

Palestine Focus

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Editorial:

U.S. Middle East Policy: Time to "Deliver" Israel

As the intifada enters its third year, U.S. foreign policy remains the main culprit stalling the Middle East peace process. President Bush did express displeasure by waiting until the last minute to arrange his meeting with Prime Minister Shamir. Still, the administration perseveres in its long-held position that the United States will not pressure Israel and declares that "the United States will not deliver Israel" to any bargaining table.

Secretary of State Baker's public objections notwithstanding, present policy continues to underwrite Israel's rejectionist stance. Indeed, if the United States did not "deliver" so much to Israel—in the form of economic aid and political acquiescence—there would certainly be a better political climate for substantive negotiations to end the occupation. Instead what gets delivered to the U.S. electorate is the illusion of peace initiatives along with hypocrisy, half-truths, and outright lies.

An examination of a few recent events shows how our government's hypocrisy permits Israel to continue to pursue policies detrimental to peace.

Sham Elections

Israeli Prime Minister Shamir rejects any semblance of real negotiations or elections despite the attempts of Egyptian President Mubarak or Secretary Baker to design an acceptable formula. While the Bush administration is mildly irked with Shamir, its concern is that the prime minister does not show more "flexibility" by agreeing with his own plan. Still, the administration ultimately defers to Israel's stance: rejection

of any possibility of withdrawal from occupied Palestinian land, rejection of an independent Palestinian state, and refusal to accept outright PLO representation for Palestinians.

The various Shamir/Mubarak/Baker election proposals continue to be promoted as "democratic" solutions, despite the fact that essential conditions for democracy are missing: Israel is telling the occupied Palestinian people that they can vote (if they behave and stop their intifada), but they cannot vote for what they want (an independent state) and certainly not for whom they want (the PLO). Israel, in other words, wants to dictate the agenda and final outcome, as well as to select who sits on the other side of the table.

The Bush administration, quick to criticize imaginary problems with elections in Managua, finds no problems with Israel's plan for blatantly undemocratic elections in

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Palestine Perspectives

Israel, South Africa, and the U.S.: The Nuclear Connection

NBC recently revealed that Israel has helped South Africa develop a medium-range missile capable of carrying nuclear payloads in exchange for South African enriched uranium for Israel's nuclear arsenal. Queried after the NBC report, U.S. intelligence officials stated they were convinced of Israeli involvement in the apartheid regime's missile program. Although American officials "privately urged" Israel to end military collaboration with South Africa, Israel plays a cat and mouse game by saying that it was not making "new" contracts with its number one arms customer, but was only fulfilling "old" ones, even as illegal arms exports from the United States to South Africa via Israel are exposed.

Disarmament, anti-apartheid, and Middle East peace activists have exposed Israel's ongoing military, economic, and political collaboration, including nuclear partnership, with South Africa for more than a decade—so the "contract" between the two regimes is "old" indeed. Meanwhile, a Pentagon-commissioned report concludes that Israel's advanced nuclear weapons program would be assisted by

the sale of U.S. supercomputers to Israel, computers which have, until now, been restricted from sale because of their possible military use.

The Bush administration, showing rare public irritation, still "privately urges" Israel to be more discrete about its cozy relationship with racist South Africa, while Israel's supporters in Congress devise new ways to circumvent restrictions on the sale of the supercomputer with the pretext that Israel's "edge" over Arab states must be maintained at all costs—even if that cost is increased nuclear proliferation.

The very open secret of Israel's nuclear capability, estimated at 200 bombs, along with its acknowledged chemical warfare capacity, seems to play no factor in U.S. policy. While the Bush administration talks loudly about stopping nuclear and chemical warfare proliferation, it ignores precisely those dangers Israel poses in the Middle East and throughout the world. Once again, U.S. policy at best slaps Israel's wrist while American taxpayers continue to pay for Israel's chips in a dangerous nuclear game of chance in which the entire world can end up the loser. □

U.S. Foots the Bill

Soviet Jews to Settle in Occupied Palestine

One side effect of glasnost has been an increasing number of Jews leaving the Soviet Union. But, after long pressuring the Soviets to allow easier emigration, the Bush administration is now restricting the number of Soviet Jews who can immigrate to the United States. U.S. immigration policy, already highly restrictive and selective, has become yet another factor in Middle East politics.

Over 90 percent of Soviet Jewish emigrants prefer to go to the United States or Western Europe, with Israel the desired destination of only a small number. As a result of the Bush administration's decision, many more Soviet Jews will be

coerced into moving to Israel if they want to leave the Soviet Union.

Israel, ecstatic at the prospect of new recruits in its "demographic war" with the Palestinians, virtually gloats over Washington's decision to restrict the right of Jews to come to America. Naturally, however, the Israeli government would not expect the United States to divert Jews to Israel without providing financing.

Israel estimates that housing costs alone for its new Jewish population will amount to \$2 billion, about what the intifada has cost Israel so far. The Shamir government

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Shamir's Elections:

Camp David, Revisited and Rediscovered

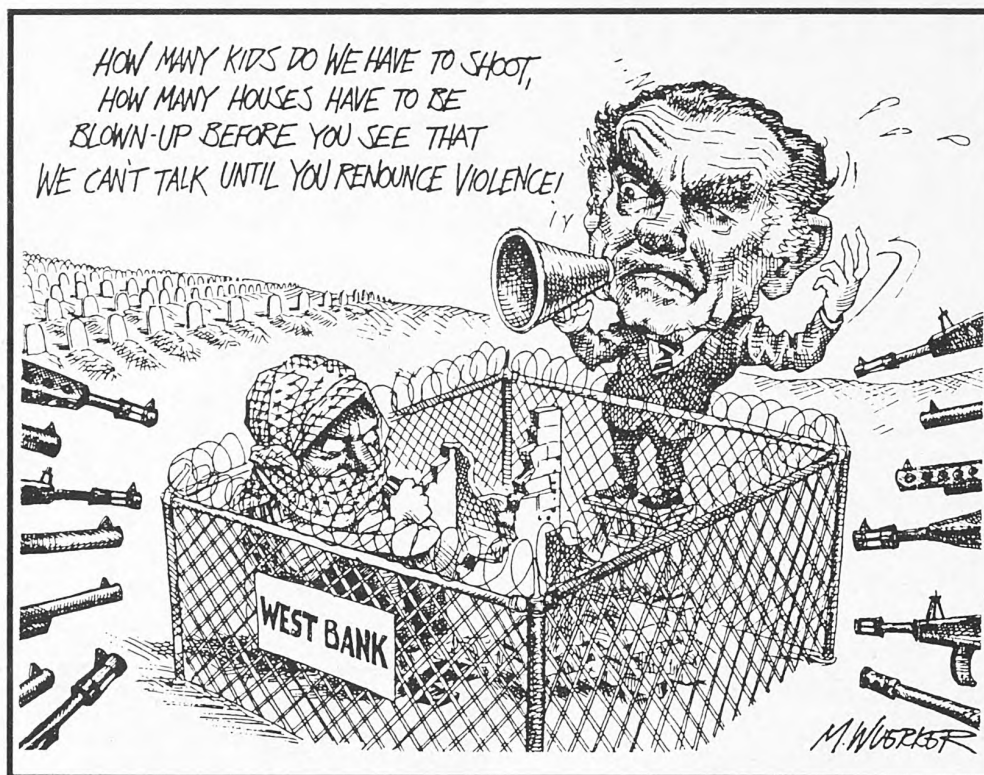
By Naseer Aruri

When placed in the historical context of U.S. involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Israel's proposed plan for elections in the occupied territories, as well as the Bush administration's efforts to effect Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, offer little prospect for early resolution. The diplomatic history of the Middle East during the past two decades reveals that a half dozen U.S. administrations have stood consistently in opposition to a settlement supported by an international consensus—one that would provide for an end to the Israeli occupation and a beginning of Palestinian statehood. At the same time, Israel has managed to reject every single U.S. initiative involving a territorial settlement, even when such initiatives excluded Palestinian sovereignty. The Palestinians have thus been confronted with two antagonists intent on denying them a national existence and a sovereign order.

The intifada represents the latest Palestinian response to this joint U.S.-Israeli endeavor of twenty years. Washington's sudden awakening to the fact that the status quo in the occupied West Bank and Gaza was untenable occurred in February 1988, after five years of diplomatic paralysis. The Shultz plan was introduced then to simply reaffirm U.S. custodianship over the Middle East, to elbow out other serious plans for settlement, and to protect Israel's image in the United States, which has been tarnished by its brutal methods of suppressing the intifada.

Mr. Shultz had endorsed Israel's attempt to contain the intifada, but his approach was different from that of Israel. He had issued an invitation to the Palestinians to explore a solution based on the Reagan Plan and Camp David, whose framework consisted of "full autonomy," transitional periods, elections for a "self-governing authority," and some kind of association with Jordan, none of which was likely to incur serious Israeli opposition. And yet when the PLO recognized Israel's "right to exist," "renounced terrorism," and called for a two-state solution, the Reagan administration agreed to no more than sporadic talks with the PLO at a fairly low level and on the basis of a constricted agenda.

Shamir has virtually turned down his own proposal.



