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The Uprising—and the Repression—Continue

End the Occupation!

By Anita Vitullo

Special to Palestine Focus

Jerusalem, February 1988—Israeli military authorities are trying to reoccupy the West Bank and Gaza, not by winning “hearts and minds,” but by breaking bones and destroying homes. Even after 60 days of Palestinian national uprising against occupation, and a Palestinian killed for each day of protest, Israeli soldiers find themselves still struggling for control over an unarmed population.

Long curfews were clamped on towns, villages, and camps, but they also seemed to increase the anger. Nablus, the largest city in the West Bank, was kept under total curfew for eleven straight days after demonstrations. Scores were arrested and a dozen people shot. Ninety were treated in hospital after being beaten by soldiers in the first two days of the curfew. Yet, when the curfew was lifted, demonstrations broke out in front of a mosque and two people were killed—one was a 14-year-old child.

The two months of confrontation have passed like a roller-coaster ride, with action shifting from Gaza to the West Bank, from refugee camps to villages, with days of no one killed and then a small massacre in some forgotten place. Shopkeepers closed their doors for an unprecedented sixteen straight days, then agreed to open for only a few hours daily in February, a strict schedule which is escalated when there are calls for days of total commercial, labor, and transportation strikes.

Universities and government-run and UNRWA schools have all been ordered closed by military authorities and private schools closed voluntarily last month because so few children were in attendance. Only emergency bakeries, pharmacies, and medical clinics have remained open in the war atmosphere in the occupied territories.

Clandestine Leadership

The strikes have been called in clandestine leaflets, a



Palestinian youth play an important role in the West Bank and Gaza.

single-page underground newspaper distributed at night on streets in the occupied territories. The leaflets, signed by the “United National Leadership for the Uprising,” first appeared on January 10 and announced a schedule for strikes to culminate on January 15 as a memorial for martyrs, “Yom al-Shahid.” By everyone’s estimation, the leaflets are the work of a local coalition of the major factions of the PLO. Scores of arrests are carried out after every new leaflet is distributed—no. 7 was released February 10 declaring February 16 as “Yom al-Ghadab,” a day of anger—but so far Israeli intelligence has not been able to stop the elusive front, despite their earlier claims that they have the names of the “steering committee.” The considered action and the national unity apparent in the leaflets has won the “United Front” the loyal allegiance

of shopkeepers and other residents.

Israeli Strategies

When an innocent young woman was shot dead by a soldier inside her house in a Jerusalem suburb—the 23rd martyr of the uprising—Israeli military authorities found their vague shooting policy was sharply criticized in the foreign press as arbitrary brutality. The United States particularly urged Israel to adopt “riot control” techniques rather than resort to lethal force against unarmed demonstrators.

A short time later, however, a policy was implemented that went beyond arbitrary brutality to systematic, deliberate injury of the general population—but particularly aimed at youth—to intimidate and terrorize. With the permission of the Israeli minister of defense, the Israeli army and police began to systematically beat people, breaking limbs, battering heads, dragging bodies, kicking, and in mid-February even burying alive four young men.

To those who criticized the battering, Israel responded that nonlethal measures such as beating, tear gas, and rubber bullets were better than the use of lethal force like sniping at demonstrators. The overall effect, however, has been to put a larger percentage of the population in jeopardy of injury as soldiers not only beat youths on the street, but break into houses and beat whole families.

Clinics in Jabalia refugee camps treated more than one thousand cases of injuries from beatings in the first 60 days of the uprising. The number of unregistered cases, where the injured did not need emergency treatment or were too afraid to seek help, may be half again that number.

A blue-ribbon team of American doctors from Physicians for Human Rights toured medical facilities in the

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Editorial

Stop U.S. Funding of Israeli Occupation

The United States government can no longer evade its responsibility for the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Since 1967, tens of billions of dollars of U.S. aid have flowed into the Israeli treasury without even a token effort to monitor human-rights violations or to get an accounting of how the money was spent. Prior to the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, the official U.S. government position held that the occupation is illegal; yet our tax dollars still went to Israel in amounts which increased every year. The Reagan administration has purposefully muddied the question of the occupation’s illegality, and the amount of official U.S. aid has climbed to about \$4 billion per year, not counting tax-exempt private transfers and the many other ways U.S. aid to Israel is stretched.

In addition, the United States government

has been the primary diplomatic backer of Israeli intransigence in refusing to attend a U.N.-mandated international conference where Palestinians are to be represented by their sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization. The United States, as in Central America, is not part of a “peace process” in the Middle East: the United States prefers the status quo but will also accept a “solution” in which Palestinians are occupied by a Jordanian/Israeli partnership.

Today, however, Israel’s brutal repression of the Palestinian uprising has introduced the issue of cutting U.S. aid to Israel which funds the occupation into the political mainstream in the United States. As the *San Jose Mercury News* put it: “That aid is not meant to pay Israeli soldiers shooting Palestinian teen-agers. That aid makes the United States an accomplice to these atrocities. ...

How long will Americans accept a ridiculous situation in which Israel uses our money and our weapons in violations of our principles and policies?”

For the first time, major newspapers—not only the *Mercury News*, but also the *Los*

Angeles Times and others—have questioned U.S. funding of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Such questions would not have been asked without the Palestinian

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Three Dead...Ship Bombed

"Ship of Return" Gains International Support

By Richard Becker and Leticia Penã

Richard Becker and Leticia Penã are members of the National Executive Committee of the Palestine Solidarity Committee who went to Athens prepared to sail to Haifa on the "Ship of Return."

Athens, February 17—The Al Awda, the Palestinian "Ship of Return," was prevented from sailing on February 15, 1988 when terrorists, believed to be Israeli agents, blew a six-foot-wide hole in the vessel's hull. The bombing of the ship in the port of Limassol, Cyprus, came less than 24 hours after three Palestine Liberation Organization officials were assassinated by car bomb in the same city. While Israel achieved its aim of stopping the ship, it paid for its military success in new damage to its already-damaged international image.

One hundred and thirty-eight expelled Palestinians, representing over two thousand exiled in violation of international law since Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, had gathered in Athens, Greece, to participate in an historic voyage to Haifa, Israel.

The expelled included a broad cross-section of Palestinian society: doctors, lawyers, religious leaders, trade unionists, elected officials, leaders of student, cultural, and women's organizations. Among them were Issam Abdul Hadie, president of the General Union of Palestinian Women; Mohammed Milhem, deposed mayor of Halhoul, and Abdul Jawad Saleh, deposed mayor of El-Bireh; Hana Nasir, president of Bir Zeit Uni-

versity; Rasmieh Odeh, a leader of Palestinian women political prisoners; Father Hilarion Capucci (Greek Catholic); Bishop Elia Khouri (Anglican); and Sheik Abdul Hamide al-Sayegh, head of the Islamic Higher Council of Jerusalem, the first person expelled in 1967 and president of the Palestine National Council.

Also present were Jabril Al-Rajoub, Husam Khader, Jamal Jibara, and Bashir Al-Kheiri, the four activists expelled in December 1987 during the current uprising. The expulsions of the four led to both condemnation of Israel in the UN Security Council and to the Al Awda project.

More than two hundred international supporters of the Palestinian cause had also come to Athens to join the expelled aboard the ship. The international delegations included members of parliament from France, Ireland, Spain, Italy, West Germany, United Kingdom, Malta, Portugal, and Greece. Solidarity activists from twenty countries in all participated.

The original plan had the ship departing Athens on February 10, stopping in Cyprus and Egypt to pick up more expellees, and then sailing toward Haifa. However, an intense Israeli campaign of pressure and threats caused a number of shipowners to cancel leasing agreements. These threats, according to reports in the international media, were against the lives of owners and their families, as well as their economic interests.



Emergency demonstration to support PLO in Athens in February.

Richard Becker/Palestine Solidarity Committee

At a press conference in Athens on February 10, Bassam Abu Sharif, spokesperson for the PLO, charged Israel with waging a "secret war" against the ship. Israeli Prime Minister Shamir declared the same day that the embarkation of the Al Awda would be "an act of war," which would "inflare the situation in the West Bank and Gaza." Shamir demanded that the Greek government prevent the ship's sailing, a demand which the latter refused.

Support for the Palestinian struggle runs wide and deep in Greece. The PLO has a full embassy in Athens, while Israel has only a diplomatic mission. The Al Awda was front-page news in Greek papers for two weeks,

as it was in much of the world's press.

Hundreds of journalists, including representatives of the major U.S., European, Japanese, and Arab media were in Athens to sail on the ship and extensively covered what proved to be an unfolding drama.

