

Palestine Focus

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Editorial:

Israeli Wars: The Myth of Security

Two years after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, its historical significance stands out in bold relief. The wars of an expansionist power are more revealing than its temporary periods of peace.

Though Israel remains militarily strong after the Lebanon invasion, it failed to achieve its stated objectives. In fact, Israel has lost a lot in its invasion of Lebanon: its national consensus, its economic stability, its facade of infallible intelligence and military might. And despite the loss of hundreds of soldiers, there is no sign that any Israeli government—the present Likud or the potential Labor regime—will abandon its strategy of expansion through war. No matter what apparent tactical shifts may result from the upcoming Israeli elections, Israeli policy will continue the course followed by all Israeli governments to date.

Israel's supporters always portray Israel under constant threat of annihilation by powerful and hostile neighbors. In fact, Israel has never been seriously threatened; all its wars have been launched with the intention of seizing additional Arab land.

The Israeli state was founded in warfare and bloodshed. In 1948 hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were driven out of their homeland by the atrocities committed against them by Menahem Begin's Irgun and Yitzhak Shamir's Stern Gang along with the newly formed Israeli army.

In 1956 the Israeli army joined French and British troops in an invasion of Egypt. Egypt had done nothing to provoke the invasion and certainly presented no threat to Israeli security. Egyptian President Nasser had nationalized the Suez Canal, hardly an act of war.

In 1967 Israel invaded Egypt and Syria, destroying the Egyptian and Syrian air forces on the ground. American Jewish support for the state mushroomed after they were told the attack was preemptive. Fearing that Israeli Jews were genuinely threatened, many Americans were driven almost to a frenzy to demonstrate their support for Israel.

At the time Israeli leaders loudly proclaimed that the Egyptians were moving their troops in preparation for an attack. However, in August 1982 Menahem Begin told



Israeli blockade of bridge over Awali River in south Lebanon, north of the city of Sidon. The soldiers fired over the head of the photographer just before this photo was taken. Jeffrey Blankfort

the National Defense College: "In June 1967, we again had a choice. The Egyptian Army concentrations in the Sinai approaches do not prove that Nasser was really about to attack us. We must be honest with ourselves. We decided to attack him."

In 1973, for the first time, the Israelis were attacked, though the attacks were made on occupied Egyptian and Syrian territory. Prior to the war Egyptian President

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Israel's Occupation of Lebanon Continues

By Douglas Franks

The population has to understand that we will remain in the southern zone of 45 kilometers for at least five years." The angry response of an Israeli politician to the abrogation of the May 17th 1983 Shultz agreement? No, this was a decree issued by an Israeli military governor for southeastern Lebanon more than six months before the abrogation on March 5, 1984. Though heated debate over Israel's next move in Lebanon ensued from the abrogation, Israel's occupation of Lebanon is more viselike than ever as it enters its third year.

Lebanese resistance to occupation and internal Israeli pressures—public opposition to Israeli policies in Lebanon and astronomical inflation, which have sparked early elections—grow more formidable every day. Yet those policies have remained essentially unchanged since June 1982. Israel will now "determine the best ways of ensuring its security," an official statement from

Jerusalem announced after the abrogation. That it will "act as it sees fit," however is no change of direction but something Israel has done from the outset.

Despite their differences, the two main contenders in the upcoming Israeli elections, Prime Minister Itzhak Shamir and opposition leader Shimon Peres, concur that Israel will have to maintain its military presence in Lebanon "for some time to come." "We don't actually need additional permission from anyone else," asserted Peres. He recommends increased reconnaissance flights, naval patrols, and "early warning stations." No one in the Israeli government is prepared to set limits on the occupation.

No "limits" apparently apply to means as well as duration. "West Bank" tactics, such

as mass arrests and sealing off villages, are rife; Israeli attempts to recruit collaborators

persist; the economic consequences of the invasion wear on. The Israelis have also resumed air strikes throughout Lebanon, a grim reminder of the catastrophic summer of 1982.

Infrastructure of Occupation

If south Lebanon only is taken into account, eight hundred thousand Lebanese

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"The Lebanese have a country and they want it back."

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After the Invasion: U.S. Cluster Bombs Once Again Go to Israel

By Franklin Lamb

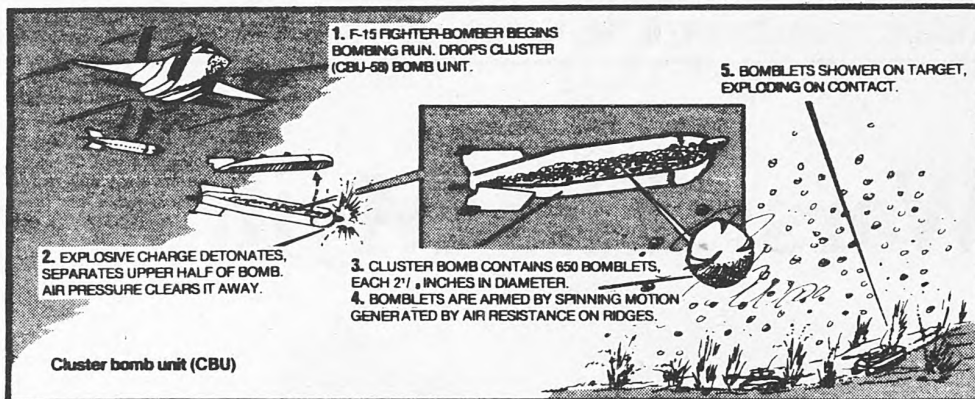
Some of the U.S. concessions to Israel as part of the expanded U.S.-Israel "partnership for strategic and political cooperation" were disclosed November 30, 1983. While it was no surprise that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir had pressured Washington to lift the July 1982 suspension on cluster bomb shipments, many people were surprised when President Reagan readily agreed.

Israel's use of American weapons, particularly cluster bombs, which became known as the "napalm of Lebanon," has left a bitter taste with the American public, as well as with many members of Congress.

Moreover, ample data, including a recently completed 18-month study, establishes Israel's widespread and indiscriminate use of American cluster bombs against civilians in Lebanon and shows Israel's use of U.S. cluster bombs to have been far more pervasive than earlier documented. Gathered in Lebanon and analyzed in Washington, this evidence confirms a classified CIA report that, since first receiving U.S. cluster bombs during the October 1973 Yom Kippur War, Israel has used in Lebanon the following types of American cluster bombs in violation of U.S. law: CBU 24/B (BLU 26/B "Guava" Bomblet first used by the U.S. in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos); CBU 49 B/B, CBU 52/B (BLU 61 Bomblet); CBU 58 A/B (BLU 63/B Bomblet); CBU 59/B APAM (BLU 77/B Bomblet); MK 20 "Rockeye" (MK 118 Bomblet); M-42 HE Cluster Bomb Grenade; M-43 HE Cluster Bomb Grenade; M-46 HE Cluster Bomb Grenade; and Fleshettes (another variety of cluster munition using hundreds of one-inch darts in a single artillery shell). Under the Reagan proposal, all of these, as well as the latest model cluster bombs can be shipped to Israel.

Other evidence from Lebanon includes:

- Scores of eyewitness accounts of cluster bombs being dropped on civilian neighborhoods, as well as photographs, video film, and physical samples of the above listed cluster bomb types;
- Verified locations in Lebanon where Israel dropped cluster bombs have been logged including 19 locations in West Beirut and 51 named locations throughout Lebanon;



- Results of ongoing explosive ordnance cleanup efforts by the British, French, Italian, and U.S. contingents of the Multinational Force in Beirut, including the findings by the MNF of more than three thousand unexploded cluster bombs dropped by Israel;
- Medical affidavits from doctors who have treated cluster bomb patients at the 20 hospitals and clinics operating in West Beirut during the Israeli siege, attesting to the large number of women, children, and elderly killed or injured by cluster bombs;
- The uncovering of classified IDF documents issued to Israeli soldiers warning of dangers of IDF-dropped cluster bombs—on the very day (June 17) that Prime Minister Begin was assuring President Reagan that Israel had not used cluster bombs in Lebanon and would not do so;
- Posters circulated by women's organizations in Lebanon showing four of the nine cluster bomb types listed above and warning of their danger.

According to Reagan Press Secretary Larry Speakes and other officials, before the shipments would be resumed Israel will have to agree to "a definitive guarantee against violations" on the use of the cluster bombs. Far from reassuring, it is hard to escape a sense of déjà vu, bearing in mind previous Israeli "definitive guarantees against violations," including:

- Pledges contained in the July 7, 1952 U.S.-Israel Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement that Israel would use U.S. arms only for self-defense;
- Identical commitments required by the U.S. Arms Export Control Act, 1976, which requires a termination of arms shipments to offending countries;

- A December 16, 1976 agreement between Israel and the United States wherein Israel pledged it would not use cluster bombs unless it were attacked by more than one country and then only "against fortified military targets";
- U.S.-Israel agreements dated April 10 and 11, 1978 in which Israel was asked to agree to additional conditions on the use of American cluster bombs and promised not to use them unless attacked by the "regular forces of a sovereign nation in which Israel is attacked by two or more of the nations Israel fought in 1967 and 1973." They also prohibited the use of cluster bombs "against any areas where civilians were exposed."



