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Palestinians' Civil Rights Violated in Los Angeles

By Jeanne Butterfield

In the early morning hours of January 26, the FBI, INS, and Los Angeles police department descended on the homes of nine residents of the Los Angeles area. Eight Palestinians and a Kenyan woman were arrested in the raid, and were held without bond as "national security risks." As the Los Angeles newspaper headlines screamed, "War on Terrorism Hits LA," the FBI quietly cancelled a press conference it had scheduled in Washington D.C. to announce the arrests.

In spite of several months of intense surveillance, the FBI admitted that it had failed to discover a shred of evidence that any of those arrested were engaged in any illegal activity. The INS, however, proclaimed that seven of the nine were members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a PLO member organization, and were therefore not only a danger to the national security, but were deportable under the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952.

The seven were held without bond in federal prison under 23-hour-a-day lockup. Denied writing materials, books, and even family visits, they were shackled hand and foot for visits with their attorneys. By the end of the week of the arrests, two of the nine initially arrested were released on bond. They face deportation hearings based on charges that they have technically violated the terms of their student visas. The remaining seven, facing not only the political charges but also a variety of technical visa violation charges, remained imprisoned until their bond redetermination hearing on February 17.

A broad coalition of church and civil liberties organizations joined to form the "Committee for Justice" in the days following the arrests. Los Angeles immigration and civil rights attorneys quickly formed a defense team headed by local civil liberties attorney Dan Stormer. Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, civil rights attorney Leonard Weinglass, immigration attorney Marc Van Der Hout, and Mark Rosenbaum and Paul Hoffman



The Los Angeles deportation defendants: (top, left) Khader Hamide, Michel Shihadeh, Amjad Obeid, (bottom, left) Ayman Obeid, Atiad Barakat, Naim Sharif, Julie Mongai. Not in picture, Bashar Amer.

of the ACLU stepped forward to join the legal team and help argue the case. A national "Vigil for Justice" was organized, and activists in more than a dozen cities across the country sent telegrams, wrote letters, and picketed at federal buildings on the day of the bond hearings.

These organizing and legal efforts met with success. On February 17, the seven defendants, along with an eighth who was arrested two weeks after the initial raid, were freed on their own recognizance, or on very low bond, pending their deportation hearings which were rescheduled to begin on April 28.

In the days that followed the arrests, it became clear that the INS charges were based on allegations that the seven activists either possessed or distributed literature published by the PFLP. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that the government's "case" includes photographs of two of the defendants picking up boxes of magazines at the airport. Copies of *Democratic Palestine* and *Al-Hadaf* were subpoenaed from people's homes as "evidence" that the

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Update

End Twenty Years of Occupation

The twentieth year of Israeli military rule did not begin quietly in the occupied West Bank and Gaza:

- An-Najah, the largest Palestinian university in the West Bank, began 1987 with a two-week closure order from the Israeli military authorities.
- On January 13, the head of the youth movement in Khan Younis, a town in the Gaza Strip, was ordered expelled.
- On January 14, Israeli authorities declared large areas of three villages in the Bethlehem area "state property" after village leaders refused to sign papers turning the land over to a nearby Jewish settlement.
- On January 20, Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin threatened to permanently close all Palestinian universities "if they continue to be the source of unrest."
- On January 29, three Gaza youths were shot and one youth was killed as they protested the expulsion of the Khan

Younis youth leader who was deported on January 26.

- On February 1, the Lawyers Union in the West Bank condemned the escalation of repression against Palestinians, reporting that 60 residents of the West Bank are currently under town arrest orders and 40 Palestinians are being held under administrative detention in Jnaid Military Prison in Nablus.
- On February 2, armed Israeli settlers attacked Palestinian residents of Al-Maghazi refugee camp in the center of Gaza Strip.
- As Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza demonstrated against the continued siege by Amal of Palestinian camps in Lebanon, Israeli troops attacked the demonstrators, wounding at least 12 and arrested an estimated 130.
- By mid-February, Israeli military authorities had ordered the indefinite closure of all Palestinian universities in

the occupied territories.

Next the Iron Fist reached out to Israeli and American supporters of Palestinian rights.

- On February 16, American Professor Roger Heacock was arrested at Bir Zeit University in the West Bank and charged with organizing a march and shop closure,

charges he vehemently denies.

- On February 17, the Israeli police raided and closed the Alternative Information Center in Jerusalem, a Jewish-Arab center which provided regular reports of human rights abuses under Israeli occupation.

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"A Sectarian Solution to Lebanon's Crisis Is No Longer Possible"

Karim Mroue is a Lebanese journalist and writer living in Beirut. He is one of the Arab world's best-known intellectuals. He is the political editor of the theoretical and intellectual journal Tariq, one of the oldest (45 years) and most well-known Arab publications. Mroue was interviewed for Palestine Focus in Boston in November 1986 by Salim Madi.

Karim Mroue comes from a village in the south of Lebanon; he has not been able to visit there for ten years. He describes himself as "a writer, a journalist, and a politician." For the last few years he has focused on the crisis in the Arab liberation movement. He has written many articles about the civil war in Lebanon. He believes that "the Lebanese civil war has the potential to be reproduced in other Arab countries with similar conditions."

PF: Why has the former unity among the forces of the Lebanese national resistance broken down since the partial Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon?

KM: First of all, the resistance continues, and it will not stop. No one can stop it. It is growing despite the problems it faces. Those who fight for the liberation of their land are not afraid of Israel. Of course, they will not be afraid of anyone else if they are not afraid of Israel.

It is true that in the last period of time, the difficulties that the resistance is facing are due to the tendency of some forces, religious and sectarian, to want to dominate not only the resistance itself, but the area which is liberated. The progressive forces from the beginning had the slogan "the land to those who liberated it."

But this is not what has been happening.

Those sectarian forces who are creating the difficulties for the resistance right now are part of the forces who fight for liberation. We should not deny this. But the sectarian forces are eager to be the only force who will harvest the fruits of this fight. We believe that this is dangerous, although it is natural. It is dangerous because it affects the unity of the resistance. It is natural because

from the very beginning we were in favor of encouraging all kinds of movements to join the resistance to Israeli occupation.

Every movement which could unite against the occupation should participate in the fight. Our main aim was to liberate the land. Who will control the land after liberation is another question. Contradictions and differences appeared during the fight, and it is natural that these differences continue to exist.

The resistance is part of the civil war, which is a political fight between two groups. One wants to liberate the country from all foreign forces, especially the Israeli, and to develop the independence of the country in a democratic framework which preserves its Arab character. The other group is not patriotic; it includes those who cooperated with Israel and contributed to the Israeli occupation.

But within this division in the civil war we see another kind of division. Some want not only to liberate the country and defend independence but to promote democratic changes. Within the resis-



Steve Goldfield/Palestine Focus

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FOCUS on Action

By Steve Goldfield

Around the country a massive campaign was built to protest the Los Angeles deportation proceedings (see articles this issue). Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of mailgrams were sent to the director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the director of the FBI. They came from local and national elected officials, religious leaders, trade unions, and many others. Many demonstrations and vigils were held in such cities as Boston, Washington, D.C., Seattle, Houston and Austin, Texas, Portland, Oregon, San Francisco, San Diego, and, of course, Los Angeles, particularly on February 17 during the bail hearings. Now that the demand for bail has been met, a nationwide campaign has been launched under the auspices of the Committee for Justice to have the deportation proceedings entirely stopped.

In the last three years, the Alternative Information Centre in Jerusalem has become a reliable and invaluable source of information on Israeli affairs from a critical Israeli perspective. The center published several publications, including *News from Within*, all under Israeli government censorship. On February 17, Israeli police raided the center, arrested four of its workers, including its director, Michel Warshawsky, and ordered the center closed for six months. In an ironic parallel to the Los Angeles case, Israeli police charged the center was used for activities on behalf of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. According to the *New York Times*, the center called the raid "an attempt to stifle a free press, carried out in retaliation for the center's criticism of the government." Protests may be sent to Minister of Justice, 29 Salah Adin Street, East Jerusalem 91010. Support statements can be sent to Alternative Information Centre, P. O. Box 165, West Jerusalem.