On February 11, the Pan-Hellenic Union of Sailors issued a statement expressing "its solidarity with the just struggle of the Palestinian people against the occupation military forces of Israel." The statement continued,

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FOCUS on Action

By Steve Goldfield

Teach-ins, demonstrations, pickets, car caravans, vigils, and many other creative forms of protest—too numerous to list in detail—at the Israeli repression of the Palestinian uprising have continued throughout the United States and around the world. Fifty thousand marched to protest the visit of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to Rome, and with one day's notice five thousand marched in Athens on February 16 in support of the Palestinians after the ferry was bombed in Cyprus. In New York, the Palestinian community held a day of mourning for Palestinian victims of Israeli violence on January 30 with a procession of coffins. On February 11, nationally called protests were organized by the Palestine Solidarity Committee to focus on the United States' role in supporting Israeli occupation. The protests, which were held in New York; Philadelphia; Portland, Oregon; New Brunswick, New Jersey; San Francisco; and San Antonio, Texas, were scheduled to precede Congressional hearings on human rights and foreign aid. The hearings were not planned to review Israeli violations of human rights.

FLASH! In March, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir will be visiting Washington, D.C., along with his coalition partners Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin. East-coast organizers planned a demonstration Sunday, March 13, in Washington's Lafayette Park. Sponsors included the Committee for a Democratic Palestine, Palestine Aid Society, United Holy Land Fund, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, Union of Palestinian Women's Associations, Palestine Solidarity Committee, Supporters of the Lebanese National Resistance, Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, Nicaragua Information Committee, NICA, Washington Peace Center, Peace and Solidarity Alliance, and Peoples Antiwar Mobilization. Buses for the rally came from Boston, New York, Detroit, Youngstown, Cleveland, Raleigh, and Charlotte, North Carolina.

Mark Your Calendar: The Palestine Solidarity Committee has called for major demonstrations to end the

occupation and U.S. support for it around the country on June 4, the anniversary of the occupation.

Thousands of postcards are being mailed to Rabin to protest the killings, beatings, and other violations of Palestinian human rights and to call for an end to the occupation. Copies are being sent to the State Department, United Nations, and Amnesty International. Contact the Palestine Solidarity Committee for postcards.

Mailgrams are being sent to Congressional representatives with the following message: "I demand that Congress initiate hearings on Israeli violations of Palestinian rights under occupation and how U.S. aid is used to support occupation. U.S. taxes should not be used to subjugate and brutalize the Palestinian people. Cut U.S. aid to Israel used to support occupation." To send your own mailgram (at a cost of \$3.50 billed to your address), call 1-800-544-0052 and tell the operator you wish to send the "End the Occupation" message. Give them the name of your Congressperson and ask that a copy be sent to the Palestine Solidarity Committee (no extra charge). Statements are being distributed among labor activists, concerned Jews, Latinos, and other groups.

The Palestine Solidarity Committee has just published a broadside in English and Spanish entitled "End the Israeli Occupation: The Palestinian Uprising and What You Can Do." Contact the PSC office for bulk copies.

Several delegations have visited Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza recently. Two legal delegations and a medical delegation went from the East and West coasts in January and February, including judges, civil rights attorneys, and doctors. A delegation of elected officials and activists went in early February. (See article, page 3.) Members of the last-mentioned delegation were shot at by Israeli soldiers using live ammunition and tear gas while visiting Gaza. They held widely covered press conferences in Jerusalem, New York, and San Francisco. Supervisor Richard Hongisto, former police chief in Cleveland and former sheriff of San Francisco, commented that never in all his police experience had he witnessed such brutality.

We were gratified to receive a letter from John G. Healey, executive director of Amnesty International USA. His letter begins, "In light of the continuing disturbances in Israel and the territories under Israeli military administration, we believe that the human rights situation has reached a critical stage. In particular, we are concerned that many of the Palestinians arrested in recent weeks had

no involvement in the demonstrations but were arbitrarily detained in nighttime raids by Israeli soldiers. Many of these youths were arrested without warrant, denied information on why they were being held, and detained incommunicado for lengthy periods. More than 577 of those arrested have already been sentenced to up to 2-1/2 years in prison after unfair trials where they were denied adequate legal representation.

"Amnesty International has called on the Israeli government to launch an urgent inquiry into the killings of at least 41 Palestinians by Israeli soldiers [ed. note: the number had reached at least 60 ten days after the date of the letter]. Many were killed in circumstances that suggest violation of Israeli army regulations for quelling violent demonstrations.

"I would urge you to raise these issues with Israeli government officials by letter or telex. I believe that an appeal on these basic human rights concerns from an individual with your experience could make a difference."

Protests erupted when the *San Francisco Examiner* published a blatantly racist cartoon on January 7. The cartoon depicted vacant-eyed Palestinian toddlers holding rocks while they were egged on by a familiar hook-nosed stereotype older Arab in a burnoose who said, "Hey, kids... See that Israeli soldier with the big machine gun? Well, if you throw rocks at him, you'll get on TV and shape world opinion! Go on, they love it..." The caption read, "How the Palestinians Control Over-Population." The Palestine Solidarity Committee held a picket in front of the *Examiner* on January 27. The publisher of the newspaper, William Randolph Hearst, III, met with a group of Palestinian-Americans and American supporters of Palestinian rights, including Jim Zogby of the Arab-American Institute; Alice Nashashibi, National Association of Arab-Americans-SF; Jack Colum, former national president of NAAA; Maha Giacaman of the Palestinian Women's Association; Hilton Obenzinger of the Palestine Solidarity Committee; Fuad Mughannum of the Independent Grocers Association; and radio journalist George Green. Hearst acknowledged that many readers and also newspaper staff were disturbed by the cartoon. The delegation criticized the cartoon, which Hearst defended, though he is considering the demand for an apology and promised to be more responsive to San Francisco's large Palestinian community in the future and to cover its activities better. □

Emergency Delegation to West Bank and Gaza

By Jeanne Butterfield

We leave here with our conscience deeply shocked by what we have witnessed. We intend to tell our story to the American people, and especially that our tax dollars and military aid are financing the atrocities being perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people." With these words, an emergency delegation of twelve North Americans concluded their press conference in Jerusalem on February 8 and packed to return to the United States after an intense week in the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

The delegation, organized by former Berkeley School Board President Barbara Lubin with the assistance of the Palestinian community and the Palestine Solidarity Committee, included San Francisco Supervisor Richard Hongisto; Berkeley City Councilperson Maudelle Shirek; Sacramento County Supervisor Grantland Johnson; Boston mayoral candidate and former State Senator Mel King; San Francisco school principal Yvonne Golden; Father Bill O'Donnell of the Berkeley sanctuary movement; Buzz Palmer of the Black Press Institute in Chicago; Antonio Rodriguez, a Los Angeles attorney in the L.A. Eight case and from the Center for Law and Justice and the Coalition for Visas and Rights; Osha Neumann of the Berkeley Police Review Commission; Fuad Mughannam of the Independent Grocers Association in San Francisco; and Jeanne Butterfield, national chair of the Palestine Solidarity Committee and vice chair of the North American Coordinating Committee for Nongovernmental Organizations on the Question of Palestine. The delegation was sponsored by the North American NGO committee.



San Francisco Supervisor Richard Hongisto and Fuad Mughannam, president of the Independent Grocers' Association, in the West Bank.

up into an army helicopter, and then dropped out of the helicopter from the air onto the ground below. Deja vu scenes from atrocities committed in Vietnam flashed in front of our eyes.

Visibly moved and shaken by what they had seen in just one day, delegation members talked over dinner. "I'm not the same person I was when I arrived yesterday," said Osha Neumann. "I've been transformed by what I've seen with my own eyes." The next day, the delegation traveled to the small village of Idna in the hills south of Jerusalem, near Hebron, where we experienced firsthand the iron fist of the Israeli military. After a peaceful demonstration in the main street of the small village by the youth, we were invited into a home to talk with villagers about what they were struggling for. "We want our freedom, our land. The Jews have a state. We want our state. Our demonstrations will continue until we get our rights, until we get our homeland, until the PLO can be here and help us make our state," one villager told us. "No," said another. "Here people support Arafat, but my point of view is that we want all the lands, the West Bank, Gaza, the coast, Akka, Haifa." "No," said yet another, "Our state should be the West Bank and the East Bank." This discussion was interrupted by the sounds of helicopters outside. As we looked out the doorway, soldiers began firing tear gas canisters into the center of the village from hovering helicopters. Small children threw stones up at the helicopters, defiant even in the face of such danger. The unprovoked nature of the attack was clear, as the helicopters returned three times to gas the entire village. The U.S. role in maintaining Israeli occupation was brought home to us as we picked up tear gas canisters which read "Made in Salzburg, Pennsylvania, USA, January 1988."