A child plays with cluster-bomb fragments. Some bombs are designed to look like toys.

The last agreement was insisted upon by the Carter administration during heated meetings with Israeli officials following CIA reports that Israel had flagrantly violated earlier restrictions on cluster bomb use during its 1978 "Operation Litani" when, according to the CIA, Israel "saturated South Lebanon with U.S. cluster bombs—mainly against civilian refugee camps."

Against a backdrop of persistent Israeli denials of cluster-bomb use, a CBS News report of July 17, 1982 cited another CIA report which clearly showed that Israel used U.S. cluster bombs "indiscriminately against civilian targets." One State Department official called continuing Israeli denials "absurd. It's an insult to our intelligence as well as our intelligence community."

It is now up to the U.S. Congress to decide if, given the sordid history of their use, resumption of supply of these heinous antipersonnel weapons to a demonstrably untrustworthy recipient is truly in America's national interest and will, as Mr. Reagan has stated, further advance peace prospects in the Middle East. The Israel Lobby, which has a very special relationship with Congress, is betting that it will decide in favor of Israel.

In any case, it will be interesting to see what imaginative syntax and language will be employed in the new "definitive guarantee against violations" agreement which will restrain Israel where earlier ones have so miserably failed. As of April 1984, no final language had been agreed upon. According to one State Department official, Israel has not yet been pressing very hard on this issue, partly because Israel is wary of public reaction on the cluster-bomb issue and partly because other aid requests have been deemed more urgent by Tel Aviv. Israel is believed to still have an inventory of fourteen thousand U.S. cluster bombs, some of which contain as many as 650 (CBU-58) individual bomblets.

A State Department official at the Israeli desk explained U.S. strategy to prevent more cluster-bomb abuses: "If Israel violates this agreement and uses cluster bombs against civilians, we'll just have to slap another suspension on them." This solution will doubtless be reassuring to the people of the Middle East. □

Dr. Franklin Lamb specializes in international law and is a frequent contributor to Middle East International. He accompanied Rev. Jesse Jackson to Damascus as his legal advisor.

FOCUS ON ACTION

By Steve Goldfield

Boston has long been an activist center for Middle East issues. Many organizations with a history of work around Palestine, Lebanon, and related issues are based there. An extensive U.S. Out of Lebanon Campaign—complete with buttons, petitions, and lettergrams—united many groups. In February over a hundred activists met to discuss issues and strategies in a conference cosponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, Catholic Connection, Lebanon Emergency Committee, and Mobilization for Survival. The conference was addressed by Noam Chomsky, *Palestine Focus* contributing editor Ur Shlonsky, and Eqbal Ahmed, among others. Grassroots International (P. O. Box 312, Cambridge (A), MA 02139), which focuses on disaster relief in Lebanon and the Horn of Africa, organized Peace in Lebanon Week, April 23—29. Grassroots is a spinoff from Oxfam-America, which has discontinued its work in Lebanon.

Berkeley's initiative to cut U.S. aid to Israel by the amount used to build settlements in the occupied territories is approaching its critical period. Zionist opposition has gelled with plans for an extensive advertising campaign and endorsements from many prominent figures, some of whom have in the past supported issues concerning Palestinian rights. An attempt to kill the initiative in the Berkeley City Council barely failed. While most of the country will be watching the battle between Jesse Jackson, Walter Mondale, and Gary Hart on June 5, voters in Berkeley will also be choosing a Rent Board and expressing their views on the eviction of Palestinians, both for the first time.

One of the major rallies at the Democratic Convention in San Francisco will be "Vote Peace in '84" on July 16. "Vote Peace" has three major planks in its platform for peace with justice: "Peace is to Freeze and Reverse the Arms Race"; "Peace is a Foreign Policy of Nonintervention"; and "Peace is Jobs and Human Needs." Under the second plank appears the point: "No troops to the Middle East." The broad peace movement is finding it must concern itself with the Middle East if it is to address the critical problems of peace in our time. The November 29th Committee for Palestine enthusiastically endorsed the rally and is participating actively in building for what we hope will be a massive demonstration.

With only a few notable exceptions, the U.S. labor movement has maintained strong ties to the Israeli labor

federation, the Histadrut, and strongly supported U.S. policy in the Middle East. From Los Angeles comes word that the California State Council of the Service Employees International Union, representing about 140,000 members, passed a resolution against the United States invasion of Grenada, against continued attempts to overthrow the Nicaraguan government, and against U.S. support for the Gemayel regime in Lebanon. The resolution goes to the international convention in May 1984. Local 535, which introduced the resolution, also protested the Sabra and Shatila massacres in 1982.

The Palestine Human Rights Campaign will hold a regional conference in San Francisco in May. The PHRC conference features panels with, among others, Israeli lawyer Felicia Langer, Palestinian scholar Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, peace activist Jack O'Dell, Rev. Don Wagner of PHRC, Hassan Abdul Rahman of the PLO, Gail Pressburg of the American Friends Service Committee, Father Elia Shakur from the Galilee, and *Palestine Focus* contributing editor Hilton Obenzinger, who recently addressed the World Affairs Council in Eugene, Oregon.

The Committee for Academic Freedom in the Israeli Occupied Territories (CAFIOT) at the University of California, Berkeley has just concluded a for-credit course on Palestine which brought scholars from many disciplines to Berkeley for Wednesday-night lectures. *Focus* contributing editor Steve Goldfield joined Central America specialist Pat Flynn for a lecture on Israel and Central America. At press time, Noam Chomsky was scheduled to address the final meeting of the class. □

Palestinians in Israeli Jails

Torture and Prisoners of Conscience

By Tony Martin

At the time the United Nations voted to support the creation of the State of Israel in November 1947, Chaim Weitzman, Israel's first president wrote:

I am certain that the world will judge the Jewish state by what it shall do with the Arabs.

Since that time the face of the newly created state has come into sharper focus for the world community. With each Israeli violation of international law, such as the illegal invasion of Lebanon, it becomes increasingly difficult to overlook the unmistakably repressive features of Israel. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Israeli treatment of Palestinian prisoners.

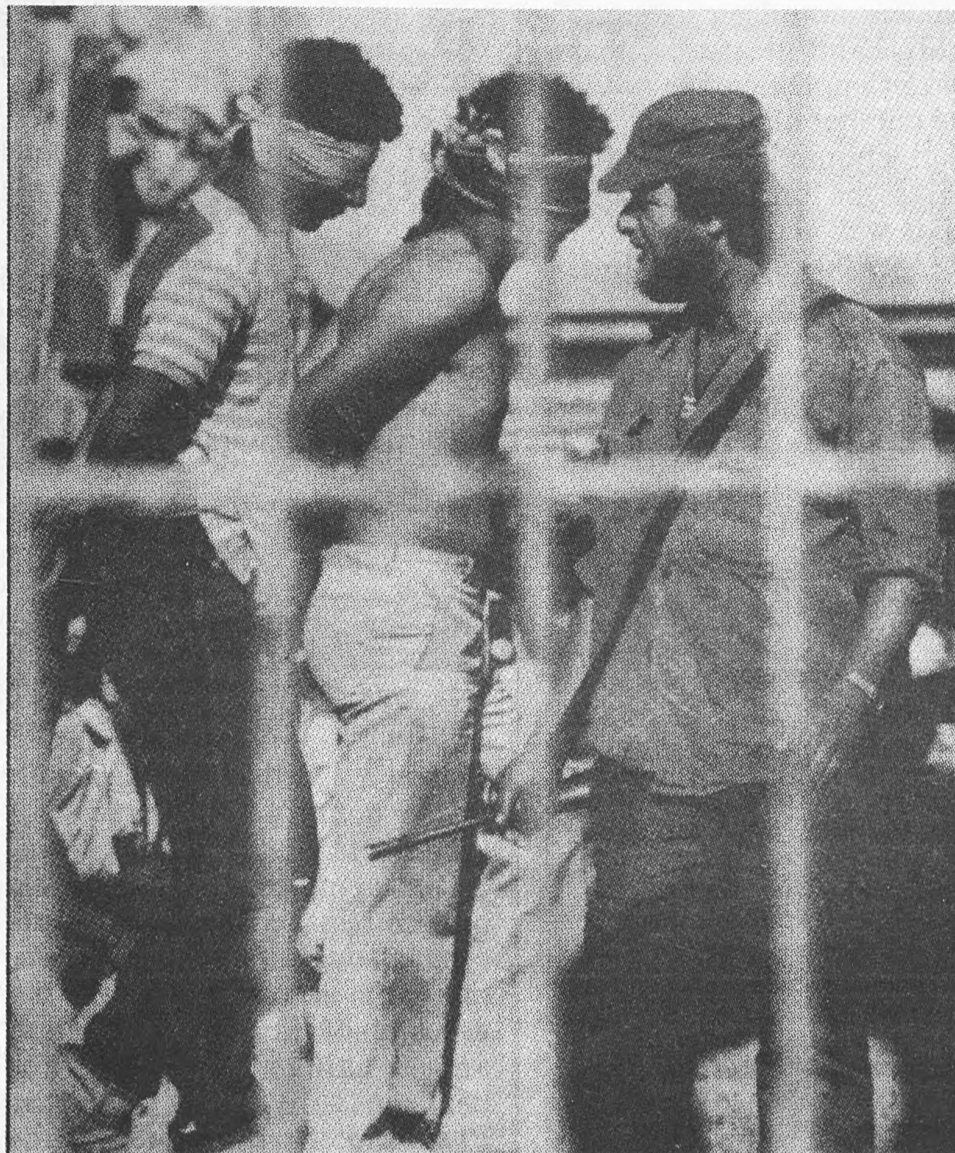
Last fall, Father Edward Dillon, an American theological scholar, completed a firsthand investigation of the condition of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons in both Lebanon and Israel. He wrote:

There may be something especially revealing about prisons. Nothing for example, reveals the murderous heart of the Nazi regime as does the system of concentration camps with their grisly meaning.... So it may yet prove to be with Israel. Its expanding system of prisons and its treatment of prisoners may eventually provide the world with the key to understanding the peculiar ethos of its colonialism.

The American press has hardly concerned itself with the brutal treatment of those Palestinians locked in Israeli prisons. It was only when thousands of Palestinian prisoners of war were released from the Israeli concentration camp in southern Lebanon called Ansar in an exchange between Israel and the PLO in November 1983 that any minimal coverage was given. While these revelations justifiably shock world conscience, these conditions are not isolated: The training ground for such atrocities has long been prisons inside Israel.

Consider the view of this anonymous Israeli official interviewed by Grace Halwell in her book, *Journey to Jerusalem*: "Let me remind you," said the official, "that Israel is a Jewish state, determined to remain so. Yet we rule 1.7 million Arabs, and for more than a decade 1.2 million of these have been under military occupation. Under our military rules, we can arrest and hold prisoners without permitting them to see a lawyer. Nor are we required to hold any court proceedings. Under these conditions, in which we report only to ourselves, are you surprised to hear that there is torture? How else do you suppose we keep more than a million people subdued, if not by torture?"

A 1977 report by the London Sunday Time's "Insight" team, Paul Eddy and Peter



Blindfolded prisoners at Ansar.

Palestine

"How else do you suppose we keep more than a million people subdued if not by torture?" —Israeli official

Gilman, first exposed the officially condoned systematic use of torture to extract confessions and information and to intimidate. The report observed that "torture is organized so methodically that it cannot be dismissed as a handful of 'rogue cops' exceeding orders. It is systematic. It appears to be sanctioned at some level as deliberate policy."

The Insight report named six prisons—in Nablus, Hebron, and Ramallah on the West Bank, in the Gaza Strip and in Jerusalem—which routinely tortured prisoners. Ample evidence was also provided of torture chambers at a secret location in a special military intelligence center.

The United Nations Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practice Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories documented incidents of torture in its 1978 report to the General Assembly. It referred to evidence which

"confirms the allegations that persons under interrogation are ill-treated and that no adequate remedies exist to safeguard such persons from abuse."

Even the Human Rights Division of the U.S. State Department has declared that "the accumulation of reports from credible sources, makes it appear that instances of mistreatment have occurred."

The National Lawyers Guild conducted a thorough investigation, graphically cataloging what the State Department terms "mistreatment":

The more primitive forms of torture commonly alleged by the prisoners interviewed, and by many others as well, include beatings (particularly of the back, feet, sexual organs and other sensitive areas), burning by cigarettes, forcing detainees to stand naked for long periods exposed to heat or cold; dousing naked detainees with hot or cold water, cutting the body with razor blades, use of dogs to bite or scratch detainees; sensory deprivation (withholding of food, blindfolding for long periods), insertion of bottles or sticks into a detainee's anus or vagina; insertion of a wire into the penis.... Some detainees have alleged that electrical shock was applied to sensitive parts of their bodies with wires specially prepared for that purpose.

Israeli Attorney Felicia Langer has echoed many of the conclusions documented by such international organizations as Amnesty International, the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, the Swiss League for Human Rights, and Law in the Service of Man, an affiliate of the International Committee of Jurists in Geneva. In her speech before the U.N. Conference on the Question of Palestine in Geneva in 1983, she stated:

The policy of the deportation, torture of detainees, mass arrests, collective punishments, arbitrary killings of civilians, among them children, and humiliation and degradation of Palestinians in their daily life has been executed by the Israeli authorities in the occupied territories during all these years... The use of torture is a common practice by Israeli investigators. I have seen with my own eyes many victims of torture with marks on their bodies.... The prisons are terribly overcrowded with dark cells, sometimes without any fresh air. The prisoners receive insufficient food, suffer from lack of movement, and from clothing of a bad quality. Medical care is far from satisfactory; because of malnutrition, lack of vitamins, lack of sun and fresh air, and poor hygiene conditions, many prisoners suffer from diseases.

In regards to those Palestinians captured in warfare with Israel, the International Red Cross along with the International Commission of Jurists have urged Israel to grant Palestinian prisoners POW status according to the Geneva Convention. Israel has steadfastly refused. To recognize POW status would be an admission that Palestinians possess national rights—the attempt to obliterate this fact underlies all Israeli policy. As a consequence, all prisoners suffer great pains when expressing their Palestinian identity. As Felicia Langer describes it:

For singing national songs, or even speaking loudly, or expressing opinions against the hard prison conditions, Palestinian prisoners are often punished arbitrarily by confinement in a narrow solitary cell, by cancelling family visits, walks, and many times beating and other physical abuses. The prisoners protested against such practices in the prisons of Beer Sheba, Nablus, Nafha, and Jenin by strikes, and now in the women's prisons, Neve Terza.

During the last year there have been organized protests in every Israeli prison with political prisoners. Neve Terza, a women's prison located in Ramle, serves as a characteristic example of spirit of the Palestinian resistance in the prisons.

Twenty women prisoners went on strike to protest conditions in May 1983. They refused to perform such tasks as serving the warden, kitchen and sewing duty. In an attempt to break the strike, Israeli police raided the prison using clubs and tear gas. Failing to break the strike, authorities imposed new restrictions in January, including the confiscation of all personal property such as diaries and books and the prohibition of any radios and television. Family visits were cut to 50 percent and exercise breaks were limited to one hour per day. In addition, prisoners were prevented from corresponding with their families through the Red Cross. On March 8, 1984—International Women's Day—the prisoners won their demands.

Many Palestinians demonstrated to support the Neve Terza prisoners, joined by groups of sympathetic Israelis. Recently the Women's Prisons Society in Nazareth demonstrated in front of the prison along with the Committee to Stop the War in Lebanon. Women Against Occupation—an Israeli women's group—picketed a Tel Aviv police station in support of the women prisoners.

International scrutiny, outcries from Israeli progressives and from around the world, along with the resistance of the Palestinians themselves, all call attention to Israel's repressive policies. Indeed, 35 years after Chaim Weitzman's admonition that the "world will judge the Jewish state by what it shall do with the Arabs," the verdict is in and apologists for Israel have a lot of explaining to do. □



Ansar Prison Camp in South Lebanon: still in use.

Gamma

Noam Chomsky is professor of Linguistics at M.I.T., a long-time activist, and author. He was interviewed in Cambridge by Ur Shlonsky for Palestine Focus.

PF: The peace movement in the United States—the disarmament movement, the nonintervention movement—have generally been reluctant to speak out against Israel. How would you explain this reluctance?

NC: There are two reasons. The primary reason is that since 1967, there has been an enormous sympathy for Israel. I mean this in a special sense, sympathy for a greater expansionist Israel. Israel's military successes in 1967 were extremely impressive to a wide spectrum of American opinion, including a good deal of American liberalism, who basically relished and admired the successful use of violence.

In the case of Israel, this was combined with a remarkable ability to combine the fact of military dominance with the appearance of being a victim, and that made it possible for liberal humanitarians to express their enthusiasm and support for the major military power in the region while pretending that they were defending a victim of oppression. Those who didn't share that attitude nevertheless recognized that if they were to take a critical attitude toward U.S. policy toward Israel or toward Israel's actions, they simply would lose their support from that spectrum of political opinion to which they could appeal.

PF: Has this been the case during the last year, following the invasion of Lebanon and the Sabra and Shatila massacres, which were certainly a blow to any humanitarian image of Israel?

