

A Most UnGenerous Offer

By Jeff Halper

Consider a prison:

If you look at a blueprint of a prison, it looks like the prisoners own the place. They have 95 percent of the territory. The prisoners have the living areas. They have the cafeteria, the visiting area, the exercise yard. All the prison authorities have is 5 percent: the surrounding walls, the cell bars, a few points of control, the keys to the door. The prison authorities do not need 20 or 30 percent of the territory to control the inmates. They only need to control the strategic points.

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About This Issue

I first met Dr. Jeff Halper earlier this year when AMEU sponsored a seminar he gave at The InterChurch Center in New York City, where our office is located.

Jeff began by saying that, while the root cause of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is Israel's 35-year occupation of Palestinian land, that was not where the focus of the public relations discussion should be.

As soon as one mentions the occupation, he explained, the pro-Israeli side counters: "But we offered the Palestinians at Camp David 95 percent of their land back, with fair adjustments for the other five percent, and they rejected it. It's Arafat's fault, not Israel's, that the occupation drags on."

It's this "generous offer," Jeff argued, that must be refuted. And that's exactly what he proceeded to do with clarity — and maps.

When he finished I invited him to share his thoughts with our *Link* readers.

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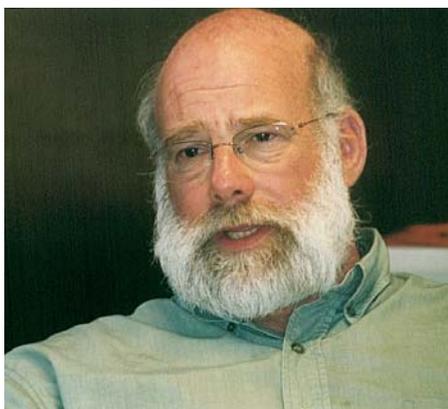
We felt that this issue was so important, and the maps that Jeff uses so relevant, that we have reproduced

the maps in their original color-coded design as our center two-page spread. This marks the first time in our 35 years of publishing that we have used color. We are indebted to Just Peace Technologies and The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions for making the two maps and explanatory notations available to AMEU.

The maps are from an 11x17-inch, four-fold, full color brochure produced by Just Peace Technologies. Copies are available from Just Peace Technologies for 40 cents per copy plus S&H. For example, the charge for 250 copies would be \$100 for the brochures plus \$20 for handling and shipment by UPS Ground. Payment by check is required in advance of shipment. Contact Just Peace Technologies, POB 610061, Redwood City, CA 94061, phone/fax (650) 261-1235, E-mail: pamphlets@justpeacetech.org, web: www.justpeacetech.org.

Pages 14 –16 list our latest books and videos. Of special note is the documentary "Beyond the Mirage: the Face of the Occupation," produced in 2002 by Americans for a Just Peace in the Middle East. The video features interviews with leading Palestinians and Israelis, including an excellent segment with Jeff Halper who, with map in hand, challenges the "generous offer" claim.

John F. Mahoney
Executive Director



Dr. Jeff Halper

This analogy is useful for understanding why Barak's celebrated "generous offer" to the Palestinians was anything but generous. It also explains the callous impunity with which Israel relates to Palestinian national aspirations and rights. I would argue that Israel views the intifada, the Palestinian uprising, like a prison riot. Israel—and the Zionist movement before it—never recognized a Palestinian people possessing a distinct identity, culture or history, with legitimate claims to a country. Although Israel required the P.L.O. to recognize it as a legitimate political construct and not merely a "fact of life," Israel in return did not recognize the Palestinians' right of self-determination. It never promised a Palestinian state at the end of the "peace process." In Oslo Israel agreed only to negotiate "final status issues" with the P.L.O., without committing itself to any particular outcome. Indeed, given the fact that Israel doubled its settler population during the seven years of negotiations, constructed a massive highway system in the Occupied Territories that linked its settlements to Israel proper while creating barriers to Palestinian movement, and imposed an economic closure that impoverished the Palestinian population, no hint is evident "on the ground" that Israel ever contemplated the establishment of a viable Palestinian state.

Understanding this is crucial for comprehending Israel's fierce reaction to the second intifada, leading to its current efforts to dismantle the Palestinian Authority completely and create a permanent bantustan. It explains why Israel mistreats Palestinians and violates their human rights with impunity, why it thumbs its nose at international humanitarian law, why it is able to build a prison wall against the Palestinians "so high that even the birds cannot fly over it." For Israeli Jews, Palestinians are merely "Arabs" (Israeli Jews seldom use the word "Palestinians"), an undifferentiated part of an Arab mass that might just as well live in one of the "other" 22 Arab countries as in "ours." From their point of view there is only one legitimate "side" in this conflict, their own. Only Jews—wherever they live, Israeli or not—hold exclusive claims to the land. This is the source of Israeli human rights violations in both the Occupied Territories and within Israel itself. There is no symmetry, no "two sides," no more negotiations. Like prison guards Israelis claim a "right" to put down the prison riot, the intifada. Inmates have no right to riot, and certainly no right to challenge the dictates of the authorities. Once we put them down, once they know their place, once they submit and accept their life in a prison, then everything will be fine. We will make their prison-bantustan a pleasant place to live; we will even liberate them from the rule of their own criminal leaders. But they must understand they are in our country, and we will brook no challenge to our exclusive rights.

House Demolitions

Now consider what it means to be a prisoner under occupation.

Back in early 1997, when Bibi Netanyahu was prime minister and we were supposedly in the midst of a "peace process," his government would often demolish 20-30 Palestinian homes a week. Demolishing houses is one of the most cruel and oppressive aspects of the occupation (even though Israel has been systematically demolishing homes and whole villages since 1948). Since the start of the occupation in 1967, 9,000 Palestinian homes have been destroyed, some 2,000 since the outbreak of the second intifada, leaving more than 50,000 Palestinians homeless, destitute, and living in fear and trauma.

