

Palestinian Elections: The View from the Diaspora

by Hatem Abudayyeh

Oslo is dead. This is not much of a scoop, as analysts and pundits have been saying and writing these words for many years, at least since the Intifada of September 2000 began. But now that the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections of January 25th, 2006, are over, we can officially turn off the lights on the agreement that, along with the first U.S. invasion of Iraq in 1991, has led to, arguably, the most difficult period in the modern history of Palestinian and Arab World politics.

This is not to say that the death of Oslo and the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) victory in the PLC elections will immediately lead to freedom and independence for the Palestinians. The Israeli military continues its occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem, and there are still approximately 5.5 million Palestinian refugees calling for their Right to Return, back to the lands and homes in historic Palestine they were forced to flee in 1947-48 and again in 1967. The paradox of a democracy under military occupation, or a "government" of any kind under military occupation, is what doomed Oslo from the outset, so there were strong and consistent arguments from some Palestinians that the elections could only be a farce and a waste of time and resources. In fact, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad carried this opinion into a boycott of the entire process.

But even as we acknowledge that the result of the elections is not a panacea to the issues that afflict the Palestinian people, 78% of eligible voters turned out to state defiantly that they support resistance and liberation over the status quo of a failed state-building project. Yasser Arafat's death in November 2004 has definitely caused a crisis in the leadership of his Fatah Movement, but this is not the only reason why it lost so resoundingly to Hamas. The Palestinian Authority (PA), which was formed after Oslo and dominated by Fatah, could no longer claim, even while Arafat was alive, that it was representative of the Palestinian people, that it was providing for the safety and security of the Palestinians, or that the "peace process" and "negotiations track" was leading to anything but the continued construction of the Apartheid Wall, land expropriations, home demolitions, imprisonment of activists and organizers, and injuring and killing of Palestinian civilians. The PA had become a failure at building a state infrastructure and, at the same time, a failure at resisting the Israeli onslaught against its people.

And at its worst, some of the PA's top leadership could even be considered complicit in the oppression of the Palestinian people. Hundreds of millions of dollars in humanitarian aid and infrastructural support is unaccounted for, and "security cooperation" between the PA, the Israeli intelligence and military agencies, and quite often, the U.S. CIA, led directly to the arrests of hundreds of Palestinian freedom fighters.

All of these factors helped lead to the Hamas victory, and the municipal elections from a few months back had already semi-predicted this outcome, but the clearest



Election campaigning in Gaza outside polling places on January 25, 2006

champion today is the Palestinian National Movement in general. The Palestinian people in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem voted for the Right of Return, for self-determination, and for continued resistance to Israeli and American plans for the region. On December 23rd, 2005, seventy U.S. senators passed a resolution labeling Palestinian resistance organizations as "terrorist groups" and attempted to prevent them from running in the elections. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP, a Marxist Palestinian group), as well as other resistance parties and movements, responded by threatening to boycott the elections if the PA acceded to these U.S. and Israeli demands against democracy.

The U.S. and European Union also threatened to cut aid to the Palestinian people if Hamas or any of the other resistance organizations were victorious in the elections. Millions of U.S. dollars were pumped into Fatah's campaign, but the Palestinian masses refused to be bullied into intimidation or fear.

The different social forces and political parties in Palestinian society made this election a mandate on the Palestinian national program. The last PLC election was boycotted by the majority of these forces, because at the time, Oslo was in its infancy and those elections were considered a referendum on that agreement. Members of Fatah dominated that PLC, and it degenerated into nothing more than a body that rubber-stamped all of the PA's policies and decisions. Now, as the Palestinian masses made clear their support for these legislative elections, the PLC is a more representative body that will protect the achievements of the five and a half years of this popular Intifada, and the 58 years of resistance to Israel's racist and brutal colonialism.

So, Hamas is not the only winner today in Palestine. Victorious also is the Right of Return, freedom for political prisoners, self-determination, resistance, and maybe the most important concept of all—the fact that Palestinians are an indivisible nation, inclusive of all those in the 1967 occupied territories, the 1948 territories, and especially the shatat (Arabic for Diaspora).

After Oslo, the PLC ostensibly replaced the Palestinian National Council (PNC, the "parliament in exile" and the highest decision-making body of the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO]), and over the last fifteen years, a new discourse was being developed and pressed on the Palestinian people—one that was slowly attempting to erode the rights of the Palestinians in the shatat, especially the refugees. But the refugee community, in camps throughout the Arab World and the occupied territories, and under the leadership of the worldwide Right of Return Movement (including Al-Awda, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, active in North America, Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe), rejected this discourse and forced the movements and parties that represent them in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza to take note. These forces made the Right of Return the main issue in their respective election platforms, and they rode these platforms to victory over the self-serving rhetoric and defeatism of some elements of Fatah and the PA.

Also defeated was the rhetoric of the international communi- (Continued on Page 9)

Building Solidarity: Where are We Going?

by Charlotte Kates

The Palestine solidarity movement stands today at an important historical moment. Five and one-half years into the Al-Aqsa Intifada, a defensive movement of Palestinians against an ongoing assault and encroachment upon their national existence, amid the U.S. occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and threats issued daily to Iran and Syria, and following January's important elections in the West Bank and Gaza, Palestine remains under attack, and its people continue to resist. It is imperative that the solidarity movement in North America strengthen itself, build its organizations and institutions and develop a coherent political strategy that works to build support for the national liberation movement of the Palestinian people in their entirety, and stands to meet the historical challenges of the day.

Today's solidarity movement is very much a product of this Intifada. After the Oslo accords of 1993, much as the institutions of the Palestine Liberation Organization were dramatically weakened, the national entities linking Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, in Palestine 48 and in exile often becoming mere sectors of the Palestinian Authority, and the concomitant localized institutions of Palestinian communities in exile often dispersed, the organizations of the solidarity movement in North America - led by such national entities as the Palestine Solidarity Committee - fell aside. Post-Oslo illusions about the "peace process" combined with the demobilization of the PLO and community institutions combined to produce a dramatic effect upon the organizing and even existence of the solidarity movement in North America.

With the failures of the so-called "peace process" soon evident to many, those most specifically excluded from this process - the Palestinians in exile, whose fundamental right to return was repeatedly relegated to "final status negotiations" - began to reassert the need for Palestinian organizing for national liberation among the Palestinian diaspora. The right to return movement, drawing together right to return committees in refugee camps in Palestine and throughout the Arab homeland, and similar committees and organizations created among Palestinian exiles around the world - in Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, Australia and North America, is fundamentally based upon the central issue in Palestine - the right of all Palestinians to return to all of historic Palestine, the liberation of the land of Palestine and the full self-determination of all Palestinians in determining the future of their nation. In an age in which the Palestinian movement was defined as a state-building process, the right to return movement returned attention internationally to the core and unaddressed issues in Palestine and served as a striking reminder that the "state-building" process had not supplanted the fundamental character of the Palestinian struggle as a national liberation movement.

The right to return movement placed the central issue in Palestine at the center of Palestinian and Palestine solidarity activism, moving away from slogans that addressed solely the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza without addressing the fundamental injustice of Zionist occupation and the creation of the Zionist entity in 1948, asserting a Palestinian discourse that rejected the marginalization of Palestinian exiles and the normalization of Zionism, and that affirmed the fundamental right (Continued on Page 2)

NOT GUILTY!



On December 7, 2005, Sami al-Arian, Hatem Naji Fariz, Sameeh Hamoudeh and Ghassan Ballut were acquitted of nearly all charges against them. The jury hung on several additional charges, with jurors stating to reporters later that 10 of the 12 jurors voted for full acquittal on all charges. Al-Arian, the target of a 10-year campaign against him, and the other defendants were Palestinian activists targeted for persecution, and accused of fundraising to support Palestinian Islamic Jihad, a Palestinian resistance organization listed on the U.S. State Department's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Al-Arian's case became a focus of the government, and symbolized the persecution of prominent Palestinian activists in the United States for their activism for Palestine. His acquittal is a major victory against the campaign of intimidation and persecution being waged against Palestinian, Arab and Muslim activists. It is now imperative to support Dr. Al-Arian against any further attempts to prosecute him and victimize him and his family. Email the Department of Justice and Attorney General Alberto Gonzales at AskDOJ@usdoj.gov or phone 202-514-2001 and demand the release of Sami al-Arian and Hatim Naji Fariz, and no new trial for these victims of persecution!