NC: Substantial segments of liberal American opinion supported the invasion of Lebanon. The Democratic Party, at the end of June 1983, came out with a strong statement endorsing the invasion and took an even stronger position than the Reagan administration. Even the Santa Monica City Council, one of the most left-wing political groups in power in the United States, during the worst stages of the bombing in Beirut came out with a grotesque statement, not only endorsing the invasion, but speaking of it as a great period in Israel's history. After the worst impact of the bombing of Beirut began to appear on daily TV, and of course after the Sabra and Shatila massacres, these groups did tend to back off.

In fact, it's quite interesting to see how things developed from September 1982 until today. What has happened, both on the part of the Reagan administration and on the part of large sectors of American liberalism, has been to gradually reconstruct the basis for their overwhelming support for Israel no matter what. And they've done it by ingenious techniques. For example, the rejection of the Reagan plan: The fact is that the plan was killed by the United States and Israel within about three or four days. Israel immediately rejected the plan, and the Reagan administration backed the rejection by immediately asking for an increase of aid to Israel, which was then increased further by the Democrats in Congress. So by that point the Reagan plan was finished.

But that, of course, is an unacceptable version of history, so for the next few months the media attempted to recast these events such that the onus could be placed on the Arabs, particularly on the Palestinians. By about February or March, that's the way the story looked—that the Palestinians, who as a matter of course refuse to consider peace with Israel, have once again destroyed the statesmanlike initiative of the American government.

And so the basis has been to some extent reconstructed for a full-hearted support for the Israeli aggression and expansionism which has been characteristic of American liberalism since 1967. In fact, it is an intriguing example of the effectiveness of organized propaganda systems in democratic systems.

PF: What is the role of the pro-Israel lobby, the organized Jewish community, in this process?

NC: They have played a significant role, but I think it is misleading to attribute so much to the American Jewish community. No domestic pressure group will have any major influence on policy or ideology unless its position is in accord with the central sectors of American power. In the case of Israel, there has been a split among those who really exercise power in the United States. Some support the concept of Israel as a Sparta, a militarized state, the attack dog of the United States in the Middle East as well as a provider of subsidiary services such as supporting murderous regimes elsewhere. The other point of view, well represented in American ruling circles, is to accept the kind of political settlement which has really been available for the last decade or more.

The so-called Jewish lobby, and in fact the sectors of American opinion from which it draws its support, have supported the concept of Israel as a kind of Sparta, an international pariah totally dependent on the United States, committed to the use of violence in the Middle East and elsewhere. That is what they want Israel to be. That is called "support for Israel" by some Orwellian perversion of language.

Because that picture does accord with major sectors of American power, it could become dominant. If it conflicted with the major interests of those who wield power in the United States, then the power of the Jewish lobby

Interview with Noam Chomsky

Part II:

The Peace Movement and the Middle East



Peter Jones/Pennsylvania Gazette

would dissipate. In fact, we've seen this, back in 1956. The Jewish lobby campaigned on behalf of Israel when it invaded Egypt. But this was counter to the interests of American power at the time because the Israelis picked the wrong allies. They invaded jointly with England and France. The United States had been trying to exclude England and France from the Middle East and therefore strongly opposed Israel's attack on Egypt.

The Jewish lobby had no influence at all. Right before a presidential election, at the most politically sensitive moment, Eisenhower and Dulles ordered Israel to leave the territories they had conquered. At that time, the Jewish lobby's commitment to an expansionist, militaristic Israel did not coincide with that of American power.

In 1967, when Israel conquered the Sinai, the Jewish lobby was very influential. Israel had made a wiser choice. Instead of choosing rivals of the United States, it picked the United States itself. So the conquest of the Sinai was applauded.

There are also other factors. The Evangelical movement, quite significant because it includes tens of millions of people, many anti-Semitic, happens to be pro-Israel for its own reasons in this special sense, i.e., in favoring an Israeli Sparta. This is an independent source of support for Israel.

PF: You've said that the disarmament movement would doom itself to irrelevance by avoiding the question of Palestine. Could you elaborate?

NC: Consider the movement opposed to nuclear war. The primary question it should ask is how a nuclear war is going to erupt. Then it should try to prevent the circumstances under which that could happen. According to the propaganda system, the way a nuclear war would erupt would be that the Soviet Union would attack Western Europe, then we would respond and so forth. But, in fact, that's pure gibberish. No rational person has ever believed that the Soviet Union would attack Western Europe or for that matter that the West would attack Eastern Europe. There has been no hint of that sort of thing. Nor has the Soviet Union ever had the capacity to do so.

Nonetheless, there is a strong likelihood that a nuclear war will erupt. If we look at the history of the strategic nuclear alerts and nuclear threats, we can see exactly how it will happen. A third-world conflict will develop in which the superpowers, for their own reasons, have become engaged and thereby come into conflict. As the delicate balance is overcome, that conflict will erupt into a direct confrontation, a nuclear war. This has come perilously close to happening in the past and it will undoubtedly happen in the future.

Well, what are the likely clash points? Nothing even compares to the Middle East. There are many possibilities, but the Middle East is by far the most inflammatory. Right now both the United States and the Soviet Union have major naval forces close to the coast of

Beirut. The Russians have several thousand soldiers manning defensive missiles in Syria as a result of Israel's totally unprovoked attack on Syria in 1982. The United States is now engaged on one side in the Lebanese civil war. The Syrians are engaged on the other side. American planes are being shot down. The Americans are shelling the Syrians and so on. It would take very little to turn it into a great-power confrontation.

In fact, the same was true in 1982. When Israel invaded Lebanon, it went out of its way to attack the Syrian army which was apparently not expecting the attack and had not even mobilized its reserves yet. Israel bombarded and occupied the Soviet embassy in Beirut—a completely gratuitous provocation. This was at a time when one of the major military powers of the world was conquering a completely undefended city. To take over the Russian embassy then was a pure act of provocation and had no military purpose whatsoever.

There were indications by the Soviet Union throughout that period threatening that if Israel went too far, they would use military force. Fortunately for the world, the Soviet Union accepted all these provocations and attacks on the part of Israel without responding. The United States would never have done that. Suppose Cuba had invaded Guatemala and had killed American advisors and bombarded the American embassy and taken over part of it. We would have dropped nuclear bombs on Havana, probably even on Moscow. The first time a Cuban soldier landed, we would have done so. But we take it for granted that the Russians will accept with equanimity affronts of the kind that the United States would never tolerate. Fortunately, they have done so. Otherwise we wouldn't be around to talk about it. But the point is that it did come dangerously close to a confrontation.

And this has happened before. The last known case of nuclear alert on the part of the United States was in the latter part of the October 1973 war when Israel surrounded the Egyptian Third Army in violation of the ceasefire. The Russians mobilized airborne units, and the United States went on nuclear alert. That's only two steps from a nuclear war.

There have been earlier cases. When the Marines landed in Lebanon in 1958, a strategic nuclear alert was called. According to American participants, the United States actually threatened to use nuclear weapons if the Lebanese army resisted. In 1967 when Israel bombarded the American spyship, the Liberty, this was again a gratuitous attack on an undefended ship, apparently in an effort to try to prevent it from monitoring Israeli plans to attack the Golan Heights in violation of the ceasefire. When the ship was attacked, it called for air support from the Sixth Fleet offshore in Naples. The commander of the Liberty actually did not know who was attacking. Jets armed with nuclear weapons took off from the Sixth Fleet with instructions to use destructive force as necessary. They didn't know whom they were going to bomb. They were called back by the Pentagon, but that again came very close.

If the peace movement were to take seriously its commitment to avoid nuclear war, it would be much concerned with alleviating the tensions and conflicts that have led to these confrontations. Now the United States plays the major role, the dominant role in these tensions and conflicts. So insofar as the peace movement excludes these concerns from its domain, it is excluding itself from the center of the arena of the efforts to prevent nuclear confrontation.

PF: With some 30,000 American troops in vessels near Lebanon, the probability of war is certainly greater than it has been. Is it in the interest of the United States and Israel to provoke a war with Syria? What would be the consequences of such a war?

NC: It certainly is not in the interest of either the United States or Israel to provoke a war with Syria. However, groups with power in the United States and Israel may see it in their interest. The Reagan administration is following a classic American pattern. This administration is committed in its domestic policy to militarization of the economy. Concomitant to the commitment to military production is international confrontation. There has to be a threatening "evil empire" and so on. This commitment to confrontation shows up in Central America, in the Middle East. As a matter of fact, it showed up in the Shultz plan for Lebanon.

The Shultz plan [the May 17 treaty between Israel and Lebanon—ed.] was designed in such a way that Syria would necessarily reject it. This was pointed out not long ago by the Israeli orientalist Yehoshafat Harakabi. He said that the essence of the plan was that state A and state B got together and told state C to cut its hand off. Not surprisingly, state C, namely Syria, refused. The rejection of the plan by the Syrians enabled confrontation to be established.