The following day, we happened upon a funeral procession in the village of Qabatiya. An old man of the village, who was ill, had been forced by soldiers to remove large boulders from a roadblock in the village. The man died of a heart attack, and was being buried as we passed through the village. Since funeral processions are illegal under Israeli military rule, soldiers soon arrived to stop the procession. Children began throwing stones at the soldiers, and the soldiers responded with tear gas and live ammunition. We witnessed the soldiers catch one young man and beat him to unconsciousness. Soldiers began to yell at us to get out. When we continued to take photos, the soldiers began throwing stones at us, then pointed their guns at us, and then came running toward us. Our film was confiscated and destroyed, some of us were frisked to make sure we hadn't hidden any more film, and we were ordered out of the village.

"This is horrible, an affront to civilization, just as what's happening in South Africa. I want to go back and make this link."—Yvonne Golden

Even after the delegation visited refugee camps and villages in the West Bank, we were unprepared for what we found in Gaza. The entire strip was shut down in support of the complete general strike which had been called for by the National Committee for the Uprising. The most densely populated strip of land on the face of the earth was a ghost town. No cars moved on the streets, and no one could be seen moving from the roadway. Smoke rose in ominous black clouds from burning tires at roadblocks in the camps and in the towns. After talking with Gaza attorney Raji Sourani, the delegation decided to try to get into Jabaliya camp, where it was reported that 1000 Israeli troops had confronted the 65,000 Palestinians who lived in the one square kilometer area of the camp that afternoon. The UNWRA clinic was reporting dozens of injuries and asked that we try to get to the clinic. Doctors at the clinic told us about events of that day, and of the past weeks. They had received 34 wounded that afternoon, and had sent 14 of the most serious injuries, mostly gunshot wounds, on to the hospital in Gaza City. They recounted the horror of hundreds of broken bones, crushed ribs, and infant deaths and miscarriages due to tear gassing in close quarters in the densely populated camp.

Leaving the clinic, we made our way through the narrow alleyways of the camp to visit several families in their shelters. In each shelter, we found people who had been severely beaten by Israeli soldiers and who had broken limbs, head injuries, and severe bruises. Several elderly women sat on the floor in one shelter, and exposed their shoulders and backs to show us the bruises from the severe beating they had experienced after soldiers broke into their shelter one night recently. "I don't know if you understand how deeply this goes against their culture, to expose themselves this way to strangers, and to men," said Fuad Mughannam with tears in his eyes. We huddled in the room with these women as soldiers began beating on the corrugated metal door of the shelter. Finally, young people from the camp began shouting and making a small demonstration at the other end of the street to distract the soldiers, while we hurriedly make our way back to the clinic to our cars.

"The wanton and indiscriminate use of violence is a campaign of terror against an entire people."—Delegation statement

The delegation met with several Israelis active in various parts of the Israeli peace movement to try to understand what impact the uprising was having on Israeli society and what the prospects for peace looked like from their vantage point. Members of Peace Now, of Y'esh G'vul [There Is a Limit-Border], and of the Coalition to End the Occupation talked about their own organizing work and the role of the United States. "The United States is the main obstacle to peace," said Rueven Kammer, Peace Now activist who was arrested for meeting with members of the PLO in Roumania. "Our ruling class is ready to play its nationalist and expansionist game up to the hilt of U.S. guilt. But the Palestinian uprising makes the Israeli peace movement stronger." "The Israeli government is using the army as a political solution," said Army Reserve officer Ishai Nenuchin who, with others from Y'esh G'vul, is selectively refusing to serve in the occupied territories. "It won't work. They have to sit down and talk to the PLO. Israel was more secure before 1967 than it is now. As Jews of Israel have the right of self-determination, so do the Palestinians. It's a matter both of principle and of pragmatic politics," concluded Peretz Kidron.

As delegation members prepared for their press conference, they reflected on their experience of Israeli occupation and Palestinian resistance. "This whole business is a matter of might makes right," said Richard Hongisto. "At least that's what they would like us to believe." "When we go back, they'll say that we only went where 'they' wanted us to go, just like they do when we come back from El Salvador, or Nicaragua. But we traveled around and talked to all kinds of folks, Palestinian and Israelis. We have to communicate that," said Antonio Rodriguez. "I was really impressed by the fact that up til now, I haven't seen any manifestation of hatred of Jewish people by Palestinians. It's really blown my mind, given what we've seen," Rodriguez continued. "I'm wondering how, as Jews, how we go out and organize, how we deal with this. I can't believe my own people, the Jewish people, have come to this," commented Barbara Lubin. "This is horrible, an affront to civilization, just as what's happening in South Africa. I want to go back and make this link," said Yvonne Golden. "The fact is that our government, and it's not a surprise coming from Reagan, our government is supporting a variation of fascism and genocide here. I can't put it in any nicer terms," concluded Antonio Rodriguez.

As the delegation stated in its press release, "We are not experts. We did not come, nor do we leave with a prescription for a solution to the conflict we have witnessed. But based on five days of experiencing the passionate intensity with which the Palestinian people are making their demands for self-determination, for an end to the occupation, and for representation by the PLO, it is our belief that terror will not stop them. Their demands are just and the realization of those demands is in the interest of all sides in this conflict." □

Feeling concern and outrage over the images coming over the nightly news broadcasts of Palestinian demonstrators being confronted by Israeli bullets and beatings, members of the delegation agreed to travel to the occupied territories to see for themselves what was going on there. The delegation was made up of people from many walks of life, and was notably "rainbow" in its composition. The twelve included five Blacks, one Latino, one Arab American and two Jews.

While members of the delegation all had expressed opposition to the occupation in the past, most were unprepared for the harsh Israeli repression which they witnessed there. "What we have seen and heard has exceeded anything we had imagined," the group stated in its press conference. "A picture has unfolded of wanton and indiscriminate use of violence against an entire population without regard for individual guilt or innocence. It is hard to describe this except as a campaign of terror against a whole people. It spares neither women nor children, neither the very old nor the very young."

After a day of witnessing the military trying to force open striking shops in Ramallah, visiting the home of Bashir Kheiry who was expelled to Lebanon on January 13, and walking through Al Amari refugee camp, the delegation went to Macassed Hospital to visit the wounded. Reports of more than 50 deaths and hundreds upon hundreds of injuries became real as we met young men whose bones had been broken in several places by beatings, old women who had been beaten to unconsciousness, young men who were partially and totally paralyzed by gunshot wounds to the head and to the spine. As we heard story after story, including that of a young man who was first beaten and then run over by a military transport vehicle, the brutality of the repression and of Rabin's order to beat protesters became shockingly clear. On the way out of the hospital, we encountered a newly wounded young man being brought in by ambulance. His family told us that he had first been beaten, and then taken

The Impact of the Pal

By Rashid Khalidie

Rashid Khalidie is associate professor of modern Middle Eastern History at the Center for Middle East Studies of the University of Chicago.

The uprising of the 1.5 million Palestinians living under occupation in the West Bank and Gaza—and the support they have received from the 750,000 Palestinians inside Israel—has opened up important new vistas for those working for peace with justice in the Middle East.

These events have had a major impact on public opinion in three areas: Israel, the Arab countries, and the United States. Although they have not yet had an effect on the political process in any of them, it is clear that certain possibilities exist today that seemed distant indeed before December 1987.

Inside Israel, the uprising has shattered the illusion that the status quo in the occupied territories was desirable or sustainable. While it has hardened a segment of Israeli public opinion, which was confirmed in its disposition to support repression in the occupied territories, it has also galvanized the opposition to occupation. Those Israelis who are at all far-sighted can see the utter futility—indeed, the counterproductive nature—of further beatings, killings, arrests, and expulsions. Among this growing minority of the Israeli political elite—running a spectrum from Rakah, the Progressive List, and the Peace Now movement to former Chief of Military Intelligence Yehoshua Har-kabi, Shlomo Lahat, the Likud mayor of Tel Aviv, and former Foreign Minister Abba Eban—it has become an article of faith that

Israel must leave the occupied territories as soon as possible for demographic, political, and diplomatic reasons.

Clearly, however, this point of view has yet to find dynamic and forceful representation in the frozen Israeli political landscape, where the lead has been taken by the hawks, whether Rabin of Labor or Shamir of the Likud. The paralysis here is profound; and, indeed, if there has been movement, it has been in the direction of a further hardening, with most privately dovish politicians ap-



pearing afraid to antagonize the right or to appear "soft on the Palestinians."