The motivation for demolishing these homes is purely political. Although Israel tries to lend its actions a legal facade through an elaborate system of planning regulations, laws and procedures—we are, after all, the "only democracy in the Middle East"—the practice of house demolitions violates international law and fundamental human rights. The purpose is to confine the three and a half million residents of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza to small, overcrowded, impoverished and disconnected enclaves, thereby foreclosing any viable Palestinian entity and ensuring Israeli control even if Palestinians achieve some nominal form of independence.

The renewal of massive house demolitions by Netanyahu in 1997 sparked the founding of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD), of which I am the coordinator.

ICAHD began as a non-violent, direct-action group composed of representatives of diverse Israeli peace and human rights organizations: Bat Shalom, Rabbis for Human Rights, Yesh Gvul, the Public Committee Against Torture, Palestinians and Israelis for Human Rights, Netivot Shalom, parts of Meretz and Peace Now. Having become somewhat dormant during the years of Rabin and Peres, when many of us believed that "peace" was painfully being achieved, we all felt that now something must be done to resist the increasing oppressive occupation. We chose to focus on house demolitions because it lay at the juncture between a political policy crucial for perpetuating the occupation and the human suffering it engendered. We had little appreciation, however, of how that decision would change our lives and the style of our work.

First, it required us to learn the "lay of the land." Israeli peace groups tend to set their own agendas, seldom consulting Palestinian organizations. We felt this only replicated the power relations inherent in the occupation itself. Early on we decided that we would act only in the

Occupied Territories in conjunction with a Palestinian organization. We therefore established close working relations with a number of grassroots Palestinian groups, in particular the Land Defense Committee, with branches throughout Palestinian towns, neighborhoods and villages, and LAW, a Palestinian human rights organization.

For the first few months of our work, as we got to know the workings of the occupation and developed relations of trust with Palestinian organizations and families, we began to visit some of the thousands of families threatened with demolition orders. Here, too, our position as Israeli peace activists was challenged. The Israeli peace movement traditionally engaged in protest. It never promised to effect any concrete changes in Israeli government policy, and was never called upon to “deliver” – which is why Palestinians had little faith in many of our activities. The Palestinian families we met would have nothing of protest or mere solidarity. They wanted to know if we could prevent the demolition, if we could help them get a permit, if we could arrange legal protection, if we could use our political influence. What would we do, they wanted to know, when the army and bulldozers arrived. Would we stand and resist together with them? And if the house was demolished, they wanted to know what would we offer: To rebuild? To help finance alternative quarters? To secure them a permit?

Suddenly, after decades in the peace movement and hundreds of demonstrations under our belts, we discovered how little we knew of the occupation and of the people living under it. Who issues demolition orders? The army? The Civil Administration? The police? Another government body? [Answer: the Civil Administration in the West Bank and Gaza, though the army also has the authority if “security” is involved; both the Municipality and the Ministry of Interior in East Jerusalem.] We had heard vaguely of the Civil Administration, but where was it located? [In the Beit El settlement northeast of Ramallah.] And who exactly is responsible for issuing demolition orders? Could we obtain building permits, and how? What is the government’s demolition policy and what numbers are we talking about? And we realized how little we actually knew about the workings of the occupation we had protested for so many years. When a family contacted us from the town of Anata, part of which lies within the Jerusalem municipal boundary, none of us knew where it was or how to get there.

In fact, none of us had ever seen a demolition. Normally they are carried out at dawn, after the men have left for work and only the women and children remain at home. And they are randomized so as to diffuse the fear and uncertainty, to deter people from building at all. Once a demolition order is confirmed by the court, the bulldoz-

ers could arrive the next morning, or next week, or next year—or never. It is like a reverse lottery you do not want to “win.” In the end the policy of house demolitions makes life so unbearable that those who have the means (especially the educated middle classes so critical for Palestinian society) are driven from the country altogether.

A major change in our work occurred on July 9, 1998. At one o’clock in the afternoon, as members of ICAHD, the Land Defense Committee, and LAW were preparing a demonstration opposite the Civil Administration in Beit El (30 houses had been demolished the previous week), we received word that the house of Salim Shawamreh was being demolished in the nearby village of Anata. It was the fifth house being demolished that day, and the Civil Administration had apparently gotten greedy, thinking that because of the lack of resistance it would keep demolishing throughout the day.

Salim Shawamreh, his wife Arabia, and their six children were one of the families we had met earlier. Their village of Anata, with a population of some 12,000, is a microcosm of the occupation. It is divided between Jerusalem and the West Bank. Almost all the village’s lands have been expropriated to build Israeli settlements, leaving the residents crowded into a small “core.” Twenty-three demolition orders had been served on Anata residents by the Jerusalem municipality, the Ministry of Interior and the Civil Administration.

The Shawamreh house fell into Area C of the West Bank, which is under full Israeli control. After several unsuccessful attempts to obtain a permit, Salim, having nowhere else to live, built on his own private land. He promptly received a demolition order, but managed to live in his home undisturbed for four years. One fine day in July, as he was having lunch with his wife and six children, he heard a knock on the door. When he opened it, he found himself confronted by dozens of soldiers. Their leader, a field inspector of the Civil Administration named Micha, asked Salim: “Is this your house?” “Yes, this is my house,” answered Salim. “No, it isn’t,” Micha replied. “This is now our house. You have fifteen minutes to remove your belongings before we destroy it.”

When I arrived on the scene and managed to pass through the dozens of soldiers to reach the house, I found Salim lying beaten on the ground and his wife being carried unconscious to the hospital. Both had resisted the attempt to demolish their home, and both had been violently ejected from the house. The terrified children had scattered and were not to be found.