The Legacy of Reagan and Shultz

From the American point of view, these talks constitute a forum from which to lecture the PLO on the requirements of accepted behavior in the hope that the PLO would replace Jordan, for the time being, as interlocutor for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Both Mr. Shultz and Mr. Baker denied that the talks constitute negotiations, despite the fact that the PLO had met Kissinger's conditions and Reagan's codicils for such negotiations.

Thus, the Reagan-Shultz legacy to the Bush administration has not been reversed by the dialogue with the PLO. In fact, the new administration's approach to the conflict exhibits an even stronger commitment to the Israeli position. At the same time, it lacks the apparent urgency with which Mr. Shultz tried to respond to the intifada.

The inaction by the new administration during its first five months was reflective

both of its world view and its sensitivity to domestic realities. Mr. Baker views the world through the prism of American domestic politics. He and the president expressed apprehension about major initiatives that may lead to doing "dumb things." Not only does the Middle East have a low priority on their policy agenda, but it also suffers from the absence of a constituency of pressure against Israel. Hence, they spent the first five months waiting for things to "ripen" on the Palestinian-Israeli front, in accordance with counsel supplied by the pro-Israel think tank, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. The fact that nearly two-thirds of the American people favor the establishment of an independent Palestinian state did not seem to have much impact on the administration. After all, public opinion does not play as crucial a role as that of cohesively organized minorities in the formation of public policy, as may be illustrated by the gun lobby, which

has prevailed despite overwhelming public approval of gun control in the United States.

When the Bush administration finally decided that the Middle East could not be ignored any longer, it moved with characteristic caution and passivity. The fear of doing the wrong thing seems to haunt this administration to the extent that it tends to encourage other parties to sponsor initiatives. This curious method of using surrogates on the diplomatic, rather than the battle, front saw the administration push Shamir and Mubarak to attach their imprimatur to the peace plan that Washington would sponsor. This is vintage behavior for an administration that lacks vision and a conceptual framework and places domestic priorities over international obligations.

The Elections Plan

The diplomatic void was filled by the so-called elections plan, a rather safe issue for the Bush administration, which induced it and elevated it to the centerpiece of its Mideast diplomacy. The plan itself, of course, had to be sponsored by Israel, whose defense minister had earlier conceived it as a means to stop the intifada and provide the U.S. Congress with the necessary justification to maintain the status quo. The plan, which received approval from the Israeli cabinet on May 4, 1989, was decorated with slogans and buzz words designed to grant it easy access to the American political arena. Phrases such as "free democratic elections," a sacrosanct concept in liberal America, "lull in violence," and "interim phases" were safe enough issues for the administration to extend approval.

The substance of the plan, however, was totally rejectionist, which should raise the question of whether the Bush administration is seriously exploring a viable settlement. After all, the Twenty-Point Program begins with a summary, under the title "Basic Premises," four of which ensure its nonworkability:

1. Direct negotiations based on the Camp David Accords;
2. "No" to negotiations with the PLO;
3. "No" to a Palestinian state;
4. "No" to "any change in the status of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza other than in accordance with the basic guidelines of the

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FOCUS ON ACTION

By Ginny Kraus

Renowned Palestinian Activists Released from Prison

Maha Nassar and Riyad Malki, two Palestinian activists from the West Bank, were released from prison in October after a major campaign by friends and supporters in the United States and Europe. The campaign included mailgrams, letters, and protests to Israeli authorities about the arrests. Dr. Riyad Malki has written numerous articles about the socioeconomic conditions of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories and has done extensive research on the export of products. He has spoken widely in Europe and North America about the suffering and the struggle of the Palestinian people.

Maha Nassar is a member of the Executive Committee of the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees in the occupied territories. She has also served as a member of the International Coordinating Committee of NGOs on the Question of Palestine. Both Maha and Riyad extend their gratitude to all those who protested their arrests to both Israeli and U.S. authorities.

Middle East Children's Alliance Plans Benefit Concert

The Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA), based in Berkeley, California, is planning a concert featuring long-time activists and artists Pete Seeger, Holly Near, and Ronnie Gilbert, with a special appearance by Marcel Khalife, Lebanese musician and composer, known throughout the world for his songs of freedom and liberation for the people of Palestine and Lebanon. The concert will raise funds for MECA and will be held in the Berkeley Community Theater in California on January 12, 1990. For tickets, phone Redwood Records at (415) 425-9191. For more information, call MECA at (415) 548-0542.

Palestine Human Rights Campaign Conference

The Palestine Human Rights Campaign held its annual conference in Chicago, October 6-8, 1989. Entitled "Palestinian Statehood: Justice, Liberation, and Democracy," the conference featured keynote addresses by Dr. Swee Chai Ang, Professor Israel Shahak, and Dr. Afif Safieh. The conference was well-attended by PHRC activists, supporters, and friends from around the country. Workshops tackled the difficult questions of how to more effectively organize in support of Palestinian human rights as we enter the third year of the intifada. Students from Madison and Ann Arbor shared lessons from their work to build sister-university relationships between their own universities and those in the West Bank. Community activists from around the country related their experiences in building local grassroots campaigns. Members of the academic and church communities focused on their own efforts to build effective networks among their constituents. The conference ended on a bittersweet note, recalling the decade-long effective work

of PHRC under the leadership of its director, Rev. Don Wagner, and wishing Don well in his new post with Mercy Corps International.

U.S. Religious Communities Pull Together for Peace

The U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East was formed in June 1987 when 50 Jewish, Christian, and Muslim leaders met and agreed to form the committee, based on the theme "Time for Peace." Today, the committee is endorsed by more than 1,200 religious leaders, including Rita Hauser, chairperson, American Committee International Center for Peace, Fr. Theodore Hesburgh, CSD, president of Notre Dame University, and Al-Hajj Dawud Assad, president, Council of Mosques, USA. The committee aims to build broad, public support for an active and sustained initiative for peace based on their theme to make peace in the Middle East a priority. They are sponsoring a "Convocation for Middle East Peace" at St. John the Divine in New York on February 11 and 12, 1990. For more information, contact Convocation at (212) 727-1203.

New York PSC Teach-In and Concert

The New York chapter of the Palestine Solidarity Committee (PSC) held a teach-in on November 29. Entitled "The Intifada: U.S. Implications," the teach-in featured Judith Chomsky, Stewart Schaar, Jeanne Butterfield, and Nubar Hovsepian and covered such topics as the impact of the intifada on Palestinian and Israeli society, U.S. public opinion and government policy in the Middle East, and strategies for the U.S. peace movement. Similar teach-ins were held by PSC chapters across the United States.

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Intifada Chronicle

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

September 23 The government of Switzerland, which acts as custodian of the Geneva conventions and three related treaties on the laws of war, refused a request from the Palestine Liberation Organization to become an official signatory of the treaties. Under pressure from the U.S. government, the Swiss government stated its decision was taken "in view of the uncertainty in the international community as to whether or not a Palestinian state exists." Bush administration officials welcomed the Swiss decision, saying the PLO does not represent a real state and should not be allowed to adhere to the Geneva conventions or to become a full member of the United Nations or its specialized agencies. The Swiss did, however, agree to circulate the PLO request to the other 165 signatory nations of the Geneva Convention to get their comments.

September 25 Israeli police announced they were questioning eight Jewish settlers in the West Bank on suspicion of firebombing the homes of neighboring settlers to provoke reprisals against Palestinians.

September 28 Three soldiers of the Givati Brigade, an elite unit which is developing a reputation for uncontrolled brutality, had their sentences reduced from nine to six months for the beating death of Hani Shami of Gaza. Defense Minister Rabin had been demanding a pardon for the men. The decision of the brigade commander brought this response from a spokesman for Yesh Gvul, the movement of soldiers and reservists who refuse to serve in the occupied areas: "Only a distorted, callous, and conscienceless society could pardon soldiers who brutally abused an innocent man, while imprisoning persons who refuse to take part in the brutality and repression."

October 9 Nidal Habash, 22-years-old, was killed execution-style in Nablus by an Israeli soldier. Palestinian witnesses, including Ismat al-Masri, who signed a sworn affidavit for journalists and the British consul-general, say that Habash was killed after he had raised his hands in surrender. Masri stated that Habash had been part of a parade which dispersed when the army arrived. Habash had been running away "but suddenly stopped, turned around, and raised his hands in a sign of surrender. The soldier who was chasing him shot him. He fell to the ground. The same soldier approached him and fired three more shots into his chest from close range." Human-rights activists believe no autopsy was done by Israeli authorities for fear of embarrassment that Habash was shot at close range.

October 18 Massive international pressure succeeded in freeing Maha Mastaklim Nassar, after fifteen days in the infamous Security Services wing of the Russian Compound detention center in Jerusalem. Ms. Nassar, the 34-year-old mother of two, is a national figure in the Palestinian women's movement. She teaches high-school level physics at the Lutheran School of Hope in Ramallah. On her release, Ms. Nassar told the Tel Aviv-based Women's Organization for Political Prisoners she was interrogated about alleged connections with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. She was put in solitary confinement in a filthy cell with a sack covering her face and her arms tied behind her back to a pole with a sharp edge. She was left standing that position for entire nights. On other occasions, she was left tied in a crouching position for several hours at a time. For the first four days after her arrest she was given



Two Israeli soldiers take Palestinian boy into custody.