If Israeli politics do not fully reflect public opinion, this is considerably more the case in the Arab countries around Israel, where the popular imagination has been as profoundly excited by the Palestinian uprising as the regimes have been profoundly disturbed. Once again, as in a handful of instances since 1936, the Palestinian national movement has succeeded in appealing to Arab public opinion over the heads of the regimes, a success visible in countries

where there is a free press and even in the state-controlled Arab media.

In Egypt, students at a number of universities, workers in Mahalla al-Kubra, the influential lawyer's guild, and the opposition parties have all been aroused by Israeli repression into attacking the Mubarak government over its ties with Israel. In Jordan, fear of the spread of unrest from the West Bank to the East has led the regime to crack down once again on Palestinian activists. In Lebanon, the uprising has led to an outpouring of popular sympathy for the Palestinians. Finally, the embarrassing spectacle of Syria backing an Amal siege of the Palestinian camps in Beirut and Tyre while Israel besieged camps in the occupied territories forced Syria and Amal to lift their 2½-year siege.

It is in the United States, however, that the gap between public perceptions and the political process has been wider than anywhere else. On the one hand, the media has dealt more harshly with Israel than at any moment since 1982 or perhaps before; a February 8 *Time* magazine poll shows surprisingly high percentages in favor of a Palestinian homeland (56 percent of non-Jews and 39 percent of Jews) and critical of Israeli practices (72 and 57 percent); and as these numbers show, there is a clear dissenting trend within the American Jewish community. On the other hand, most politicians and the administration have steadfastly refused to waver from their blindly pro-Israel and anti-Palestinian position.

This divergence is not new, and the reasons for it are well-known. The key point for those interested in the Palestinian cause is that nothing arcane is at work here, nothing mysterious, and nothing which cannot

Most American politicians and the administration have steadfastly refused to waver from their blindly pro-Israel and anti-Palestinian position.

be changed in time, just as the opponents of apartheid in South Africa have succeeded in changing the terms of public discourse in this country and just as the opponents of U.S. intervention in Central America seem on their way to success in stopping some of the grosser excesses of the Reagan administration.

While turning things around over the Middle East is not going to be easy, it looks somewhat less difficult than it did a few months ago, thanks to the impact of the sacrifices made by the people of the occupied territories. However, several things will be necessary if such a turnaround is to occur:

1. The first is to build unity among Palestinians, Palestinian-Americans, and their American supporters to work for Palestinian rights. People under occupation have managed to sink their differences and in so doing have achieved more than they could possibly have done in a disunited fashion. Even before the uprising, Palestinian unity was achieved at the Algiers Palestine National

Uprising ...

Continued from page 1

occupied territories in early February and reported that "an epidemic of violence by the Israeli army and police" exists in the West Bank and Gaza. From the location and kind of bone fractures, they judged that soldiers were systematically breaking limbs of Palestinians with the intent to disable, rather than to deal mortal blows. However, they said that less restraint was apparent in Gaza, where there were more cases of head trauma and more injuries per individual.

In the same week, reports came in from Gaza of three teenaged youth who were beaten to death by Israeli soldiers in separate incidents. One youth was found outside Bareij camp only hours after he was arrested from his home. Another youth was beaten in the street and died from massive head wounds.

The gruesome story of the death of the third youth provoked some comment inside Israel, but only because the boy was from a prominent Christian family. The boy, Khader Tarazi, rode his bicycle into a demonstration and then fled into a neighbor's house and hid under a bed when soldiers came after him. The soldiers pulled him out and beat him severely. Then, eyewitnesses said, a soldier lifted him up and threw him down against the cement floor until blood streamed from his mouth. Although Khader no longer moved, neighbors said, the soldiers tied him to the hood of their jeep and continued to beat him with sticks and rifles. Nine hours later, they brought him to the hospital where he was pronounced dead shortly thereafter.

Such "excesses" have brought no comment from Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who insists the army has clear orders on when to use force (a staged reaction from tear gas, rubber bullets, shooting at legs if soldiers' lives are in danger), that violations of these regulations are rare and involve only isolated individuals, and that the use of beatings is legal. But scores of "excesses" have been documented in the foreign and Israeli press, and only two Israeli officers have been suspended from duty.

The immediate effect of the beatings policy has been to keep youth off the streets in Gaza. Even grocery shopping during breaks in the commercial strike has become risky business for teenaged boys who know that to walk on a Gaza street is to invite a beating and possible arrest. Consequently, there are few demonstrations now in Gaza, but the commercial, labor, and transportation strikes are very strong, with only a tiny fraction of laborers traveling to Israel for day work.

Camps Policy

Israel tried to starve refugee camps into submission in mid-January by curfewing whole camps for days, and in some cases weeks, and by blockading foodstuffs from entering. Water and electricity were cut to some areas as well, and foreign observers, including UN-designated factfinder Marrack Golding, were banned from entering.

While camps were under curfew, Israeli soldiers bombarded residents with tear gas. Gas grenades were shot from guns, thrown by soldiers, and dropped from helicopters, sometimes for days at a time. Since residents could not leave their houses during the curfew without risk of being shot, there was an alarming rise in the number of stillbirths, miscarriages, and fetal death, and there were deaths of small infants and older people with respiratory difficulties reported in Jabalia, Bureij, and Nusserat camps in Gaza and in Deir Ammar camp in the West Bank. Camp residents also experienced the terror of soldiers breaking into their homes at midnight, beating people, and arresting their sons.

Prison Camps

Eight hundred young men are in the four rooms and eight tents in Ansar 2 prison camp in Gaza. Seven hundred prisoners were sent to Atlit prison inside Israel. Two tent prisons were set up in the Hebron area (one in Dhahriya and one next to the Hebron military headquarters) and Fara'a prison camp in the northern West Bank was expanded for several thousand new detainees. These prison camps are in addition to the regular prisons administered by the civilian Israeli prison authorities in the West Bank and Gaza.

Every day brings scores of new arrests, with no particular charge other than demonstrating. At Moscobiyya, the



Funeral/demonstration in Idna in West Bank.

main police station and detention center in Jerusalem, a special visit room has been arranged in the women's prison for families of young boys detained who are less than 16 years of age.

Israeli military authorities have ordered more detentions without trial by administrative order in both Gaza and the West Bank. Inside Moscobiyya detention center, released prisoners said that Israeli soldiers were being used to beat detainees day and night. Several detainees are said to be in dire physical condition; they are beaten for days on end, kept sleepless, stripped and doused with freezing water, then kept outside at night. "Ninety-nine percent of the detainees are confessing, to things they've done and haven't done," said one recently released prisoner.

Offensive against Villages

By the end of January, almost every village in the West Bank had made a demonstration of protest against Israeli

Palestinian Uprising

Council meeting in April 1987. While there has been some new coordination in this country since the uprising began, it is still not sufficient. Even in the critical moments, considerations other than the common cause of Palestinian rights have sometimes prevented the maximization of efforts in this country. We must not allow this to continue. Personal considerations and organizational factors should not obscure the real task the movement for Palestinian rights needs to address. The task of changing American public opinion and official policy is too huge and the energies available too limited to waste any time over petty differences.

2. The second thing that must emerge is a willingness to form broad political coalitions, just as the movements opposing apartheid and U.S. intervention in Central America have done. Success will require Arab-Americans and supporters of the Palestine cause to develop links with these two movements and to reach out to unions, anti-war groups, and community and other organizations. In short, they must break out of the community and political ghetto. The potential payoff is great. If polls such as those in *Time* are correct, with an event like the uprising as the background it is possible to bring more people to support peace with justice in the Middle East more quickly than most of us would have believed was possible.

3. A third and related requirement for progress is a recognition that the political process in this country can be turned around and that until that has been done, very little has been achieved. A stage of grassroots organizing, coalition building, and educational work is necessary before public opinion will be reflected politically, but this goal is not unattainable. Registration of Arab-Americans to vote and organizing them to make candi-

dates aware of their existence, as well as utilizing this strength to support other related causes in order to obtain reciprocal support for the Palestine issue, are only some of the things that have to be done. The fact that the right-wing pro-Israel lobby is strong and rich and has arrogated to itself the right to speak for American Jews should not be a deterrent: its influence is fairly recent and resented by many; and it can be countered by a different kind of politics which is no less effective.

4. Finally, there must be a willingness to rise to the level of the efforts of Palestinians under occupation, especially since their sacrifices have created unprecedented openings for action in this country. Such opportunities do not last forever, may not recur, and must be capitalized on if they are to come to anything. A high level of organization, activism, and willingness to sacrifice will be required. Moreover, the sacrifices may well be considerable in view of the ways in which the dangerously vague anti-PLO bill signed by Reagan in December 1987 is likely to be used by the government to intimidate, harass, and prosecute those acting in support of the Palestinian people.