Together with Salim and his neighbors, I resisted the army’s attempts to drive us away so that the bulldozer could begin its work. I sat in front of the bulldozer

(something that would have gotten a Palestinian shot) and was pushed down the hill by the soldiers. Finally, lying with Salim and the others in the dirt, I witnessed a unique experience for an Israeli—watching through the eyes of a Palestinian as his house was systematically destroyed and all the fruit trees of his garden uprooted.

Demolition is a different experience for men, women and children. Men probably are the most humiliated, since the inability to provide a home for their families and to protect them destroys their very position as head of the family. The loss of one's home means loss of one's connection to the land, the family's patrimony. The message of demolitions is clear: there is no place for you here; there is no place for a Palestinian on the face of the earth.

Men often cry at demolitions, but they also are angered and swear revenge, or plan to build again.

For women the loss of the home is the loss of one's identity as a woman, wife and mother. For Palestinian women, most of whom do not work outside the home, the house is their entire world. In fact, they lose twice. They lose their own home in a traumatic act of violence—their most personal belongings thrown unceremoniously outside in the dirt—and they must go to live in the home of another woman (a mother- or sister-in-law), thereby losing their status as the head of the domestic household and even as mother. Palestinian women tend to sink into mourning, their behavior—crying, wailing, and then depression—very much like those of people who have lost loved ones. The demolished home can never be replaced, and after demolitions women undergo personality changes. Some become more sullen or moody, often frightened by small sounds or unexpected events, prone to break into crying. Others step

into the vacuum left by the emasculated husband and become the strong center of the family unit.

For children the act of demolition—and the months and years leading up to it—is a time of trauma. To witness the fear and powerlessness of your parents, to feel constantly afraid and insecure, to see loved ones beaten, to experience the harassment of Civil Administration field supervisors—and then to endure the noise and violence and displacement and destruction of your home, your world, your toys—these things mark children for life. The signs of trauma and stress among children are many: bed-wetting, nightmares, fear to leave home lest one “abandon” parents and children to the army, dramatic drops in grades and school attendance, exposure to domestic violence that occasionally follows impoverishment, displacement and humiliation. One day recently, Israeli tanks appeared before the windows of the Shawamreh's rented apartment, and their 11-year-old daughter Wafa went blind for two hours. Her mind simply shut down



Friends tend to Salim Shawamreh after he was beaten while resisting the demolition of his home. His wife was carried unconscious to the hospital.

under the weight of successive traumas.

A month after the demolition of the Shawamreh home, ICAHD brought hundreds of Israelis to join local Palestinians in rebuilding the house. It was promptly demolished a second time by Israeli bulldozers, but we all decided to rebuild it yet again as a political act of resistance. When we all had finished the home for the third time, Salim said: “Together with Israelis who seek a just peace, we have built here a House of Peace.” In April 2001, the Shawamreh house was demolished yet again. We are now planning to rebuild it for the fourth time. We refuse to let the occupation win.

Israel's Matrix of Control

As "the only democracy in the Middle East," Israel attempts to conceal its prison-like occupation behind a legalistic facade. Thus the Palestinians are cast as the "law-breakers." How else could Israel explain its demolition of thousands of Palestinian homes while at the same time constructing exclusive Jewish settlements on the occupied land—some 40,000 Jewish-only housing units in the West Bank since 1967, and 90,000 in East Jerusalem.

It also denies the very fact of occupation. Israel claims it is merely "administering" the West Bank and Gaza (having formally annexed East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights) until their final status is negotiated—a position unanimously rejected by the international community. But by embedding its occupation in an elaborate bureaucratic and legal system, Israel hides the illegality of its occupation policies under international law.

Since 1967, Israel has laid over the Occupied Territories what I call a Matrix of Control. It is a sophisticated, complex, and integrated system designed: a) to control every aspect of Palestinian life while giving the impression that "occupation" is merely proper administration; b) to cast Israel's military repression as self-defense against an aggressive Palestinian people endeavoring to expel it; and c) to carve out just enough space to establish a dependent Palestinian mini-state—or worse, a number of feudal and disconnected cantons—that will relieve it of responsibility for the Palestinian population.

The Matrix operates on three interlocking levels:

(1) Military Controls, Military Strikes and Close Surveillance

* Outright military actions, including attacks on civilian population centers and the Palestinian infrastructure, especially evident during the two intifadas (1987-1993; 2000-present), are not Israel's preferred means of control. They are brutal, too visual, and generate both internal and foreign opposition. Citing "security" concerns, Israel uses military force effectively and with impunity to suppress resistance to the occupation and as a deterrent ("teaching the Palestinians a lesson;" conveying a "message"). In the longterm, however, Israel prefers to control the Palestinians administratively—including the issuance of thousands of "military orders" and by "creating facts on the ground."

* Extensive use is also made of collaborators and undercover "mustarabi" army units. The dependency which Israel's stifling "administration" engenders turns thousands of Palestinians into unwilling (and occasionally willing) collaborators. Simple things such as obtaining a

driver's or business license, a work permit, a permit to build a house, a travel document or permission to receive hospital care in Israel or abroad is often conditioned on supplying information to the security services. Extortion, the only word to describe forcing people into traitorous activities that undermine their own society, is an essential feature of the Matrix. So effective is this that Israel can pinpoint and assassinate Palestinian figures—"targeted prevention" is the euphemism—in their cars or even in telephone booths.

* Israel has at its disposal sophisticated means of surveillance. In May of this year it launched Amos 5, the fifth in a series of spy satellites, which can detect the tiniest movement even at night. Since the Occupied Territories are small and largely barren patches of land, surveillance is virtually complete.

* Mass arrests and administrative detention are also common features of the military side of the Matrix of Control. In the March-April 2002 raids on West Bank cities, towns, villages and refugee camps, about 3,000 people were detained, 280 of them held in administrative detention, which can last for months or years, without being either charged or tried.