Neal Cassidy/Frontline

no food; she then began a hunger strike, which lasted thirteen days. On October 16, interrogators smashed her head against a wall. Riyad Malki of Bir Zeit University, who had been detained at about the same time and was also the subject of an international campaign, was released at the end of October.

October 21 Sixty-five charitable non-profit organizations providing services to Palestinian citizens of Israel appealed to the United Nations for help in preventing the passage of a proposed amendment to

Israel's "Prevention of Terrorism" act that would cut off their funding by prohibiting receipt of donations from a source connected with a terrorist organization. "Terrorist organization" is defined as any body declared as such by the government. The amendment would give police broad powers to seize property from individuals or groups on suspicion that it originated from an illegal source.

October 25 Israeli fears of a growing tax revolt among Palestinians (see story on Beit Sahour) may be well-founded. Here is

a report for the last six days: **October 19** Israeli tax authorities raided Attil village in the Tulkarim district, imposing fines of \$300-1,200 on several residents who were ordered to report to local military headquarters. **October 20** Israeli tax collectors, escorted by the military, raided Haress village in the Nablus area, confiscated identity cards, and imposed heavy fines on merchants refusing to pay taxes. **October 22** Tax collectors, accompanied by soldiers, raided shops on Hittin Street in Nablus, seizing shopowners' identity cards and goods and imposing high fines. **October 23** A similar raid occurred in Kufri Thulth village in the Qalqilya area. Soldiers detained nine people for several hours and confiscated their ID cards pending payment of taxes. On the same day, the military confiscated fifteen cars at a checkpoint in Hebron, stating their owners had refused to pay taxes. **October 24** Tax collectors raided several shops in Jerusalem, stating that the owners had not paid taxes to occupation authorities. Again, in Bani Zeid village in the Ramallah area, military checkpoints were erected and several cars seized.

November 15 Gaza was declared a closed military area on November 10 and the West Bank was closed on November 14 in anticipation of the first anniversary of the declaration of the Palestinian state by the Palestine National Council. All international media were banned and curfews were in effect. The school year was ended prematurely. Roadblocks were set up to prevent all travel. Nevertheless massive celebrations were held, particularly in Gaza, where thousands marched in the

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Beit Sahour: "No Taxation without Representation"

Six weeks after Israeli Defense Minister Rabin vowed in parliament to "teach them a lesson," the 12,000 residents of Beit Sahour, a prosperous town near Bethlehem, celebrated a major victory October 31 in their fight against taxation without representation. Under pressure from both internal and international criticism and with the residents showing no sign of capitulation, the Israeli army ended the state of siege it had imposed on the town.

Troops had sealed off the town, arrested 55 residents, and seized personal property and industrial equipment valued at many times the taxes owed. Undaunted, the tax resisters vowed to continue their campaign against paying taxes for the occupation and demanded that their confiscated properties be returned.

Last summer 600 business owners and other leaders decided, in accord with the policy of the intifada leadership, to withhold payment of taxes to Israel. In addition to protesting their lack of political rights under the occupation, Beit Sahour residents noted the lack of common government services—health, utilities, road repairs—people usually expect in return for taxes paid.

On September 22, after tax collectors going door to door found no one willing to break the solidarity of the protest, the army sealed off the town and cut telephone lines. Soldiers began arresting tax refusers, and some received stiff fines and jail terms. When these measures failed to weaken the protest, the troops brought in trucks and seized furniture, cars, machinery, and finished factory goods. Tawfik Abu Aita, owner of a clothing business, told the *New York Times*, "They took 1,500 blouses, 700 kilograms of wool, and a 1986 Opel Cadet." He added that the soldiers were unable to dismantle his knitting machines, which were left behind.

George Qumsieh is a mother-of-pearl

artisan who works out of his home workshop. His stock of silver earrings was seized, along with two cars, a TV, and a sofa. He told *Al Fajr*, "We pay only for our own government and not for occupiers." Abla Rishmawi owns a garment and textile factory. The tax collectors confiscated two-and-a-half tons of cloth and 15,000 jogging suits valued at \$250,000 (U.S.), double the amount Ms. Rishmawi had been ordered to pay in taxes. "I do not pay because of principle," she told *Al Fajr*.

Beit Sahour soon became an inspirational example to many others, as the siege did not prevent news of the protesters' steadfastness from spreading throughout Palestine. Protests mounted as food supplies in the town dwindled. On October 3, the Jerusalem-based Popular Committees for Health Services issued an appeal to worldwide health and human-rights organizations on behalf of the more than 1,000 patients who had been denied medical care—from newborns and their mothers to those suffering from chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes.

On October 6, the consuls-general from Britain, France, Greece, Italy, Spain, Belgium, and Sweden attempted to visit the besieged town but were turned away by the army, which had declared it a closed military zone. U.S. Consul-General Phillip Wilcox canceled a planned trip to Beit Sahour on October 12 to meet with the town's mayor, Hanna al-Atrash. Meanwhile, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution October 6 condemning Israeli practices in the occupied territories, including the tax raids on Beit Sahour. The resolution passed by a vote of 140 to 2, with the United States and Israel casting the only no votes.

Observers have noted that Israel is apparently trying to head off a widespread tax resistance movement by making an example of Beit Sahour. Residents of many other towns have been resisting paying taxes without yet receiving the kind of collective punishment meted out in Beit Sahour. In

lifting the siege, Israeli authorities also claimed victory, as the value of the goods taken exceeded several million dollars, well in excess of the original tax bills. (At press time, Israeli peace movement activists were planning to buy confiscated factory equipment at auction and lease it back to the owners for a nominal fee to prevent further expropriation.) The military government issued a statement saying it "places great importance on this because the taxes collected finance government services for Arab inhabitants in the territories, such as health, education, and welfare."

But the morale of Beit Sahour residents remained high, as they pointed to the international support their cause had inspired. Several international delegations visited Beit Sahour to express solidarity. One such group included 130 U.S. visitors who attended an ecumenical service in the town. Father Bill O'Donnell, pastor of St. Joseph the Workman Catholic Church in Berkeley, California, told *Palestine Focus*, "We saw up close the oppression of the Palestinian people. I was very impressed by the determination of the people of Beit Sahour. They told me, 'Our freedom is worth more than our possessions.'"

Beit Sahour residents also said they were buoyed by another UN resolution condemning the "Israeli siege" of the occupied territories, which failed to pass the Security Council only because it was vetoed by the United States, the sole opponent. And the Palestine Central Council, meeting in Baghdad, voted to tithe all PLO employees and institutions to raise funds to compensate the Beit Sahour residents for their losses. Said Mr. Abu Aita, the Beit Sahour clothing manufacturer, "What they've really done with this kind of collective punishment of an entire city is draw people into the intifada who have never been in it before." S.R. □

The woman reached out, a tray filled with glasses of orange soda trembling in her hands. She smiled, but her eyes were dark with worry. The wind blew dust through the empty house, so close to being finished, just the windows left to complete. Her family sat in a row beside their father on the one remaining sofa, faces immobile, as if in shock. Tomorrow the house would be rubble, punishment for a stone-throwing incident in which a soldier implicated her two young boys. Their possessions lay in a pile on the street, the sum total of 30 years selling vegetables in the market. "Why?" they asked us. "Why are they doing this to us?"

Over a year ago, Miranda Bergman came to me and said "I want to get together a team of Jewish women artists to paint a mural in Palestine; are you interested?" I immediately thought of my mother. Throughout my childhood, I had been haunted by images of my mother, climbing the rocky hills of the new state of Israel, flanked by handsome young men in boots, carrying guns. It had been her dream, this state, based from the beginning on the tragic fallacy that Palestine was a land devoid of people, or worse, that the Palestinians did not matter; after all, they were not Europeans. I remember Jewish children sending a dollar to plant a tree in Israel, "to make the desert bloom." I later came to know that a terrible crime was taking place on that "desert," a crime committed in my name.