The headline in the January 29, 1987 *New York Times* was striking, "Israelis Reassess Supplying Arms to South Africa." The story was less so: "The struggle in Israel pits a tiny minority of Israeli officials and intellectuals who want to see Israel not only sever or reduce its trade, cultural, and military relations with South Africa but also take a leading role in the fight against apartheid" against "a majority of the bureaucracy that wants to maintain the

status quo in Israel-South Africa relations or perhaps adopt a few token reductions, and to make the already secret relationship even more secret. This group is led by Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, one of the staunchest advocates of Israel-South Africa relations, and includes Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and former Defense Ministers Ezer Weizman, Moshe Arens, and Ariel Sharon, as well as virtually all the other Likud ministers in the government and most of the Labor Party ones as well." With such a lineup, nobody should expect Israel to cease its role as South Africa's best ally any time soon.

What is interesting about the story, however, is that it shows that the spur for the "reassessment" is in part the work of the anti-apartheid movement and the Palestinian rights movement in the United States. For the immediate concern is that the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, passed in October 1986, mandates the State Department to report on other nations' arms sales to South Africa. And American Jews, on the defensive about Israel's relations with South Africa, have also been pressuring for change. The article also notes that the excuse that Israel is concerned about the welfare of the more than one hundred thousand South African Jews is "largely a pretext." Dan Sagir, a South Africa expert for *Ha'aretz*, explains the likely outcome: "If the West is going to be hypocritical and impose sanctions while selling arms, then Israel should at least be hypocritical, too, and impose some symbolic sanctions."

Speaking of apartheid, April 25 actions are planned to highlight that issue, along with Central America. Unfortunately, the extremely relevant and urgent issue of stopping U.S. intervention in the Middle East is not highlighted by the organizers of the actions despite the central Israeli role in the current scandal facing the Reagan administration. The Iran-Israel-Contra affair shows that the Reagan crowd understands quite well the vital link between U.S. strategy in the Middle East and in other areas of the world such as southern Africa and Central America. The Middle East will be raised by contingents at the April actions in Washington, San Francisco, and Seattle. And despite the serious shortcomings, the important issues raised warrant our strong support.

New York Cardinal O'Connor's recent visit to Jerusalem was more revealing about the limits on opinion in the U.S. political scene than about the Middle East. O'Connor was attacked on his return to New York because he expressed sympathy for Palestinian rights during his visit. It certainly irks diehard Israel supporters that virtually all the mainstream religious organizations in the United States support Palestinian self-determination. Cardinal O'Connor, who considers himself a supporter of

Israel, met with Jewish groups upon his return. But he also met with Muslim groups and, notably, did not demand as a precondition any statements from them regarding Israel's "right to exist." Cardinal O'Connor's visit and remarks are an important reminder that the view of the Israeli and United States governments rejecting any role for the PLO and any possibility of an independent state for the Palestinian people is not shared by most of the governments in the world and is not supported by the majority of people in the United States.

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) will hold its 1987 national convention in Washington, April 2-5, 1987 with the theme "Arab America: A Strong New Voice." Speakers and panelists include five congressmen, Edward Said, Executive Director Randall Robinson of TransAfrica, Ramsey Clark, Jonathan Kuttub, Cheryl Rubenberg, Jane Hunter, Dan Stormer of the Los Angeles defense team, representatives from Japanese-American and Mexican-American organizations, and many more.

The Arab American Institute held its Election '88 Strategy Conference in Washington, March 13-14, 1987 with the title, "A Strategy to Win: The Arab American Agenda for Election '88." Speakers included Jesse Jackson, five members of Congress, Los Angeles City councilman Robert Farrell, and attorney Leonard Weinglass and defendant Khader Hamide of the Los Angeles first-amendment case.

The recently launched Latino Task Force of the November 29th Committee for Palestine held a series of events in Colorado in March. Speakers from the task force participated in an International Women's Day event sponsored by the Arab Students, MECHA, and International Women's Week at the University of Colorado. A Saturday evening Latino-Palestinian event featured task force coordinators Leticia Peña and Yolanda Birdwell, Texas immigration activist Carlos Calderon, and Ricardo Romero who was imprisoned for refusing to testify before a grand jury. Several of the presentations, including a radio interview, were bilingual or in Spanish and two new Spanish-language brochures produced by the task force were distributed.

Ginny Kraus, November 29th Committee for Palestine West Coast regional coordinator, represented the committee at the World Peace Congress in Copenhagen in October. Among the many issues discussed at the congress was "1987: Year of Palestine." Issues of Palestinian rights and the threat of war in the Middle East were high on the agenda of the more than 2,500 delegates. □

Reagan Administration Takes on the Constitution

The Reagan administration, desperate at the collapse of its foreign policy objectives and the discrediting of the underlying moral and ideological rationale, has launched a broadside attack on the first-amendment rights of the foreign-born and, by implication, of all Americans. Eight Palestinians and a Kenyan were scooped up in an early-morning raid in Los Angeles on January 26, 1987. A ninth Palestinian was picked up later. (See article, page 1.) Though all have since been released on bail, the threat of deportation for engaging in protected political activities continues.

The charges, aside from minor immigration infractions which are normally settled by filing forms: "each of the seven has been a member of or affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP),

vealed that it had conducted a prolonged investigation of those charged but had been unable to detect any evidence of criminal activities. An FBI informant moved in next door to one of the Palestinians but could find no evidence of wrongdoing.

Reagan's Assault on Reason and Reality

The Reagan administration's ideological approach amounts to calling names. Its allies and friends are "democrats" and "freedom fighters." Its enemies are "communists" and "terrorists." Since the main enemies are Arabs, Iranians, Black South Africans, and Nicaraguans, Reagan labels entire peoples as "terrorists." This international racism is entirely consistent with the Reagan administration's domestic racism,

sirables: A Contingency Plan," says "the Service will likely be required to concentrate its counterterrorism efforts against particular nationalities or groups known to be composed of certain nationalities, most probably those citizens of states known to support terrorism." Noting that those with citizenship or immigrant status have fewer legal protections, "the most effective actions in removal of aliens who constitute a threat would be in the nonimmigrant category."

The Investigations Division recommends that the INS "routinely hold any alien so charged without bond, as a danger to the national security and public safety, vigorously oppose granting of any bond by immigration judges in bond appeal on that same basis; introduce any material necessary to sustain the government's position under the provisions of 8 C.F.R. 242.17, relating to submission of classified information to the immigration *in camera* for inspection and use in arriving at a decision favorable to the government." They also call for "exclusion of the general public from the hearings on the basis of the national security."

The methods specified are brutal arrests and confinement without bail on the grounds of threats to national

security in special detention centers or federal prisons. The charges are to be anything which can be used, from minor immigration violations through allegations of terrorist activity. Initially, the target immigrants are from eight countries: Iran, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, and Morocco. However, the task force mandate is sufficiently broad that any nationality deemed potentially threatening may be added. And another recommendation notes that "a similar tool for travel control, not only of aliens but citizens as well, exists in Section 215 of the Act."

The INS says the document is just a discussion paper drafted by low-level officials. But an attached September 15, 1986 letter announces a September 17 meeting "to implement specific recommendations made by the Vice President's Task Force on Terrorism regarding the control and removal of terrorist aliens in the United States." The same letter notes that INS Commissioner Nelson (who denies knowledge of the program) was named chairman of the Alien Border Control Committee. An October 1, 1986 memo reports on the September 17 meeting, chaired

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One of the most remarkable things about the entire deportation proceeding is its similarity to the process the Israeli military authorities use to deport Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza.

an organization that advocated the economic, international and governmental doctrines of ... world communism through written or printed publications."

The charge is based on the infamous McCarran-Walter Act. This act blatantly violates the free-speech and freedom of the press sections of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The same law is now being used to deport poet Margaret Randall and to deny entry to writers and cultural figures such as Canadian author Farley Mowat and Colombian novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

Shortly after the L.A. raid memos were leaked from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) revealing a comprehensive plan to harass and intimidate foreign residents who become politically active through imprisonment and deportation.

By targeting those who challenge U.S. policy, in this case in the Middle East, a message was also sent to all Americans to beware of controversy, of challenging the wisdom of the government and its policies. Palestinians were clearly chosen because they are "the weak link in the civil-liberties chain," in the words of Jim Zogby, but the message was clear that tomorrow it could be Salvadorans or South Africans. And the day after that American citizens who work against intervention and in solidarity with resistance movements and progressive governments can expect the "knock on the door."

The INS opposed bail for seven of the nine on the grounds that they are a threat to national security. The FBI, however, re-

which has fueled the resurgence of overt racial violence as in Howard Beach and For-syth County.