(2) Creating Facts on the Ground

* Since 1967 Israel has expropriated for settlements, highways, by-pass roads, military installations, nature preserves and infrastructure some 24 percent of the West Bank, 89 percent of Arab East Jerusalem, and 25 percent of Gaza.

* More than 200 settlements have been constructed in the Occupied Territories; over 400,000 Israelis have moved across the 1967 boundaries: 200,000 in the West Bank, 200,000 in East Jerusalem, and 6,000 in Gaza. A key goal of the settlement enterprise is to foreclose the establishment of a viable Palestinian state (or, for some, any Palestinian state) by carving the Occupied Territories into dozens of enclaves surrounded, isolated, and controlled by Israeli settlements, infrastructure and military.

* While a number of Israeli highways were built in the Occupied Territories before the Oslo Accords, construction of a massive system of 29 highways and by-pass roads, funded entirely by the United States at a cost of \$3 billion, was begun only at the start of the "peace process." Designed to link settlements, to create barriers to Palestinian movement and, in the end, to incorporate the West Bank into Israel proper, this project, which takes up an additional 17 percent of West Bank land, contributes materially to the creation of "facts on the ground" that prejudiced the negotiations.

Another mechanism of control that came into being

with the signing of Oslo II in 1995 was the further carving of the Occupied Territories into Areas A, B, and C in the West Bank; H-1 and H-2 in Hebron; and Yellow, Green, Blue, and White Areas in Gaza. In addition, Israeli-controlled “nature reserves,” closed military areas, security zones, and “open green spaces” restrict Palestinian construction in more than half of East Jerusalem. This system confines Palestinians to an archipelago of some 190 islands encircled by the Israeli Matrix. Israel formally controls 60 percent of the West Bank (Area C), 60 percent of Gaza, and all of East Jerusalem. Its frequent incursions into Palestinian territory and its virtual destruction of the Palestinian Authority between March and July 2002, have left it, however, in de facto control of the entire area.

* Hundreds of permanent, semi-permanent, and “spontaneous” checkpoints and border crossings severely limit and control Palestinian movement.

* Construction of seven of 12 planned industrial parks on the “seam” between the Occupied Territories and Israel gives new life to isolated settlements while robbing Palestinian cities of their own economic vitality. These parks exploit cheap Palestinian labor while denying it access to Israel. They also afford Israel’s most polluting and least profitable industries to continue dumping their industrial wastes into the West Bank and Gaza.

* Israel’s Matrix of Control extends underground as well, using settlement sites to maintain control over the main aquifers of the Occupied Territories.

* Even seemingly innocuous holy places such as Rachel’s Tomb in Bethlehem, the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron, sites in and around Jerusalem, and Joseph’s Tomb in Nablus serve as pretexts for maintaining an Israeli “security presence.”

(3) Bureaucracy, Planning and Law, the most subtle control mechanisms.

* “Orders” issued by the Military Commanders of the West Bank and Gaza—some 2,000 in number since 1967—supplement Civil Administration policies that replace local civil law with procedures designed to strengthen Israeli political control.

* Since the start of the “peace process,” a permanent “closure” has been laid over the West Bank and Gaza, severely restricting the number of Palestinian workers allowed into Israel and impoverishing the Palestinian community whose own infrastructure has been kept underdeveloped.

* Discriminatory and often arbitrary systems of work, entrance and travel permits further restrict movement both within the country and abroad.

* Given Israel’s goal of controlling the entire country and its “demographic problem”—Palestinians will soon outnumber Jews in the area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea—policies of displacement are actively pursued: exile and deportation; revocation of residency rights; economic impoverishment; land expropriation; and house demolitions, all are means of making life so unbearable that it will induce “voluntary” emigration. Schemes of “transfer” have become a common and acceptable part of Israeli political discourse, with two parties in Prime Minister Sharon’s government, the National Union Party and Israel Is Our Home, now promoting transfer as their main political program.

* Zoning and planning policies are ideal vehicles for rendering the occupation invisible, since they are couched in supposedly neutral terms and professional jargon but serve Israel’s political ends by obstructing the natural development of Palestinian towns and villages. Central to this system is the restrictive use of building permits, reinforced by house demolitions, arrests and fines for “illegal” building, and daily harassment by Israeli building inspectors.

While the Palestinian population is being confined to small enclaves, planning for Israeli expansion employs “master plans” that encompass broad stretches of Palestinian land intended for future settlements. Within this framework Israel can cynically claim that its settlement building is “frozen” and that it is only “thickening” existing ones for purposes of “natural growth.” In fact, small settlements often give rise to large settlement-cities which, of course, “do not count” because they share an existing master plan.

* Severe restrictions on the planting of crops and their sale hit an already destitute population hard, especially when combined with Israel’s practice of uprooting hundreds of thousands of olive and fruit trees since 1967, either for settlements or for “security” purposes.

* Use of abusive licensing and inspection procedures limits the local economy and keeps it dependent on Israeli goods.

Barak’s “Generous Offer”

If anything has turned public opinion in Israel and abroad against the Palestinians, it is the contention that Israel under Barak made far-reaching concessions to the Palestinians and that they rebuffed his “generous offer” with violence. In this popular view the Palestinians are to “blame” for the breakdown of the peace process and, in the light of terrorism, Israel’s policies of repression are justified. Seen in the light of the prison analogy, however, Israel does not need more than 5-10 per cent of the Occu-

Israel's "Most Generous" Peace Offer...

"Israel's supposed 'offer' to withdraw from 95% of the West Bank will create not peace, but rather a Palestinian prison state. The issue is one of control, viability, and sovereignty - not just territory.

Just as prison guards "control" only 5% of a prison (the outer walls, cells, and corridors), so too will Israeli border crossings, settlements, and bypass roads continue to control a Palestinian mini-state. The only solution: dismantle the **Matrix of Control** completely."