In the United States, the gap between public perceptions and the political process has been wider than anywhere else.

occupation in some way or another. Laborers stayed home in a general boycott against migrant work in Israel. Youth in villages next to main highways stoned Israeli settler cars and targeted collaborators by burning their cars. But in most villages demonstrations consisted of lines of stones placed across village entrances to keep away soldiers and settlers. Villages in remote areas, such as Deir Ghasoun in the north, were even declared "liberated areas" by residents who had not seen a soldier in weeks. The four-color Palestinian flag flew from electricity pylons, roofs, and tree tops, and even very small children played games of "soldiers against the people."

The Israeli army was slow to stop demonstrations in villages, partly because the incidents were so frequent in the West Bank's 300-plus villages and the youths so elusive. These demonstrations in rural areas regarded as conservative by Israeli "Arab experts," probably alarmed Israeli military authorities more than the vast and angry confrontations in the camps, which Israelis have always considered "hotbeds of nationalism."

When it did come, Israeli reaction was brutal and overwhelming. Military authorities apparently gave upon the idea of catching youths in action and made efficient use of collaborators to make nighttime arrests. Typically, a 24-hour curfew was called on villages, while soldiers went in and forced residents to pull down flags and remove barricades and then conducted house-to-house searches, beat people, smashed furniture, and arrested young boys. Tens of teenaged boys and young men have been arrested from every village, their names given to military authorities by local collaborators.

In many villages, army bulldozers made huge earth barricades across the roads to imprison villagers and sometimes turned the bulldozers on people and cars. Four boys were beaten in the village of Salem, then buried alive by soldiers who dumped wet earth on top of them. Two of the boys were unconscious when villagers managed to pull them out and one was in critical condition with fractures of both arms, legs, and pelvis.

Israeli settlers have learned that their mere presence in a village is enough to incite a demonstration, as people

gather to defend the village and protect themselves with stones and knives. Usually, the Israeli army is not far behind and uses the gathering as a license to shoot. In Beir Ummar near Hebron three villagers were shot dead in just such a situation, after news spread of a young girl who was shot dead in neighboring Arroub refugee camp by a settler.

In the Jerusalem area, demonstrations in Palestinian neighborhoods adjacent to Israeli settlements have been ongoing for a month. Soldiers have made arrests by the busloads and have ordered men to stand the night outside

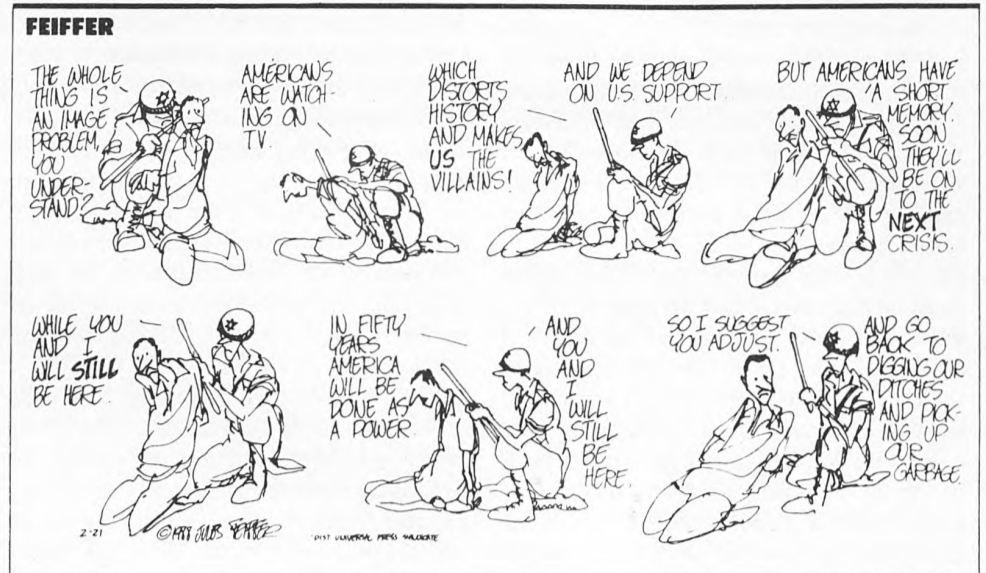
"An epidemic of violence by the Israeli army and policy" exists in the West Bank and Gaza—American doctors' delegation

where they are beaten. Scores of injured have been treated in hospital for broken bones, concussions, and bruises. Police set up a target shooting range in the villages of Silwan and Issawiya after intense confrontations between youth and borderguards and shot at human images for an hour to terrify villagers.

Settlers Role

Armed Israeli settlers increased their vigilante activities by patrolling roads and shooting at stone throwers, breaking into houses, smashing car windows and slashing tires in villages, and terrorizing residents. A carload of settlers tried to kidnap a 10-year-old child in Dheisheh camp. Settlers regularly walk through the camp with pistols to provoke people. In Ya'abad, settlers burned down the village's water pump.

Two settlers were briefly detained for shooting dead a Palestinian man who was simply standing on a road in his village. And settlers mix with soldiers



There must be an understanding that this will be a long struggle, even if its successful end seems a bit nearer and a bit more assured thanks to the profound impact of the uprising in occupied Palestine. Although resistance to a just solution will be fierce in each arena in which this battle must be fought—the international, Arab, Israeli, and American arenas—it will be particularly stubborn in this country, where signs of a counteroffensive are already apparent. Moreover, there is a limit to what can be expected of Palestinians under occupation or in the Arab diaspora as far as this country is concerned, for they naturally have to worry most about—and know best—the hostile and Israeli and Arab environments in which they are struggling. This means that a great deal of responsibility falls on the shoulders of those present in the United States, whether Palestinians or Americans, who are concerned about this issue.

The Palestinians under occupation, like those in Lebanon, have shown what people under siege are capable of doing. It is incumbent upon Palestinians, those who feel an affinity for them, and Americans who oppose injustice, especially when it is aided and abetted by their own country, to try to rise to the occasion. Perhaps we should thank Reagan, Meese, and the fifty lemming-like legislators who cosponsored the anti-PLO bill for threatening all of us a little bit. This act, intended to delegitimize and muzzle American support for the Palestinians, has begun to bring home to Americans a fact Israelis have begun to learn: that what is done abroad will sooner or later make its way back home. We already know in principle that all struggles for freedom and justice are linked. But as the case of the Los Angeles 8 has already shown, this is true not only of Palestine, South Africa, and Central America, but also of the struggle for civil liberties in this country. □

daily as they patrol and make arrests.

Settlers have been encouraged in their violent activities by top Israeli government officials. Ariel Sharon spent a night in his controversial new house in Jerusalem's Moslem quarter, as he told the press that Israel must use more "aggression" against Palestinians. Prime Minister Shamir has made a number of appearances at West Bank settlements to rally settlers, but some cabinet ministers have warned against settlers complicating the role of the army.

Jerusalem Targeted

It seems obvious, from the kind of government regulations now being promulgated, that all Israeli ministries have been told to make life as difficult as possible for Palestinians in the occupied territories, but particularly Jerusalem residents. A special unit of the Israeli Employment Service was set up in February to implement a regulation that all laborers in Israel must be registered or face court charges. Half of all workers do not go through official Israeli channels, a system that has worked well for Israeli employers, too. In the first two weeks of the special unit's operation, 1,800 workers and employers were charged; 75,000 workers are at risk.

Residents of Jerusalem and the Golan, the two pieces of territory occupied in 1967 and later annexed by Israel, have particularly vexed Israelis by their strong demonstrations and strikes. Their punishment: National Insurance payments will no longer be made directly to those who are eligible. Now residents must bring their identity cards to Israeli offices every month for on-the-spot approval. Taxes are to be increased a whopping 15 percent for Palestinians who are already protesting tax discrimination.

Israeli police announced a 24-hour police watch of Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem to begin February 22 and extend for one month. More than 1,500 police from all over the country volunteered for the watch, which Israeli authorities say "will increase friction" but will also prevent demonstrations during the visit of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz. Arrests will be made in house-to-house searches in what looks like a major military operation in Jerusalem. Permanent outposts may be set up in some villages, police authorities said, as Israeli tactics against Palestinians in uprising take a new turn. □

Getting It All in FOCUS

By Hilton Obenzinger

Interview with a Rock

December 1987

Extraordinary events demand extraordinary journalism—and sometimes more. In this time of Palestinian rebellion, we are fortunate to have obtained this interview with a rock. This rock was interviewed somewhere on the West Bank, although its exact location cannot be revealed for security reasons.

PF: Tell us what you have been doing during these unusual times, this uprising.