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of the Palestinian people to liberate all of historic Palestine and the nature of Palestine as an Arab land, and that centralized the struggle for the right to return.

In doing so, the right to return movement propagated a coherent discourse that returned to the original basis of the Palestinian movement - the right to return, the illegitimacy of Zionist occupation of Arab land, full self-determination for the Palestinian Arab people, and the liberation of all of historic Palestine. Rather than focusing its fundamental advocacy on "intermediate" issues, it focused upon the core issues, making key demands that focused upon the political and ethical center of the Palestinian movement for national liberation.

Amid the rise of this intifada, and the brutal repression visited upon the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza by the Sharon regime, the right to return movement and the nascent solidarity movement quickly became visible and active, organizing demonstrations, events and activities across North America. After the better part of a decade of quietude, the movement burst into activity. At the same time, U.S. threats against Afghanistan, Iraq and other Arab and Muslim countries were increasing in intensity and danger. As an antiwar movement grew to combat those wars and eventual occupations, Palestinian activists and the Palestine solidarity movement were centrally involved in the development of that movement, and the struggle of the Palestinian people represented, for the overall movement, the continuing resilience of a people's ability to fight imperialism and continue to resist despite all costs. On April 20, 2002, over a hundred thousand demonstrators poured into the streets of Washington, DC, in what was initially called as a general antiwar demonstration but that quickly became a broad expression of solidarity with Palestine. Palestinian flags flew above the crowds and speaker after speaker addressed the urgent need to support the Palestinian struggle. Palestinian and Arab communities organized and turned out en masse for the demonstration. It was an unmistakable sign that the Palestinian movement, and the Palestine solidarity movement, were present and growing.

This period also saw the rise of the divestment and boycott movement; Students for Justice in Palestine chapters sprouted across the country, as, taking their cue from students at Berkeley, who organized a national conference in February 2002 calling for an organized movement for divestment from the apartheid colonial settler state of "Israel," they called for university divestment. Institutional divestment, community boycott and calls for an end to U.S. aid to the Zionist state became mechanisms for materializing solidarity with the Palestinian movement.

Looking back upon this period, it is clear that while this intifada was, by and large, a defensive mobilization that attempted to hold off continuing Zionist assaults against the very existence of the Palestinian people - perhaps most poignantly represented by the Apartheid Wall and the destruction of Jenin, it also represented a rising period of reassertion of Palestinian mobilization and, also, international solidarity with the Palestinian movement.

At the same time, however, the political discourse of the solidarity movement was neither unified nor coherent. As the Palestinian national institutions of the PLO had been dismantled and weakened, the clear source of data for the Palestinian consensus program was, largely, not present. In addition, the assertion of some forces within the Palestinian Authority or NGO-related organizations that the right to return was less central than addressing the occupation of 1967 was used to justify the implementation of such advocacy within the solidarity movement. In the immediate pre-Oslo years, the emphasis on statehood in advocacy left memories of such a focus that carried on into later organizing.

In addition, the presence of "Left" Zionists within the U.S. Left and progressive movements, as well as those who sought to assuage them, led to advocacy that focused on making a "better Israel," providing for "Israeli security," and "two states for two peoples." Such forces, which accepted and supported the fundamental legitimacy of the Zionist project in Palestine, rejected Palestinian resistance and the right to return - sometimes openly, as "threats" to the Zionist state, and sometimes covertly - as "not realistic," or "divisive". In reality, refusing to address the right to return and to support Palestinians' fundamental right to resist

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New Jersey Solidarity - Activists for the Liberation of Palestine: Who We Are

New Jersey Solidarity--Activists for the Liberation of Palestine is a grassroots organization dedicated to resistance and action in support of the Palestinian struggle for justice, national liberation, human rights and self-determination. We are dedicated to building coalitions, educating the public, spreading awareness, and organizing actions and events that highlight the pressing need for justice and spotlight ways in which we may take part in securing meaningful justice in Palestine. We are committed to standing in solidarity with the liberation struggle of the Palestinian people, supporting Palestinian resistance, and developing a strong and united resistance movement in the United States in solidarity with the liberation of Palestine.

As a movement, we are committed to standing firmly against racism and all forms of oppression, and to working in solidarity with liberation struggles of people around the world against imperialism and colonialism. We draw lessons and inspiration from earlier and continuing movements for liberation within the United States and around the world, and from the history of Palestinian resistance. Within the United States, we are committed to acting against all forms and structures of oppression, standing in solidarity with all movements for justice, and securing a foreign policy that rejects imperialism and embraces international human rights and economic and social justice. We are dedicated to exposing and highlighting the role of the United States in furthering injustice and oppression in Palestine, and call for an immediate end to all U.S. aid--political, military and economic--to Israel. We recognize our natural solidarity with all anti-racist struggles and the struggles of indigenous peoples and will work to expand our links of solidarity.

We are committed to several primary principles of unity to guide our organizing. We call for an immediate end to the Israeli occupation of all Palestinian territories, the recognition of the full, non-negotiable human right of return for all Palestinian refugees, and full political, social and economic equality under law for all people in historic Palestine. We are opposed to the existence of the apartheid colonial settler state of Israel, as it is based on the racist ideology of Zionism and is an expression of colonialism and imperialism, and we stand for the total liberation of all of historic Palestine. As an anti-racist, anti-imperialist movement, we support equality and justice for all peoples and all religious identities.

As a solidarity movement, we are committed to working fully in support of the Palestinian people's resistance movement. We unconditionally support Palestinians' human right to resist occupation and oppression by any means necessary. We are committed to building unity at local, national and international levels in order to provide the international support needed by the Palestinian people in their struggle for liberation, and we invite all that share this commitment to join us in struggle.

Al-Awda Newspaper Needs Your Support!

This newspaper is the result of the work of many, and the contributions of many. It aims to provide a forum and a venue for informing the public, discussing community concerns, and organizing for justice in Palestine, within North America, and internationally. Featuring reports on activities and events of a local, national and international character, penetrating political analyses that reach to the root of the major questions of the day and unique news and interviews, *Al-Awda: Voices of Resistance and Liberation* newspaper is a voice of the movement.

It reaches community members, readers and supporters with important messages and information, and provides an opportunity for expression - and for mobilization. From informing readers about upcoming events, actions and demonstrations, to providing necessary political analyses of the events of the day, *Al-Awda* Newspaper provides a vehicle for the voices of the Palestinian and Arab community and the Palestine solidarity movement.

This newspaper, on the streets, in businesses, offices and homes, in student centers, academic buildings and coffee shops, provides the news that is excluded from the corporate media, and provides a mechanism for activists, organizers and community members to share their insight and creative works with one another.

As we organize and build, in the community and among the public at large, sustainable institutions are necessary for a vital movement that grows. This newspaper can be one such sustainable institution. In order to ensure that it remains such, however, your support is needed.

This newspaper, publishing Palestinian and solidarity voices committed to the struggle for national liberation, takes as its name the core issue and demand of the Palestinian movement - Al-Awda, the return. It is committed to a vision of justice in Palestine that embraces total liberation and full equality in a democratic Arab Palestine in all of historic Palestine and that seeks out solidarity with oppressed communities, people of color, indigenous peoples and all oppressed sectors and nations. It is committed to firm opposition to colonialism, imperialism and racism in all of its forms, including the Zionist project.

It is a voice that is needed and wanted. It opens lines of communication - for organizing, for awareness, and for discussion. If you agree that this publication is valuable, please extend your support for *Al-Awda* in one of the following ways:

1. Donate to *Al-Awda: Voices of Resistance and Liberation*. You may donate online at <http://www.newjerseysolidarity.org/>, or write us at info@newjerseysolidarity.org to find out about additional ways in which you can make a financial contribution to sustaining this important publication.
2. Bring *Al-Awda: Voices of Resistance and Liberation* to your community. Your group or organization is welcome to order copies for distribution. If you reimburse us for the cost of shipping, we will be happy to ship bundles to you. If your group can donate for the publication of additional copies, we can increase your order. Use them at events, meetings and for distribution in community spaces.
3. Write for *Al-Awda: Voices of Resistance and Liberation*! A publication such as this one that seeks to serve the community and the movement relies on its readers and supporters to contribute analyses, news reports on your work, creative pieces, including poetry and art, and other materials.