- Jeff Halper, Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions

Tel Aviv

Palestine
Gaza Strip

Jerusalem

Israel

Map based on Camp David Israeli proposal (never formalized) to transfer 85% of the West Bank and Gaza to Palestine. For detailed maps, see Foundation for Middle East Peace, www.fmep.org, and the Applied Research Institute Jerusalem, www.arij.org

Turns a Palestinian State into a Prison

All borders controlled by Israel

- ☒ Palestinian state surrounded by Israeli troops.
- ☒ Israel controls seaport, airport, airspace, and "security" zones.
- ☒ Israel regulates all entry/exit, trade.

Palestinian areas disconnected

- ☒ Israel annexes settlement blocs.
- ☒ Israel retains strategic highway segments, thus controlling the movement of people and goods.
- ☒ 370,000 Israeli settlers¹ remain on confiscated Palestinian land.

Natural resources stripped

- ☒ Israel keeps control of aquifers, diverts water to itself.
- ☒ Israeli "long-term lease" on Jordan valley farmland.

East Jerusalem encircled by Israel

- ☒ Palestinian economic heart² cut off from West Bank.
- ☒ No Palestinian sovereignty over religious and cultural centers.
- ☒ 200,000 Palestinian East Jerusalemites surrounded by Israeli settlements.

Gaza becomes "world's largest prison"

- ☒ Million impoverished Palestinians confined to 60% of tiny Gaza; 6000 Israeli settlers in other 40%.

¹In all peace offers, Israel would annex all East Jerusalem Jewish settlements (200,000 settlers) and 85% of the West Bank settlements (170,000 out of an additional 200,000).

² East Jerusalem, including the Arab quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, accounts for 40% of Palestinian economic revenue.

"You know, it's not by accident that the settlements are located where they are... Come what may, we have to hold the western security area, which is adjacent to the Green Line, and the eastern security area along the Jordan River and the roads linking the two. And Jerusalem, of course. And the hill aquifer."

- Ariel Sharon, Prime Minister of Israel, quoted in the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz, 4/12/01

"The international community does not recognize Israel's sovereignty over any part of the occupied territories."

- U.S. State Department, Report on Human Rights Practices, 2/01



Israeli soldiers review Palestinian documents at checkpoints surrounding each West Bank and Gaza town

Israel's Occupation places 3 million Palestinians Under Siege



Settler population doubled since "Oslo peace process" began (1993)

- ☒ 400,000 settlers in West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem.
- ☒ 2,850 Palestinian homes demolished.
- ☒ 10,000 Palestinians made homeless.

Palestinians confined to enclaves

- ☒ West Bank carved into 200 disconnected islands.
- ☒ Separated by Israeli settlements, highways, checkpoints.

250 miles of Israeli bypass highways

- ☒ Free movement for Israeli settlers and soldiers.
- ☒ Highways 3 football fields wide with fenced-in margins.
- ☒ Barriers to Palestinian movement, city growth.
- ☒ Can be closed to Palestinian traffic indefinitely.

Palestinian land expropriated and agriculture destroyed

- ☒ 72% of the West Bank declared Israeli "state land".
- ☒ 50,000 acres seized.
- ☒ 150,000 olive trees and fruit uprooted.

"Closure" imposed on occupied territories

- ☒ No Palestinian crossing between Gaza and West Bank.
- ☒ Jerusalem off-limits to most Palestinians.
- ☒ Unemployment rate 50% in the West Bank, 80% in Gaza.
- ☒ Closure has brought impoverishment: Palestinian per-capita income down by 75% since 1993.

"Greater Jerusalem" Expansion Plan

- ☒ Israel controls the economic heart of the West Bank and renders a Palestinian state non-viable.
- ☒ Palestinian sections lack city services; all growth constrained, house demolitions ongoing.

"These restrictions severely impair not only the right of freedom of movement, but also other human rights [including] the right to work and make a living, the right to proper medical treatment, the right to education, and the right to maintain family life. These restrictions...are one of the primary reasons for the increased distress and despair in the Occupied Territories."

- Israeli human rights group B'Tselem, 5/01

"Resettlement of the Israeli civilian population in occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, is illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention."

- U.S. Ambassador William Scranton NYTimes, 3/25/76

pied Territories to retain control and render any Palestinian state non-viable and non-sovereign. The fallacy lies in equating territory with sovereignty. Although gaining control of 95 or 88 percent of the territory is important—especially if the territory is contiguous—it does not necessarily equal a sovereign state. This is where the Matrix of Control enters the picture, and where knowing the “lay of the land” is critical. If anything, Taba revealed how much Israel could relinquish and still retain effective control over the entire country. Looked at closely, this is what the “generous offer” in fact offered (see maps on pp. 8-9):

* Consolidation of Strategic Settlement Blocs. Israel retains the three large blocs of Ariel and its surrounding “Western Samaria” bloc; the central Givat Ze’ev-Pisgat Ze’ev-Ma’alei Adumin, and perhaps Beit El bloc; and the Efrat-Gush Etzion-Beitar Illit bloc.

* The Creation of a “Greater [Israeli] Jerusalem.” The Givat Ze’ev-Adumim and Gush Etzion settlement bloc, with their 80,000 settlers, when annexed to Israeli-controlled “Greater Jerusalem,” will dominate the entire central region of the West Bank. Because some 40 percent of the Palestinian economy revolves around Jerusalem in the form of tourism, commercial life and industry, removing Jerusalem from the Palestinian realm carries such serious economic consequences as to call the very viability of a Palestinian state into question.

* Emergence of a “Metropolitan [Israeli] Jerusalem.” The ring roads and major highways being built through and around Jerusalem are turning the city into a metropolitan region, incorporating 10 percent of the West Bank. Within its limits are found 75 percent of the West Bank settlers and the major centers of Israeli construction.