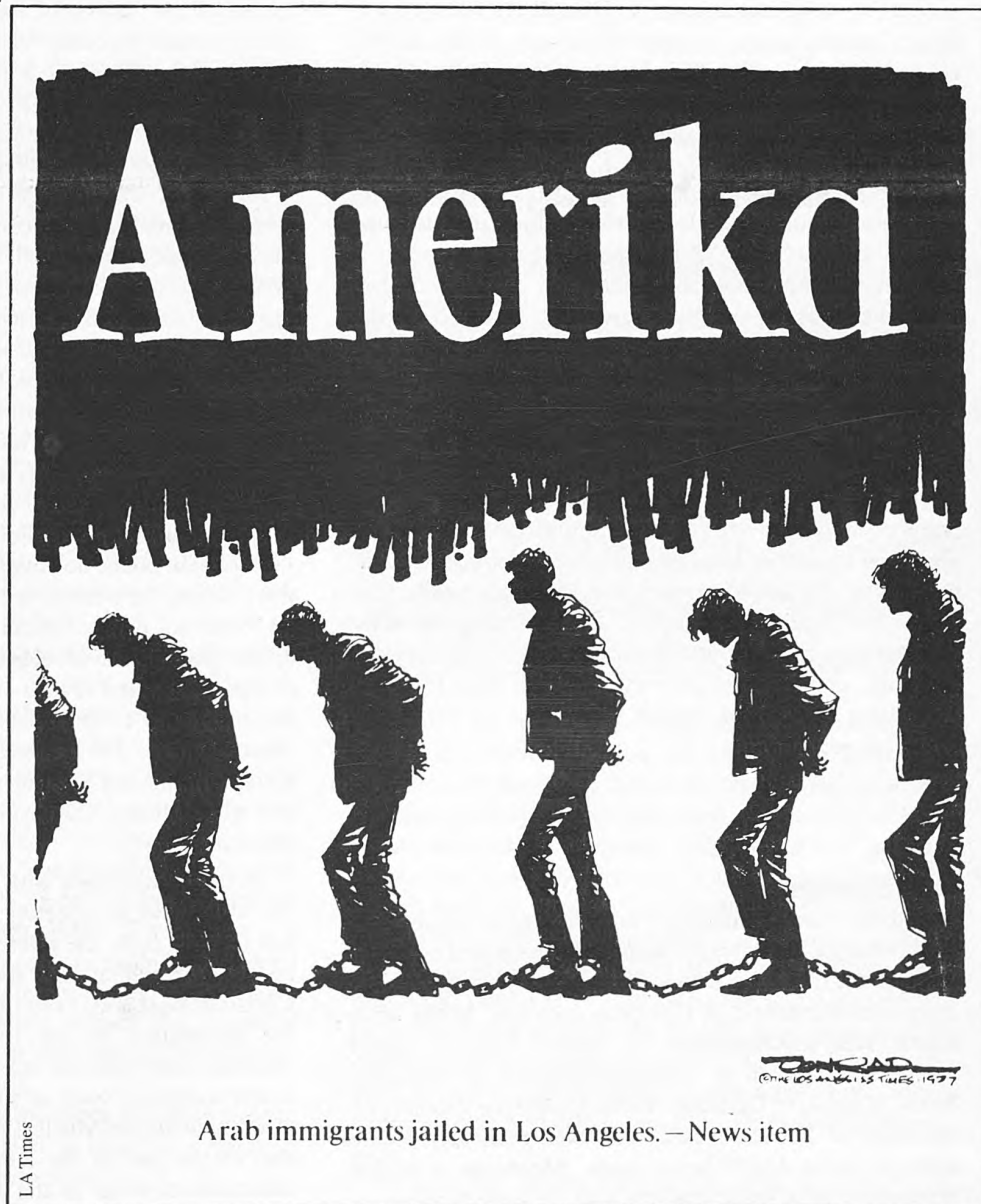
The INS move appeared well-timed to follow the taking of four new hostages in Lebanon and to precede by a single day Reagan's State of the Union address. Its context was the disarray of the Reagan administration caught out by the Iran-Israel-Contra scandal. Within a week, the Reagan administration sent more than a score of battleships into the eastern Mediterranean and rounded up Palestinians in Los Angeles.

Combining rampant racism and so-called antiterrorism with disdain for the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution, the Immigration and Naturalization Service violated the rights of nine foreign-borns because they were Palestinians, or in the case of one Kenyan wife and supporter because she dared to be politically active.

The Secret INS Task Force

In 1986, to usher in the bicentennial year of the U.S. Constitution, a task force was set up by Vice President George Bush to target immigrants for deportation based on their constitutionally protected political views and activities. Shortly after the Los Angeles arrests, a 31-page INS memo leaked, revealing the plans under way.

The task force, based in the INS and including the FBI, Justice Department, CIA, Customs, and other federal agencies, is intended to harass and deport opponents of current U.S. foreign policy if they are foreign-born or noncitizens. The May 1986 report, entitled "Alien Terrorists and Unde-



Arab immigrants jailed in Los Angeles.—News item

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The Holocaust and

By Cheryl Rubenberg

Cheryl Rubenberg is an associate professor of political science at Florida International University. Her article is adapted from a paper she presented at a conference of the Arab-American University Graduates in Chicago in November 1985. Rubenberg's approach is that of a scholar and we believe the ideas she presents are extremely important and deserve attention.

I was asked to speak about the use and misuse of the holocaust and anti-Semitism to serve Zionist ends. The two are obviously related, both historically and in the manner in which they are used as instruments to further the cause of Zionism. A third concept is also relevant to this analysis—the term “diaspora Jewry.”

Historically, many groups—especially when relegated to minority status within a larger social group—have experienced hostility, hatred, prejudice, discrimination, murder, and genocide based on racial, religious, ethnic, or other “out group” characteristics. Indeed, this has been a universal condition since the origins of human society. To say so is not to excuse such attitudes and practices; they are always abhorrent.

All groups should be free to maintain their beliefs and rituals so long as those beliefs and rituals are not imposed on other members of society. My point is that the hatred directed toward Jews is not a uniquely Jewish experience (although certainly in some societies at some historical junctures the hatred of Jews attained extreme degrees). But, it seems to me, if we are truly humanistic individuals, we should be concerned with hatred expressed toward any people (or with the murder of any people), resulting from their religious, racial, or ethnic affiliations. In this regard, we might want to consider the experience of the Armenians, the East Timorese, the Sri Lankan Tamils, or, for that matter, the Sioux in our own country, as well as the Palestinians in Lebanon.

There are a number of serious consequences in defining the hatred or murder of Jews as something unique. One is that we lose sight of the same occurrence when it happens to other peoples—whether in the past or present—and thus we are insufficiently galvanized by the appearance of such attitudes in other contexts. (Elie Wiesel's peculiarly selective moral blindness seems instructive in this regard.) Another is that it separates Jews from the family of man in their own eyes, as well as in the eyes of others.

Third, by allowing hatred of Jews to be defined as a category unto itself (that is, “anti-Semitism”) or by speaking of the murder of Jews as a unique and particular event relative to the Jewish experience (in other words, the “holocaust”), we permit the use of these phenomena by Zionists as a primary justification for their ideology, institutions, and political-military practices. Thus I think it imperative to see the Jewish experience in its proper historical perspective.

“Anti-Semitism”

The term, “anti-Semitism,” is a European expression. And certainly, historically, hatred of Jews based on religious, racial, or ethnic considerations has been predominantly a characteristic of European societies. While Jews experienced discrimination in Islamic lands, it never reached the fervor or institutionalization of Christian Spain, Russia, or Germany. Indeed, until the Zionist colonization of Palestine, Jews achieved relatively secure status in most Arab/Islamic lands. Moreover, a cogent argument can be made that much of the hatred expressed toward Jews has arisen from a convergence of factors that can be explained sociologically. Such hatred can be observed in relations among human groups everywhere throughout history, particularly among formations of an ethnic-national type or among religious communities.

Maxime Rodinson, a French Jew, so argues in his book, *Cult, Ghetto, and State*. Rodinson rejects the image of the Jews as eternally and essentially victims and never able to be anything else but victims. No people is intrinsically good or bad eternally and by their essence. No people is destined always to be victims. All peoples have been victims and executioners by turns, and all peoples count among their number both victims and executioners. Rodinson, like the long-deceased Belgian Jew, Abram Leon (author of *The Jewish Question—A Marxist Interpretation*), searches for explanations of the Jewish experi-

ence—in both its positive and negative dimensions—in the materialist forces of history.