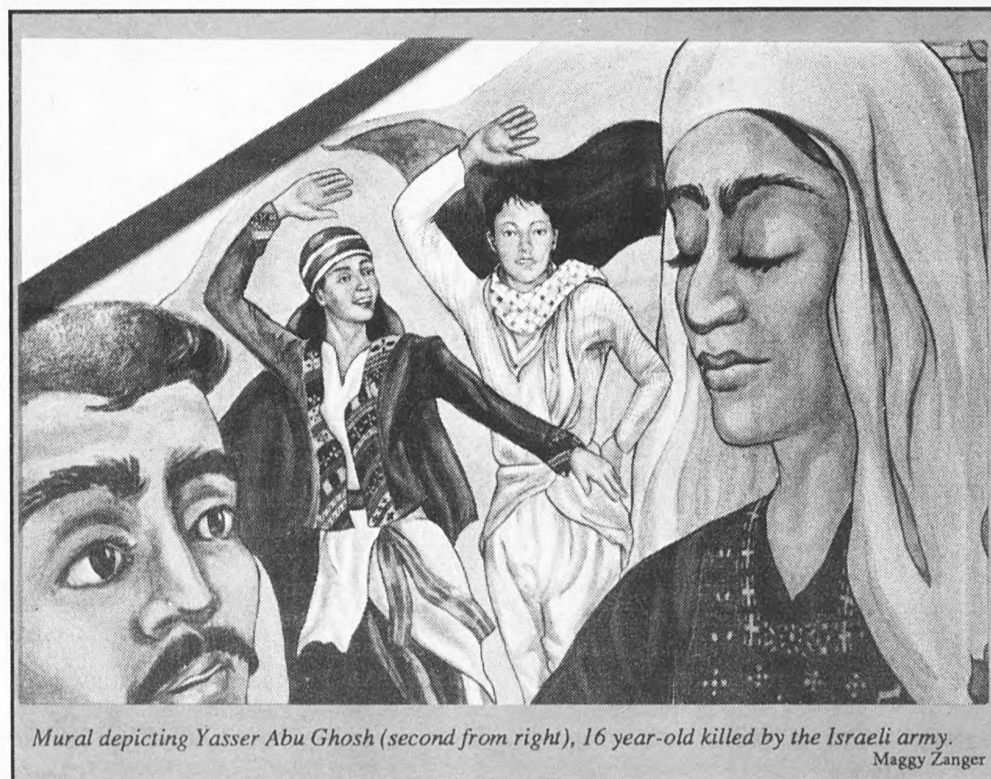
"I first thought of the project," Miranda said, "because I was really uncomfortable with my own silence and with the lack of support and information about what was happening with the Palestinian struggle. As the intifada grew stronger and as the repression by the Israeli government grew stronger, it became more and more uncomfortable to be silent about it, to not take a stand to show clearly that there are a lot of Jewish people who are against the occupation and who want justice in that part of the world."

So we formed the Break the Silence Mural Project—four North-American Jewish women: Miranda Bergman, Marlene Tobias, Susan Greene, and myself. Miranda and Susan were experienced muralists, their work stretching from the projects of Oakland to the parks of Nicaragua. Marlene and I were new to the mural process, having worked until now in graphic design and illustration. What we all shared was the conviction that the Palestinians deserved the same rights that all people deserve, the power to make their own choices, and the freedom to live in peace in their own sovereign state.

Unsure of what the response from the community would be, we sent out 1500 letters describing our project and asking for donations, then waited with some anxiety to see what would happen next. I felt like we were testing the public pulse on Israel—without community support the trip would not happen. The response came, and, as

Miranda said, "It just really took off. I was heartwarming and I guess you could say somewhat surprised, although I felt like if I had such strong feelings, there had to be a lot of other people who did, too." Several hundred letters arrived with contributions and words of encouragement. We also received several small grants. At the end of May, Margaret Randall gave a benefit poetry reading on our behalf. By the beginning of June we had the necessary funds and were ready to go.

On July 1 we arrived in the West Bank village of El Bireh (adjacent to Ramallah), where a site had been chosen for our mural. With less than a day in Palestine, we found ourselves sipping thick coffee from tiny cups and examining the winding staircase that would be home to our mural. The staircase connected two organizations sharing the same building, the Friends of the Community Charitable Society and the Center



Mural depicting Yasser Abu Ghosh (second from right), 16 year-old killed by the Israeli army. Maggy Zanger

for Popular Arts. The Friends of the Community distributes food to the poor, offers classes in literacy, health and nutrition, and traditional sewing and embroidery and runs a medical clinic. The Popular Arts Center preserves and promotes folk culture, using the traditional elements in innovative ways. They support local groups of artists, such as Al Fanun, a 35-member music and dance troupe, offer dance classes for children, and provide the community with a music, video, and art library.

To aid in the authenticity and lend depth to the mural, our hosts organized a series of excursions for us, so that we could better understand the environment we were to represent.

For two weeks we drank in the new images: the land itself, more beautiful and varied than I had imagined, the muted green of the olive trees, the multitude of stones with their dramatic and improbable shapes, the Palestinian houses blending into the hillsides, merging gently with the

Break the Silence Paint Murals

landscape, while the Jewish settlements loomed ominously above them, looking stark and out of place.

And we saw the rubble of houses where families once lived, the overturned gardens, the uprooted groves of olive trees, roots drying in the sun. We saw soldiers on the rooftops, eternal voyeurs spying through binoculars, shooting abruptly into crowded streets, shooting at children. The soldiers seemed to be everywhere, their radios buzzing like wasps. We saw flags the children

*Our brushes flew
chilling descriptions
and torture, the loss
the loss of*

in a variety of environments, none of us had ever tried to work under occupation before. We would have to use symbols, avoiding images that would provoke the authorities into closing the center or destroying the mural. No children throwing stones or holding their fingers in the victory sign; no flags. Even combining the colors of the flag in another form could be seen as inflammatory. And we would not be able to work in the evening, when the lights could draw the attention of the soldiers. We would have to be careful going to and from the building.

As we began there was some trepidation on both sides. Marlene later admitted, "At first I was a little bit nervous, after all the information, or I should say misinformation, you hear in the United States." Suhail, the director of the Center for Popular Arts, said, "We had fears, I had fears ... how would people react to such a thing—people here do not know about murals, and who is this group, are they really committed? We thought, we'll see"

I was concerned that because we were not able to paint on the street, we would be working in isolation, a fear that was quickly dispelled. The center was filled with activity, drawing many different kinds of people to its variety of services. They were at first, perhaps, a little mystified by these four Jewish women, stretched across the wall, covered with paint, but soon curiosity overwhelmed our mutual shyness, and we began to talk. We worked closely with the members of the center to develop the mural themes. Many people joined us in the painting, both accomplished artists and interested newcomers to the world of paint. Soon people would come by just to visit and chat, and their lives opened to us. Our brushes flew as we listened to chilling descriptions of imprisonment and torture, the loss of family members, the loss of the land. And we heard the quiet stories of love and hope for the future.

As the friendship grew, so did the mural. On entering the building you see the land, traditional stone archways framing the rolling hills and distant villages. A large cactus stands as a symbol for patience

had thrown, hanging precariously from electrical wires, anchored by stones or bottles, symbols of resistance. With the help of the Women's Committees we visited schools, cooperatives, hospitals, families of the dead and imprisoned, heard stories of pain and courage, and came to feel the vitality and determination of the people.

"It became so clear to us that the Palestinian culture is like a very large extended family where everybody wants to take care of each other and really does this," Marlene remarked. "It's not at all in theory, it's completely in practice. We never felt alone; we always felt protected."

We were invited to live with a family in the Kadura refugee camp and there experienced the richness and profound generosity of community life. We especially felt the strength and militancy of the women, who cared for us as if we were long-lost sisters and daughters. We came to love each other deeply.

So how were we going to include all this in the mural? Although we had worked

accept as a real opening the elections proposed by the Shamir government, and to "understand that no one is going to deliver Israel for you."

As for Israel, the new element in Mr. Baker's AIPAC speech was merely the language: "Now is the time to lay aside, once and for all, the unrealistic vision of a greater Israel.... Forswear annexation. Stop settlement activity. Allow schools to reopen. Reach out to the Palestinians as neighbors who deserve political rights."

Mr. Baker clearly placed the onus for breaking the impasse on the Palestinians and the Arab world, which he admonished to "take concrete steps toward accommodation with Israel," and insisted that such steps cannot be outside the framework of the so-called peace process. He, therefore, ignored previous Arab efforts on behalf of accommodation which span two decades beginning with UN mediator Gunnar Jarring in 1970 and including the numerous resolutions adopted by Arab summit conferences calling for mutual recognition. Baker bade the Arabs to: "end the economic boycott; stop the challenges to Israel's standing in international organizations; repudiate the

odious line that Zionism is racism." He then turned to the Soviet Union, which, unlike the United States, recognizes the right of self-determination for both Arabs and Jews in Palestine, and challenged it to extend the "new thinking" to the Middle East.

On the whole, the first major policy statement of the Bush administration introduced very little, if any, in terms of substance. But the sensational phraseology, reaffirming the U.S. perspective on Israel's obligations under Resolution 242, marked a stylistic change in Washington's dealings with Israel. The only new element in the speech, however, is Washington's open support for Shamir's elections plan. And yet, the speech was widely interpreted in the United States as the first major policy pronouncement of the Bush administration and was generally described as even-handed.

The Egyptian Phase

If sponsoring elections through Israel was the first phase of the Bush-Baker diplomacy, selling the plan to the Palestinians through Egypt was the second phase. Wash-

Camp David Revisited ...

Continued from page 2

government."

The last premise translates as the Likud notion of functional autonomy and the Labor notion of territorial autonomy, neither of which involve any surrender of Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza.

Baker's "Useless" Speech

The administration, however, continued to try to "play it safe," with a major address by Secretary Baker to the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) on May 22, 1989. Baker's speech was filled with rhetoric but short on substance, carefully avoiding the label of a U.S. plan. Its lists of "dos" and "don'ts" placed the administration in the position of arbiter, albeit an active bystander whose intense scrutiny would fall short of producing a verdict. The mild rebuke it drew from Shamir as "use-

less" was not quite as bad as the one delivered by the Israeli prime minister in response to the Shultz Plan: "bad, unwelcome, and impractical." Only Shultz's signature was found acceptable by Shamir.