* An East Jerusalem Patchwork. Israel will not cede the entire area of East Jerusalem, where Israelis, now about 200,000, outnumber Palestinians. Palestinian presence in Jerusalem will be fragmented and barely viable as an urban and economic center. The Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif issue remained unresolved at Taba, with Israel seemingly prepared to cede “functional sovereignty” (though not official) to the “upper” area of the mosques, while retaining sole sovereignty over the “lower” Western Wall.

* Israeli Control over Highways and Movement. Over the past decades Israel has been building a system of major highways and by-pass roads designed to link its settlements, to create barriers between Palestinian areas, and to incorporate the West Bank into Israel proper. Even if physical control over the highways is relinquished, strategic parts will remain under Israeli control: the Eastern Ring Road, Jerusalem-Etzion Bloc highway, Road 45 from

Tel Aviv to Ma’aleh Adumim, a section of Highway 60 from Jerusalem to Beit El and Ofra, and the western portion of the Trans-Samaritan highway leading to the Ariel bloc. In terms of the movement of people and goods, this will divide the Palestinian entity into at least four cantons (see maps on pp. 8-9): the northern West Bank, the southern portion, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. Plus, Israel insists on retaining rights of “emergency deployment” to both the highway system and to the Jordan Valley.

* Limited Palestinian Sovereignty. Such a Palestinian state would possess limited sovereignty only. It would be demilitarized and unable to form military alliances not approved by Israel. It would have jurisdiction over its borders, but would have certain restrictions as to who may enter, especially vis-a-vis the refugees). And the restrictions regarding military contingencies, as defined by Israel, would apply.

Defeating Palestinian Aspirations

Faced with the prospect of being locked forever into a tiny non-viable bantustan, Palestinians rose up in their second intifada in September 2000. It spelled the final rejection by the Palestinian people of the Oslo “peace process,” which they considered a sophisticated form of apartheid. Since then, the intifada has turned into a full-scale war for independence. For Israel it has turned into a last-ditch battle in which Israel will emerge victorious and the Palestinians’ aspirations for self-determination in a viable state will be dashed forever. The May 12th vote—by acclamation—of the Likud Central Committee against the establishment of any Palestinian state flowed logically and smoothly from “Operation Defensive Shield,” the ferocious incursion into Palestinian areas in March-April 2002.

In the wake of this military action and the reoccupation of Palestinian areas—all done with U.S. support for “reform” of the Palestinian Authority (read: implant a quisling leader)—the Sharon government believes it has defeated the Palestinians once and for all, and can thus drop the pretense of even a Palestinian mini-state. It has three good reasons for thinking so:

1. *Jenin.* Although the Israeli attacks of March-April 2002 extended far beyond the Jenin refugee camp, Jenin became the focal point and symbol of Israel’s thrust to “destroy the infrastructure of terrorism.” In fact, it represents for Sharon the final defeat of any Palestinian attempt to resist the occupation. Palestinians, in his view, have nowhere to go. Their infrastructure is demolished, and given Israel’s suffocating control of Areas A and B, they will never be able to reorganize. There may be isolated incidents, but the problem of terrorism/resistance has been reduced to manageable proportions.

2. *Ramallah*. Although the Israeli assault on Ramallah received far less press and was focused on events around Arafat's compound, it represents nothing less than the destruction of the Palestinian Authority's ability to govern. In Ramallah virtually the entire civil infrastructure was destroyed—all the data of the government ministries, hospitals and clinics, the land registry office, the courts and banking system, businesses, non-governmental organizations and research institutes, even the Palestinian Academy of Sciences. We already see Israel's Civil Administration stepping into the vacuum. Before the incursion, Israel recognized the documents/passports issued by the Palestinian Authority to Palestinians traveling to Jordan; now Palestinians will have to get travel documents from Israel. In addition, they will need special permits to leave their cities in order to travel to the bridge to exit, which they didn't need before. And we must not miss the "message" of the soldiers left behind: "Death to Arabs" scrawled on walls with excrement, excrement and urine spread throughout offices and homes, wanton destruction of furniture, equipment, artworks, and gardens.

3. *The American Congress*. On May 2nd, in the wake of the attacks and in anticipation of Sharon's visit to Washington, Congress overwhelmingly passed a resolution (94-2 in the Senate, 352-21 in the House), supporting Israel's campaign to destroy "the terrorist infrastructure and attacking the Palestinian Authority." The resolution showed clearly why the U.S. Congress is Israel's "trump card," allowing it to defy the international community while thumbing its nose at American administrations.

All this leads inexorably towards a three-fold permanent "solution" to the "Arab problem." First, Arafat will be transferred to Gaza, which will become one large prison for PLO members. At some point, probably when Arafat leaves the scene and a more compliant leader can be found, Gaza will become the Palestinian state as a sop to international demands for Palestinian independence.

The West Bank will then be divided into three separate cantons according to settlement blocs and Israeli highways already in place. A northern canton would be created around the city of Nablus, a central one around Ramallah and a southern one in the area of Hebron, with a possible separation of Qalkilya and Tulkarem from the rest. Each would be disconnected from the other and connected independently to Israel. A road or two might connect the different cantons, but checkpoints and cargo docks would ensure complete Israeli control. Each canton, whose residents would have a residency status similar to that of the Palestinians of East Jerusalem today, would be granted local autonomy to run its municipalities, schools and services, as envisioned by Begin.

Finally, Israel would ensure submission using a combination of controls. The administrative tools of the Matrix, together with the "facts on the ground," effectively foreclose any Palestinian organization beyond local autonomy. Fear of losing the economic opportunities promised by Peres's industrial parks and other enterprises would counteract moves towards renewed resistance. And then there is the "quiet transfer." By inducing the emigration of the educated Palestinian middle classes, Israel renders Palestinian society weak, leaderless and easily controlled. Since the outbreak of the second intifada an estimated 150,000 Palestinians have left the Occupied Territories, the vast majority of them middle class, including many Christians from the Bethlehem and Ramallah areas.