From this perspective, the Jewish experience has not been ahistorical, idealist, and spiritual. Jews have survived through history, not despite it. In other words, Jews have survived not because God willed it, nor because of some “national” will to live, but rather as a result of some fairly concrete factors and forces that can be identified and, in addition, can be found at work elsewhere throughout the history of human societies.

Constant moral and physical blackmail have been exercised against Jews who refuse to consider themselves members of a distinct community to which they are supposed to owe allegiance.

Such a nonidealist approach does not necessarily entail a vulgar conception of Marxism that postulates economic factors as the sole significant ones. Clearly, for example, the influence of the Jewish religion on the destiny of Jews is certain. But we can understand religion in this context as one of the materialist forces that has acted to hold the Jewish entity together. Viewed in this manner, Judaism may be considered as a collection of myths, legends, practices, and institutions, which in time became incorporated into the consciousness of the Jewish people and served to maintain their unity.

Moreover, what people believe their past to mean assumes a dynamic of its own. To give one example from the distant past, though one with contemporary relevance: While Abraham's vision of a God who promised him the land of Canaan will not pass for historic “fact,” its reality was accepted by generations of Abraham's descendants and, for them, validated their possession of the land. Obviously, this myth continues to validate for many Jews their possession of the land of Palestine and, as well, continues to fulfill a unifying function. Thus people integrate myth and history for contemporary purposes, which, of course, is not only a Jewish practice.

The main point, however, from the materialist perspective, is that the persistence of the Jews historically is to be found not in theological explanations involving some divine plan, nor in ideological explanations involving an eternal and united Jewish nation, but rather in forces and factors similar to those which have been experienced by other peoples. For instance, all social groups possess certain myths and legends that idealize their past, maintain group unity, and explain and justify their present circumstances.

To be more explicit with regard to Jewish history, from the materialist perspective, the persistence of the Jews has derived from the relatively pluralist character of the societies in which they found themselves—in both the Christian West and, even more, in the Muslim East; from the inadequacy of the forces of unification in these societies; and from the lack of genuine efforts (except in a few instances such as fifteenth century Spain, which also brutalized its Muslim/Arab community, and the Nazi era) on the part of the dominant ideology to extend totalitarianism as far as the destruction of rival theologies or ethnic groups. In these conditions, the normal tendency of communities is to perpetuate themselves and to defend their interests and the aspirations of their members at the level of the community. The Kurds provide an example of such a social group that has persisted as a community in several nation states.

If we accept this explanation of the positive aspects of Jewish history, it then becomes possible to argue that the negative aspects of that experience—the expressions of hostility and hatred—are likewise to be found in the nature of human social organization and are not unique nor deserving of a special linguistic category: “anti-Semitism.” Certainly, other groups besides Jews have endured religiously based hatred persecution, which has also involved socioeconomic dimensions. The treatment of the Sikhs by the Hindus provides one example. The

Catholics in Northern Ireland are a further illustration.

From the lower Middle Ages onward, the economic factors become of more importance in analyzing the Jews' place in history, and Max Weber's description of the Jews as a sort of Indian caste perpetuating itself even in a world without castes has some validity, though that argument should not be carried too far.

In any case, with the rise of capitalism, the modern state, and the enlightenment, Jewish social cohesion in European countries began to decline. By the eighteenth century, Jewish communities often lacked cultural, social, or even religious bases. This was true, for example, in both France and Germany. Jewish social cohesion was re-established, however, by nineteenth- and twentieth-century expressions of hatred toward Jews (which indeed attained extreme degrees in some European countries) and by modern political Zionism, which was itself a consequence of such hatred. Neither, however, should be seen as a progressive outcome.

A progressive resolution of the historical problem of hatred of Jews would have necessarily been found in the formation of more harmonious and democratic societies. It could not have been found through transferring the racial, and we must say racist, attitudes of some Europeans into a Jewish racial philosophy, which inevitably became Jewish racism.

In the context of the contemporary Arab-Israeli conflict, the most pernicious use of the concept “anti-Semitism” has been the successful Zionist effort to portray the quite justifiable anger of the Arabs at the dispossession of the Palestinians and the implantation of an exclusivist Jewish state in the midst of the Arab world—as “proof” of the inevitable and eternally existing hatred of Jews by non-Jews. The non-Jewish Christian West, anxious to purge its own guilt for the atrocities perpetrated against Jews in Western countries, readily accepted this ideological construct and agreed to “defend” the Jewish state at all costs.

The Zionist establishment then compounded the problem by attempting to argue that Zionism, Judaism, and Jewishness were all equivalent and that modern Israel was the institutional expression of this sacred trinity. In the



nd Anti-Semitism

current era, I find no more deleterious phenomenon—no phenomenon that by itself would legitimately engender hostility toward Jews—than the claim of the state of Israel that it represents all Jews, everywhere in the world, and that the actions it takes and the policies it pursues are on behalf of world Jewry as a collectivity. In fact, constant moral and physical blackmail have been exercised against Jews who refuse to consider themselves members of a distinct community to which they are supposed to owe allegiance.

In short, hatred of Jews is not a unique phenomenon, and one consequence of not challenging that claim is that Zionists have no more intimidating weapon with which to discredit their opponents or silence their detractors than the allegation of anti-Semitism. George Ball recently commented with reference to the pro-Israeli lobby in this country: "They've got one great thing going for them. Most people are terribly concerned not to be accused of being anti-Semitic, and the lobby so often equates criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism. They keep pounding away at that theme, and people are deterred from speaking out."

"The Holocaust"

In an article published in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* in 1981 the Israeli writer Boaz Evron analyzed the experience of Jews under the Nazi regime from much the same perspective I have used to look at the broader Jewish experience of hatred. Evron rejects even the use of the word "holocaust," suggesting instead the phrase, "the murder of the Jews of Europe," as being an appropriate way to describe an historical event, which he correctly argues "must be grasped and understood in historical terms, not in mystical and pseudo-religious terms."

Evron rightly points out that the Nazi policy of mass murder was not directly exclusively at Jews: Gypsies were also slaughtered, three million non-Jewish Poles were murdered; parts of the Russian people were exterminated in order to clear the land for German settlement; and, moreover, the Nazi policy toward the "inferior races," by which was meant primarily the Slavs, meant that the enslavement and extermination of the Slav peoples in stages was only a matter of time: indeed it was prevented only because of the Allied victory. The recogni-

tion of such salient facts about the Nazi period removes the murder of the Jews of Europe from the viewpoint which regards it as an event typical of and exclusive to Jewish experience.

It is also important to note that if the Poles and Russians, territorial nations rooted in their own homelands, could be exterminated, then sovereignty and military power are no guarantee against extermination. In fact, most of the territorial nations known throughout history were conquered or lost their identity in some other way.

Zionists have no more intimidating weapon with which to discredit their opponents or silence their detractors than the allegation of anti-Semitism.

Thus a central argument of Zionism—that the Jews needed a territorial Jewish state in order to preserve Jewish life—is shown to be neither necessary or sufficient.

As with hatred of Jews, which I argued could best have been eradicated through making states more democratic, humanistic, and harmonious internally, so, too, the only guarantee against ideologically based extermination is the eradication of ideologies which dehumanize any human group or remove any human group from the family of man. Military power and sovereignty clearly cannot save a people from mass murder. However, not only did Zionism adopt the argument that a territorial state was necessary to preserve the Jewish people, but it developed an ideology which included the dehumanization of the Palestinians—indeed, the denial not only of their humanity, but even of their existence.

One of Boaz Evron's more important observations is to point out the consequences of the Jewish monopolization of the Nazi experience. Evron demonstrates that, by presenting the Jews as the almost-exclusive victims of Naziism, Zionists have separated Jews from the human race, as if they are different by their very nature. (This argument, of course, is the selfsame one that Nazis and other anti-Semites have used historically.) Indeed, it is particularly significant—as Lenni Brenner has demonstrated—that the arguments of genuine anti-Semites and Zionists are virtually identical. Both claim that Jews are eternally rooted in their Jewishness, that Jews are aliens in countries in which they live, and that hatred of Jews is natural, is rooted in the Jewish "essence," and will be eternally present in non-Jewish societies.

The consequences of this stress by Zionists on the everlasting and inevitable victimization of Jews has caused, as Evron notes, a paranoid reaction among major parts of the Jewish population. The paranoia has resulted in many Jews feeling that they are cut off from humanity and its laws, which then causes certain Jews, when in a position of power, to treat non-Jews as subhuman: indeed precisely as Jews were treated by the Nazis. Israel, as we unfortunately have fresh evidence of each day, is one of the most flagrant violators of international law and international norms in the global arena.

