middle East. Write to Claremont Research and Publications, Dept. G, 160 Claremont Avenue, New York, NY 10027. ■

## Lebanese Resistance...

Continued from page 1

tians, with the largest presence in government, military, and civic offices. Other religious communities were brushed aside and remain marginally represented in all aspects of society.

The favoritism enjoyed by the Maronite Christians created the basis for the right-wing Phalangist Party to gain its current supremacy. The Phalangist Party is not only composed primarily of Maronites but has long been dominated by the Gemayel family.

The Lebanese resistance embodies opposition to the historical domination of confessionalism in Lebanon, not a war between religious entities as the media would have it. A *Christian Science Monitor* commentator aptly described the conflict as "liberty and...the issues of minorities versus the concept of privilege for the elite."

### Armed Resistance

One of the major arenas of the Lebanese war is the Shouf mountain region. Here the National Resistance Front (NRF) battles with the Lebanese Army, which, according to Phalangist commander Fadi Frem, works in close "tactical coordination on the ground" with Phalangist militias. In the Shouf, the NRF consists of the militias of at least four major Lebanese political parties: the Progressive Socialist Party, the Lebanese Communist Party, the Syrian Socialist National Party (which is actually Lebanese), and the Baathist Party.

Domination of the Shouf mountains by the NRF is one of the most serious dilemmas facing the Gemayel government. In Bhamdoun, for example, the Phalangists suffered between three and four hundred casualties, the highest rate since the 1975-76 phase of the civil war. The NRF claimed it captured enough war materiel to replenish its own supplies for three months.

The NRF has made an impact in other regions as well. To the north, Phalangist units under Samir Jeajia were defeated, immobilizing a third of the Phalangist army. The defense ministry building in Yareh and the military academy in Fayabiyeh also came under heavy NFR attack.

**A**mal (meaning hope) is the principal resistance organization in South Lebanon. Allied with but independent of the NRF, Amal serves the largely impoverished Shi'ite population of South Lebanon. The Shi'ites are Lebanon's largest single minority and a prime example of confessional disenfranchisement.

"Village league" administrators are a

primary target of resistance in the South. Shawki Abdullah, president of the United South Assembly (the Israeli-engineered network of collaborators) has twice narrowly escaped assassination. In October, Hussein Wahbe, a chief exponent of these pro-Israel "national guards," was assassinated.

These assassinations signal a larger failure of Israel's collaboration campaigns. Israel-sponsored militias were created to provide improved security for Israeli troops in Lebanon. Incessant ambushes by Lebanese resistance forces on Israeli positions show the total inability of the Israeli-sponsored militias to carry out this task. Moreover, aversion to being recruited into the de-



Ruins of Israeli military base in Tyre destroyed by the resistance.

Time

spised militias has prompted many young Lebanese to join the resistance movement. Israel's vigorous efforts to coopt Amal have also failed. Amal's leaders have called for "total civil resistance" to the Israeli recruitment of young Lebanese.

On the war of attrition against Israeli occupation, a military correspondent for *Ha'aretz* observed that "literally not one day passes without at least one military operation taking place [against the occupation]."

In early December, Israeli Captain Shael Siegel told the *New York Times* that it was "a fair assessment" to say that the resistance was growing.

Unremitting armed resistance has not only fueled Israeli pessimism over its Lebanon "dilemma" but has also elicited countermeasures bordering on paranoid overkill. Any tree or wall that might provide cover for a resistance fighter has been demolished along with the mowing down of high grass and shrubs. The *Christian Science Monitor* reports that the Israelis have resorted to blowing up "suspicious" cars at checkpoints.

Despite the "very bold" character of antioccupation resistance, as a Lebanese newspaper describes it, and the inevitable countermeasures, Israeli forces have consistently failed to identify specific resistance fighters, much less curb their attacks.

Israel's frustration is expressed through its familiar mass arrests and the intensification of its devastating air attacks. The recent strategic agreement between the United States and Israel is not only further proof of our government's uncritical support of Israel but ensures that this desperate and inhumane strategy will continue.

### Political Resistance

The political arm of Lebanese resistance is the National Salvation Front (NSF) which was formed last July in formal opposition to the Shultz agreement. The NSF represents nearly the whole of Lebanon's political spectrum and most of its religious

fellow Lebanese. In Hammana 600 soldiers deserted, 30 officers among them, saying that they had been made into "tools to tear up our own country." Moreover, reported *Time* magazine, thousands of young Maronite Christian males have fled Lebanon altogether to avoid being recruited into Phalangist "gangs."