There were certainly alternatives. If the United States had been interested in peace rather than confrontation, it could have called upon Israel to withdraw unconditionally as had been demanded by the United Nations with totally hypocritical American assent. This would have been in keeping with the principle that there should be no reward for aggression. Israel should gain nothing from this

Continued on page 5

"The Disease Is Called Occupation"

Rita Giacaman teaches at Bir Zeit University, one of the major Palestinian national institutions located on the occupied West Bank. She also works on family health care at the village level. She was interviewed by Palestine Focus in February 1984.

PF: What is the current situation at Bir Zeit?

RG: The university is closed frequently because it is a symbol of Palestinian national culture. A month ago six kilograms of tnt were found planted by the Israeli terrorist organization called TNT which is a terribly conservative fascist movement. Our students protested and were imprisoned as a result. The old campus where the protest occurred was closed down. [Since this interview, the whole campus has been closed.]

PF: How was your work at the community health unit affected by the closure of the university?

RG: What we try to do at the community health unit is to create an alternative health model that is compatible with the real needs of the people. This is important because until recently Palestinians have simply adopted the type of health care that they were taught in Europe and the United States. We concentrate on the family health care model in rural areas and on the training of village health workers such as midwives.

Every time the university closes down our work is hampered not only at the university but at the primary health centers run by the villages. As soon as the army surrounds the university people are afraid to come to the villages to receive health care because they risk getting arrested on the spot. People sometimes wait too long to get a child to the hospital and the child dies.

The university is located in Bir Zeit village. The village literally lives off the university. When the university closes even simple things are affected. Shops close and transportation completely stops. The lives of three thousand people from the village are also affected.

PF: What are conditions like for Palestinian women in the West Bank?

RG: The Palestinian women's movement began in 1921 with the first formal women's organization. Since that time they have been moving forward toward a more active role in social, economic, and political life. In the late seventies and early eighties the women organized for health and education such as nursery schools and literacy programs. The military reacted by placing the leaders of these movements under town and house arrest simply for being socially and not politically active.

Recently three outstanding women were placed under town arrest. One of them is a Bir Zeit university student and now she cannot graduate. Another is a woman who is nine months pregnant and she may as a result of her arrest be denied the right to proper medical care. [This woman has since been released following international protest.] A third has been under house arrest for four years and the town arrest was just renewed.

PF: What does it mean to be under town or house arrest?

RG: It means that you are not allowed to leave a particular town. If you do leave, you go directly to prison. More importantly you have to report once or twice a day to the police station.

PF: What form does resistance to occupation take in the West Bank?

RG: There are many ways in which we resist occupation. For example there is the women's movement which unifies two objectives. The first is women's liberation and the second is national struggle. At the same time that these women are working towards the improvement of the status of women, they are also helping Palestinians stick to the land.

Another example is the movement in health. We have what are called the Medical Relief Committees that are responding to the deteriorating health situation under occupation. They do voluntary work in the villages where

70 percent of Palestinians live. We also have a voluntary work movement to help farmers till the land.

We interpret education at the university and high-school level as resistance. The military has been doing its best to stop or hamper academic freedom in the occupied territories. An example is Israeli military order 854 that reduces the universities to the status of high schools. High schools are completely controlled by the military both in terms of syllabus and in terms of the type of student who would be admitted. This order is totally unacceptable and Palestinians have resisted it.

"Since 1967 between 60 and 70 percent of the land of the West Bank has been confiscated."

PF: How has the growth of settlements affected the Palestinians?

RG: Let me begin by reminding people of the intentions of the Israeli government as far as the occupied territories are concerned. It is to obtain the land without the people. Since 1967 between 60 and 70 percent of the land of the West Bank has been confiscated. That means that there is no longer any chance whatsoever of growth for Palestinian towns and villages.

PF: In the last several months there have been several reports about Palestinian women in prisons. How many are there in Israeli prisons?

RG: I am not sure about the numbers but I could tell you that over the years a growing number of Palestinian women have been put in prison. This is a reflection of the increasing activity of Palestinian women in social, economic, and political life. It also means an increasing awareness on the part of the military that Palestinian women are no longer taking a traditional role. They are being perceived as more dangerous than before.

PF: Are Palestinian women generally imprisoned because of their political activities?

RG: Not necessarily; anything on the West Bank is interpreted as political. If you go to a village to start a nursery school to allow mothers to become literate this could be interpreted as political. A meeting of ten people—no matter what the topic—is illegal under military occupation. Most of the activities of the women in the occupied territories involve helping Palestinian stick to the land. Since this is contradictory with the interests of the military government, mainly the attempt to take the land without the people, then this is in turn interpreted as political. Therefore Palestinian women are put in prison.

PF: Can you tell us something about the health situation in the West Bank?



Rita Giacaman speaking at the Berkeley YWCA.

Steve Goldfield/Palestine Focus

RG: Basically the problem is that we don't have authority or control in health. This means that we are at the mercy of the military in terms of permits to start any health projects. Because of this, any decision as to what should or should not happen in health is not ours but the Israelis. As a result, the military allows the construction of yet another hospital when we already have 17. At the same time it does not allow the connection of villages to a potable water supply.

Twenty-nine percent of the households in the West Bank do not have a potable water supply. For the past



Rita Giacaman.

Steve Goldfield/Palestine Focus

several years we have been trying in the villages where we work to get a permit from the military to connect one village with some water. There has been no response, neither negative nor positive. The problem lies in our inability to deal with the situation. Whatever we do in health is simply palliative. It is not a radical cure for the problems because the military controls the water sources and the permits for initiation of health projects.

PF: Is there an agreed upon understanding on the charge of poisoning young Palestinian women students on the West Bank a year ago?

RG: There were about a thousand cases, mostly among young women in secondary school between the age of 12 and 17. According to the physicians who took care of the girls, there were women who suffered at least clinically clear symptoms of toxicity. Palestinian health professionals conceded that a good number of these women suffered anxiety states.

But this by itself is indicative of the situation under occupation. So far there has not been one study about the mental health of the Palestinian population under occupation.

To say that this is anxiety and not toxicity is all right. The problem that should be looked at is how come this large number of women suffer from anxiety states. If anxiety is caused by occupation, then the disease is called occupation and has to be removed. □

Chomsky (II)...

Continued from page 4

war. In fact, they should be made to pay reparations.

As far as the Syrians are concerned, it is now largely forgotten that the Syrians were scheduled to leave Lebanon in the summer of 1982. Whether they would have done so is now an unanswerable question because the Israeli attack aborted this possibility. In fact, I am inclined to believe that the timing of the Israeli attack may have been partly determined by the fear that the Syrians might withdraw, which would have eliminated one of the pretexts for the invasion.

The United States could have approached Syria, stating that we are demanding unconditional Israeli withdrawal

and we are therefore asking you to withdraw also as scheduled in 1982. The United States could also have invited the Soviet Union to take part in the negotiations as the government of Lebanon had requested. This would have been a feasible negotiating schedule.

As far as Israel is concerned, I fear that with the internal crisis, in particular the economic crisis, the government may again resort to a classic means to mobilize support, namely war. I read with some concern in the Israeli daily *Davar* several weeks ago when Hanna Zemer, the editor, wrote that most of the experts she consulted expected a war with Syria next summer. If we translate that from Newspeak into Hebrew or English, it means that they were expecting an Israeli attack on Syria this summer.

PF: And what of the Palestinians?

NC: The situation of the Palestinians is really desper-

ate. Those in the West Bank are defenseless against Israeli violence. The only support they could have is international opinion. But since the attitude in the United States toward the Palestinians is totally racist—they are not regarded as human beings with human rights—they get no protection from the United States, which is the dominant force in the region.

With the role of the PLO severely diminished, its voice in international affairs is also diminished. The Palestinians in Lebanon are like the Jews under the Nazis; they can be massacred at will. Their situation is truly desperate. Sooner or later the Phalangist government, when it gets the chance to do so, will massacre them. They have no defense. In fact, the tragedy of the Palestinians right now is a heartrending situation of a dispersed and conquered people with virtually nobody in the world to support them. □

Israel in Lebanon...