Evron poignantly illustrates the moral blindness and the double moral standards that exist in Israel as a result of the continuous stress on the holocaust:

Because the world was always presented to us as out to get us, we ourselves are exempted from any moral considerations in relating to it. We who base our main arguments on justice and the obligation of the world to the "remaining refugees," see ourselves as having the right to establish relations with the most oppressive regimes, to make arms deals with the worst of nations, and not to refrain from oppressing the non-Jews living under our rule. The use of the murder of European Jews for these aims has been developed to a fine art.

Despite Evron's important corrective analysis, the murder of European Jews in its familiar conception of the "holocaust" has been and continues to be used to manipulate both Jews and non-Jews alike. Certainly extraordinary use has been made of this tool to police Jews in the United States—primarily by exploiting the guilt feelings

of American Jews for not having done more to prevent the genocide of European Jews; as well as by playing on the insecurity some have regarding the status of Jews in the United States.

These guilt feelings are manipulated in several ways. Israel is presented to U.S. Jews as being in permanent danger of annihilation by the Arab states surrounding it—a picture that has no basis in objective reality, as several prominent Israeli generals such as Matti Peled have repeatedly stated. (See also David Hirst's *The Gun and the Olive Branch*.)

But through the presentation and perpetuation of the myth of Israel's imminent destruction, American Jews are provided with the opportunity to assuage their guilt by economically and politically supporting Israel—allegedly to "prevent a second holocaust." Indeed, it is not an exaggeration to state that the holocaust memory constitutes the principal means for the Zionist establishment to control Jews living outside Israel—the communities of which constitute a necessary power and ideological base for the Israeli state.

The most malignant manipulation of the holocaust world view—both Jews living within Israel and those living outside it—has been the Zionist exploitation of Arab hatred of Israel. This manipulation involves the spurious equation between Nazis and Arabs and the apocryphal conclusion that the fate of Israeli Jews is potential annihilation at the hands of Arabs. The analogy has been used in turn as justification for the dispossession, hatred, and murder of Arabs by Jews. It has also been used as justification for the development of one of the most sophisticated military-industrial complexes in the world, with an elite sector enjoying extraordinary personal privilege arising from this institution.

The non-Jewish world is also constantly reminded of the genocide of European Jews—with the intention of eliciting support for Israel and silencing criticism of its policies. The implicit—and sometimes explicit—argument is: "Those who did nothing during the holocaust cannot teach us what we ought to do to defend ourselves from another holocaust."

By presenting the Jews as the almost-exclusive victims of Naziism, Zionists have separated Jews from the human race, as if they were different by their very nature.

Finally, we should note one additional concept that serves a similar function as anti-Semitism and the holocaust for Zionism, that is, the term "diaspora Jewry." "Diaspora Jewry" is typically used to refer to Jews living in countries other than Israel, and it is a critical aspect of the Zionist view. The unstated implication in the term is that all Jews are eternally and inevitably connected to the land of Palestine. The phrase serves as a continuous reminder to both Jews and non-Jews of the supposedly everlasting connection of Jews with each other and with a particular piece of real estate in the Middle East. Moreover, the emphasis on the concept "diaspora Jewry" further separates Jews from the societies in which they live, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of their non-Jewish countrymen.

In sum, the Zionist perspective, with its three fundamental underlying concepts—anti-Semitism, the holocaust, and diaspora Jewry—is a powerful force that must be understood and carefully analyzed if cogent arguments are to be made against it and if those who make the arguments are to survive the existing propaganda system. Zionists have used and continue to use these concepts to manipulate both Jews and non-Jews alike. With Jews the concepts serve to reinforce and perpetuate the feelings that they exist outside of history, that they are separate from and different from all other human groups, and that they always have been and always will be victims. With non-Jews—especially those in the Christian West—these concepts serve to reinforce feelings of guilt and obligation, to silence criticism of Israeli policies—both domestic and international, and to silence criticism of the practices of Zionist groups in the United States and elsewhere. □



Continued from page 3

by Commissioner Nelson, and notes the establishment of working groups "to prevent known terrorists from entering the United States," develop visa restrictions for aliens from certain countries "who are likely to be supportive of terrorist activity within the United States," and facilitate "expulsion from the United States of alien activists not in conformity with their immigration status."

The real proof that the INS is implementing its plan is the test case in Los Angeles, which unfolded almost exactly according to the script. The use of the INS courts meant that the rules of due process which obtain in other courts did not apply. The prisoners were not read their rights when they were detained (technically they are not under "arrest"). Illegally obtained evidence is admissible. There is no right to counsel. The "defense" does not have the right to subpoena witnesses or file discovery motions to see the prosecution evidence. Indeed, the task force memos recommend that evidence be shown to the INS judges *in camera*, which means that the accused and their attorneys would never see it or be able to respond. The arresting officers also brought with them an illegal subpoena to seize literature from private homes.

One of the most remarkable things about the entire deportation proceeding is its similarity to the process the Israeli military authorities use to deport Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza.

In a separate but obviously related incident, a Palestinian woman who is also a U.S. citizen was picked up in San Diego by apparent government agents who flashed badges at her, took her to a private house, and proceeded to interrogate her under a form of torture, which included leaving her hanging suspended from a bar by handcuffs for three hours. Her crime was that she knew one of the nine. She was released on the street two miles from her home, terrified at first even to talk about the incident.

The L.A. case has generated massive and widespread support. Arab-Americans saw

the INS actions as an escalation of the racist campaign waged by the U.S. government in the media to make Arab a synonym for "terrorist." Indeed, the day after the arrests the Los Angeles *Herald Examiner* quoted Betsy Rosenthal, western states counsel for the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League (ADL), saying that two of the nine "have been linked by the ADL to Arab activities in this country." One had been identified with Arab activities in San Diego. It is clear from the context that the reader is to conclude there is something sinister about "Arab activities."

INS memos reveal a comprehensive plan to harass and intimidate foreign residents who become politically active through imprisonment and deportation.

But is it so surprising that Arabs are involved in Arab activities? What other activities can one be involved in if one happens to be an Arab? One of those Rosenthal referred to, Khader Hamide, is active in the Arab-American Democratic Club and the Rainbow Coalition. Is this so sinister that he must be locked up as a threat to national security?

David Lehrer, executive director of the ADL, was described in the same article as a Jewish leader who tracks "Arab terrorist organizations in this country," by which most readers would conclude that such organizations exist in the United States, as suggested by the output of such filmmakers as Cannon Films and the major television networks.

Meanwhile Palestinians survive under siege in Lebanon by eating rats and cats. Israeli raids target refugee camps while Israeli ships engage in piracy on the high seas. The uprising in the West Bank and Gaza continues. And the

Israeli military occupation continues to deport Palestinians from their homeland. Even if they achieve immigration status in the United States, Palestinians are not safe from government harassment.

Many prominent people and organizations immediately came to the defense of the victims and denounced the government's actions. The ACLU joined the defense team and is filing a challenge in court against the McCarran-Walter Act, passed in the wave of McCarthyite anticommunist hysteria of the fifties as a way of deporting foreign-born alleged communists.

Former Attorney-General Ramsay Clark and noted defense attorney Leonard Weinglass also joined the legal defense. Elected officials, trade unions, and many

others sent mailgrams to the INS protesting their actions. Congressional officials promised to conduct an investigation into the use of the INS to harass political activists. We call on the House Judiciary Committee, chaired by Michigan Congressman John Conyers, and its Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional and Human Rights, chaired by California Congressman Don Edwards, to investigate the administration's abuses and violation of the U.S. Constitution.

The immediate objective was to get the "accused" (they really have not been accused of anything) released on bail; it could take two to three years to complete deportation proceedings with appeals in federal court. In a surprise move, on February 17 an INS judge ruled that no evidence had been presented to justify holding anyone and released five on their own recognizance and three on bail. The deportation hearing was rescheduled for late April.

Despite this initial victory, the U.S. government must not be permitted to deport activists on a charge of distributing political literature. The message must be sent to the Reagan administration that the people of the United States will not tolerate such authoritarian behavior. For if it succeeds, it will surely use the same tactics again and again. □

1987: Year of Palestine

1987 has been designated *The Year of Palestine* by the nongovernmental organizations of the United Nations Committee for the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The upcoming year will focus greater attention than ever before on the Palestinian people, their aspirations for self-determination, and hopes for peace in the Middle East.