The fact is, however, that the demands which Baker's speech made on Palestinians and the Arabs were more specific than those made on Israel and they went beyond those made by his predecessor, George Shultz. Baker urged them to produce a "constructive" response to the initiatives which the "Israeli government has offered." He commanded the Palestinians to "renounce the policy of phases in all languages.... Amend the Covenant. Translate the dialogue of violence in the intifada into a dialogue of politics and diplomacy." He asked them to accept a transitional period of autonomy prior to a final settlement. He warned them not to "distort international organizations" by seeking admission to membership in the United Nations specialized agencies. He wanted them to convince the Israelis of their peaceful intentions, to

...: Jewish Women in Palestine

... as we listened to
... of imprisonment
... of family members,
... the land.

and for the Palestinian villages that were destroyed. Under an olive tree made of linked hands, a boy learns to read and dreams of being a doctor. Behind him a kouffiyeh blends with a rainbow. On the opposite wall stands a tall woman in the traditional embroidered dress: Shadya Abu Gazala, the first woman martyr in the Palestinian struggle. She rises proudly from the roots and rocks, holding in her hand a baby with an olive branch in one small hand and a stone in the other. To her left, the world's people are playing "London Bridge," their hands clasped and arms raised to let the children pass through. At the front of the chain are a Palestinian mother and Katherine Smith, a leader of the Navajo nation, another people whose land was stolen.

Moving up the stairs are the musicians playing the traditional flutes and the 'oud and the dabkeh dancers in their brightly embroidered costumes. One of the dancers is Yasser Abu Ghosh, a 16-year-old boy and popular student activist who was killed by the army during our time in Ramallah. While entering a pharmacy just two blocks from where we were living, he was shot in the head and the back. Refusing him medical attention, the army then draped him like a trophy across their jeep and paraded him around town while he bled to death. People would come by and stop for a long time to look at the painting of Yasser, and I felt it became a kind of memorial to him.

Leaping off the landing of the staircase are two large horses, symbolizing freedom and rebellion, one in the colors of day, the other in the colors of night. And then on the final staircase an old man and a young girl plant new seeds and pour water over a large sunflower with the earth at its center, each petal a golden map of historic Palestine. Surrounding the flower are the faces of the Palestinian people, in all their variety and strength. The end of the mural is punctuated by the anemone, Palestine's official flower, brilliant in red, black, green, and white (not so coincidentally the colors of the Palestinian flag).

We were soon inundated with requests to do other murals, and we tried to squeeze

in as many shorter projects as we could. The first of these was a combined effort with a group of professional Palestinian artists, executed on the rocky wall behind Al Hakawati, a theater and cultural center in East Jerusalem. The plan allowed each artist to design his or her own section; we then all helped each other in the final painting. It was in the completion of this mural that we met several fine painters who later helped us in our other projects. In the end, the wall became a colorful blend of each distinct style and image.

Our next mural was done at the African Club, a center for black Palestinians in East Jerusalem. Both children and adults participated in the painting, which turned out to be mostly by candlelight, as the lights went out while we were working. What was lacking in polish was more than made up for by energy and enthusiasm.

The following set of murals Marlene laughingly called our "clandestine bunny series." We painted a bunny chasing butterflies at a children's nursery, and a bunny picking daffodils at a new school for children, ages 4 to 6. Even in these we tried to include some subtle symbolism, a butterfly whose wings shimmered with the colors of the Palestinian flag, and the national flowers of Palestine stretching toward the sun.

Our last mural had special significance for us. On our first night in Palestine we had been invited to a clandestine festival to celebrate the Day of Folklore, previously an annual event that had been curtailed for two years by the Israeli occupation. In the early evening, we were whisked off to the village of Bir Zeit, where we had our first real taste of the spirit of the intifada, watching the joyfully exuberant dancers and listening to the intifada songs. At the end of our trip it seemed like the completion of a circle when we were asked to paint the wall behind the stage where we had spent our first unforgettable night. So many people helped on that mural that it seemed at times that there was not a square inch of space where somebody was not painting. In just five hours we completed the design of intertwining olive trees, two birds of freedom at either side, the

twisting kouffiyeh in their beaks.

Along with the mural painting we were delighted to have the opportunity to teach both an art class for children and a graphic design class for adults. Because the Israeli government had ordered the schools closed for most of the last two years, education had been forced underground. Many teachers had been jailed. We were happy to fill in.

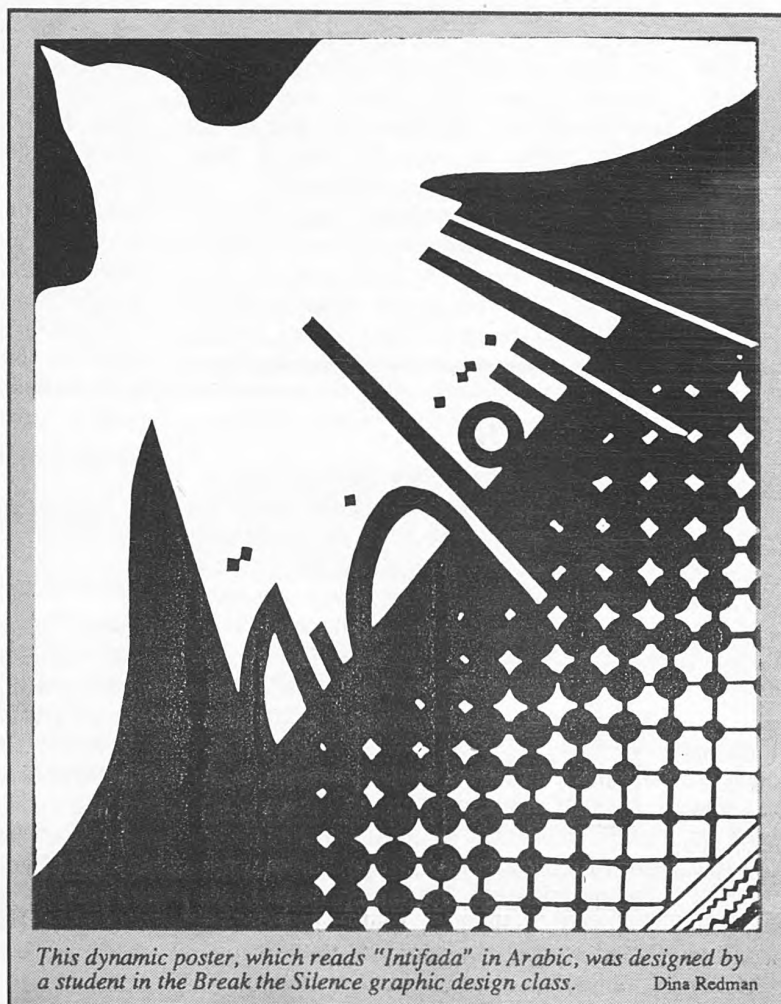
Often, children would arrive hours before their class began, running eagerly up the stairs, laughing with excitement. Instead of the 30 we had anticipated, there were usually as many as 50 or 60. Their paintings were haunting: Children lying dead in the street or being carried off in caskets, volcanos of blood exploding from their bodies; soldiers shooting people; tires burning; children throwing stones. And flags, a multitude of flags, seeming fueled

and from class. The work was powerful and complex.

Our time passed all too quickly, and it seemed like a dream when after nine weeks we were saying tearful goodbyes to our new friends and returning to the United States for the next part of our work. "Having built real human ties in the two months we were in the West Bank, we are going to expand the Break the Silence Mural team into a network of artists for an independent Palestine," said Miranda. "We will encourage others not to be afraid to criticize Israel because they will be called anti-Semitic or self-hating. We say stand up strongly and proudly and state that the policies of Israel are wrong."

"Palestinians from all walks of life made a distinction between Jewish people and Israeli policy. Many times people said that a person's religion does not matter: what matters is what is in his heart," said Susan. "Coincidentally, I had never declared myself so openly as a Jew as I did this past summer in Palestine—I have also never felt myself to be in a less anti-Semitic environment."

Finally, I asked Suhail what his thoughts of the project were, now that we had finished. He answered: "We were very happy because people were reacting very positively to this painting and to the group. Your way of working with the people was very beautiful and you became friends with lots of people. The mural is a new art form that people are not only willing to accept, but are willing to work for because it breaks this wall of art as something that only a few people can do and our ordinary people cannot even talk about it; what do we know to comment. Regular people come in and say, 'Oh, these people are Jewish women from the United States, painting all this in support of our Palestinian struggle.' It emphasizes that the problem is not a religious problem. We cannot only be friends; we can be working with each other toward a specific thing, regardless of religion. The problem is against Zionism, against imperialism. I always believe the struggle is not a Palestinian struggle only but is part of an international struggle for peace." □



This dynamic poster, which reads "Intifada" in Arabic, was designed by a student in the Break the Silence graphic design class. Dina Redman

by the prohibition on flags in the outside world: the beginning of each class was a veritable frenzy of flag painting. "When we ran out of paper, they would paint flags on anything available: cups, spoons; one kid even painted a flag on a lightbulb," said Susan.