Rock: Certainly. I was thrown quite a bit. I think it's because I'm the right size, good for a hand or a slingshot. Once I was put on top of a barricade, but I found that it was only to be thrown again. I have never been in the air so much! So many rocks were hurled that for a time I couldn't tell if the earth was up and the sky was down; it seemed that the ground was above the people's heads, and that was the way it should be.

I was tossed at Israeli soldiers mostly, a few times at settlers. I was passed from one hand to another. The kids seem to appreciate a good rock, although, to be honest, if they had bullets, I would probably have stayed put.

PF: How did you come to this state of affairs?

Rock: I don't think I'm a very special rock. Up til now I've missed everything important. Once I was flung at someone who transgressed the law—but I can't even remember the crime. I missed the catapults the Romans aimed at the walls of Jerusalem. I even missed getting embedded in those walls, so I couldn't even get scattered when the Romans delighted in wrecking the town.

No, all the big events passed me by. I didn't even see Jesus, or at least I don't think so. Maybe I did, so many people were getting nailed up by the Romans back then it was hard to tell Jesus apart from the other dead ones. Saladin didn't even use me for the Battle of Hittin, and Richard the Lion-Hearted ignored me completely.

I spent whole centuries sitting with other rocks in a wall on a terrace of a field. Every year I saw farmers digging the ground and coming up with tomatoes and other fleshy growths. What else should a rock do but sit, watching fields? I didn't know any better, and I never was so fortunate as to have some prophet make me important by giving me something special to do, like put myself under his foot.

For hundreds of years I sat guarding tomatoes and beans. Then the Israelis came—or the Jews who became Israelis, whatever they were. At first, I thought they were like the others, like the Turks or the British. A

pain to the people, but certainly no problem for me. But the Israelis rolled out bulldozers, knocked down the wall, and flattened the terrace. I was stunned. Sure enough, tomatoes and other green things sprouted in long rows, so I must admit all the machines they brought in seemed to do the work, along with the Arabs bending over the rows. But I was left with nothing.

I spent years rolling from field to field, tossed here and there, kicked by kids, generally living a scattered, purposeless existence. I mean, after hundreds of years with the same job, it isn't easy adjusting to new circumstances. Once some American picked me up who wanted a souvenir of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I felt very mixed about this: On the one hand, at least I would have something useful to do; but on the other, I didn't want to leave. Fortunately, I was dropped as being too inconsequential even to be a memento, and I did not suffer the fate of exile on a mantlepiece in Boston. This was my life until the kids picked me up.

PF: How do you feel being thrown against the Israeli soldiers?

Rock: As you can tell, nothing much important has happened to me. Nor was I ever given a big responsibility, like that famous one in David's sling. But now I have a whole new self-esteem. To be a teacher is something very important, and I have been blessed with a certain curriculum to convey. Every time I hit one of these Israeli soldiers

in the head—thwack—I teach him a lesson. Now, whether the soldier learns the first time or not, that is one of the admirable qualities of an inspired teacher, that patience to try again and again until the student learns. Of course, the teacher must love the student, but a little pain is often very instructive. May the young Jewish boys, who are shooting and beating, learn quickly that these Palestinians do not want them lording over them. Truly, I do not hate the soldiers. Otherwise, I would not try to educate them.

PF: What do you hope to do after the Israelis leave?

Rock: Diplomacy is beyond the realm of a simple rock. Perhaps I am merely nostalgic, but I would be glad just to be piled up on a wall on another terrace. It is a great honor being called upon to teach—and I imagine this is how Jesus and the other great teachers must have felt—but I much prefer the quiet life filled with a simple purpose that revolves around the seasons of the sun and moon. Perhaps those days are over forever and something else gets built between all the people that step over this ground. As I say, I am but a simple rock. I certainly don't want to be worshipped and fussed over. At least I could say now that I have done something in this land. I may have missed everything else, but I did not miss the resurrection of the Palestinians and the great lesson they taught the soldiers and the world. It's not bad. Not bad at all. □

Ship of Return ...

Continued from page 2

"The union announces that its members volunteer to supply the ship with the necessary manpower of sailors no matter how dangerous the situation is ... in spite of the open threats spread by the Israeli secret service in respect to the return voyage of the Palestinians."

The response from Israel to this courageous statement was another threat. The Israeli Ship Officers Union telexed the sailors' union: "We strongly protest against trade-union interference in politics.... Should you continue with these actions, we would have no choice but to boycott Greek vessels in Israeli ports."

But this was not the only message coming

from inside Israel. On February 12, Mohammed Mi'ari, who recently resigned from the Knesset (parliament) in protest of the repression of the uprising, spoke at an Athens press conference. He announced that he and a number of other Knesset members, both Jewish and Palestinian, supported the Al Awda and were prepared to sail, despite threats of prosecution.

On February 13, tens of thousands of Palestinians and Jews marched in Haifa to support the ship and the Palestinians' right to return.

The following morning, Marwan Ibrahim Al-Kayyali, Mohammed Basim Mustafa Sultan Al-Tamini, and Mohammed Hassan Al-Buheiri, all PLO military cadre, were

murdered in Cyprus on that country's election day. It was then widely believed that, because of the delay in sailing, Cyprus had become the logical embarkation point for the voyage. This was confirmed when the international delegation was informed that we would be sailing from Cyprus the next day. Early in the morning of February 15, however, the Sol Phryne, a ferry which had been used to evacuate PLO forces from Beirut in 1982, was damaged by an underwater bomb. Israel Defense Minister Rabin had declared that he ship would be stopped by "whatever means are suitable."

On February 16, over five thousand people, mobilized in less than 24 hours, marched from the U.S. Embassy to the Israeli Mission in Athens, chanting "Greece, Cyprus, Palestine—No Americans will Stay," "Shamir—Fascist Murderer," and

"PLO—Israel No."

At a final press conference on February 17, a PLO declaration stated in part: "We have had to temporarily postpone our journey because of Israeli threats and terrorism, but none of the obstacles we have encountered will stop us from making a voyage of return to our homeland in the near future. We will return." Citing "Israeli terrorism in the West Bank and Gaza, fully supported by the government of the United States," the declaration called for world support in ending the occupation and concluded with "Long Live the Heroic Uprising of our People," "Long Live Free Palestine."

Although the Al Awda was prevented from sailing, for two weeks unprecedented world attention was focused on the issue of Israeli expulsions and the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland. □

US Funding ...

Continued from page 1

uprising. The questions have been raised, and they will not go away.

In this election year of 1988, we must call our own representatives to account. Will they continue to fund Israeli occupation? Will they hold hearings on Israeli violations of human rights—such as routine and systematic torture of Palestinian prisoners, including children, during interrogation; expulsions banned by international law; house demolitions and sealings; collective punishment—all documented by Amnesty International and similar organizations? Or will they continue to support closing PLO information offices and the PLO observer mission at the United Nations, blocking our access to information and discussions with the genuine spokespeople for the Palestinian people?

Israeli "Democracy"

Our elected representatives often try to justify their support of Israel on the grounds that it is the only "democracy" in the Middle East. But there is no democracy for Palestinians under occupation. Palestinian mayors, elected in the West Bank and Gaza in 1976, were almost all deposed because of their support for the PLO. Palestinian newspapers operate under heavy censorship and are frequently closed or permanently shut down. Many Palestinian journalists have been murdered, arrested, or expelled. Israel's military courts are a cruel joke; often defendants are not confronted by specific

charges or evidence other than confessions induced through torture. Palestinian trade unions, women's organizations, and even groups which provide free medical care are constantly harassed, their leaders arrested or expelled.

While Israelis exercise some democratic rights, even these are being eroded. Israelis face imprisonment when they travel abroad to meet with PLO representatives. One Israeli peace activist, Gideon Spiro, faces imprisonment because of two letters he wrote to judges protesting their decisions convicting Palestinian defendants. The Alternative Information Center in Jerusalem, which publishes the internationally respected newsletter, *News From Within*, was closed last year for six months on flimsy charges. Its director, Michael Warschavsky, was imprisoned and is now banned from any contact with the center. Two Israeli newspapers, *Tariq al-Sharara* and *Derech Hanitzotz*, were informed by the Israeli District Commissioner of Jerusalem, Eli Swissa, on January 18, that he is considering revoking their licenses. *Al-Jamaheer* newspaper, published in Nazareth, was closed in August 1987. Can this be the "democracy" our elected officials support?

International Peace Conference

For many years an international consensus has called for an end to Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and for an independent Palestinian state to be established. The clear first step toward ending the occupation is to negotiate Israeli withdrawal. The clear mechanism for ending the occupation

is the international peace conference called for by United Nations resolution 38/58c, which mandates Palestinian representation by the PLO.