Support this newspaper. It is, indeed, a voice of resistance and liberation - and one that needs your involvement to thrive and grow as a community and movement institution.

In Solidarity and Until Return, The Editors, Al-Awda

Al-Awda is published monthly by New Jersey Solidarity-Activists for the Liberation of Palestine. We welcome submissions, letters to the editor, cultural works, and other proposals for publication.

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Our editorial collective is responsible for editing, laying out and developing this publication. We are open to new members who are in accord with the mission and principles of this newspaper.

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Please contact us for advertising rates and information, or for material on becoming a distributor.

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The advertisement shows several items of merchandise. A white t-shirt has a graphic of a sun and a person. Another white t-shirt has the text 'WOMEN FIGHT FOR PALESTINE'. A dark t-shirt has the text 'from the river to the sea, palestine will be free'. Buttons feature various slogans: 'Long Live', 'from the river to the sea, PALESTINE will be free!', 'PALESTINE WILL BE FREE!', 'PALESTINE WILL DIE!', and 'Free Palestine'.

Art and Activism of Samia Halaby

by Maymanah Farhat

Samia Halaby has been contributing to the development of international art for nearly fifty years. As one of the most established Palestinian-American artists, Halaby's work is aligned with the progression of the Palestinian art movement, which is renowned for its deep connection to Palestinian culture and political advocacy. Her dedication to the self-determination of formally colonized peoples has led Halaby to explore creative venues that surpass the rigid boundaries of the mainstream art world.



Samia Halaby's work, "The Kafre Qasem Massacre: The Ninth Wave of Killing," 1999

While teaching art at American universities for seventeen years, Halaby frequently participated in solo and group exhibitions. After moving to New York in 1976 she became involved with underground art shows independent of commercial galleries. Since then she has continued to be a part of New York's ground-breaking art scene.

As curator of such art exhibitions as Williamsburg Bridges Palestine: The Face of Palestinian Humanity Through Art & Culture, 2002, and The Subject of Palestine, 2005, Halaby exposed viewers to the rich artistic heritage of Palestinian culture, simultaneously calling attention to the difficult and life threatening Israeli occupation of Palestine. In late 2002, Halaby was instrumental in the selection of art for the critically acclaimed art exhibition, Made in Palestine. Her guiding of the exhibition's curators throughout Palestine resulted in a landmark display of Palestinian and Palestinian-American artists whose work is at the forefront of contemporary art. The exhibition opened at the Station Museum in Houston, Texas in 2003.

Halaby's involvement in the Palestinian art movement led to the publication of her scholarly book, Liberation Art of Palestine in 2003, which culminated from years of interviews with forty-six of the most influential Palestinian artists. In Liberation Art of Palestine, Halaby provides the reader with a detailed history of contemporary Palestinian painting and sculpture through the thorough analysis of each artist's work and their contributions to the movement. In her publication, Halaby presents the ability of art to communicate the experiences of a people who are otherwise silenced.

In recent years, Halaby has also been active with humanitarian delegations to Palestine. Meanwhile, she continues to advocate the Palestinian cause through her art. For Halaby, "Palestine is full of epic subject matter. It seems that anywhere you look, any person you question, any door you knock at, reveals subject matter fitting for great art."

With such works as The Kafre Qasem Massacre: The Ninth Wave of Killing, 1999, I Found Myself Growing Inside an Old Olive Tree, 2005, and Palestine, from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea, 2003, Halaby creates stunning art that articulates the strength of a population refusing to accept a violent occupation. Halaby informs the viewer of the devastating conditions under which the hope for a resolution struggles to survive.

The artistic process through which I Found Myself Growing Inside an Old Olive Tree and Palestine, from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea were created, displays the complexity of Halaby's creativity. Both pieces exhibit the innovative employment of light and structure with the use of black and white

Samia Halaby's "I Found Myself Growing Inside an Old Olive Tree," 2005

paint in vibrant abstractions that fascinate the viewer with the appearance of multiple dimensions and forms that seem to rise from the canvas.

With I Found Myself Growing Inside an Old Olive Tree, Halaby produced a self-portrait that communicates the intimate connection she feels towards her native Palestine. The piece is 36" x 24" and was created in response to an open invitation from the ArtCar Museum in Houston, Texas for artists to submit self-portraits to an exhibition titled, "Face". After spending a week in Al Ramah's olive orchards in Galilee painting its olive trees, Halaby was drawn to what she describes as, "the experience of these olive trees, and the way in which they share our fate as Palestinians." When she returned to her studio in New York and found the open invitation, she began to use acrylic and type to recount her experience in Galilee.

Amidst the fluidity of white, gray and black brushstrokes, lies Halaby's face staring

Successful New Jersey Fundraiser for Al-Jisser

by Maymanah Farhat

Little Falls, NJ, January 21, 2006- The New Jersey based organization Friends of Al Jisser held a cultural benefit on Saturday to raise money for the Made in Palestine art exhibit that is scheduled to open in New York City this spring. The cultural benefit, Min Layali Falasteen, was held at the St. George Church Hall in Little Falls and included an evening of dinner and entertainment.

Two hundred and sixty guests attended Min Layali Falasteen, which featured poetry by Nathalie Handal, comedy by Maysoun Zayid, music by Johnny Faraj and Ensemble, and folkloric Palestinian dance by The Stars Folklore and Dabke Troupe. A traditional Arab dinner was prepared and served by volunteers, with the ingredients for the meal donated by Al Baasha Restaurant, Fattal's Bakery, It's Greek to Me, Sahara Grocery Store and Nablus Pastries. The benefit was organized by Maha Kabbash and Ikhlas Munayyer of Friends of Al Jisser with the support of New Jersey Solidarity and Al Jisser Group of NYC. The event brought together activists, artists and community members for an evening that showcased the many aspects of Palestinian culture and heritage, all in support of the art exhibition, which has received nationwide critical acclaim.

Palestinian artist and activist, Samia Halaby, (whose work is featured in Made in

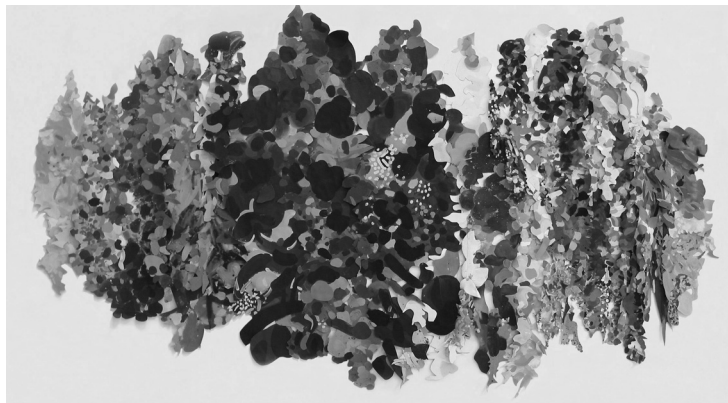
directly at the viewer. The brushstrokes that surround the artist's face are leaf-like while the lower portion of the piece shows elegantly gnarled roots. Halaby lies partially covered by foliage; roots ascend into the lower portion of her self-portrait while leaves and branches revolve in midair around her face. The brushstrokes that outline Halaby are indistinguishable from the throng of olives that dominate the focal point of the piece. For Halaby, "It seems to tell people just what I experienced there with the ancient olive trees about which I began to feel very sisterly, as though they were accepting me into some ancient collective of those who have seen tragedy and joy."

As the title suggests, Halaby's being is concentrated in both the physical and metaphorical elements of the olive tree. For many Palestinians, olive trees are life-giving ciphers that denote their tie to the homeland they continue to be expelled from. The use of a limited color palette suggests Halaby's return to an organic state of existence; the emphasis is on the unification of self with the foundation of her identity and origin of life.