The graphic design class was a mix of people already working in the field and people with no previous experience but an interest and determination to learn new skills that would be useful in their work in the community. Our first assignment was a black-and-white poster. Allowed to pick their own theme, they chose a single word—"intifada." To do a poster on the intifada is dangerous and illegal. To avoid detection, some of the students folded the designs inside their clothes while going to

Dina Redman is a Bay Area artist. The Break the Silence Mural Project is planning a nationwide speaking tour and has produced a slideshow for presentation. Also in production are a videotape and a new mural in San Francisco, based on the lessons of the trip. To reach the project or to send contributions to support their work, write to: Break the Silence Mural Project, 1442A Walnut Street, #252, Berkeley, CA 94709 or phone: (415) 540-0161.

ington's secondary proxy in the region would sweeten the bait and try to camouflage its diktat character. But Mubarak's Ten Point Plan was rejected by Israel, not withstanding its capitulatory character. Consider the procedurally oriented amendments it offered with no mention of Palestinian independence or its accommodation of the Likud by creating a new legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Baker's response to its recalcitrant ally was five "suggested points," again carefully avoiding the impression that there was any American plan and keeping the United States away from the center of the negotiating process. The intent of the "suggested points" is to hold a meeting for the foreign ministers of Egypt, Israel, and the United States in order to decide on who is the legitimate representative of the Palestinians. After all, Mr. Shamir not only rejects the PLO in that role, but he has objections to a broad range of Palestinians involved in the uprising in the occupied territories. He said in response to Mubarak's earlier invitation to an Israeli and a Palestinian delegation to Cairo the following: "Who will come to Cairo? The leaders of the intifada will

come. Were we to sit together, it would not be for negotiations but surrender talks."

Israeli rejectionism of its patron's suggestions have become so absurd as to disturb even its best friends in the United States. "Bleak Rejectionism" was the title

Shamir Rejects His Own Proposal

That the Shamir government is stalling and perpetuating the impasse is well-known. What is interesting is that Shamir has virtually turned down his own proposal,

Israel has managed to reject every single U.S. initiative involving a territorial settlement.

of a *Washington Post* editorial on October 9, 1989 which asserted that Shamir has made a decision "to greet the new president in his first year ... with a hard line in order to set the tone for the rest of his term." A *New York Times* editorial (October 4, 1989) entitled "Is Coaxing Enough?" stated that Shamir and his allies are "tough customers," who are "unlikely to budge unless Washington makes clear, at least privately, its determination to get talks under way."

which some of his allies in the Likud coalition believe offered the Palestinians too much! Herein lay the disagreement between Shamir and Baker. But Mr. Shamir is being approached with kid gloves by all players: Mr. Baker would not push him into a corner and risk a collapse of his fragile "national unity" government. In addition, that would be contrary to his style. Mubarak has a vested interest in a settlement which would make room for his name and would not

only vindicate Egypt, but present Camp David as the way for the future.

The PLO, which has the most to lose by its own disenfranchisement and the political extermination of the Palestinian people, opted against rejecting the charade, being fully aware that it amounts to no more than a repackaged Camp David. In fact, the PLO encouraged Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories to meet with Israeli officials and with the Bush administration's first high-ranking delegation in May 1989, while its own contacts with Washington were limited to the level of U.S. functionaries in Tunis. This is the extent to which the PLO has gone to avoid being seen as spoiler. It hopelessly tries to push the United States to take seriously what Israel in fact started as a public-relations exercise—i.e., to deliver Israel. Israel, on the other hand, refuses to be delivered, and Baker is on record stating that no one will deliver Israel for you.

Meanwhile, the real objectives of Israel's election proposal is to throw the ball back into the Palestinian court, to create a division between the PLO and the

Continued on page 6

"Deliver" Israel ...

Continued from Page 1

Ramallah and Nablus. After all, the United States has already decided that there can be no Palestinian state and that the PLO should be displaced by "moderate" Palestinians. In fact, the United States casts a large "ballot" in this "election" with the usual results: Israel remains draped in a mantle of democracy; the Palestinians are urged to face "reality" and to agree to vote against their own interests; and the PLO is once again set up to be blamed as the main obstacle to peace.

Of course, there can be no elections in any case, not even this carefully orchestrated variety proposed by Shamir, because Israel will not even agree to discuss them with legitimate Palestinian representatives. Instead, the world must watch an absurd charade: The United States appears to be pressuring Israel into accepting a plan that would result in discussions to have elections to select representatives to hold negotiations on topics that only Israel can define! How far from reality—the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinians and their determination, as expressed in the intifada—can anyone get?

No hypocritical slap of Yitzhak Shamir's wrists by James Baker can compen-

sate for real pressure on Israel. Instead, while Shamir, Mubarak, and Bush dance around each other, money from U.S. taxpayers to keep Israel afloat keeps on flowing as usual.

Tax Revolt: Beit Sahour

The townspeople of Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem, also have a taxpayer problem. Local merchants decided that, as their contribution to the intifada, they would refuse to pay taxes to the Israeli military occupation. Such taxes, purportedly for Israeli "services" provided to Palestinians, only help finance the occupation. The peaceful tax protest provoked a massive, violent response from Israel: The city was declared a "closed military zone" on September 22 and virtually put under siege for over a month. Israeli soldiers entered homes and confiscated millions of dollars worth of household goods, industrial equipment, and commercial goods (far beyond the value of the taxes withheld); and soldiers beat and arrested many. Beit Sahour was almost completely cut off from the rest of the world, living in terror because of these reprisals against its peaceful protest.

"No Taxation without Representation" is a slogan voiced by Beit Sahour residents. The phrase should be familiar to the Bush administration, but it only seems to fall on deaf ears in the case of Beit Sahour. Despite

the State Department's own criticism of Israeli human-rights abuses during the intifada, the U.S. government vetoed a UN Security Council resolution condemning the Israeli attack on Beit Sahour. The administration turned a blind eye toward atrocities committed against the people of Beit Sahour and against the many other victims of Israel's illegal military occupation. Still, American taxpayers' money continues to flow to Israel despite legal restrictions forbidding foreign aid to countries which violate human rights.

These examples of hypocrisy, double standards, and willful ignorance in American foreign policy add up to real complicity on the part of our government with Israel's violent and dangerous activities. That is why we place the blame for the current deadlock in the Middle East peace process squarely on Washington. President Bush and Secretary Baker cannot genuinely say they want peace without acting to change the behavior of the world's largest recipient of U.S. aid.

The Bush administration certainly has some differences with Israel: The United States continues its half-hearted dialogue with the PLO, and Secretary of State Baker, if one listens carefully, declares that the occupation, indeed, must end. But his feeble statements are contradicted by actions; the essence of our country's foreign policy in the Middle East is acquiescence to Israel's attempts to crush the intifada and continue with its colonizing project. American taxpayers are thus forced

to support policies which fly in the face of often-touted American democratic values, policies which result in the deaths of hundreds of Palestinians, massive violations of human rights, illegal support for South African apartheid, and the threat of nuclear instability.

As the world rapidly changes, continued U.S. support for Israel is increasingly out of step with reality. No longer can the "Soviet threat" be used to justify militarism. The role of America's "strategic" ally is increasingly exposed as a military base for suppressing the national aspirations not only of the Palestinians, but of all peoples of the region. The PLO's historic peace plan offers an opportunity to settle the conflict in a way which guarantees the rights and security of everyone involved. If the Bush administration continues to allow Israel a free hand in rejecting Palestinian self-determination, the United States will have to bear the responsibility for allowing the opportunity to slip away and the bloodshed to continue.

While the Bush administration may still refuse to "deliver" Israel to the negotiating table, the American people can assert our own point of view: We need to let our politicians know that we no longer want to "deliver" our cash to support Israel's rejectionist stance. We do not want to fund human-rights violations and nuclear proliferation. If no dividends for peace are produced by Shamir, Peres, and company, then American taxpayers have a right to demand that our money be withdrawn. □

Letters to the Editors

Dear Editor,

For many years I sympathized with Israel in what I thought were its efforts to fend off the aggression and ill will of the Arabs in the area. The media "information" in the United States certainly gave the impression that that was the situation.

A few years ago I noticed that something was wrong about what was written on the subject. There was never any discussion of the demographics in Palestine prior to the Zionist conquest, although that is the key to the hostility to Israel in the area. I began to read, attempting to avoid books which are nothing but pro-Israeli propaganda, and found that the creation of the state of Israel involved the conquest of Palestine by Zionists who were largely outsid-

ers. Outrage and hostility on the part of the Palestinians and their allies were inevitable and justified.

I also concluded that Israeli supporters in the United States have done an excellent job of impressing their version of history on the American public, while the Palestinians, who were not so numerous and influential in the United States, have done a miserable job of presenting their case. I believe that the Palestinian case is an excellent one and easy to prepare; however, it is not easy to get it before the public because the media seems to have an aversion to publishing anything which challenges Israel's legitimacy.

Gary Box
Seattle, Washington

Camp David Revisited ...

Continued from Page 5

internal leadership, to break the U.S.-PLO talks by forcing the latter to criticize Baker's wimpish approach toward Shamir, and to create a rift between the PLO and the Arab states.