1987 is *The Year of Palestine* because it contains several significant anniversaries that underscore Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people and other peoples of the Middle East: June 6 marks the twentieth anniversary of the 1967 war; June 5 marks the fifth anniversary of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon; November 29 marks the fortieth

anniversary of the United Nations vote to partition Palestine into two states; and November 2 is the seventieth anniversary of the Balfour Declaration.

During *The Year of Palestine* we want to alert American public opinion to the danger of the U.S. government's hypocritical policies. President Reagan would rather pursue tactics of aggression and lies (politely termed "disinformation") in the Middle East than pursue real justice and peace. We will pay particularly close attention to the twenty years of occupation that Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza have faced. We will declare with people around the world that the first step to achieve peace in the Middle East is: Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. □

By Hilton Obenzinger

"War on Terrorism Hits LA" blasted the front-page headline on the January 27, 1987 *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*—and the media circus was on! What prompted the inflammatory headline was the arrest of eight Palestinians and a Kenyan woman on charges of being members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and of distributing publications which "advocate . . . world communism" under the infamous 1952 McCarran-Walter Act. Perhaps this case could be summed up with an adaptation of the old McCarthyite query, "Are you now, or have you ever been a card-carrying . . . Arab?" No matter what you call it, the repressive and racist character of the arrests became obvious soon after the first "terrorism" headlines blared forth and the media went through an astonishing turn-around. The case has now emerged as a major test of our constitutional rights, particularly the First Amendment, against a Reagan administration hell-bent on denying rights to anyone dissenting on its failed foreign policies.

As the bizarre behavior of the government soon became clear, such as FBI and INS admissions that those arrested had not committed any crimes, despite months of investigation, broad public opposition to this travesty of justice snowballed. When revelations of secret INS and other agencies' plans for rounding up Arabs into concentration camps leaked, the storm of criticism for denying constitutional rights turned into a torrent.

New York Times columnist Anthony Lewis deserves special mention for two outstanding columns on February 13 and 20. In one, Lewis told the story of a young Palestinian woman (a U.S. citizen) who was abducted in San Diego by unidentified agents, held for twelve hours, three hours of which she was suspended by handcuffs from an overhead bar, and interrogated. "Is that America?" Lewis asks. "Realism requires us to recognize that it can happen here. It has happened. But it is not too late to find out how, and to punish the federal agents who behaved like totalitarian thugs." In his next column, Lewis explored the entire case as a challenge by the U.S.

Getting It All In FOCUS

government of the "basic constitutional right in this country to read and express political ideas, however unpopular." These early columns effectively broke the media dike, and a flood of articles and opinions came forth.

The fact that the government's case is so flimsy, along with their conspicuous Arab-bashing, made the editorial boards of such papers as the *Los Angeles Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Oakland Tribune*, *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Times*, and the *Boston Globe* speak out in opposition to the government's assault on democratic rights. Even the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* saw the light and wrote a searing editorial in defense of free speech.

ABC "Nightline" covered the case, referring to other instances in the past of anti-immigrant hysteria, such as the 1919 Palmer raids and the roundup of Japanese-Americans into concentration camps during World War II. The government, perhaps sensing it didn't have a leg to stand on, declined even to appear before Ted Koppel. Koppel, however, tried his best to play devil's advocate by berating the defense team lawyers Leonard Weinglass and Dan Stormer for not getting the detainees out of jail soon enough. (Ted: it's the government that denied bail on "national security grounds," not the defense lawyers!) No matter—a cogent, logical examination of the government's brutal behavior did reach millions.

The media has come a long way, although that's not to say everything's perfect by any means. The November 29th Committee for Palestine and *Palestine Focus* have repeatedly come up in an illogical fashion, for example. "Nightline" showed two "PFLP publications" on screen—*Palestine Focus* and *Al-Fajr*, which is published under Israeli censorship from Jerusalem. The next night the

producers ran a retraction, but still, it seems that what is at stake in the trial is not just the distribution of magazines from the PFLP, but any literature that deals with Palestinians and seeks peace in the Middle East. In that regard, we are all equally "guilty," whether *Al-Fajr*, *Palestine Focus*, *Palestine Perspectives*, or any publication that does not toe the pro-Israel line.

Still, the advances that have been made are significant. Nor are they isolated. For example, after years of growing exposure of Israel's relationship with South Africa, the *New York Times* was driven to editorialize against Israel's arms dealings with dictatorships in Central America and South Africa. Articles appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* and other papers exposing some embarrassing facts to the light of day. Sure enough, after years of denying any serious economic or military relationship with South Africa, the Israeli government was forced to discuss (but not to implement) a half-hearted effort to disengage from the apartheid regime under pressure of Congress' recent anti-apartheid bill, which provides for blocking U.S. aid to any country not honoring sanctions.

And on the electronic media front, reporter Mike Hegedus of San Francisco's Westinghouse station, KPIX, did five nights of specials on the Palestinian people the week of February 16. His reports focused on Palestinians as people, families who want peace, kids who want to go to school, ordinary people squeezed into an extraordinary situation of homelessness. The final segment covered the Palestinian community in the San Francisco Bay Area. The series was careful to be balanced, but simply showing Palestinians as people is a dangerous trend, and pro-Israel sympathizers bombarded the station with an organized campaign of letters and phone calls. The pressure on the media is intense, but now with many in public life stepping forward to recognize that an injustice has been done to the Palestinian people, including New York Cardinal O'Connor, the atmosphere has changed a tiny bit. There is still a long way to go, of course.

If *Palestine Focus* readers want to learn more about stereotyping of Arabs in the media, read *The TV Arab* by Jack Shaheen (American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee) and *Covering Islam* by Edward Said (Vintage). □

LA Update...

Continued from page 1

seven are affiliated with an organization which publishes literature which advocates "world communism." Such affiliation is a deportable offense under the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952.

The McCarran-Walter Act is the immigration component of the anti-communist laws passed over President Truman's veto during the height of McCarthyism in the 1950s. While the anti-communist provisions of the act have never before been used to deport anyone from the United States, the same provisions have often been used to deny entry visas to visitors the U.S. government deems "undesirable," such as Hortense Allende, widow of the slain Chilean president, Nicaraguan Minister Tomas Borge, and Colombian novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

A far-reaching plan for dealing even more harshly with "undesirables" was revealed in a secret INS document which was leaked to the press shortly after the Los Angeles arrests. Entitled "Alien Terrorists and Undesirables: A Contingency Plan," the document appears to be a blueprint not only for the Los Angeles

arrests and threatened deportations, but for the U.S. government's overall "anti-terrorist" campaign, targeting the Arab and Arab-American community in the United States. The document outlines plans for arrests, detention without bond, and expedited deportations of "alien activists"; visa

"Palestinians are the weak link in the American civil-liberties chain."

**—James Zogby,
Arab-American Institute**

restrictions for aliens from certain countries; travel restrictions on U.S. citizens to certain countries; and mass detention of targeted "aliens" in huge internment camps such as the INS detention center in Oakdale, Louisiana.

Like the Japanese internment camps of the 1940s, the McCarthy Era witch-hunts of the 1950s, and the struggle

for Black-Americans civil rights of the 1960s, the Los Angeles case has become a rallying point for the defense of civil liberties in the 1980s. The response of the broad civil-liberties movement in the United States to the Los Angeles case has been heartening, and has proved already to be a major stumbling block to the government's efforts to deny civil rights to Arab activists. The first minor skirmish has been won, but the major campaign against the threatened deportations will require a concerted effort in the weeks leading up to April 28.

Telegrams to the INS demanding that all charges be dropped and that the INS stop all McCarran-Walter deportations can be sent by calling 1-800-325-6000 and asking for operator 9077. Your home phone will be billed \$4.50.

Letters of support also should be sent to Congressmen Conyers and Edwards, urging them to convene a congressional inquiry into the arrests and into the INS contingency plan. Write to the congressmen at the U.S. House of Representatives, Rayburn Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Contributions for legal expenses should be forwarded to the "Committee for Justice," P.O. Box 4631, Los Angeles, CA 90051 (213) 413-2935, (213) 413-3209. □

20 Years...

Continued from page 1

Four of the center's workers were arrested, including its director Michel Warschawsky. Warschawsky was released one month later on \$50,000 bail, only after his attorney (and wife) Lea Tsemel appealed to the Israeli Supreme Court.