Continued from page 1

and Palestinians in an area of over one thousand square miles live under direct Israeli military rule. Some twenty-five thousand Israeli soldiers still occupy Lebanon at a cost of at least \$1 million per day. In a February 12 *Jerusalem Post* interview, an Israeli commander enunciated Israel's determination to spare nothing, in terms of human resources, for the occupation of Lebanon:

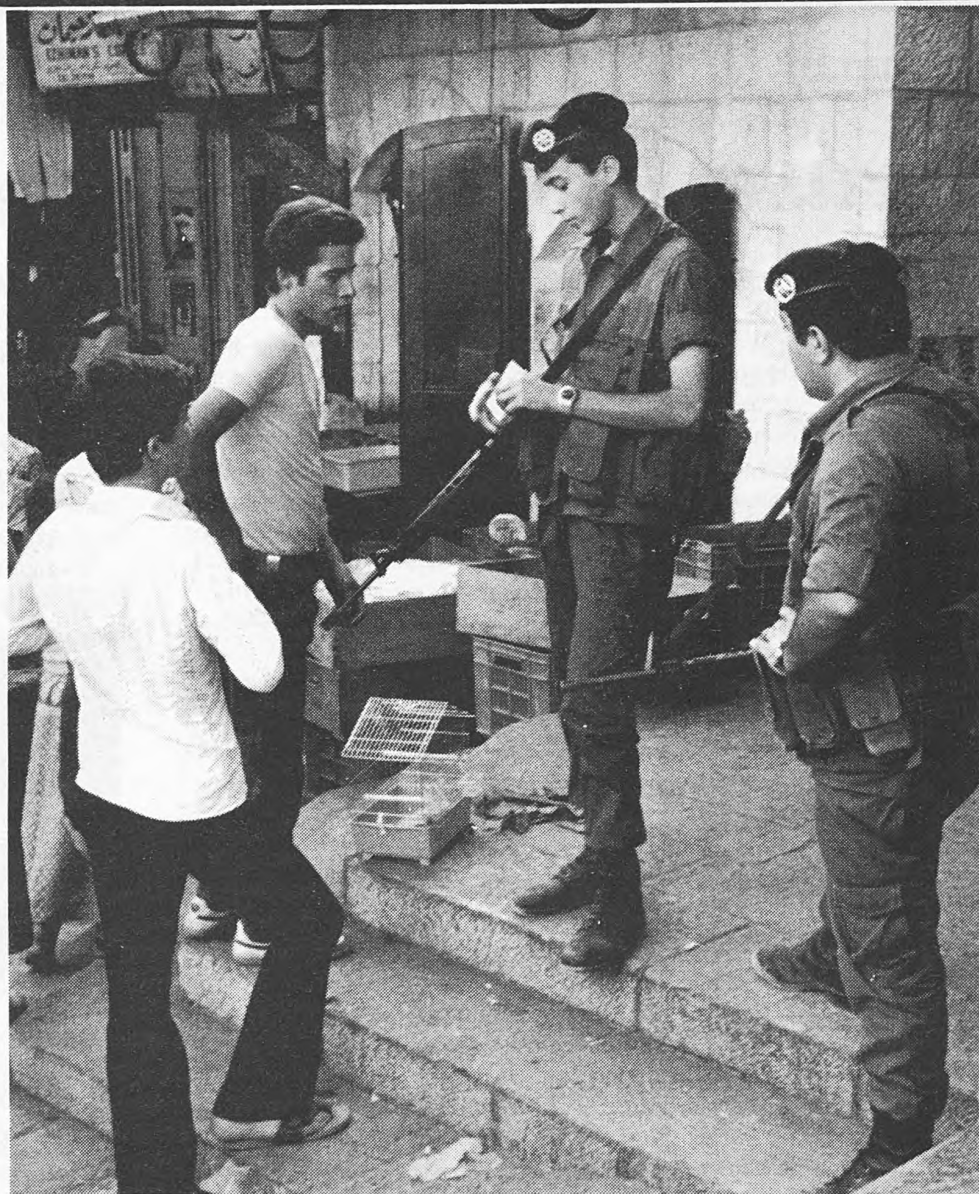
Any job, at any place, at any time. That is what guides us here. We are an elite unit in the army, with years of tradition and an unquestioned dedication to duty. That is the way we were educated, and that is the way we will educate those who come after us. We take pride in what we are, what we represent, and how we do it.

The "how" his troops take pride in is an elaborate infrastructure of occupation. At least five airstrips have been completed or are under construction by the occupiers. The Israelis occupy 47 miles of coastal highway. They remain poised in the eastern Bekaa Valley, where they are reportedly massing additional troops. Damascus is within easy reach of their artillery. Military patrols or convoys routinely venture beyond the Awali line, which by no means contains the occupiers; on February 18 an armored column of thirty vehicles moved to within ten miles of Beirut. Despite last fall's redeployment, armored columns remained stationed as far north as the Shouf foothills to "rattle sabers" at Lebanese resistance forces there. Israeli "Alpine Units," complete with snow and ski gear, patrol Mt. Baruk, the northernmost holding of the occupiers. From that 6,300-foot vantage point, "the whole panorama of Lebanon lies exposed," observed a *London Times* correspondent.

One of the most awesome displays of Israeli entrenchment is the fortification along the Awali River. "As far as the eye can see," wrote the *London Times* correspondent, viewing its construction from the air, "hundreds of trucks, earth-moving machines and laborers appear as tiny dots on the muddy brown landscape." This 67-mile long "bunker" is laced with a string of forts, watchtowers, trenches, electric fences, checkpoints, searchlights, barbed wire, artillery emplacements, and armed troops. Prefabricated military bases are hidden behind 20-foot high walls of earth and are equipped with running water and sewage systems. A labyrinthine system of roads was laid to facilitate Israeli maneuvers.

North Bank, West Bank

The Awali fortification is a key instrument in Israel's conversion of south Lebanon into a "North Bank," an occupied territory like the West Bank. The Israelis enforce varying degrees of closure all along it, ranging from severe to total. Permanent total blockade has been advocated by influential members of the Knesset and the



Israeli soldiers check Palestinian ID's in occupied Jerusalem.

Jeffrey Blankfort

**"We will remain in the southern zone for at least five years."
—Israeli military governor, southeastern Lebanon**

Israeli military establishment. On at least two occasions, the three thoroughfares between the south and north were sealed completely for periods of several days.

But even "normal" restrictive measures along the Awali line have caused the Lebanese in the south uninterrupted hardship. As few as five trucks per day have been allowed to pass, lamented Dr. Nazih Bizri, former Lebanese health minister. At such times, the south "cannot receive the most essential and fundamental supplies from the rest of Lebanon."

Checkpoints by the dozen and special licensing requirements on all motor traffic between south Lebanon and the north back up traffic for miles and cause waits of up to four and five days. Israeli tanks and artillery are trained on those waiting to proceed through the checkpoints. Many travelers must resort to going on foot, walking great distances, fording the river, and sometimes having to abandon belongings.

Lebanese newspapers contain frequent reports of Israeli checkpoint rigors: Police dogs, rifle butts prod-

ding crowds, people being forced to their knees, tanks crushing cars. Little is left unscrutinized and hardly any humiliation is left uninflicted.

West Bank tactics abound elsewhere in the south. Different forms of collective punishment are a daily occurrence and are on the rise. Milder forms include "deterrent arrests" or indiscriminate detentions of individuals or groups, house-to-house searches, random curfews and the like. Sheikh Ali Mahdi Ibrahim of Adloun recounted:

The Israelis send armored patrols in here and they send planes over. They send in foot patrols. Sometimes they raid the village. They take away youths whenever they have an accusation against them.... We are an occupied people.

The more violent forms of collective punishment include the destruction of property, houses, automobiles, and human lives. When three people were shot dead in Djibchit on March 28, Israeli officers interviewed said that those responsible for the shootings "had acted in accordance with standing orders." The Feb. 25 sealing of Maraka was accompanied by a raid. Israeli tanks, helicopters and paratroopers were brought in. Four villagers were reported killed and forty wounded when Israeli troops opened fire.

Heartrending accounts are available of the Israelis blowing up or bulldozing residences and other buildings or even demolishing them with sledge hammers. In some cases adjacent buildings are destroyed in the process. When reminded that such collective punishment violates the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Israelis say the prohibition does not apply to them. In clear reference to similar demolition policies in the West Bank, an Israeli spokesman said, "If you use artillery, it is because it is found to be effective. We just believe it will help. It helped in the past."

Parking is severely restricted. Cars are liable to be blown up by tank fire if deemed suspicious or "illegally parked." A *Jerusalem Post* correspondent calls this behavior "the IDF's way of issuing a parking ticket." A "scorched earth" policy,

though more restrained than some Israeli leaders would like, has led to the punitive razing of fruit orchards and eucalyptus groves along the coastal highway as well.

Although the plan failed in the West Bank and has thus far failed in Lebanon, Israel is still trying to create a network of collaborators in south Lebanon. Various precedents by the abortive "United South Assembly," "home guard units," and "territorial brigades," the latest attempt to constitute a "local army" was announced by Radio Israel on February 29. According to Israeli Major-General Amir Drori, "There is one security force (in southern Lebanon) and that is the Army of Southern Lebanon." The Army of Southern Lebanon would be a merger of the late Saad Haddad's militia and other Phalangist militias which recently fled to the south and would enlist any other collaborator militias as they became available. Also assisting is Haddad's de facto replacement, the ultraright Phalangist, Etienne Saqr, whose motto is "every Lebanese should kill a Palestinian." The Army of Southern Lebanon has already seen action in tandem with Israeli troops and has demonstrated a willingness to abide by the Israeli motto to shoot first.