What Must Be Done?

A just peace will not be achieved unless the following elements are present:

- An explicit declaration that the eventual goals of the negotiations are a viable and truly sovereign Palestinian state, together with an Israel enjoying security and regional integration (a position very close to the Saudi plan).

- A direct connection between the negotiations and the realities on the ground. Oslo was formulated in a way that put off the "hard issues," those most crucial to the Palestinians, for the final stages of the negotiations, which never happened. Jerusalem, borders, water, settlements, the fate of the refugees and security arrangements—all these issues (except the last, important mainly for Israel) were put off during the seven years of negotiations. Although Article IV of the Declaration of Principles talks about preserving the "integrity" of the West Bank and Gaza during negotiations, it did not prevent Israel from "creating facts" on the ground which, as we have seen, completely prejudiced the discussions.

- Reference to international law and human rights. International humanitarian law provides a map for the equitable resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian "conflict." By guaranteeing the collective rights of both peoples to self-determination and prohibiting occupation and the perpetuation of refugee status, it leaves only the details of an agreement to be worked out by negotiations. Boundaries, the just resolution of the refugee issue based on the Right of Return and individual choice and the other "final status issues" can be resolved only if they are addressed in the context of human rights and international humanitarian law—and not as mere by-products of power. Nothing is being asked of Israel that is not asked of any other country—accountability under covenants of human rights formulated and adopted by the international community, which Israel pledged to respect as a condition for its crea-

tion by the United Nations.

– Dismantling the Matrix of Control. As we have seen, the strategic 5-15% of the Occupied Territories Israel seeks to retain would frustrate Palestinian national aspirations. Viability, sovereignty and an end to Israeli control (along with addressing genuine Israeli security concerns) must be the markers of progress towards a just peace.

– Refugees. Some seventy percent of the Palestinian people are refugees. No resolution of the conflict is possible without addressing their rights, needs and grievances. Israel must acknowledge its active role in creating the refugee problem and recognize the refugees' right of return. Once that is done, the Palestinians, and the wider Arab world that endorsed the Saudi plan, have indicated their willingness to negotiate a mutually agreed-upon actualization of that right.

– Involvement of the wider international community, civil society as well as governmental, in peace-making efforts. We must closely monitor whether peace proposals in fact further Palestinian independence in a viable state. Key to this is understanding the implications of the various discussions and proposals in terms of the reality "on the ground." This may involve initiatives on the part of civil society; investigating the events in the Jenin refugee camp, for example, if the U.N. is prevented from doing so.

– Mobilizing public opinion. ICAHD's campaign to organize 1,000 house parties in order to raise funds for the rebuilding of demolished Palestinian houses is a meaningful act of resistance that involves Israelis, Palestinians and internationals in civil society peace-making. (For more information on this effort, see our campaign web site at www.rebuildinghomes.org.)

– Lobbying. Palestinian and Israeli delegations should be brought to parliaments and Congress.

The occupation poses a bold challenge to the international community, whether to its elected representatives or to the civil society as represented by Non-Governmental and faith-based organizations. In an era of global transparency, of mass media, instantaneous news coverage and the internet, can a new Berlin Wall be built that locks millions of Palestinians behind massive fortifications, Israel's \$100-million "security fence?" Decades after the end of colonialism and a decade after the end of South African apartheid, will the international community actually sit passively by while a new apartheid regime arises before our very eyes? In a world in which the ideal of human rights has gained wide acceptance, could an entire people be imprisoned in dozens of tiny, impoverished islands, denied its right of self-determination?

The cardinal mistake in the American approach is to

believe that Israel will voluntarily relinquish its occupation in return for full security or regional integration, or, as National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice put it, that Israel has an interest in a strong, stable Palestinian state. The Israeli government does not consider its occupation an "occupation," but merely an administration until such a time that its control can be formalized in negotiations. The recent July 2002 bombing in Gaza, in which 17 people were killed and some 150 wounded, most of them children, illustrates this clearly. The attack came just hours before the Fatah Tanzim were to declare a ceasefire, and when even Hamas was considering a similar change of policy. The attack was nothing less than an intentional escalation designed to scuttle any developments that might force Israel into real negotiations. Unless this fundamental point is grasped, all efforts to shake Israel's hold of the Occupied Territories will end in failure.

A Long Way From Hibbing . . .

Sometimes, while trying to explain the plight of the Palestinians to an Israeli public that doesn't want to listen, or when facing arrest by soldiers while resisting the demolition of a Palestinian home, or during testimony before a U.N. commission on Israeli human rights abuses, I think to myself: "This is a long way from Hibbing, Minnesota"

What brought me to Israel 30 years ago was a curious mixture of push and pull, and what has kept me here is an even more curious mixture of attachment and resistance. The "push" comes, I believe, from four sources. One was my home town of Hibbing (yes, where Bob Dylan hails from), which possessed a strong socialist tradition deriving from its place at the center of the iron mining industry, and from its working class Scandinavian and Central European immigrant roots. Hibbing is also the hometown of Gus Hall, the long-time head of the U.S. Communist Party, which is also a source of pride. The mild radicalism that informed the ambience I grow up in pre-conditioned me for the second source of my activism: the Sixties. As a student at Macalester College in St. Paul, I was involved, as were so many others, in the activities of the New Left—the twin causes of civil rights and anti-war in particular. I called myself a "radical," as did so many others, but unlike New Left people who rejected "ideology," I remain part of what I call today the "critical left."