In Palestine, from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea Halaby used multiple pieces of painted canvas and paper to create a map of color representing Palestine. The vast portrayal of Palestine is 7'3" x 13' and impacts the viewer with a layered assortment of brilliant color and intricate texture. In both size and effort, Halaby has described Palestine, from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea as a major piece in her production as a painter.

The sophistication of Halaby's use of abstraction lies in the reduction of the physical characteristics of Palestine into eye-catching color assemblages that inform the viewer of the significance of resonating environmental elements of a homeland that few can return to. When asked about the use of such colors Halaby affirmed, "I knew it was about parts of Palestine because various sections had specific geographic inspiration. Most obvious is the central dark green part, which is about the mountains of Ramallah and BirZeit at night. It captures the sensations of rows of rock on mountain sides, the shapes of rock, the color of fig leaves and their shapes, and a lot more that is difficult to quantify."

Halaby's use of cut paper and canvas intrinsically observes the Palestinian/Israeli conflict through courses of destruction and reform.



Samia Halaby's "Palestine from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River," featured in the "Made in Palestine" exhibition

By painting and cutting the physical foundation of her map, Halaby acted as a sort of mediator on the destiny of her birthplace. Subsequent to devastation during the initial stages of the map, the remains were gathered and connected to create a vivid affirmation of natural beauty. Throughout the process, Halaby is able to voyage with her homeland from ruin to reconstruction. Palestine, from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea presents an optimistic future for millions of displaced Palestinians. "I have great optimism to the point of certainty, that Palestine will return to us and that we will build the sparkling society that is promised in our hearts," Halaby asserts.

The Kafre Qasem Massacre: The Ninth Wave of Killing is part of an eighteen-piece series of pencil drawings on paper that tell the horrifying stories of forty-nine people that were killed during the 1956 massacre of Kafre Qasem. Halaby created the drawings after visiting the Palestinian village during the mid 1990s. She describes The Ninth Wave of Killing as depicting the moment when, "sixteen women were shot over and over again until only one survived. The sole survivor was in the center of the big hug that the women created as they were being shot." Some called this event in the massacre "The Dance of Death" because when the shooting began the women came together and began to rotate slowly as bullets hit them.

The drawings employ a documentary style method reminiscent of Renaissance drawing. Halaby's forms are composed of vigorous sketches in a way that connotes a sense of continual movement. The use of such a technique not only records one of the most chilling moments of the massacre but also shows victims in the moments before death.

The image haunts the viewer, as the large body of victims is in continual rotation, struggling to protect the sole survivor. The composition of The Ninth Wave of Killing is simple yet the power of Halaby's documentation lies within the violent nature of drawing that aggressively makes up each figure. Despite the aggressive use of bold lines and vigorous sketching, Halaby's figures emanate with the fragility of defenseless victims caught in a cyclone of hostility. Humanity juxtaposed against cataclysmic violence reminds the viewer of the most devastating aspects of political conflict, the tragic loss of innocent lives.

Halaby's work and revolutionary spirit have inspired audiences, artists, activists and scholars. She continues to reinvent herself through her work and activism, each reinvention redefining the boundaries of art and political advocacy. For more information visit <http://art.net/~samia/>.

Palestine), reflected on the event by saying, "The event went great. People were enthusiastic and supportive and everyone seemed to have had a good time. We danced Dabke; while the star of the evening was a grandmother who had recently arrived from Nablus. She showed us how to really dance Dabke and also performed a traditional village yodel."

Min Layali Falasteen was a successful fundraiser on behalf of Al Jisser, a non-profit organization that promotes Arab arts and is organizing the Manhattan showing of the Made in Palestine exhibition. Made in Palestine consists of groundbreaking work by twenty-three Palestinian artists and has been touring the country since its inception at the Station Museum in Houston, Texas in 2002. The New York opening is scheduled for early March 2006 but Al Jisser is still in need of monetary support for the exhibition. Made in Palestine is also scheduled to tour additional cities in North America. For more information or to donate money for the New York opening of the exhibition, visit: <http://www.aljisser.org>

"Made in Palestine" is coming to New York City in March/April 2006! Check www.aljisser.org regularly for updates and public announcement of dates, location and schedule of events!

“Chasing After Birds, Finding the Sky...” by Lora Gordon

written Nov 21 2003

Mahmood al-Qaed, shaheed at 13.

Ali's fourteen-year-old eyes are wide brown almonds, a near perfect copy of his father's, which shine like mirrors through the hair that covers his face like a tangled vine. Ali's younger brother Mahmood stares back at them from the poster on the wall, his eyes finely crafted by identical genes, his small face a mirror for his brother's, his thin arms tangling with his brother's arms in bed at night.

Since Mahmood was killed, there isn't anything his parents can do to convince Ali to sleep in his bed where he and his brother used to share dreams. Mostly the family doesn't sleep at all anyway. It's Ramadan, and the fear of dreaming chases their eyelids open until it's 5am and they've eaten the pre-fast meal and the men have come back from the mosque.

We are in Gaza with the family, carrying the night into a kind of raucous vigil. Family members fill up the last space on the thin mattresses and the last plastic chairs and weave conversations through each other until it becomes its own body, a vibrating noise that moves in through our ears and runs from mouths to mouths, leaving faint pains in the temples of the guests until Ali's father orders everyone out at nine o'clock, hands in the air, eyes adamantly wide.

Om Ali's full-moon face looks like it might break at any time as she carries her family on her back, through the breakfast meal and an endless procession of tea, coffee and cigarettes, without ever sitting down before near daybreak. If she does take a break, it is to smoke a cigarette with her sister-in-law in the kitchen, perched like old birds on the kitchen counter in long jilbabs drawn in intricate patterns like lace, blowing smoke up to Allah. They smoke cigarettes since two years now, since Om Ali's brother was killed in Israel two years ago for smuggling non-military trade goods. The pain of their loss is enough to make them forget the societal shame associated with women who smoke cigarettes, as well as the Qor'an, which forbids people to vandalise Allah's creations.

Now especially that Mahmood, Om Ali's second child, has been killed, the pain is visible in her body, as she walks from task to task. It dwells most heavily in her eyes, which have become flat from the task of crying all the time. It lives in her laugh, which breaks from the weariness and from the cigarettes and from the sleeplessness of worry. When she tells us the story of her son's murder her voice runs between the even tone of one accustomed to a great pain, and the more high-pitched, urgent tone when the grief surfaces.

"We live two kilometers from the border with Israel. Mahmood, my son, was killed about 600 meters from that border. Mahmood was 13. He used to always go and catch birds with the other boys in the neighborhood to sell so that we could survive. Since my husband was shot in the back in the First Intifada, he can't work and he has psychological problems in which his mood changes from hour to hour. I spend my life taking care of him.

Ali always used to go with Mahmood to catch birds. They did everything together, even

dressed the same - they were like twins, even though Ali is a year older.

The day Mahmood became a martyr, in the morning, Ali said he wasn't going bird catching because soldiers had been coming to the area where they used to go to catch birds. But Mahmood was determined to go and said, "If you don't go, I'll go anyway with the other kids." Mahmood is like that. He does whatever is in his head, there is nothing anyone can do to convince him not to do something he has decided to do.

Mahmood went bird catching with two of his friends. They told me what happened to Mahmood. They didn't want to. Nobody wanted to tell me what happened to my son. They didn't want to hurt me. But I made sure to hear what happened.

Mahmood and his friends met up with some farmers that they know on their way to the place where they used to go to catch birds. Then they went to the area and started working. This is the songbird Mahmood caught on that morning just before he was killed.

Several Israeli soldiers on foot cut through the barbed wire on the border with Israel. They were armed with M16s. The rest other two kids were able to run away, but Mahmood got stuck and they caught up with him. They shot him in the heart from a meter away. Why did they shoot him? He was catching birds. Is this a crime?

We think that the first time they shot him was what killed him. But the soldiers did not stop at that. After he fell over, they kicked him hard with their shoes. The doctor said he could see boot marks on his legs. And then they shot him with seventeen more bullets. Some of them went through his jacket, you can see. But his jacket wasn't zipped up, it was open, so not all the bullets went through it. Most of the bullets were fired in his lower body anyhow.