The overwhelming international consensus which supports such a process includes almost all the countries in the world, but it does not include the United States and Israel. Successive Israeli governments—backed by the United States—refuse to attend such a conference because they will not recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate and internationally recognized representative of the Palestinian people. In fact, Israel refuses to recognize Palestinian national identity as a people with a right to choose its own representative.

Use the Lever of Economic Aid

Only one country has sufficient leverage on Israel to pressure its government to the negotiating table to end the occupation and withdraw. Only the United States is currently giving Israel \$4 billion a year, funds without which the occupation simply could not continue. Those funds are the lever. As the *Mercury News* put it, "It is time that U.S. military and economic assistance to Israel be linked to a settlement in the occupied territories."

In 1988, ending the occupation and ending U.S. funding of the occupation are compelling issues. This year we will elect a president, one-third of the Senate, and all members of the House of Representatives. All candidates for all those offices must be challenged to respond to key questions: What will you do to end Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza? Where do you

stand on the U.S. aid to Israel that funds the occupation?

Related questions also need to be put to the candidates. How will you enforce existing laws which prohibit U.S. aid being sent to violators of human rights such as Israel? Why is there no accounting—either to U.S. taxpayers or to the U.S. government itself—for the disposal of the aid given to Israel? In Egypt, more than one hundred U.S. officials monitor the flow of aid; for Israel, there is not even a single such official.

Around these questions and around the issues of Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza a broad grassroots movement can be built. There is now a unique opportunity to shift the discourse in the United States from how best to unquestioningly support Israel to how best to achieve a just and comprehensive peace. Our elected representatives have not previously been seriously challenged to bring their positions on the Israeli occupation into line with their positions on other similar issues in Central America or southern Africa.

In fact, our representatives are out of step with a growing American public consensus that the occupation and our government's support for it must end. The Palestinian uprising has reminded the world that the Palestinians still lack freedom and that they cannot wait much longer for their aspirations to be fulfilled. In 1988 the time has come for those in the United States who support human rights to make our presence known and felt. In 1988 the time has come to end Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. □

"Ten Ways Israel Is Different from South Africa"

By Steve Goldfield

The *New York Times* recently reported that the Israeli Foreign Ministry had issued an internal briefing paper entitled "Ten Ways Israel Is Different from South Africa." The Israelis were, apparently, hurt by increasingly widespread comparisons, such as by ABC News, between their military occupation over Palestinians and the apartheid system in South Africa. A list of such differences is not easy to compile, but the Palestine Solidarity Committee has risen to the challenge.

1. In South Africa, people can be held without charge under administrative detention for fourteen days without seeing a lawyer. Under Israeli occupation, it is eighteen days. More than three-quarters of African men have been imprisoned, many for pass violations. More than half of Palestinian men have been imprisoned, many for identity card violations.

2. Although in both Israel and South Africa there are both town and house arrest, South Africa has no refugee-camp arrest: it has no refugee camps. To be fair, Israel has no Bantustans.

3. In South Africa, 87 percent of the land is reserved for whites. In Israel, 92 percent of the land is reserved for Jews. In the West Bank and Gaza, more than half the land has been taken from Palestinians...so far.

4. In South Africa, green, black, and gold—the colors of the African National Congress—are illegal. Blacks use it anyway. The African National Congress was banned in 1960; it is illegal to quote ANC leaders. Under Israeli law, red, black, green, and white—the colors of the Palestinian flag—are illegal. Palestinians ignore that law, too. The Palestine Liberation Organization is, of course, banned, and Palestinian newspapers have been closed for publishing interviews with PLO leaders.

5. South Africa has the death penalty and has put many activists to death. Many, such as Steve Biko, have died while in custody. Israel does not have the death penalty, but Palestinians seem to die anyway from beatings and other forms of torture in detention and from shootings on the streets. Photographs published in Israeli and U.S. newspapers have documented Palestinians entering custody in good condition and leaving Israeli prisons in shrouds.

6. South African Blacks carry passbooks and are punished if they are in the wrong place or do not have a passbook. Palestinians instead have identity cards which they must show to soldiers and police. One form of punishment is to confiscate an identity card, which can lead to immediate deportation and is thus a form of house arrest. Palestinians in the West Bank (except in Jerusalem) and Gaza are also issued different-colored license plates than are Israeli citizens.

7. African workers cross into white areas to work but are forbidden to sleep there, and many must return to homelands or racially segregated suburbs at night. Working in white-run factories, farms, and mines for very low wages is virtually the only means to earn a livelihood. Palestinians who cross

over into Israel to work are also forbidden to sleep there and must return to the West Bank and Gaza at night. Working in Israeli factories, farms, construction, hospitals, or sweeping streets for very low wages is virtually the only means available to them to earn a livelihood.

8. South African Blacks have no vote, though so-called Coloureds and others have token representation but no real power. West Bank and Gaza Palestinians have no vote, though Palestinians with Israeli citizenship have token representation; virtually no government funds are spent on their needs, and they have no real power.

9. South Africa is a settler state in which the indigenous people greatly outnumber those of European descent. The same was true for Palestine before 1948. Israel is a settler state from which the indigenous people were driven so that today Israeli Jews outnumber Palestinians.

10. South Africa calls its suppression of the majority of African descent: "Apartheid." Apartheid is based on a system of privileges granted to those declared

"white." South Africans of Asian and mixed ancestry are second-class citizens. Blacks are not considered citizens and have no rights whatsoever. Israel calls its suppression of Palestinians: "Military Occupation." Israel's system of privileges, based on its Zionist ideology, gives privileges first to those descended from European Jews, second to Jews from other places, and last and least to Palestinians with Israeli citizenship. Other Palestinians are not considered citizens and have no rights whatsoever.

WOULDN'T YOU RISE UP?

The above are some of the "differences." A list of similarities between Israel and South Africa and of the longstanding and very close military, political, and economic ties between the two countries (an Israeli journalist described South Africa as "Israel's best ally after the United States") would be very long, indeed. Consider the comments of Raphael Eitan, chief of staff of the Israeli army during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon and currently a member of the Israeli Knesset:

I don't understand this comparison between us and South Africa. What is similar here and there is that both they and we must prevent others from taking us over. Anyone who says that the Blacks are oppressed in South Africa—is a liar. The Blacks there want to gain control of the White minority just like the Arabs here want to gain control over us. And we, too, like the White minority in South Africa, must act to prevent them from taking us over. I was in a gold mine there and I saw what excellent conditions the Black workers there have. So there are separate elevators for Whites and Blacks, so what? That's the way they like it.—Guest lecture at School of Law, Tel Aviv University, December 24, 1987 in *Yediot Ahranot*, December 25, 1987

Americans oppose apartheid in South Africa. Isn't it about time we stopped our government from supporting and funding the Israeli form of apartheid?

DEMONSTRATE!

Saturday, June 4, 1988

June marks the anniversary of the 1967 war when Israel seized the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), Gaza, and the Golan Heights. This year's anniversary of the occupation has a special significance throughout the occupied territories and the world because of the Palestinian uprising. Join with the Palestine Solidarity Committee in your area to protest Israel's occupation and to support Palestinian rights.

- Stop the Killing, Beating, Imprisonment, and Expulsion of Palestinians
- End the Israeli Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza
- Stop U.S. Funding of the Occupation

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

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

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

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The Palestinian Revolt and Its Implications

By Michael Warschavsky

Michael Warschavsky is a long-time Israeli political activist and the director of the Alternative Information Center in Jerusalem, publisher of News From Within. When the center was closed for six months in February 1987, Warschavsky was arrested and later banned from any contact with other members of the center. He wrote this article in French especially for Palestine Focus.

Fifty years after the bloody ending of the 1936-39 revolt, we are witnessing an unprecedented popular uprising of the Palestinian people of the West Bank, Gaza, the Triangle, and the Galilee. In many ways, today's revolt is deeper and filled with bigger promises of freedom than the one of 1936. The main reason for this difference is that there is a national uprising and a national mass consciousness which transcends divisions between cities and countryside, between religions, and between social classes.

Even though this popular uprising may sooner or later diminish in intensity, there is no doubt that "nothing will ever be the same." A point of no return has been attained, twenty years after the Israeli forces occupied the West Bank and Gaza.

Motives for the Rebellion

If Israeli authorities previously spoke of PLO manipulation and then spoke of fundamentalist Islamic currents, they have to admit today that it is a mass popular movement born out of a harsh reality of occupation which shows no hint of ending in the near future. In a sense, we can say that the Palestinian masses celebrate in their own time and in their own way the twenty years of occupation a few months late. It is as if all of a sudden the people of the West Bank and Gaza have understood that twenty years have passed and not only does the Israeli occupation continue, but for the first time the Zionist leaders proudly and loudly declare that they have no intention to end it.