The third source of my activism—and the one that impelled me to move to Israel so many years ago—was the Jewish one. Since I was always extremely secular, my Judaism found expression in Jewish radical traditions—deriving from the "Prophetic tradition." Like many in the Sixties searching for "identity" and "roots," I was "pulled" towards Israel by my national Jewish—and incipient Israeli—identity.

Upon my arrival in Israel in 1973, I found myself drawn to the critical "leftist" community where I met my wife Shoshana, a refugee from an orthodox religious upbringing. Zionism seemed to me parochial, exclusivist and, in the end, oppressive. I did not share with the extreme Israeli left, and most Arabs, the view that Israel is a "colonial settler state." I did accept as legitimate Jewish national claims to the country; we were not merely "settlers," as were the British, say, in Kenya. But I had to admit that the Zionist movement had acted—and continues to act—as a colonial movement. It also seemed to me that trying to maintain an ethnically pure state in our globalizing reality is a recipe for discrimination, oppression and injustice. While I accepted my status as Israeli, I have tried hard over the years to reconcile my identity and national rights with those of the Palestinians, and to work towards justice and co-existence.

I believe that my professional background as an anthropologist, the fourth source of my activism and worldview, has also helped me bridge those apparent contradictions. It certainly has given me the ability to see, get to know, and work with the "Other," the Palestinians.

As I look back over my life and my work in the cause of a just peace between Israelis and Palestinians, I hear the words of my hometown balladeer:

*How many times must a man look up
Before he can see the sky?
Yes, 'n' how many ears must one man have
Before he can hear people cry?
Yes, 'n' how many deaths will it take till he knows
That too many people have died?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.*

Notice

Non-Government Organization leaders worldwide are meeting at the United Nations in New York, Sept. 23-24, 2002, in support of the rights of the Palestinian people.

This emergency meeting will include presentations by scholars and Middle East leaders, with workshops on alternative strategies for establishing peace with justice.

Those wishing to participate will need to request credentials in advance. Please contact Dr. David Graybeal at 976-408-3274.

Suliman S. Olayan

Suliman Olayan, a Saudi businessman, died July 4, 2002. The New York Times obituary called him one of the richest men in the world, but his riches extended well beyond money.

Suliman was a firm believer that education was the key to resolving the Middle East conflict. When, in 1977, we published a special issue of *The Link* on "A Literary Look at the Middle East," Suliman suggested that we publish an annual catalog of all our books. With his help we did and, within three years, our annual sales went from \$1,500 to over \$60,000. Many of the books went to public and school libraries. The following two pages of books, a standard feature of *The Link*, is an ongoing tribute to his conviction that truth will prevail.

In 1986, AMEU honored Suliman with its Distinguished Service Award. Days later he wrote to AMEU's president that "AMEU's book program since its inception ten years ago has been one of the most personally gratifying projects for me." Suliman would later go on to be knighted by the British Government and praised by leaders worldwide for his business acumen and integrity. We are honored that among the awards he opted to display on the wall of his Park Avenue office was the one we presented him.

As we mourn his loss, we will continue to honor his memory by promoting those educational programs he endorsed with such conviction.

John D. Law

John Law, a member of AMEU National Council died on June 2, 2002. John was a foreign correspondent, first with United Press in Paris, Warsaw, and Brussels, then with U.S. News & World Report, where he covered most of the Middle East conflicts.

Longtime readers of *The Link* will remember John as the author of those periodic encounters with "Humphrey," an American Everyman who thought he knew all about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For those who may have missed these issues, "Humphrey Goes to the Middle East," vol. 18, # 5 and "Humphrey Gets the Inside Dope," vol. 27, #4, they are available on our web site at www.ameu.org.

John was one of those noble journalists who continued to focus on the rights of the oppressed long after leaving the Middle East. He honored us by lending his name and skills in support of our efforts.

Video-Cassettes (VHS)

- ▶ AJPME, **Beyond the Mirage: The Face of the Occupation** (2002, 47 minutes). Israeli and Palestinian human rights advocates, including Jeff Halper who wrote this issue of *The Link*, challenge the misconceptions most Americans have about the Occupation and Palestinian resistance to it. **AMEU: \$25.00.**
- ▶ DMZ, **People & the Land** (1997, 57 minutes). This is the controversial documentary by Tom Hayes that appeared on over 40 PBS stations. **AMEU: \$25.00.**
- ▶ Kelley, R., **The Bedouin of Israel** (1998, 2 hours). Never-before-seen film of how Israel has treated its Bedouin citizens, including interview with the notorious Green Patrol. **AMEU: \$30.00.**
- ▶ Longley, J., **Gaza Strip** (2001, 74 minutes). Riveting documentary on the horric plight of the Palestinians in Gaza. **AMEU: \$25.00.**
- ▶ Masri, M., **Frontiers of Dreams and Fears** (2002, 58 minutes). Focuses on two Palestinian girls growing up in refugee camps in Beirut and Bethlehem. List: \$50.00; **AMEU: \$43.95.**
- ▶ Moushabeck, M., **Anatolia: Lost Songs of Palestine** (2001, CD, 52 minutes). List: \$15.00; **AMEU: \$12.50.**
- ▶ Munayyer, F. & H., **Palestinian Costumes and Embroidery: A Precious Legacy** (1990, 38 minutes). A rare collection of Palestinian dresses with historical commentary. List: \$50.00; **AMEU: \$25.00.**
- ▶ PHRM, **Jerusalem: An Occupation Set in Stone?** (1995, 55 minutes). Graphic account of Israel's plan to uproot Palestinian presence from Jerusalem. **AMEU: \$25.00.**
- ▶ Studio 52 Production, **Checkpoint: The Palestinians After Oslo** (1997, 58 minutes). Documents the post-Oslo situation with off-beat humor and historical insights provided by Palestinian and Israeli activists like Naseer Arad and Hanan Ashrawi. **AMEU: \$27.00.**

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