As Palestinians confront an accelerating cycle of repression and violence under occupation, we in the United States must accelerate our efforts to inform the U.S. public about the realities of occupation. As public attention is drawn to the Irangate/Contragate affair, as the progressive movement is reawakened by revelations of FBI infiltration of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), as civil-rights activists rally in support of the Palestinian and Kenyan activists threatened with deportation in Los Angeles, we cannot afford to slacken in our efforts to build the "End the Twenty Years of Occupation" campaign. The spring mobili-

zation against U.S. intervention in Central America (April 25 in Washington D.C., San Francisco, and Seattle) will give us a unique opportunity to present the churches, trade unions and peace and solidarity organizations across the United States with information and analysis about the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and about "Twenty Years" activities.

June 6, 1987 will soon be upon us. The "End the Twenty Years of Occupation" campaign is already underway in several cities across the country. Organizer's packets have been mailed to local affiliates of all the national organizations involved in the campaign: from Mobilization for Survival, to the International Jewish Peace Union, to the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, to November 29th Committee for Palestine, and more. A national petition campaign has begun; plans are being made for nationally coordinated activities the weekend of June 6, 1987. We urge you to contact the November 29th Committee for Palestine National Office, 415-861-1552 for more information on how you can become involved.

Copies of the petition are available from November 29th National Office, or from the

Mobilization for Survival National Office, 853 Broadway, New York, NY 10003. The text follows:

To End the Israeli Occupation...

A Call for the U.S. to Support an International Peace Conference

(To: President Reagan, House Leader, Senate Leader)

Twenty years ago, the Israeli army occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the June 1967 war. Since then, an entire generation of Palestinian youth has grown to maturity under increasingly harsh military rule. A generation of young Israelis faces a profound social crisis caused by the occupation.

As this second decade of occupation draws to a close, revelations in the Iranscam/Contragate scandals cast new light on the moral bankruptcy and grave dangers of U.S. policy toward the Middle East. Fueling an arms race with the Soviet Union in the region, carrying out clandestine operations, spurning opportunities for comprehensive negotiations, all have been part of a policy of exacerbating conflict rather than resolving it. Urgent action is required to avert the risks that conflict in the volatile

Middle East will engulf the whole world in catastrophic war.

We therefore call upon the U.S. government to turn away from its military orientation toward the Middle East. The United States should instead support efforts to end the occupation and to resolve the Arab/Pal-

"An entire generation of Palestinian youth has grown to maturity under increasingly harsh military rule."

estinian/Israeli conflict through the international peace conference proposed by the United Nations. □

Lebanon...

Continued from page 2

tance there is a fight between those who want these democratic changes and those who do not.

We fight over the meaning of the resistance and its role now and in the future is a natural one. We consider the sectarian and religious trends a key ally in the larger fight, not only for liberation, but against the Phalangists. These trends contribute to the destruction of the sectarian regime in the country.

But they have another objective. They consider themselves first. They can destroy, but they cannot build. The big negative is that while they are destroying the regime, they are also destroying the democratic movement. That is the problem.

PF: Why was Syria targeted as a "terrorist" state by the U.S. government and media in late 1986, which attempted to link it to bombings in Western Europe?

KM: Syria supports the struggle of the Arab patriotic forces to liberate their homelands from Israeli occupation and to fight for

emancipation from imperialist domination of Arab countries and their resources.

The question is, why are they accusing Syria, why this campaign at this time? The campaign is aimed at intimidating all the progressive movements in the Arab countries. Syria is being made to pay the price

The experience of the resistance shows that united we can successfully defeat Israel's schemes.

for its policy of rejecting all of the so-called peace projects proposed by Israel and the United States. Syria's rejection of these plans comes at a critical time, when not only the Israelis and the imperialists, but also the Arab reactionaries, are eager to enlarge the Camp David process.

PF: What is behind the war of the camps, the savage attacks on Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon?

KM: This war is between Palestinian and Lebanese people who are suffering jointly from Israeli aggression. So why this war, and why does this war rekindle from time to time? Those behind this war have different interests and different positions. Some reactionary forces among the Shi'a population of the south are trying to demonstrate to the people of the south that armed Palestinians fighting for their cause constitute an obstacle to the liberation of the south. This is an attempt to obscure reality and to create the illusion that the Palestinian movement, and not Israel, is the enemy.

We fully support the right of the Palestinians to fight for their cause from Lebanon, and from all Arab land, by all means, including armed struggle. But this fight should be under the leadership of the nationalist, progressive forces in the Arab countries, including Lebanon. It should be based on a fundamental political understanding and principled political relations between the progres-

sive Lebanese and Palestinian forces. The progressive Palestinians and Lebanese are struggling to establish this fundamental basis which should be accepted by everyone.

PF: What do you see for Lebanon's future?
KM: We have to look to a very important phenomenon appearing in the area controlled by the Phalangists and Lebanese Forces. The people in these areas have been seeing nothing but blood and destruction. The things they had been promised by the Phalangists have not appeared.

So little by little, the population has become differentiated from the Phalangists. And the fight inside the Phalangist party itself is becoming a major phenomenon. As the Phalange party becomes weakened, it practices a policy which is against the interest of the population under its control. That's why we are now seeing the appearance of what can be called a non-Phalangist tendency. Among this non-Phalangist tendency there grows, little by little, a democratic trend.

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

Palestine Focus is the national newspaper of the November 29th Committee for Palestine (formerly November 29th Coalition). 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 November 29th Committee for Palestine takes its name from the date declared by the United Nations as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Our task is to spark and support consistent, far-reaching, and effective activity which brings the issue of Palestine before the American people and builds a growing and deepening base of understanding. Our 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 November 29th Committee for Palestine. Letters, opinions, and other contributions are welcome.

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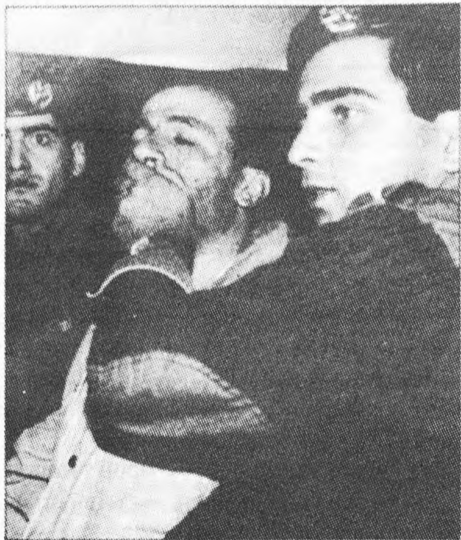
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Israel's Nuclear Secrets Out in the Open

By Douglas Franks & Jeanne Butterfield

Israel's nuclear capabilities are one of its worst-kept secrets. With the disappearance from London last fall of Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu and his abduction to Israel to stand trial for passing on information about Israel's nuclear industry to London's *Sunday Times*, the issue of Israel as a rapidly expanding nuclear power once again became the focus of world attention. Indeed, Israeli attempts to silence Vanunu and stifle his incriminating revelations have had quite the opposite effect.

The Vanunu affair is also calling attention to Israel's judicial excesses and inconsistencies. Held without bail, Vanunu is charged with the serious crimes of espionage and high treason for leaking information Israel had done its utmost to hide. He faces the death penalty, a rare sentence in Israeli courts. While awaiting trial, he is being held incommunicado and the Israeli government is saying nothing about the case. Desperate to make public what the Israeli authorities were doing to him, Vanunu managed to write "hijacked in Rome, Italy" on the palm of his hand and press it to the car window as he was being driven to closed-door court hearings in Jerusalem last December. Measures to increase his isolation were immediately taken as security guards painted over the windows of the vehicle transporting him to prevent any more such "press" conferences.



Mordechai Vanunu gagged by Israeli soldiers.

Israel continues to turn a deaf ear to Italian and British demands for an explanation of Israel's handling of the Vanunu case. The prosecution is attempting to further discredit Vanunu by handing over sections of Vanunu's personal diaries to the press.

An ironic twist to Israeli flouting of international legal standards in the Vanunu trial concerns the release from prison of William Nakash just as Vanunu faced arraignment. Nakash, a French Jew wanted for the murder of an Arab in France, fled to Israel—where he committed another criminal act—to escape prosecution and was granted Israeli citizenship under the "Law of Return." Under the slogan "No Jews to be Extradited to Gentiles," adopted by those defending him, Nakash has been spared extradition back to France by the highest Israeli authorities, despite an extradition treaty between Israel and France. France was duly dismayed by Israel's failure to comply with their agreement. The incident demonstrates that Israel will go to any length to pursue those on its "wanted" list but stand in the way of other governments lawfully attempting to do the same.