A bit after Mahmood left to catch birds, Ali went out on his bicycle. Not one half an hour later, I got word someone in the Qaed family had been injured. I thought it was Ali. I went to the hospital and asked the doctors. Nobody wanted to tell me what had happened because they were worried about me, because I was a woman and I was by myself and they were afraid to shock me. Everyone was avoiding my questions. Finally I lost it. I started shouting in the hospital lobby for someone to tell me what had happened to my son. Then a man, a police officer, called me over. He said, who are you? I told him my name. He said, come with me. He took me to the room where they store dead bodies. He said, your son Mahmood has become a martyr.

I was confused at first. I had thought something had happened to Ali so it was really strange to find it was Mahmood. Then I felt faint and passed out.

Ali refuses to go to catch birds now and so we have lost every resource of supporting ourselves and must rely completely on the UN's help, which is scant. I have a stomach disorder and my daughter Fatima has a back disorder and we can't go to the doctor or pay for treatments to help them. My brother was killed two years ago and I haven't found any joy since. I don't know why we are here. A person only dies once. Better to die quickly and be with my son again."

Justice for Palestinian Political Prisoners by Noel Winkler

Among the numerous humiliations inflicted upon the Palestinian people by the colonial project known as "Israel" is the illegal detention and imprisonment of more than 8000 Palestinians.

Since the expansion of the occupation in 1967, over 650,000 Palestinians have been detained by the Zionist occupier. This amounts to one of every five Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza facing detainment at some point during her or his life. The policy of illegal arrest and detention continues unabated, with mass arrests erasing any decrease in the total number of prisoners resulting from occasional and much over-hyped "goodwill gestures" by Israel, such as when it released a few hundred prisoners in February 2005. In late September 2005 the Zionist military abducted an additional 500 - 700 Palestinians in the West Bank. The International Middle East Media Center reported that the Ofer Israeli military court transferred 200 of these detainees to administrative detention, without trial, for periods ranging from four to six months.

Political Prisoners

Palestinians detained by Israel are in fact political prisoners. As an illegal occupier, Israel creates and enforces illegitimate laws which criminalize resistance to an immoral and illegal occupation. Israel wishes to oppress with impunity. It has created a system of military rule whereby a military commander issues military orders by which Palestinians must comply, or face abduction. The arrests take place, often in mass campaigns, by the invader on Palestinian soil. Just as the occupation is a violation of human rights, so is the arrest and detention of those struggling against that occupation.

In addition to the illegality of the detention itself, Israel further violates human rights and international law with systematic practices of torture. The world was horrified when it caught a minor glimpse of the abuses at Abu Ghraib. This same style of torture, and much worse, is practiced regularly against Palestinian political prisoners. The Palestinian Prisoners' Society estimated in July 2003 that 90% of all Palestinian prisoners are subjected to torture. Nearly 200 prisoners died in detention as a result of torture or medical negligence since 1967.

The widespread use of illegal detention by the colonial occupier has led to an outgrowth of prisoner support organizations. One such organization is Addameer Prisoners Support and Human Rights Association. The word "addameer," Arabic for "conscience," reflects the work of this group which was formed in 1992. Addameer provides psychological, legal and media support to prisoners, and support to the families. Through its campaigns and documentation efforts, it works to raise awareness of the situation of Palestinian political prisoners.

Just as activists in the U.S. face oppression by all levels of government when struggling for human rights, so do the activists of Addameer by Israel, in many cases more severely. Providing direct support to prisoners is made difficult by an Israeli imposed ban on travel to 1948 Palestine. Although it is a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention detainees abducted in territories occupied in 1967 to be transferred to areas outside of those territories, 21 of Israel's 24 detention facilities are in 1948 Palestine. Since Israel denies the right to most Palestinians living in the West Bank or Gaza to travel outside of these territories, political prisoners held in these 21 facilities are widely denied access to their families and lawyers.



The mother of a Palestinian political prisoner protests carrying her imprisoned daughter's photo.

Addameer reports that the conditions of detention are appalling. The Ketziot Military Detention Camp in the Negev desert is a revival of a prison camp left over from the pre-1948 British mandate era. Rather than housing detainees in modern facilities, the occupier provides nothing but threadbare tents to protect prisoners from the weather year round.

The detention centers are notorious for overcrowding. Hardly a pillar of humane treatment of prisoners, even the U.S. has a minimum standard of providing 10.5 square meters per detainee. Israeli Prison Ordinance permits the holding of 20 detainees in a cell of 5 by 4 meters, and 3 meters high, with an open lavatory. This equates to 1 square meter (about 3 feet by 3 feet) per abductee!

Palestinian political prisoners are systematically denied access to proper medical treatment. In many instances the detainees are wounded during their capture. In these instances and all other medical situations, Palestinians are provided nothing but aspirin. They are not provided a change of clothing and instead must wear their blood-soiled clothing for months. Palestinians requiring surgery or other hospital treatment are put off for months.

Palestinian political prisoners are subjected to the following forms of torture: sleep deprivation, shackling in painful positions, beatings, physical and psychological humiliation, strangulation, exposure to extreme temperatures, plus many other documented methods.

In addition to documenting the abhorrent conditions of detainment experienced by Palestinian political prisoners, Addameer has launched several specific campaigns. The May 2005 issue of Al-Awda - Voices of Resistance and Liberation featured the Campaign to Free Manal and Nour, a case involving a mother and her infant son illegally detained by Israel. Addameer's own chairman, Abdul Latif Gheith, was the subject of a campaign when he was abducted at the Qalandiya military checkpoint and placed in (Continued on pg. 5)

Inside the Lines: Paola Rizzuto

by Nazreen Cama

"Oh, so what are you here to do, liberate us?" The man who spoke went thick on the sarcasm. As a Palestinian living in the West Bank, he'd become jaded after years of seeing promises of amelioration dissipate into the hazy blue sky. Rutgers University undergrad Paola Rizzuto was not sure what to expect. It was her first time inside the lines.

Paola smiled and warmly greeted the stranger in Arabic. As she reached out to him in his native language, a modicum of trust began to form, as he saw that this girl, this American student, actually did seem to care about what was happening to his land and his people. But truly, what immediate relief was she providing him besides companionship and an understanding heart, she wondered?

Paola visited the West Bank this past July. As a member of New Jersey Solidarity, she was anxious to see what life was really like on the ground in Palestine. Since she was spending the year at the American University of Beirut in Lebanon, she decided to spend a few days in Palestine. At the very least, she would get to visit her good friend who lived on a majestic hill, the highest point to be seen for miles. And she would see Ramallah.

Having spent nearly a year in Lebanon already, Paola had already met many ethnic Palestinians, the great majority of whom lived in refugee camps. Paola notes that the general sentiment among Palestinian refugees in Lebanon is resentment toward the Lebanese government. People are angry because they are not allowed to hold positions in over 100 of the most lucrative Lebanese career fields. Buildings in the camps are not allowed to be fixed or repaired. Some refugees are not even allowed to enter and leave their camps freely.

This latter point was not the case in Sabra and Shatilah, but this did not make the visit to the cold, stone tenements any cheerier. Paola showed me pictures she took inside Sabra and Shatilah. Shadows overpowered narrow alleyways in between crowded domiciles. Children played ball in the street, and laundry hung out to dry, but an umbra of despair seemed to live on. However, Paola could not overemphasize how kind and welcoming the people of Sabra and Shatilah were to her. They did their best to make her feel at home, and everyone "maintained a spirit of resistance," which did make hearts a bit brighter.

Getting from Lebanon to Palestine is no easy task, as Paola explained. One cannot just head south into Palestine from Lebanon. Instead, it is necessary to go through Syria and then into Jordan. The Jordanian Crossing, patrolled by "Israeli" soldiers, was theoretically less than a five minute bus ride away, on a very, very, hot, crowded, bus packed with others circumnavigating from Lebanon.