Civil resistance in Lebanon often takes the form of mass action. The Israeli clampdown after the bombing of their military headquarters in Tyre triggered a general strike by the local population. Another general strike took place in response to the killing of a prominent Druse leader in late November. When Israeli soldiers initiated a wave of arrests near Sarafand in South Lebanon a month earlier, they were confronted by groups of angry residents bearing "knives, iron bars, and heavy objects." In late September, one thousand Lebanese demonstrated in front of the United States Embassy against its aggressive support of "a fascist 10 percent called the Gemayel family."

In late October, Sheikh Mohammed Mehdi Shamseddin, a leading Lebanese clergyman, addressed an audience of fifty thousand at a religious festival. He urged them to resist the occupation and warned Israel against sealing off South Lebanon. He stated that to deal with the occupiers was illegal and treasonous. Finally, he urged all Lebanese to boycott those who collaborate, to counter the Israeli arrest campaign, and to hold fast to their land, and he called for unity in opposing the occupation.

In the coastal town of Aaldun, another prominent church official, Sheikh Sayid Ali Ibrahim, was equally unequivocal. "We can't accept the presence of the Israelis here. We must do everything we can to put fear in them, to make them get out, violent or not." According to the *New York Times*, dozens of Lebanese clergymen have joined him in advocating a militant response to the occupation.

They are succeeding, if individual acts of resistance are any barometer. Reacting to Israeli destruction of local vegetation and other private property, villagers have tied themselves to trees in protest. Echoing the November bombing in Tyre, a silent protester there painted "no, no, no, a thousand no's to Israel" on a wall.

The Lebanese are face to face with two of the world's major military powers allied in saying "no" to self-determination for Lebanon. They are grappling with a government which admits its own failure but is unwilling to cede its artificial supremacy. Mighty obstacles, but judging from the breadth of resistance and the numbers mobilized to engage in it, the long process of self-determination, of attaining social and political justice, is well under way. ■



# A Crack in the National Consensus?

By Ur Shlonsky

The June 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon created in its wake the largest, most vital, and enduring movement of conscientious objection in the history of Israel. Over 1,700 reservists—many of them officers and almost all of them combatants—have so far signed an open letter sponsored by the newly-created Yesh Gvul movement ("There Is A Limit") criticizing the government for its invasion and occupation of Lebanon and stating their objection to serve in those occupied territories.

Over 100 of the signatories have already been court-martialed and sentenced to twenty to thirty-five-day terms, often one after another. Yesh Gvul's call for popular refusal to serve in Lebanon was joined last June by some 250 high-school seniors. It appears that a genuine movement has thus asserted itself.

Many of the cosigners are reservists who had no qualms about the invasion at its inception but whose lengthy tours of duty in occupied Lebanon have awakened them to the insanity which motivated the war. Thus, three objectors described their experiences in Lebanon in January 1983:

Thirty days of reserve duty in Lebanon were enough to arouse serious suspicions that such service endangers the image of the Israeli army as a humane army—such is the consequence of the acts that we witnessed. The following list of phenomena which were all preventable, must be seen and judged on strictly ethical criteria, regardless of political context or partiality.

- Abuse of detainees, held merely on suspicion, by soldiers—Israeli Border Patrol units. Repeated attempts by reservists on the scene to end such behavior were to no avail.
- Use of detainees to do the "dirty work" for the army and the Border Patrol. For the first time in reserve duty we found the army not abiding by its sworn principles. We had been accustomed to the norm that unsavory labors are part of the soldiers' duties whether it be washing the floors or cleaning latrines. An army whose toilets are cleaned by detainees becomes an army of masters. At least our company of reservists refused to take advantage of such "service."
- Cooperation with Haddad's militiamen, whose conduct inside our army bases is totally unacceptable, and cooperation with the Phalangists and

the resulting ex-post-facto support for their criminal acts. We witnessed a number of incidents, which were not planned in advance, in which the most ugly kind of cooperation between Israeli units and armed Lebanese forces took place. The net result was the impression that Israel covers up such deeds and stands behind their perpetrators." (Lieut. Ilan Blum, Corporal Shimson Weinberg, Corporal Deddi Zucker in *Koteret Rashit*, March 16, 1983)

It is worth noting that such objections to the military have a history previous to the 1982 invasion. In 1969, a group of Israeli high-school seniors addressed a letter to the Minister of Defense, expressing their abhorrence at the continued occupation of Arab territories conquered in June 1967 and stating that when its signatories are called up for military service, they will refuse to comply. "The Seniors' Letter," as that document came to be known, was the first statement of conscientious objection by

out of sporadic actions, to establish for themselves and their goals a broader spectrum of political support, contributed to their isolation and ultimately to their bankruptcy as a group. (Some individuals, like Neumann, succeeded in extracting recognition of their demands by the army. The price was usually too high for most of these young men and women and most preferred a backstage compromise to a duel with the authorities.)