The Vanunu case tells a much larger story than Israel's violation of an individual's rights, however, and its self-appointed freedom from international norms. Israel—again flying in the face of internationally agreed upon conventions—is not a signa-

tory to the nuclear nonproliferation treaty and refuses to permit any outside monitoring of its nuclear facilities. With Vanunu acting as "monitor," it has come to light that Israel's nuclear capabilities are indeed proliferating at an alarming rate.

Overnight, Israel has become the world's sixth largest nuclear power.

Vanunu, employed as a nuclear technician for ten years, disclosed to *The Sunday Times* that Israel has a stockpile of one to two hundred highly sophisticated nuclear and thermonuclear weapons. Previous CIA and UN estimates had pegged Israel's nuclear stockpile at 10 to 20 relatively primitive atomic bombs. Israel is sufficiently equipped, according to the third annual report on global nuclear proliferation issued by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace—a report both utilizing and corroborating Vanunu's documentation and photos he acquired over a four-week period—"to level every urban center in the Middle East with a population of over 100,000." Overnight, Israel has become the world's sixth largest nuclear power.

These sobering conclusions signify that Israel's nuclear industry has progressed much further than previously acknowledged or suspected. Yet prior to Vanunu's findings, much had already been known about Israel's nuclear program. It began virtually the moment the Israeli state was founded. In 1952 the U.S. government assisted Israel in building a small reactor near Tel Aviv. Construction of a nuclear reactor was secretly begun by the French in 1958 at Dimona, a facility Israel long claimed was a textile factory but which was found to be otherwise by U.S. spy-plane photos. The French also helped Israel build a plutonium separation plant.

Israeli and French collaboration continued throughout the late fifties and early sixties. Together they modified the Mirage jet fighter, equipping it to carry nuclear bombs. They jointly developed missiles tipped with nuclear warheads. Israeli scientists participated in French nuclear tests in 1960 and 1964. As early as 1974, secret CIA memoranda stated that Israel had already produced nuclear weapons. Israel had also stolen large quantities of weapons-grade uranium and plutonium from the United States and Europe.

"Israel is sufficiently equipped to level every urban center in the Middle East with a population of over 100,000." —Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

When France severed its ties with Israel following the 1967 war, South Africa picked up the slack. Israeli-South African collaboration in nuclear research and development began a year earlier in 1966, according to the Israeli newspaper *Ma'ariv*, although their relationship was not reported in the press until 1977. It is now commonly held that Israel and South Africa jointly exploded an atomic bomb off the coast of South Africa on September 22, 1979. (The Israeli journalist who months later first broke the damning story was stripped of his press credentials by the Israeli authorities.)

Removing yet another layer of the secrecy and deception historically enveloping Israel's nuclear industry, Vanunu revealed to *The Sunday Times* that the nuclear plant at Dimona was not only capable of manufacturing powerful nuclear weapons but could do so at the rate of 20 per year. Monitoring by American scientists of the Dimona facility during the sixties to verify Israeli assurances that only peaceful nuclear research was being conducted there was halted due to harassment by Israeli authorities. What the inspectors never found out but what Vanunu succeeded in discovering was that Dimona housed an underground plutonium separation plant. "Peaceful nuclear research" had in fact become an assembly line for atomic bombs.

Vanunu detailed how the small French-built reactor had been greatly expanded in order to enhance production of plutonium, necessary in the manufacture of nuclear weapons. Beneath Dimona's "peaceful" facade lie six previously unknown underground levels comprising a vast subterranean nuclear-weapons factory. Vanunu indicated that Israel even possesses the technology to produce the neutron bomb, a terrible weapon that kills people without damaging the buildings they live in.

For alerting the world to just how immense Israel's nuclear arsenal really is and to just how formidable a military threat Israel poses in the Middle East, Vanunu is considered a dangerous criminal by the Israeli government and possibly faces death by execution. Although Israel has stated it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons in the region, the credibility of a state power which would wreak the devastation on another country Israel did against Lebanon in 1982 is truly subject to serious doubt. That credibility had already been eroded back in 1973 when, according to a former U.S. government official, Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir ordered nuclear devices to be put in readiness at Israeli air bases when Israel feared it might lose its Yom Kippur War.

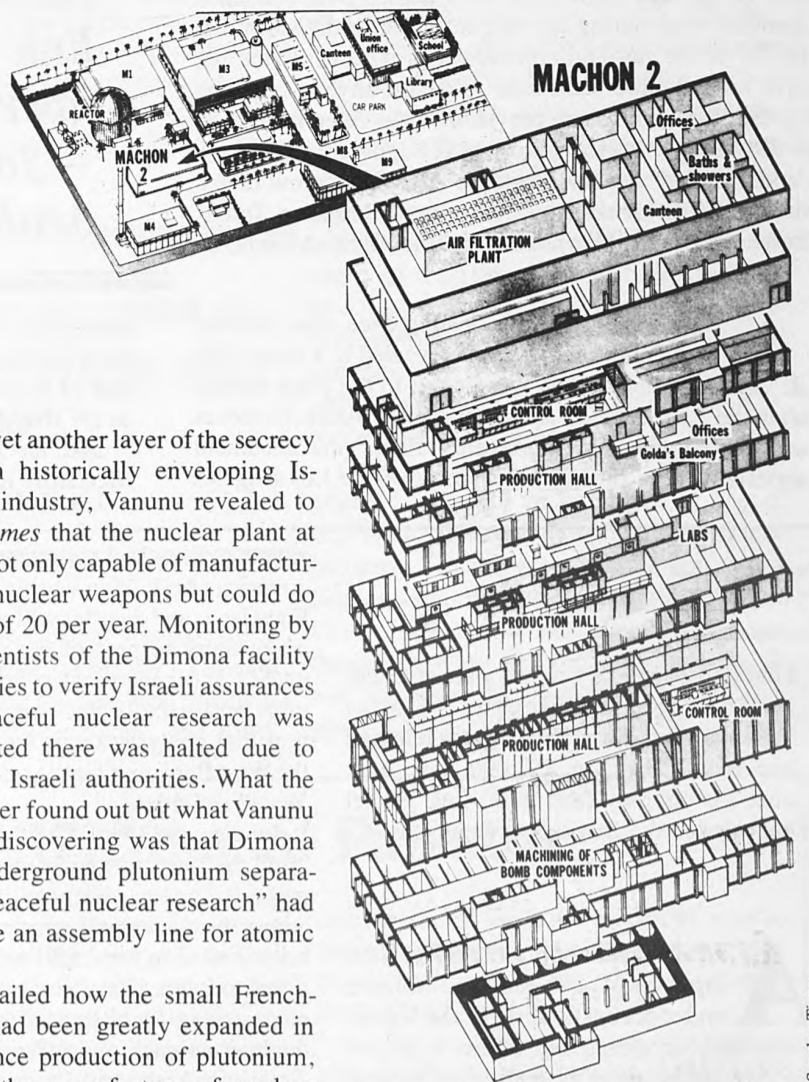


Diagram of Dimona nuclear facility: Israel's bomb factory as revealed by Mordechai Vanunu.

treatment of Vanunu—not to mention its systematic denial over the years of human and national rights to the Palestinian people—may not be sufficient inducement for some to critically re-examine Israeli government

"To think that Sharon and his colleagues will have their fingers on the Israeli trigger should make every human being sleepless." —Israeli peace activist Gideon Spiro

policies and their consequences. Israel's large nuclear stockpile and extensive production facilities, combined with its adamant self-proclaimed unaccountability and unabashedly militaristic orientation, however, should make everyone sit up and take notice. Just as Vanunu's own fate is uncertain, an atomically armed and dangerous Israel renders the fate of the Middle East equally as uncertain.

Commenting on Vanunu's findings in no uncertain terms, outspoken Israeli peace activist Gideon Spiro wrote, "It is only a matter of time until Israel uses its nuclear weapons, especially if we remember that Israel's rightwing leadership has the ability to win in an election. To think that Sharon and his colleagues will have their fingers on the Israeli trigger should make every human being sleepless." □

Contributions to the Mordechai Vanunu Legal Defense Fund may be sent to P. O. Box 45005, Somerville, MA 02145. Contributions will be forwarded directly to defense attorney Amnon Zichroni in Jerusalem.