Once inside Palestine, "Israeli" soldiers began to interrogate everyone from the bus. Paola's interrogation was long, repetitive, and a bit surreal, but at least the "Israeli" facility was air conditioned, providing some relief to the stasis. Questions included "what religion are you?" "what religion is your father?" and "do you know anyone in Damascus?" Questions were often repeated and rephrased. Paola noted that, during the entire interrogation, the "Israelis" had her passport and documentation. They try and keep "an iron grip on your documentation" while they have you in interrogation. You are powerless, and it feels like "you're on pins and needles for as long as they had your papers." She was relieved to find out, at last, when her passport was returned to her, that it had not been stamped. Had the "Israelis" stamped it, her passage back into Lebanon, and even Syria, would have been severely delayed at best, since neither of the two countries have diplomatic relations with the Zionist entity.

The friend Paola came to visit lives in a beautiful house at the highest point of his village's hill. However, to get there, it's "very obvious you're driving through and 'Israeli' settlement." Houses not part of the settlement often had "for sale" signs on them written in English – obviously not being sold by their Palestinian owners. For all of the land leading up to the hill is slated to be annexed to the settlement. Families living a little way downhill from her friend had been given six months to evacuate by the "Israelis." No one is sure whether the houses will be knocked down or if settlers will simply move in and take over. Back in New Jersey, flipping through pages of photographs, a myriad of emotions cross Paola's face. Recognition of the physical beauty of Palestine is juxtaposed with the political



reality of the abominations actually occurring there. If there was one point she drove home to me, both in her words and expressions, it is that Palestine is majestic – but not yet free.

*Graffiti
on the Apartheid
Wall in Palestine*

(Political Prisoners, Continued from pg. 4) "administrative detention" for six months.

The practice of administrative detention is used by Israel to hold Palestinians indefinitely without ever bringing charges or holding a trial. Israel has its own international-law-violating regulations under which they permit themselves to hold Palestinians on secret evidence, making it literally impossible for the detainee to exercise the right of defense. In the case of Mr. Gheith, he was never provided with a reason for his abduction and detention. Age 63 at the time of his abduction at gunpoint on July 29, 2004, the administrative order issued 7 days later merely state that he was a "danger to the security of the region." He had no trial, but was held for six months. It was Israel's third illegal 6-month detention of Mr. Gheith since 1988.

While Mr. Gheith was released at the end of his imposed detention period, Israel has also been known to renew illegal administrative detentions. In the past, Palestinians have spent up to 8 years in administrative detention, without charges or a trial ever being held against them. The Palestine News Network reported on October 6, 2005 that Raslan Talal Thouqan, 31, from the Balata Refugee Camp recently had a 4-month administrative detention order renewed by the occupying power for the 9th time in a row. Mr. Thouqan, father to a daughter who has never seen his face but in photos, has been held without charge or trial since November 4, 2002.

There are currently 600 Palestinian political prisoners held as administrative detainees. A recent report by the International Middle East Media Center indicates that Israel has offered "voluntary deportation" to some detainees as a condition of release. After 57 years of displacement and occupation, Israel continues its efforts to transfer all Palestinians out of

Screening of "Frontiers of Dreams and Fears"

by Nancy Olszewski

On November 9th New Jersey Solidarity presented a screening of the film "Frontiers of Dreams and Fears."

The film focuses on the friendship of two teenage girls - Mona Zaaroura and Manar Majed Faraj. Mona is from the Palestinian Refugee Camp Shatila in Lebanon where the Shatila massacre took place in 1982. She would like to be a writer. Manar is from the Al-Dheisha Refugee Camp near Bethlehem where the IBDAA dance troupe is from that toured the United States two years ago making stops in New York and New Jersey and was featured in the film.

The girls become pen-pals through a program at their community centers in the spring of 2000. The children from both community centers get to meet each other just after the withdrawal of Israeli forces from South Lebanon at the beginning of the Second Intifada. Then their lives begin to change. The children from both camps meet at the Israeli-Lebanon border where they exchange pictures, gifts and cups of Palestinian earth. They hold hands, sing and dance while Israel soldiers are watching them. This is the first time the children from Shatila see their homeland.

As the Intifada goes on the girls join groups throwing stones at watchtowers and soldiers who respond by shooting and one of Manar's friends is wounded. So she writes "I am changed now. Everywhere I am surrounded by settlements. I feel like I am in a prison."

Manar visits the village and the home her grandfather left in 1948. The home could no longer be lived in but she saw where he slept and hid his treasures. She also saw where the village was that Mona's family lived before they left for Lebanon that Mona would like fly home to like a bird.

At the end Mona spoke at a rally in Washington about the Palestinian Conflict.

Mai Masri won first prize for a Documentary Film at the International Festival of Films by Women at Turin, in 2002.

This is a good film to educate young people about the Palestinian Conflict, since the two girls, Mona and Manar are teenagers.

Acts for Palestine for "Made in Palestine"

by Nancy Olszewski

On Sunday, October 16th & Monday October 17th the AlJisser Group, The Kazbah Project and Nibras Arab American Theatre Collective presented "Acts for Palestine" a series of one-act plays by Palestinian playwrights for the benefit of the art exhibit "Made in Palestine." It gave New York audiences a chance to experience Palestinian theatre.

The first play was a solo performance entitled "Pressing Beyond In-Between." It was about a Palestinian girl who was raised in America. She describes praying in a mosque and her visits to Palestine. In her first visit she describes the busrides and the checkpoints. In her second visit she wants to stay and be a freedom fighter. She describes these as her most memorable moments.

The second play was "Between Our Lips" by Natalie Handal who is also a poet. Ayat (the heroine) is arrested for murder. A journalist from The New York Times whom she was in love with in the past returned to interview her. He hoped to get her new representation because he did not think she was the type who would murder. They reminisced about their past lives and their married lives. The person she was thought to have murdered died in her arms because he did not want to die in an Israeli Prison.

"Palestine" was written and performed by Najla Said the daughter of author Edward W. Said. It was both political and personal. It is personal in that she describes her trying to fit in in her private schools. She is from a Christian Palestine and Lebanese background. She is the only Palestinian in her schools. Most of the others are Jews. After her trip to Palestine she feels guilty about not suffering as Palestinians are suffering. She wants to suffer as they suffer and be a martyr.

The last play was "Macklubeh" in which an angel informs an old woman that she is going to die that day. She does not want to die because she does not want to die because she has always been alone. A freedom fighter hides in her house. When she hears that an Israeli soldier is looking for him she changes her mind and chooses to become a martyr.

After the plays one of the artists who is exhibiting in "Made in Palestine" showed some pictures of the art that is being exhibited. There was a tent by Emily Jacir with the names of Palestinian villages embroidered on it. There were some murals and some pictures by Palestinian Political Prisoners. There were pictures of ancient Canaanite goddesses. There were sculptures of Olive Trees, earth mounds with roses painted on them representing martyrs and one of Samia Halaby's paintings entitled "Earth."

Palestine.

The Zionist occupier uses administrative detention and other forms of political imprisonment as a means of making life unbearable for Palestinians who defy occupation by continuing to live in Palestine. No better evidence

Addameer has developed numerous reports on the conditions of Palestinian political prisoners. These have been made available on their website at <http://www.addameer.org>. An in depth look at the practice of torture by Israel is undertaken in "Torture of Palestinian Political Prisoners in Israeli Prisons." Addameer and Canada-based Sumoud Political Prisoner Solidarity Group co-created "Status of Palestinian Political Prisoners In Israeli Prisons, Detention and Interrogation Centers" which is also available on the Addameer website.

On April 3, 2005 New Jersey Solidarity - Activists for the Liberation of Palestine hosted an event featuring Addameer attorney Sahar Francis and Addameer activist and former political prisoner Akram Al-Ayassa. Ms. Francis spoke of the support work undertaken by Addameer, and Mr. Al-Ayassa described his experience as a political prisoner. The presentations are available as video downloads at <http://www.newjerseysolidarity.org>.

Just as it denies Palestinian refugees their Right to Return home, the colonial settler Zionist entity denies Palestinians countless additional rights, including the right to struggle against oppression, the right to organize and the right to freedom. Palestinian political prisoners have a right to justice and every single one of them must be released.