What Washington wants from the PLO, having exhausted all means of promoting Jordan as interlocutor, is to deliver the Palestinian leadership in the occupied territories—i.e., to acquiesce in the ongoing process aiming to substitute self-government for statehood. The desired outcome of Mr. Baker's renewed "peace process" is not difficult to predict. His AIPAC speech found symmetry between the Arab dream of an independent state on less than 25 percent of pre-1948 Palestine and the dream of a greater Israel in the whole of Palestine. Therein lay his compromise. The Palestinians would have to sink below their minimal position, while Israel would correspondingly trim its maximalist position. But even this myopic vision conflicts with the plans of Mr. Shamir, who was elected on a party plank of nonwithdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza and who considers that Israel's obligations under

Resolution 242 have already been met by territorial withdrawal from Sinai.

Should any disagreement occur between Washington and Tel Aviv, which now appears unlikely, it would be over the interpretation of 242. But given the timidity displayed so far by the Bush administration and the intimidation of U.S. legislators by the Israeli lobby, U.S. pressure on the Shamir government is not in the offing. The United States is likely to continue its attempts to pressure its Arab clients and to extract concessions from the PLO in order to assure an outcome that would preserve as much of the status quo as possible.

In the meantime, the PLO has not only played Arafat's "last card," i.e., recognition of Israel, but the intifada card as well. These cards produced a meager dialogue, which Washington has so far used to preach to the PLO from the pulpit. From Washington's perspective, the Palestinians will have to develop new cards in order to warrant U.S. moves beyond the dialogue. □

Naseer Aruri is professor of political science at Southeastern Massachusetts University

Focus on ...

Continued from Page 2

New York PSC also held a well-attended benefit concert for material aid for Palestinians on December 6. Marking the second anniversary of the intifada, the concert was cohosted by Vivian Stromberg, national cochair of Madre and Tato Laviera, a Puerto Rican poet, and featured local and national talent, including singer Roy Brown, the band Human Condition, blues and jazz singer Toshi Reagon, and the Al-Watan Palestinian folkloric dance troupe. The theme of the concert, "Healing the Wounds of the Occupation," is the national Palestine Solidarity Committee theme for material aid to raise badly needed funds for medical projects in the West Bank and Gaza. To contribute to these projects, send your tax-deductible contribution (checks payable to MECEF) to PSC, P. O. Box 27462, San Francisco, CA 94127.

Other events marking the anniversary of the intifada were held by PSC chapters in Sacramento, featuring the Latin American new song group Altazor, Al Awda Palestinian cultural ensemble, and Al Ard Palestinian dance troupe, and in Seattle, with *Nation* columnist Alexander Cockburn and singer Jim Page. The Seattle

event was cosponsored by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

Austin PSC Celebrates Palestine Week

The Austin PSC chapter sponsored a week of educational events from October 14-20, 1989. The series commenced with a lecture by Mamazane Xulu, the head of the U.S. chapter of the Women's Section of the African National Congress, on Israeli/South African relations. The October 17 event featured eyewitness reports from Don Bobb, minister of Hyde Park Presbyterian Church, Moriba Karamoko, political scientist from Southern University in Louisiana, and others. On October 19, Fedwa Malti-Douglas lectured on "Poetry and Patriarchy: the Autobiography of Fadwa Tuqan." Finally, on October 20, Rabab Hadi of the PSC National Executive Committee and Edna Homa Hunt, an Israeli activist with Women in Black spoke on a panel entitled "Women and the Intifada." Each event was well-attended, even by the local Friends of Israel, who were particularly unhappy about the exposure of relations between Israel and South Africa.

International Peace March in December

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Join Palestine Solidarity Committee

We invite you to join us to work for Middle East peace and Palestinian rights.

The Palestine Solidarity Committee (PSC) is a national grassroots organization working to change U.S. government policy to support steps toward a just resolution of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. The tremendous upsurge of the Palestinian intifada has struck a responsible chord with many Americans.

You can help reach these potential supporters and to press our government to sup-

port self-determination for the Palestinian people through the United Nations international peace conference and an independent Palestinian state.

You can help build a grassroots, activist movement which can organize for a just peace. Your political commitment, in the form of membership in PSC, will help achieve this goal. As a member, you will receive *Palestine Focus* and our bimonthly *Members Update* with reports on the latest PSC activities across the United States.

Yes! I Want to Join The Palestine Solidarity Committee!

Name _____

Street or Box # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Enclosed is a check for:

\$30/year, Regular \$15/year, Student/Low-income

\$50 \$75 \$100 Sustaining Member

I wish to be a monthly sustainer and will contribute \$_____ monthly for the next year. (Make checks payable to Palestine Solidarity Committee or PSC.)

I wish to send material aid directly to Palestinians under occupation. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of \$_____. (Make checks payable to Middle East Cultural and Educational Foundation or MECEF.)

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

The intifada, the Palestinian uprising against occupation and for independence which began in 1967, is as complex and many-sided as a living organism. Its features are by the collective activities of millions of Palestinians all over the world; their varied contributions ultimately merge into a unified campaign, but each individual's story is also a distinct part of the national history.

A book which aims to document such a human endeavor must, therefore, approach its subject from many vantage points. It must convey the tremendous exhilaration of the intifada, by which millions of Palestinians reclaim their national identity and dignity. It must portray the tremendous suffering they endure from Israeli repression: shootings, beatings, imprisonment, torture, house demolitions, expulsions, and more. Such a book must describe street demonstrations and workers' strikes, health-care committees and makeshift schools, farm cooperatives and cultural festivals.

Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation, the new book from the Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP, which also publishes *Middle East Report*), edited by Zachary Lockman and Joel Beinin, fulfills all these objectives and much more. The book, which is a collection of articles and speeches from *Middle East Report* and other sources and of much original material, also covers developments in Israeli society and the Israeli peace movement, including Lockman's essay, "Original Sin," on recent breakthroughs in Israeli historical writing which substantially revise the formerly accepted version of what happened in the era when the Israeli state was created.

The contributors range from Edward Said and Noam Chomsky to Mahmoud Darwish, Anita Vitullo, Rashid

GETTING IT ALL IN Focus

By Steve Goldfield

Khalidi, Salim Tamari, Rita Giacaman, Reuven Kaminer, Hanan Mikha'il-Ashrawi, and many more. The role of the United States is not neglected; the book includes Chomsky's 1988 speech at Tel Aviv University on "Israel's Role in U.S. Foreign Policy" and an analysis of "The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and the U.S. Peace Movement" by Todd Jailer and Melani McAlister.

Joe Stork's essay, "The Significance of Stones: Notes from the Seventh Month," captures another reality of the intifada. "Visitors to the West Bank and Gaza get a very immediate, sensory grasp of the significance of stones.... The West Bank is a land made in equal measure of stones and soil.... The hill country of the West Bank is a subtly sculptured landscape of terraces that testify to uncounted generations of unobtrusive settlement, rows of rough stones piled patiently and mended every several seasons. The occupiers of the last twenty-one years have quarried the same stones to build their fortress suburbs that stand over this land. These constructions do not blend; they dominate. They are no more a part of this landscape than the many

tent encampments set up outside towns and large villages to garrison the tens of thousands of troops now needed to confront the stones. It is fitting that this uprising has reclaimed these stones to sling at the army and to barricade the roads against their armored vehicles."

The book's ample appendices include English translations of the first 29 communiqués of the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising (including, for comparison, one Israeli forgery), a list of the first year's martyrs, and the proclamation of the independent Palestinian state and the political communiqué from the 1988 Palestine National Council. Several of the communiqués begin with these words, which assert the relationship of the uprising to the PLO: "No voice can rise above the voice of the uprising. No voice can rise above the voice of the people of Palestine, the people of the PLO."

Each section of the carefully edited collection begins with a poem and a series of photographs, which acknowledge that prose alone cannot fully convey the reality of a mass popular uprising. The end of Mahmoud Darwish's "Those Who Pass between Fleeting Words" eloquently expresses this point: "Die wherever you like, but do not die among us for we have work to do in our land. We have the past here. We have the first cry of life. We have the present, the present and the future. We have this world here, and the hereafter. So leave our country, our land, our sea, our wheat, our salt, our wounds, everything, and leave the memories of memory O those who pass between fleeting words!" □

Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation sells for \$15.00 and is published by South End Press, 116 Saint Botolph Street, Boston, MA 02115.

Soviet Jews ...

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requests \$400 million in loan guarantees, and the United States decides to help out our "strategic ally." But, disturbed that any of the money may appear to be spent on settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, which the U.S. government officially opposes, the United States stipulates that none of the money can be used for housing in the occupied territories. However, the Bush administration obligingly points out that there is no restriction on the use of other funds from being spent in the West Bank and Gaza for building settlements.

Once again, the administration has managed to cut a very fine moral distinction. So long as U.S. hands appear to be clean, there is no objection to filling Israel's coffers with funds which free other funds to build settlements or to pay for repressing the uprising.