Economic Invasion Continues, Military Invasion Resumed

The economic casualties caused by the occupation still plague Lebanon. The Gulf states are withholding all aid to Lebanon until Israel withdraws. Goods originating in or transiting Israel still flow unchecked into Lebanese marketplaces to the forced exclusion of Lebanese goods. The captive Lebanese market yielded Israel \$100 million in 1983, according to Radio Israel. Hence, Arab states are leery of buying from Lebanon.

The *Wall Street Journal* cites a 50-percent reduction in agricultural production and a 70-percent decline in agricultural products—the mainstay of the south—in south Lebanon since the invasion. Fifteen thousand farmers face permanent unemployment, according to the Sidon Chamber of Commerce. The agricultural sector lost \$55 million in November alone. Local business in the south has declined to less than a third of its level prior to the invasion, and merchants' stocks are "dangerously low."

The Awali blockade is largely responsible for much of the economic grief. Produce ends up dying on the vine because it would rot anyway if forced to sit for days in the sun at checkpoints. Cattle have similarly perished. Transportation costs have skyrocketed over 200 percent. The isolation of the south renders it grudgingly dependent on Israel to a certain extent for economic and material survival.

The broadest context of Israel's occupation of Lebanon includes the principal tactic Israel employed in June 1982: technological terror from the air. Since November Israel has launched one series of air raids after another deep into Lebanon, far from Israel's northern border. Many towns have been repeatedly bombed. A January 4 attack on the central mountains left over one hundred dead and three hundred wounded. Daily air strikes the last week of February used the horrifying vacuum, or "implosion," bomb, noted the Beirut newspaper, *Al-Safir*. In early April Israeli jets again bombed Bhamdoun in routine fashion.

Israel's wanton acts of destruction against Lebanon, seizure of Lebanese territory, repression against the Lebanese people, and economic chokehold refute the persistent Israeli argument that "our presence is not a military occupation but a temporary stay pending arrangements that will protect northern Israel's security." The growing magnitude and intensity of the Lebanese campaign to regain Lebanon's security equally affirm that Lebanon is occupied in the real and fullest sense.

Prime Minister Shamir rhetorically asked a *Wall Street Journal* correspondent, "The question always in Lebanon is if we go out, who will replace us?" After personally viewing the grim realities of Israel's two-year occupation, a UN official unwittingly answered Shamir: "The Lebanese have a country and they want it back." □



Lebanese civilians ford the Awali River to avoid a long wait at the blockaded bridge.

Nahar

Before World War II few American Jews supported the Zionist movement. During the forties and fifties, several outstanding Jewish leaders emerged to oppose the growing Zionist hold over American Jews. These included the late Moshe Menuhin, author of *The Decadence of Judaism in Our Time*, published by the Institute of Palestine Studies. Rabbi Elmer Berger, who has led anti-Zionist Jewish organizations with tens of thousands of members, is a still active member of the same generation.

Dr. Alfred Lilienthal belongs to this vital yet often overlooked tradition. Stationed in the Middle East during World War II, he has been passionately defending Palestinian rights ever since. Lilienthal authored *What Price Israel?* in 1953 (of which over a million copies have been sold in the Arab world) and, more recently, *The Zionist Connection*, which contains a comprehensive historical survey.

Often, it is assumed that concern for Palestinian rights is expressed only by people the press prefers to portray as "radical." Dr. Lilienthal refers to himself with some wit as "a Wendell Willkie Republican." His outstanding work for Palestinian rights and peace consistently upholds his ideals of liberal democracy.

Dr. Lilienthal publishes *Middle East Perspectives*, a monthly newsletter offering articles by noted authors and scholars and regular reports of Dr. Lilienthal's travels to further peace. For information on his books and the

Getting It All In FOCUS

newsletter, write to *Middle East Perspectives*, P.O. Box 154, Springfield, VA 22150.

* * *

From 1949 to 1984, the U.S. government has given Israel the equivalent of 42.3 billion in 1983 dollars. This astonishing fact is revealed in *American Aid to Israel: Nature and Impact*, by Mohamed El-Khawas and Samir Abed-Rabbo. Published by Amana Books (58 Elliot Street, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301) and with an introduction by Rabbi Elmer Berger, this study provides valuable help in understanding how Israel has been able to become a regional military giant while continuing to colonize Palestinian land without "heavy reliance on high-interest commercial loans, dipping into its foreign exchange reserves or causing economic depression." The answer, of course, is U.S. aid in astronomical amounts.

Including the uncensored "Draft Report of the General Accounting Office on U.S. Aid to Israel," this book provides much needed background.

* * *

Long-time Palestinian rights activist Sheila Ryan writes in a recent issue of the *Guardian* newsweekly of the need for the antiintervention movement to take up issues of the Middle East.

Noting the response to Reagan's recent setbacks in Lebanon she comments that "very little was heard" from "the organized forces in civil society which have worked to reign in U.S. military intervention in other instances." She terms this "another instance of disjuncture between the Reagan administration's area of priority on intervention—the Middle East—and the antiintervention movements' areas of priority—all elsewhere."

Palestine Focus readers should also examine the *Guardian* for the excellent coverage of the Middle East by freelance activist-writer Mark Garfield. If you want a dose of reality—as opposed to what often passes for Middle East media coverage—Mark Garfield joins that small but dedicated crew of honest journalists who can really keep us informed.

* * *

Many *Palestine Focus* readers have received a mailing from *Al Fajr*, English-language Palestinian weekly published in Jerusalem. In turn, *Palestine Focus* sent a mailing to *Al Fajr* readers. We hope this exchange will help both in developing an ever-growing audience. However, if any *Palestine Focus* readers would prefer not to receive such mailings, just drop us a note. □

Israeli Wars...

Continued from page 1

Sadat had offered even more generous peace terms than he was to accept in the Camp David agreement five years later. The Israeli response to such peace gestures was to step up incursions, shelling attacks, and bombing raids into Lebanon.

Whose security, after all, is at stake? Do the Palestinians of the West Bank—after seventeen years of brutal occupation, whitewashed in the American press as "benign"—threaten Israeli security? Did the PLO, which had honored a ceasefire over the Lebanese border for eleven months prior to the June 1982

"All Israel's wars have been launched with the intention of seizing additional Arab land."

invasion, threaten Israeli security—or was the threat primarily political?

The media harps on Palestinian "terrorism" to justify Israeli actions. But fewer than 300 Israelis died as a result of all Palestinian commando actions conducted prior to the 1982 invasion while tens of thousands of Palestinian and Lebanese people, mostly civilians, died as a result of the invasion. The question is not whether any particular act of Palestinian resistance should be condoned or condemned. Rather, we question a moral scale which condemns the resistance of the victim as "terrorist" while it approves invasion and occupation by the Israeli military as "Peace for the Galilee."

Since the Vietnam war and Watergate, the distinction between words and deeds has become readily apparent. In 1967 Israeli officials announced, immediately after conquering the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights: "We will never take an inch of territory." Jerusalem and the Golan have been officially annexed, and entirely giving up the occupied territories has become unthinkable in mainstream Israeli politics.

Do the Lebanese people threaten Israeli security? In truth, now that their anger has been aroused by the Israeli and U.S. intervention in their affairs, the Lebanese people do present a threat—to the Israeli strategy of dominating its neighbors by fomenting religious and ethnic sectarianism. The plan to break up Lebanon was a necessary step in the spread of fragmentation to other Arab countries.

Israeli officials solemnly intoned that "they did not covet one inch of Lebanese territory." Considering Israel's track record, how can the Lebanese people accept such assurances that southern Lebanon—already referred

to as the "North Bank" by Israelis—is secure?

How does Israel protect its security? Bombing entire refugee camps to rubble, using antipersonnel weapons such as cluster and phosphorus bombs, building settlements on occupied land in violation of international law—how do these measures protect the "security of the state of Israel"? What kind of state defines its security in such terms?

The time has come to recognize "Israeli security" for what it is, a convenient cover for Israeli and United States government aggression. "Israeli security" means insecurity for Central Americans, whose repressive governments are armed by Israeli weapons manufacturers. "Israeli security" means insecurity for South African blacks, whose government has jointly developed atomic weapons with Israel and Taiwan. It means insecurity for the Lebanese people, whose territory has been coveted by Israel at least since the 1950s. It means insecurity for all Israel's Arab neighbors; the destabilization of their countries is considered vital to Israeli "security."

But most of all, "security" for Israel has come to mean a threat to the security of the entire Palestinian people, whose very existence challenges the idea of an exclusivist Jewish state, which many Israeli policymakers believe is a state with no place for non-Jews.