It is likely that continued Israeli presence in southern Lebanon, a growing toll of casualties, and lengthy service in a hostile environment will motivate more Israelis to seek ways of resisting or dodging compulsory reserve service. Israel, it should be emphasized, does not recognize the status of conscientious objector (unlike the United States). Therefore, objectors are *a priori* breaking the law. That is why dodging service by pretending illness and the like has grown in popularity since the invasion.

Yesh Gvul offers a political backbone to such dissatisfaction and can serve to encourage the many thousands who did not actually sign the original open letter, but looked upon it favorably to one degree or another, to take a more militant stand. ■

**"Once again a vicious circle of bloodletting and blood guilt awaits us: conquest-resistance-repression. Instead of peace for the Galilee you have brought us a war without end."**



Andre Brutmann, *New Outlook*

20,000 Israelis gather for an anti-war concert sponsored by Yesh Gvul, dubbed "Yesh Gvulstock."

Other objectors, having realized that occupation did not begin with Lebanon have drawn similar consequences about service in the West Bank and Gaza.

It's good that standards of conscientious objection have been established. Today it is considered more acceptable than ever before to refuse to serve. People will be more at ease to refuse to serve in the West Bank. Nowadays, Israel is a democracy for Jews only, but not a democracy. Because whatever occurs on the West Bank cannot coexist with democracy, and if what my comrades and I are doing and if reservists returning from Lebanon state that the situation there is getting worse and worse, then the country is really on the edge of the periphery." (David Ehrlich, *Davar*, May 6, 1983)

a sizeable group of young Israelis.

By renouncing their obligation to serve in the IDF, that group repudiated what was, and still is, considered to be the highest form of moral virtue in Israel: military service. Only one of the "Seniors," Giora Neumann, fought it out almost to the end, suffering prolonged imprisonment and condemnation from virtually every ally. Eventually he struck a deal with the military; his jail terms were considered part of his service and for the remaining months he agreed to serve in a hospital as a civilian volunteer.

Since then, several groups of young Israelis have risen to oppose the policies of their government by refusing to serve, whether in the occupied territories or in principle. These limited eruptions of conscientious objection suffered from two crucial weaknesses. The opposition to service was limited exclusively to seventeen and eighteen-year-olds faced with the glum prospect of three years of service. The reserve corps of the armed forces, which is the bulk of Israel's fighters, remained unaffected by the action of the young recruits and was generally hostile to them. Second, the objectors' failure to create a movement

**The Open Letter to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defense:**

We, the undersigned, officers and soldiers in reserve military service, turn to you and ask not to be sent to Lebanon, because we can't take it any more! We have killed and are being killed too much in this war, We have conquered, bombed, and destroyed too much, and for what?

Today it is all clear to us: through this war you are trying to find a military solution for the Palestinian problem. But a people's problem cannot be solved militarily. You are trying to force a "new order" on the ruins of Lebanon, to shed our blood and the blood of others for the sake of the Phalangists. We were not conscripted into the Israeli Defense Force for this purpose.

You have lied to us! You spoke about the 40-kilometer line, but you meant to approach within 40 kilometers of Damascus and to enter Beirut. Once again a vicious circle of bloodletting and blood guilt awaits us: conquest-resistance-repression. Instead of peace for the Galilee you have brought us a war without end. For this war, for these lies, for this conquest, there is no national consensus. BRING THE SOLDIERS HOME!!!

We took an oath to defend the security and welfare of the state of Israel. We remain faithful to our pledge. We are therefore turning to you to enable us to carry out our reserve duty within the boundaries of the state of Israel and not on Lebanese territory. ■

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*Palestine Focus* is the national newsletter of the November 29th Coalition. It is an information vehicle tied to an activist movement, yet aimed at a general audience with little background knowledge. We intend to report on activities, not only of our coalition but also of other groups, and to provide consistent commentary and analysis of the situation in the Middle East.

The November 29th Coalition takes its name from the date declared by the United Nations as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Our task is to spark and support consistent, far-reaching, and effective activity which brings the issue of Palestine before the American people and builds a growing and deepening base of understanding. Our movement organizes to stop U.S. intervention in the Middle East and to cut U.S. aid to Israel. We educate Americans on the need to support the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, developing a movement to oppose the discriminatory and racist policies and practices toward Palestinians inherent in the Zionist movement and the state of Israel.

*Palestine Focus* is distributed free. However, we urge readers to write for individual subscriptions for mail delivery at \$5 per year.

Signed articles are not necessarily the opinions of the November 29th Coalition. Letters, opinion articles, and other contributions are welcome.

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