Organizing the Palestinian Diaspora: The View from North America

In December, 2005, Palestinian exiles from around the world met in Geneva to work to develop a program and a plan for the expansion and reactivation of structures to organize the Palestinian exile community and activate its political presence within the Palestinian national liberation movement. The following document was prepared by the North American delegation to Geneva, for discussions there, and to guide the work that will be taking place in the coming months to build community organizing and institutions among Palestinian exiles in North America. -Al-Awda Newspaper

It is our hope that this conference in Geneva will prove to be a milestone in the struggle for a free Palestine, and an important step towards improving the Palestinian state of affairs. Only through affecting internal, revolutionary changes would the Palestinians and their representative institutions be able to move forward.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Political Principles

The conflict with Zionism and Israel ought to be framed as a struggle for national liberation. This is based on the undeniable fact that the entirety of Palestine continues to be occupied by Zionist settlers. Hence, all the documents emanating from this conference must reflect those realities. They must reaffirm our adherence to:

1. the program of national liberation;
2. the Palestinian people's right to resist occupation by legitimate means;
3. the PLO's Palestinian National Charter, which represents the Palestinian consensus;
4. the inalienable right of return for all Palestinian refugees;
5. the establishment of a Palestine as an indivisible part of a unified, free and prosperous Arab homeland;
6. the oneness of the Palestinian people, both within and outside historic Palestine;
7. the fact that Return (Alawdah) and Liberation (Tahrir) are dialectically linked to one another;
8. the conviction that the struggle for a free Palestine is first and foremost an Arab project, which, like Iraq today, is a manifestation of the historical conflict between the Pan Arab program of unity, liberation and development, on the one side, and the imperialist-Zionist project and its ongoing attempts to fragment the Arab Homeland (Al-Watan Al-Arabi), people and identity.

Organizational Principles

Attaining the objectives delineated above requires the development of mechanisms and frameworks of implementation. These, in turn, must be based on a number of principles.

1. All Palestinian institutions, be they official, popular, syndicate or community-based, must adhere to the doctrine of collective and democratic decision-making.
2. Corruption within the Palestinian body politic coupled with the existing tendency towards favoritism and tribalism, must be replaced with more institutionalized, democratic, and transparent methods.
3. Equal participation of Palestinian women in all aspects of the struggle, and at all levels, is an imperative.

THE PLO: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Several factors contributed to the PLO's gaining of regional and international legitimacy during the first half of the 1970s.

The birth of the PLO in 1964 on the basis of the Palestinian National (Qawmi) Charter constituted a defining milestone in the history of the modern Palestinian national movement. In 1968, and in the wake of the occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and the Sinai Desert, the PLO replaced the Qawmi Charter with the Palestinian National (Watani) Charter. This was due to two developments: the ascendancy of the armed factions, and the PLO's emphasis on Popular War and Armed Struggle as the main method to achieving and victory.

These developments were followed by increased regional and international recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians. The process culminated with Yaser Arafat's address to the General Assembly of the United Nations, following the PNC's adoption of the Ten-Points Program in June, 1974. It was during that period that the PLO attained most of its diplomatic successes on the international arena.

However, the broad international recognition which the PLO enjoyed during the 1970s and 1980s took place in the context of the organization's acceptance of significant concessions, including the de facto abandonment of the strategy of Armed Struggle as the primary means to attaining liberation and Return. Those were the first in a long series of political retreats undertaken by the official Palestinian leadership in its quest for international legitimacy.

Today, and for the aforementioned reasons, the popular legitimacy once enjoyed by the PLO has been dissipated. The organization's poor performance, coupled with the marginalizing and weakening of its institutions by an autocratic leadership, served to further undermine its credibility and effectiveness. The present confusion over the PLO's relationship with the Palestinian Authority is but one example of the predicament facing the Palestinian national movement today. This prevailing sense of uncertainty and paralysis plaguing the organization had caused many Palestinians people to switch their allegiance to the Islamic movements.

Yet, despite the paralysis of Palestinian politics, the Palestinian people possess other options besides having to throw its lot either behind the PA, or the remnants of the PLO's leadership. It is essential to keep in mind that the destiny of our people and its struggle are inextricably linked to the destiny and struggle of the Arab Nation.

Yet, it is our right and duty to pose the following questions:

- Who is responsible for the destruction of the PLO?
- What are the causes behind the predicament which the Palestinian national liberation movement is facing today?
- Why did the PLO participate in the Madrid Conference, which came on the heels of the attack on Iraq?
- Who is responsible for the Oslo Agreements and their disastrous consequences vis-à-vis the PLO and the strategic rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people?
- Why did the Palestinian leadership alter and undermine the Palestinian National Charter?
- How could we trust the PLO's Executive Committee and its current chairman, or any of the organization's leaders, both inside and outside Palestine, who lack the will and/or the means to reform the organization?

Finally, the de facto collapse of the official Palestinian institutions, coupled with the factions' inability to effectively address the multifaceted problems confronting the Palestinian people, had led to the spread of NGOs within Palestinian society, particularly in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This is an alarming development, especially in light of the NGOs' objectives, which include:

- strengthening the culture of defeat at the expense of the culture of resistance;

- legitimizing the Zionist entity;
- undermining the Palestinian national liberation discourse and program;
- replacing the decaying PLO;
- drawing into their ranks of large numbers of progressive political cadres, intellectuals and activists.

The foregoing represents our diagnosis of the condition of the PLO today. The organization has been transformed from a national liberation movement into an organization that is subservient to morally and politically bankrupt Arab regimes, who owe their continued survival to their role as clients and tools of a US-controlled capitalist world order. This transformation was begun in 1974 and culminated with the Madrid Conference, the signing of the various Oslo Accords, and the deletion of sections of the Palestinian National Charter.

There is a tendency amongst some to blame the PA for the disastrous consequences of the Oslo process. This is not only historically inaccurate; it is also morally and politically deceitful. It was the PLO leadership who negotiated and signed the Oslo Accords and their various extensions and derivatives. It is this deceitfulness and disrespect for the sacrifices of the Palestinian people that makes it exceedingly difficult to have any faith or trust in the current leadership. That is why we believe that this conference must remain free of PA and PLO influence. And that is why we were wary about having the PLO present with us today, even as an observer. This is due both to its well-documented unwillingness or inability to acquiesce to playing such a role in any Palestinian gathering.

That said, we emphasize our respect the decision by the Preparatory Committee to invite members of the PNC and the PLO's Political Department. At the same time, we demand that their participation be based on their clear and explicit adherence to the Palestinian National Charter in its unmodified, 1968 version, excluding all the illegal amendments made in 1996 and 1998. We also ask that all the conference's documents condition acceptance of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people on its full adherence to

--the 1968 National Charter of 1968,

--the National Liberation program,

--the rights of the Palestinian people, first and foremost the Right of Return.

Defining Our Future Relationship with the PLO

Restoring the various organs of the PLO to its role as the leader of the Palestinian national liberation movement is the task of the Palestinian people everywhere. It must be preceded by democratic and transparent elections for a new Palestinian National Council (PNC). These elections must encompass all Palestinians, including members of the exiled communities (jailbait), who must be involved in all efforts aimed at rejuvenating the organization as the only representative of the Palestinian people. To be successful, however, this rebuilding process which all of us have been demanding for years, must be guided by, and consist ant with the letter and spirit of the Palestinian National Charter. For we firmly believe that al-Mithaq al-Watani al-Falastini, in its un-amended version, is the anchor of Palestinian national unity.

History shows that those who have been at the helm of the Palestinian leadership for decades have failed to accomplish our people's strategic objectives, particularly the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their villages and towns in historic Palestine. Instead, they had shattered most of the political gains which our people through decades of blood and tears. Yet, they refuse to own up to their blunders. Nor are they willing to be held accountable by the people for their failures. Such endemic lack of accountability within the PA and forces us to conclude that that the present Palestinian leadership is part of the problem. As such, it can't be part of the solution.