Does Palestinian security count for nothing? Can Palestinians live safe from brutal massacres, such as Sabra and Shatila? Can they live safe from bombardment? Can they live in their homeland safe from theft of their land and homes, safe from the agony of dispersal and the pain of discrimination? If there is to be peace in the Middle East, these are the real security questions which must be answered.

Americans began to confront the strange inversion in our attitudes and consciousness about Israelis and Palestinians in 1982. Yet many people are still afraid to look squarely at the facts; strident voices preach that we are forgetting the very real Western responsibility for the slaughter of Jews in Europe. The fear of being falsely labeled anti-Semitic prevents many from raising criticisms of Israeli human rights violations.

Israel is the only ally of the United States which still maintains an aura of sanctity in American politics. "Israel is the best friend of the U.S." will be heard repeatedly during this election year from Hart, Mondale, and Reagan. The ability of Israel to serve U.S. interests—and to be rewarded with massive military and economic aid—has become holy writ in the American political gospel.

When our "best friend" invaded Lebanon, with full support from the Reagan administration, Israel was carrying out U.S. objectives as well as its own. Israel's failure to impose its will on Lebanon brought direct American intervention. Such aggressive policies, justified in the name of "security," directly threaten our own security.

For those genuinely concerned with the safety of all the people of the region, the road must lead toward justice and not toward the dreams of empire of the Sharons and Shamirs. The Palestinian people have no choice but to resist, but Americans (and Israelis) have the option of telling any administration and any candidate that demagogic appeals to "security," Israeli or American, will not be accepted as justification for aggression.

Real and lasting security and peace will only be achieved when the fundamental injustice done to the Palestinian people is redressed. □

The Poem Launchers

Poet Zain El-Abdeen Fouad and musician Adly Fakhry are progressive Egyptians who remained in Beirut during the Israeli siege in 1982. With Zain writing the words and Adly singing and composing on the 'oud, they traveled from position to position to sing encouragement and hope to the city's beleaguered defenders. With their rocket launchers in mind, they nicknamed Zain and Adly, "The Poem Launchers." The two artists composed and performed new songs every day, placing one more weapon in the hands of the resistance.

"Every Day There Is a Siege"

By Zain El-Abdeen Fouad.

Every day there is a siege
And every day, a song.
They begin the destruction
And we begin rebuilding.

We are the lovers of flowers and music
Lovers of the small child

Who, bit by bit
Learns to write

We are the fighting love
We are the fierce love
We grasp the flowers of all plants
If even one candle is extinguished.

We are the sun of all places
We are the coming time
We are the wind, and the ships
And we are the flower of light.

We are the roses
That blossom thorns
In the heart of the siege
That perfume all places
And raise high the flag of daylight. □

U.S. Aid: The Impact on Israeli Society

By Ur Shlonsky

Over the years, and especially since 1974, the package of U.S. military and economic aid to Israel has grown dramatically. Most of this money is channeled directly or indirectly into the Israeli military-industrial complex, whether by direct grants for military purchases and development or by general assistance in the repayment of Israel's enormous national debt, incurred by a military unable to finance itself. In addition, sales to the U.S. Defense Department and its contractors make up almost 40 percent of Israeli exports to the United States. The United States directly finances 25 percent of the Israeli government's annual budget.

Anything to do with the military is thus extremely lucrative and attracts a disproportionate amount of labor and capital. It is estimated that about one-quarter of the Israeli labor force is directly or indirectly employed by the Israeli army. The largest military manufacturer is owned by the government; the Histadrut labor federation owns the second largest.

Israel has grown increasingly dependent on the United States. Most experts agree that a total withdrawal of U.S. aid would topple the Israeli economy in weeks. For the small, yet powerful, upper echelons of Israeli society, this is really no big deal: their motivation is profit—fast and in dollars—and what could be better than the present setup in which they are subsidized by the U.S. government? However, for most Israelis and Palestinians who are part of the Israeli economy, this situation is precarious indeed. The short-term gains of being serviced by the United States are rather insignificant compared with the emergence of Israel as a U.S. protectorate.

Less dramatic, though no less precarious, has been the effect of U.S. aid in promoting and encouraging state apartheid and the rise of popular anti-Arab racism.

Almost half of U.S. nonmilitary assistance is used to set up an apartheid regime in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as extending it into Palestinian areas in pre-1967 Israel. The U.S. General Accounting Office comments:

None of the Economic Support Fund (ESF) aid to Israel is tied to development projects, as is the case for ESF provided to almost all of the other recipient countries. Therefore, the amount is not based on a specific developmental need and there is no way to measure the precise effects that these funds have on Israel's economy. Rather, these funds serve a budget-support and political purpose.

How much is actually invested in the occupied territories remains classified but even conservative estimates are astronomi-

cal, especially when compared against Israel's budget for education or welfare. And the Israeli commitment to further seizures of Palestinian property is not just an economic matter. In recent months Israel has enacted apartheid legislation effectively extending Israeli law in all areas settled by Jews while maintaining an authoritarian military regime to rule over the Palestinians.

Another direct consequence of U.S. aid has been the extraordinary expansion of the military-industrial complex in Israel, based in a burgeoning arms industry and commercial ties with third-world dictatorships who increasingly

manovitz of the Institute for Halakhic Social Research (*Halakha* is Jewish law), for instance, recently stated that Jewish law forbids Jews and non-Jews to reside in the same building or even in the same neighborhood. Rabbi Zalmanovitz is no mere fringe figure but rather a pillar of the Israeli religious establishment; *not a single* rabbi in Israel protested his statement.

A week later, Chief Rabbi Y. Yashar of Acre called for the expulsion of 137 Palestinian families from a mixed Jewish-Arab housing project. (Acre was a major Palestinian town. Under Israeli rule, most Palestinian inhabitants were driven out in 1948 though a sizeable Palestinian minority

Criticism of Israel is thereby elegantly eliminated from political discourse. Consider the genuine public debate on whether the United States ought to condition military aid to El Salvador on its human-rights record. Most American liberals would agree this is a valid criterion for the allocation of U.S. aid. Yet very few liberals would apply the same logic to Israel; it is considered politically out-of-bounds to even question U.S. aid to Israel, which is far greater than anything given to El Salvador.

In fact, it is not Reagan who is the loudest advocate of this special treatment of Israel but Congress! The authors of the censored



Tel Aviv memorial for Sabra/Shatila massacre.

Jeffrey Blankfort

depend on Israeli arms technology and advisors to combat popular movements. The military industry systematically excludes Palestinian workers (administratively classified as "security threats") but creates opportunities for working-class Jews to obtain better industrial and managerial positions. The Palestinian labor force is thus relegated to low-status industries and services, "Arab labor" in the racist jargon that has come to permeate Israeli popular culture.

The "South Africanization" of Israeli society includes more than a material basis; the ideological underpinning is supplied by state Judaism. In a country in which church and state are not separated, the actions and pronouncements of religious leaders carry a great deal of weight. Rabbi E. Zal-

manovitz remains. Acre is one of the few places in Israel with mixed neighborhoods.) In the town of Upper Nazareth, a movement named *Mena* (Prevention) fights against leasing apartments to non-Jews. The names of homeowners who do so are made public, and they are subjected to harassment. Official condemnation is barely audible.

The other dimension of U.S. support for Israel is moral. Political support is provided not only by U.S. government agencies but by the American media. This support boils down to propagating the view that Israel is somehow unique; conventional standards of military conduct, for instance, do not apply. Israel is portrayed as the eternal victim, transcending evaluation with values by which other states are measured. Israel's uniqueness, according to this argument, derives from the Holocaust, which is viewed as the private property of the state of Israel and which lends Israel an eternally moral and righteous stance as the "protector of Jews."

GAO report on U.S. assistance to Israel baldly state,

State and DOD [Department of Defense] officials say that it is not politically possible to submit to Congress, as an administration proposal, a lower FMS [Foreign Military Sales] figure for Israel than that for the previous fiscal year. The perception held by some DOD and State officials is that congressional approval for FMS is easier to obtain if increases to Israeli assistance are sought.

There is perhaps one possible advantage to the extent of Israeli dependence on the United States. This dependence invests opposition groups in the United States with a unique role. By taking up the question of Palestine, antiwar groups can develop successful strategies to challenge Congress and the administration. Such actions on the part of American peace groups can also strengthen the work of opposition groups in Israel. □

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(415) 861-1552

P.O. Box 27462 San Francisco, CA 94127

Palestine Focus is the national newsletter of the November 29th Committee for Palestine (formerly November 29th Coalition). It 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 movement 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 the discriminatory and racist policies and practices toward Palestinians inherent in the Zionist movement and the state of Israel.

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

Contributing Editors:

Douglas Franks, Steve Goldfield, Nanay Gabriel, Tony Martin, Hilton Obenzinger, Cathryn Salazar, Ur Shlonsky

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