The accumulation of resentment and frustration, as well as the strengthening of national expectations, are the basis of the popular uprising in the occupied territories, to which one must add the disappointment of hopes placed in the outside Palestinian leadership's military and diplomatic initiatives.

One can feel this disappointment everywhere: the Palestinian population has been waiting for twenty years, waiting for the fighters, waiting for Arab armies, waiting for international support, waiting for diplomatic initiatives from leaders of Arab states, waiting for international conferences.

One gets the feeling that the Palestinian people in the occupied territories have wanted to make the whole world understand, including the PLO, that "now it is our turn to speak." Undoubtedly, the PLO remains as the unchallenged leadership of the Palestinian people, but it is more and more obvious to the occupied Palestinian people that the efficiency of political and diplomatic initiatives of the PLO will depend above all on the reality of the resistance in the occupied territories and not the other way around, as many believed in the past.

Beyond the general context, common to the West Bank and Gaza, there are obviously more immediate causes to the current popular outbreak. In Gaza, the arrogance and violence of the settlers was the final straw: the coldblooded murder of a high-school girl from Dir El Balah, the death of four residents of Jabalia refugee camp in a so-called traffic accident, and the killing of a few militants in an ambush sparked the recent events. In Gaza, blood flowed with no real reason. The local people, especially the youth, feel "cornered." "We have nothing to lose; our lives hang on a thread so we might as well fight and die as martyrs," Abdullah told us at the beginning of the uprising.

In the West Bank, paradoxically, the political efficiency of Yitzhak Rabin's Iron Fist was one of the principal causes of the current upsurge. The Defense Minister had been boasting, a few weeks before he was summoned to return to Israel, as in 1936, that he had deported and arrested three times more Palestinians than his former predecessors in Likud. It seems that such politics have lately become unproductive. Indeed, with an ever growing repression and without any national leadership, the people are pushed to their limits. The cadres of the Palestinian resistance had always tried to avoid such a situation to spare their people terrible suffering. What has been happening for the last two months shows that the violent retaliations from the Israeli forces did not slow down the

popular uprising but, on the contrary, contributed to its radicalization.

A New Generation

These young people who attack, with stones and sticks, armed soldiers who do not hesitate to shoot have never known any other power than the Israeli occupation and that is why they are called the "occupation generation." For them there is no retreat; Jordan or Egypt hold no meaning for the youth of the West Bank and Gaza. They are born with the PLO and the new Palestinian consciousness that is as pervasive as the Israeli occupation itself.

In many ways the "occupation generation" differs from its elders brothers and fathers: First of all, they do not believe in the Arab states but have an unflinching faith in the capacity of the power of the Palestinian people, led by the PLO, to win its independence. Also, as opposed to the older generation, they are not afraid. They are not afraid to die because they feel cornered; they are not afraid of the Israelis because they know them. Indeed, the Jabalia youth and the Kalandia youth work in Tel Aviv or Ashkelon; often they live there most of the week. "As opposed to our parents," says one of them, "we who are born under the occupation have learned to know the enemy. We are not afraid of the Israelis anymore; we know them up close; we know their weaknesses, their fears, and their selfishness, too. They are not the invincible monsters that made our parents tremble." Often the new generation also knows Hebrew, and on TV they daily witness the cracks which divide Israeli society.

From this new generation comes a new leadership, in the cities and camps, which, although it almost always belongs to one of the main tendencies of the PLO, nevertheless has an independence in thought and action which could not but impact the organizations, their programs, and their methods of struggle. One of the characteristic elements of the style of political thought of this new generation is the constant link between the long-term objective, the liberation of Palestine, and the defense of the immediate demands capable of mobilizing large masses. It is their political conception that explains how, after two months, the popular uprising is still going strong.

It is precisely the originality of these forms of struggle and the leading militants' extraordinary optimism which entirely confuse the entire political-military Zionist apparatus. The Israeli political leaders, as well as the military hierarchy and the many information services, find themselves absolutely incapable of understanding what is happening and, of course, can even less find an answer.

Confusion of the Israeli Authorities

The Israeli authorities' first reaction was to hold fast and assert that it was only trouble provoked by fundamentalist elements manipulated by outside PLO forces. Defense Minister Rabin made himself ridiculous by promising that things were back to normal every other day. Then came the warnings: Rabin, who had boasted before the events about creating a political "Iron Fist," promised after ten days of strikes and demonstrations to "take off his gloves and to apply a firm and uncompromising political force."

Taking off his gloves meant the massive arrest of more than 1,500 so-called demonstrators, the deportation of nine supposed leaders, the opening of internment camps for the young suspects—most of whom will never face trial—more than 150 administrative arrests. If the army received the order to shoot only in extreme circumstances, it also nevertheless received orders to maintain order at any cost. In Gaza thousands of elite troops have been added to those already there, which prompted the army's chief of staff to admit that the number of soldiers in Gaza today is three times larger than when it was conquered in 1967.

The increased repression did not produce the expected results. To the contrary, a new wave of strikes and demonstrations has been the response of the people of the West Bank and Gaza to these massive arrests and expulsions.

Only then did the tone of the Israeli leaders change; even the defense minister has had to admit that the authorities erred in their evaluation of the nature and length of this popular outbreak. He has actually turned 180 degrees. For Rabin, the PLO is no longer behind these demonstrations. On the contrary, they are spontaneous and show, asserts Rabin, how weak is PLO influence in these occupied territories. Prime Minister Shamir adds in turn that after things go back to normal they will start to apply the autonomy status promised by Israel during the Camp David negotiations. Of course Shamir speaks of autonomy and of dialog with the local people so as to



Israeli peace group protests Shamir's policy.

avoid negotiating with Jordan.

Meanwhile, there is a renewed increase in retaliations, the "striking fist" has replaced the "Iron Fist," and the club has become the emblem of the occupation. More than three hundred people have been brought to hospitals in the occupied territories with broken arms and legs and sometimes both at the same time. But against expectations once again the striking fist has only strengthened the Palestinian people's determination.

Polarization in Israeli Society

If the insurrection in the occupied territories has a second wind, it is mostly because of the settlers who had previously stayed in the background mostly because they were aware of the role they had played in the popular upsurge. Under pressure from their most extremist members, the settlers decided to take the offensive. On many occasions armed settlers have entered refugee camps and Arab localities where they destroyed everything in their way, mainly cars. It is repeatedly reported that young Palestinians are kidnapped and then turned over to the armed forces. In order to stop the blocking of roads, the settlers have recently organized car patrols which do not hesitate to raid neighboring Arab localities to terrorize people.

If the military authorities are not very happy with the settlers' initiatives, they do little to stop them and sometimes there is direct collusion between the army and settlers. Demands from a few rightwing leaders for a massive eviction of Palestinians and the debate throughout the media on the opportunities for such a "transfer" explains why the Palestinian population is today so sensitive to the settlers' initiatives and how news about massacres is so quickly spread, similar to Sabra and Shatila.

But it would be wrong to see only this side of the Israeli society's evolution. This massive Palestinian uprising has immediately forced hundreds of thousands of Israelis to radically reconsider their attitude toward the occupation. Dozens of flyers signed by hundreds of prominent personalities followed the dozens of demonstrations organized by the Left, which has been able—for once—to unite under a single program.

Leftist Zionists, communists, Palestinian nationalists, and anti-Zionists have joined in diverse initiatives ranging from material support for the refugee camps to massive demonstrations in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. These actions are starting to have an impact on the large pacifist movement represented in Peace Now. After the success of the January 23 demonstration, attended by 35,000, it seems that a new level has been reached. Israeli society is once again divided as it was during the Lebanese war. That 250 soldiers and reserve officers have already announced that they will not take part in the retaliation in the occupied territories seems to foretell a deep rupture in the heart of the army when it is called upon to do its dirty job. As soon as the sacred unity crumbles again, Israeli politics enters a crisis, and the Palestinian people will be able to count on new allies, or at least on a substantial weakening of its enemy.

Nevertheless, any relief to the current crisis is still far away. One needs only to listen to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to understand how stubbornly the Zionist leaders refuse to see reality as it is. Shamir just declared, "The idea upon which it is said there is a conflict between the state of Israel and Palestinians is an invention of recent days." With such political perception it is doubtful that the Zionist leaders will manage to reach some kind of political strategy that would bring a light at the end of the tunnel. Things are not about to become "normal" again in the West Bank and Gaza. The fundamental conflict that opposes the Palestinian people with the Zionist state and which, despite what Shamir says, dates back forty years will only worsen until all of the Palestinian people can live in freedom in all of their country. □