These plans are eerily reminiscent of events shortly after the end of World War II, when tormented Jewish refugees poured out of Europe, most wanting to come to the United States, which restricted them from doing so and thus diverted them into the new state of Israel. These Jewish immigrants became a wave that literally swept Palestinians out of their homeland. Today Soviet Jews, although not brutalized as were the Nazi victims, are being coerced to move to Israel to fuel Israel's expansionist aims.

While Israeli officials openly discuss "transfer"—the euphemism for the violent expulsion of most Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza—such U.S. hypocrisy amounts to implicit support for Israeli expansionism. With millions of homeless in the United States, American taxpayers are being asked to finance Israel to house Soviet Jews and thereby to contribute to the homelessness of an entire people, the Palestinians. □

Focus on ...

Continued from Page 6

European and international nongovernmental organizations have developed preliminary plans for the International Peace March scheduled to take place over a three-day period (December 29–31) in Israel and Palestine. Including a wide range of actions, meetings, and discussions, the activities will be sponsored and organized jointly with relevant Palestinian and Israeli groups and/or individuals in the spirit of

peace, dialogue, and cooperation. Among various activities under discussion is a human chain linking East and West Jerusalem, followed by a large event with prominent European, Israeli, and Palestinian speakers. The initiative supports the cause of peace and justice and is based on the following principles: two peoples—two states; respect for human and civil rights; and negotiations for peace. For more information, contact the ECCP/ICCP office in Geneva, P. O. Box 2100, CH. 1211 Geneva 2, Fax: (41.22) 798.10.50. □

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

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

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

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

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Israeli Peace Movement under Attack

By Steve Goldfield

Attacks by the Israeli government on members of the Israeli peace movement, which have become frequent in recent years and months, have grown more intense. These attacks, which have accelerated along with the repression against the intifada, have focused on Israelis who work with and in support of Palestinians.

In an Israeli court, packed with members of the Israeli protest movement, a panel of three Israeli judges sentenced Michel Warshawsky, director of the Alternative Information Center (AIC) in Jerusalem, to 30 months in prison on November 7; 10 months were suspended—Warshawsky is to serve 20 months without the possibility of parole but is still out on appeal. In addition, the AIC was fined \$5,000.

Warshawsky and the AIC were convicted under the Emergency Regulation of 1945 of providing typesetting services to "illegal organizations" and "holding

printed material belonging to illegal organizations" but found innocent of support for "terrorist organizations" under the "Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance of 1948." The charges concern a pamphlet which, according to the prosecution, gave guidelines to Palestinian activists on how to resist during interrogation and torture by the Israeli secret service.

Warshawsky's supporters charged that the harsh sentence was based on his refusal to furnish names of the people who brought the material to be typeset by the AIC. The AIC issued a call for solidarity, which stated: "We have no doubt that this harsh punishment, which is totally out of proportion to the actual accusations, is an attack against Michel Warshawsky's way of life and the character of his political activities, which are dedicated to Israeli-Palestinian cooperation and to the struggle against occupation. The severe punishment is aimed at frightening progressive Israeli forces from engaging in this type of cooperation, which has expanded considerably recently, with hundreds of Israeli activists fighting shoulder to shoulder with Palestinians struggling against the repression of the

human right of national expression in the occupied territories and inside the borders of Israel."

Since the time of the original arrest in early 1987, the AIC was closed for six months and Warshawsky has been barred by Israeli authorities from working in its office and from writing for its journal, *News from Within*.

On October 10 Israeli peace activist Abbie Natan was sentenced to six months in prison for meeting with Yasser Arafat. Natan had openly admitted meeting with the Palestinian president twice last year. But he refused to plead guilty to defying the 1986 law outlawing such contacts or to appeal his sentence, saying, "I want to go to jail as a protest against an illegal, barbaric, antidemocratic, and stupid law."

One thousand people accompanied Natan to jail. Later, he was visited by Knesset member Yossi Sarid and several dozen supporters. Natan told them he had refused to accept a deal proposed by authorities—amnesty in exchange for declaring remorse over the meeting with Arafat. Natan told the visitors, "Now, more than at any time in the past I know I did the right thing." An

estimated one hundred Israelis have met with representatives of the PLO since the beginning of the intifada; only a few have been prosecuted. Those already convicted are still appealing their sentences; Natan is the first Israeli to go to jail for talking with the PLO.

Three picketers from the Women in Black in Jerusalem were detained for investigation by the Jerusalem police on suspicion of "identifying with a hostile organization." The charge was based on buttons they wore depicting a Jewish child and an Arab child dancing, above them the Israeli and Palestinian flags, and below the word "peace" in Arabic, English, and Hebrew. The Women in Black organize weekly protests of the occupation at various locations in Israel, including the prime minister's residence. Arna Mer, a peace activist and painter from Haifa, was detained on a charge of waving a painting she drew using the colors of the Palestinian flag and other Palestinian national symbols. She was released on bail after five days in jail. For more information on these and other activities, we strongly recommend *The Other Front* and *News from Within*, published by the Alternative Information Center. The AIC requests telegrams and petitions in support of Michel Warshawsky and appeals for funds, both to be sent to AIC, P. O. Box 24278, Jerusalem, Israel. AIC publications are available from the same address. □

Chronicle ...

Continued from Page 3

streets and drove in car caravans. Throughout the West Bank there were children's marches with balloons and flags. Two Palestinians were killed in Kalandia Camp at November 15 celebrations which generally were received with routine repression: shootings and tear gas.

November 29 The growing isolation of the United States on the issue of Palestine in the international community was vividly illustrated when the governing General Conference of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization voted overwhelmingly for a resolution, introduced by Arab members, calling on the agency to cooperate with the PLO on agricultural development in the West Bank and Gaza. The resolution was explicit in accusing Israel of hindering economic development in the occupied territories and of confiscating Palestinian land and water. Only the United States and Israel voted against the measure. The United States had threatened to drastically cut funds to the FAO if the resolution passed. Observers point out that several such incidents over the past year indicate the United States is losing its ability to blackmail world bodies with such threats.

December 6 UN representatives of a group of Western governments, along with the Soviet Union, averted a showdown in the General Assembly over a resolution that would have recognized Palestine as a nonmember state by voting to table consideration of the measure. The U.S. government had threatened to withdraw major funding for the UN if the resolution passed. Recognizing that it had the backing of a majority of delegates, postponement of a vote was the best that could be achieved by the resolution's opponents.

December 9 The intifada began its third year today, with the death toll at over 700 Palestinians. Israeli prisons, detention camps, lockups, and holding installations hold at least 14,000 political prisoners. Seven hundred people are being officially hunted by the military, and death-squad assassinations of those on the wanted list continue. Raids, sieges of towns, curfews, and other forms of collective punishment continue unabated. Economic sanctions—seizure of land, uprooting of trees, destruction of crops, harassment of cooperative ventures, arbitrary closure of businesses—are escalating. All Palestinian colleges and universities remain closed; elementary and secondary schools are repeatedly opened



Children demonstrate in the West Bank village of Kufer-Mallek

Beverly Orr/The Return

and reclosed by the military administration. Expulsions also continue, but in a new form. For the last year, after coming under international criticism (including displeasure expressed by the U.S. government), Israel has not issued any new orders for the expulsion of political prisoners. But the policy which permits the expulsion of anyone without an official residency permit has led to the expulsion of more than 80 people and the voluntary exit of at least as many others who left in order to avoid an expulsion order. Most were born in Palestine (or their parents were) but lost their residency permits through some technicality of Israeli law aimed at reducing the population of Palestine. For example, those not present in their homeland on the day Israel conquered the West Bank and Gaza did not receive residency permits from the occupation authorities. And since the beginning of the intifada, Israeli authorities have refused to register newborn children as residents, even though their elder siblings may have been registered, if one parent is without a residency permit. Thus expulsion continues to tear families apart, which, after all, is its aim. □

Healing the Wounds of Occupation ... Building the Palestinian State

After 22 years of military occupation and particularly since the beginning of the intifada, health conditions in the West Bank and Gaza have deteriorated dramatically, especially in remote villages and refugee camps. To help provide services for Palestinians where the need is greatest, the Palestine Solidarity Committee (PSC) is helping to fund several medical-aid projects.

PSC's medical-aid campaign is raising funds for several health clinics sponsored by the Popular Committees for Health Services. These include mobile clinics which bring medical services directly to patients in remote areas and clinics in the Nablus district and in Beita in the West Bank and a health clinic in Jabaliya camp in Gaza. The campaign is also helping to fund an ambulance project sponsored by Mercy Corps International and the Roots Relief Fund, and a bloodtyping project

by the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees.

These projects work not only to meet the immediate needs, but to build an infrastructure of health services for the new Palestinian state. They need our support now more than ever as Israeli military and settler violence increases and as the Palestinians voice their determination to continue the intifada until freedom and independence are achieved. Your contribution will help buy badly needed medical equipment and supplies. Please be as generous as you can. Your dollars will, quite literally, help heal the wounds of occupation.

Please take a moment to write out your tax-deductible donation in any amount to MECEF (Middle East Cultural and Educational Foundation) with the notation "Healing the Wounds of Occupation." Send it to PSC, P. O. Box 27462, San Francisco, CA 94127.



Healing the Wounds of Occupation... Building the Palestinian State