THE ARAB DIMENSION OF THE STRUGGLE FOR RETURN

It goes without saying that the Arab dimension of the struggle for Palestinian rights, including the Right of Return, must be brought to the fore, both in deed and word. This is the case more so today than during any time in the past. Suffice it to say that the intensification during the past few years of the Zionist-US attempts to force a Palestinian surrender is proceeding today within the context of an Euro-American campaign to fragment, hegemonize and balkanize the Arab Homeland. In other words, framing the struggle for Palestine in Palestinian nationalist (Watani) terms must be replaced with a framework that emphasizes its pan-Arab (Qawmi) nature. The need for a strategy and an analysis that situate Palestine at the heart of Arab resistance against the encroaching neo-colonialism under the garb of a "New Middle East" or "democracy" is no longer an option; it is a necessity. The organic, albeit deemphasized, relationship between the struggle for Palestine and the struggle for Arab independence, development, and unity must be reasserted. The recent events in Iraq, Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon all but confirm such necessity.

THE PREPARATORY CONFERENCE

We envision the following to constitute the conference's objectives, as well as the building blocks of its program:

1. Defending the Right of Return—The Right to Return, in conjunction with the right to self-determination within the context of an independent, democratic and secular state comprising the entirety of historic Palestine, with Holy Jerusalem as its capital, are and must always be the anchors of our struggle and the foundations of our unity. Therefore, we urge the conference to propose tools and mechanisms to transform the numerous efforts on behalf of the Right of Return in the Shataat into a unified, popular movement. This requires devising campaigns to educate the young generations of Palestinians and Arabs, especially those born or residing in non-Arab countries, about the centrality of this right.
2. Bolstering the participation of Al-Shataat in realizing Palestinian national goals—US, Zionist, European and official Arab, including Palestinian, attempts to marginalize the rights and role of Palestinian communities in exile continue today unabated. These efforts, which intensified with Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and after, reached their peak with the Oslo betrayal.
3. Increasing the level of participation in efforts and campaigns on behalf of Palestinian rights by members of expatriate communities. It is high time that the Palestinian communities in exile rise to the challenges facing the cause of Palestine today by rebuilding their shattered, national and syndicate institutions and organizations (e.g. labor, student, artist and women unions) on democratic and transparent basis. The Palestinian masses, who sacrificed for liberation and return, and who continue to do so readily and eagerly, deserve to elect their leaders, instead of having them installed by the different political factions.
4. Defending the civil rights of the expatriate Palestinian communities—The Arab-Palestinian identity, along with the social, economic and cultural rights of Palestinians in the Shataat must be safeguarded against all forms of racism and prejudice irrespective of their source.

(Continued on Page 10)

Repression of Palestinian Activists in the US: Where are the Defenders of Justice?

by Noah Cohen

April of 2002 saw some of the largest and most vocal demonstrations of solidarity for Palestine in US history. On April 5 in Boston, 2,000 people marched in the street protesting the Israeli invasion of Jenin and other Palestinian population centers; the march received prominent and unusually sympathetic coverage in the Boston Globe. On April 20 of 2002, between 50,000 and 100,000 people marched in Washington DC, protesting both the escalation toward war in Iraq, and continued US support for Israel in its military actions against Palestinians. The march was arguably the largest pro-Palestinian demonstration in US history; the Washington Post gave it front-page coverage, quoting Palestinians and supporters of the Palestinian cause at length. In both of these demonstrations, Arabs and Muslims turned out in large numbers.

The significance of rallies and marches for changing US policy can be debated. The purpose of this article will not be to discuss the relative merits of public demonstrations, but rather to observe something about the recent history of repression against the Palestinian cause in the US, as yet unmentioned in most of the current discussion of civil liberties. This silence is a glaring omission to anyone directly involved in pro-Palestinian organizing over the last few years.

For in fact, by the end of 2003, both of the two Palestinians who had spoken from the national stage in DC on April 20th had been detained; one was subsequently forced to leave the country, the other faces long-term imprisonment inside the US. In Boston, five of the central non-citizen Palestinian organizers had been forced from the country; two had also been detained by the INS or by its later incarnation, the Department of Homeland Security, and one had also been tortured in custody.

Why have these facts not been more generally discussed? More importantly, why has so little been done about them?

The View from Boston

Jaoudat Abouazza



Jaoudat Abouazza, Palestinian organizer tortured by police

Jaoudat Abouazza was part of a small community of Palestinian, non-citizen organizers who were centrally involved in building public demonstrations in Boston. His picture appeared at the front of the march in the April 6 Boston Globe. He attended regular demonstrations in front of the Israeli Consulate and brought supporters.

On May 30 of 2002, he was stopped by police in Cambridge, MA, ostensibly for an elapsed vehicle registration. The police searched his car and found a stack of flyers announcing a protest of the upcoming Israel Day of Celebration. Soon Abouazza would find himself in the Cambridge jail being interrogated by members of the FBI.

During Abouazza's arraignment on the following day, the police had formulated a laundry list of charges against which Abouazza would never have the opportunity to defend himself.

The prosecutor cited the presence of the protest flyers along with a roll of speaker wire as a reason to deny bail (now infamous as the "flyers and wires" theory), an argument that the judge found persuasive. He was held for another three days until his first pre-trial hearing. During that time, he was repeatedly questioned by members of the FBI concerning

his political beliefs and associations, in the absence of his court appointed attorney. By the time his pre-trial hearing arrived, the INS had already filed a detainer; he pleaded innocence, but the INS took him into custody on the following day. Since he was therefore unable to appear at his next hearing on June 12, the Cambridge Court issued a warrant for his arrest.

The Jaoudat Abouazza Defense Committee (JADC) was formed immediately after Abouazza's arrest in Cambridge. Members worked on two fronts: mounting a public pressure campaign for Abouazza's release; securing effective legal representation. After Abouazza's detention by the INS, the JADC held a meeting with members of the local chapter of the National Lawyer's Guild who were centrally involved in the NLG Immigration Rights Project. The meeting seemed favorable. The NLG representatives surprised the committee a few days later by declining to take the case, without explanation. They provided instead a referral to an NLG affiliated immigration lawyer-Nelson Brill-who agreed to handle the case for his normal fee.

After Abouazza was transferred into INS custody, the interrogations continued, along with an escalating pattern of physical and psychological abuse. Upon his detention in Bristol County Jail, where he was moved from Cambridge, one guard punched him in the stomach; another called him "Taliban." He was introduced to the other prisoners as a "terrorist." He was repeatedly awakened in his cell by federal agents, who showed him flyers and pictures of political associates and asked him questions. He was placed in solitary confinement for refusing to answer questions. At no time was his lawyer present.

On Sunday, June 16, Palestinian activist Amer Jubran and another member of the defense committee visited Abouazza in Bristol. His mouth was swollen and bleeding. He told them that earlier on the same day he had been taken from his cell to a medical office inside the prison, strapped into a chair, and four of his teeth had been pulled against his will and without anesthesia. Attorney John Reinstein of the ACLU and Abouazza's public defender, Emily Karstetter, visited Abouazza two days later. Karstetter confirmed to the press that she saw Abouazza's wounds; Reinstein said nothing.

The JADC began a public pressure campaign to have Abouazza transferred to a medical facility both to receive treatment and to gain independent documentation of torture. Bristol County Sheriff Thomas Hodgson first denied that any teeth had been pulled; then claimed that the treatment was voluntary. He refused to grant access to an independent medical investigator, and later barred members of the defense committee and the ACLU from further visits.

On June 27, 28 days after his arrest, Abouazza was finally granted an immigration hearing. He asked for voluntary departure to Canada (where he was a citizen) in order to be released as soon as possible from the INS and from the threat of further abuse at the hands of US officials. The judge granted his request, but allowed for his continued detention by the INS pending their appeal. Amnesty International wrote a letter to Bristol on July 5, warning them that physical abuse of prisoners was a violation of international human rights, and asserting the need for independent medical review. The INS finally executed the order of voluntary departure to Canada a week later.

Partly as a result of the work of the JADC, news of Abouazza's detention spread quickly through the local activist community. One consequence was an immediate chilling effect among local Arabs and Muslims, who recognized correctly that their own participation in political speech would not be protected. Whereas 2,000 people-disproportionately Arab and Muslim-had been on the street on April 5, less than 100 were present on June 9, for the protest for which Abouazza had been building at the time of his arrest. Abouazza's subsequent torture in INS custody further drove home the message of intimidation.

Amer Jubran

Amer Jubran-active in Abouazza's defense-was himself the object of political targeting and harassment. Jubran had helped to organize a protest of the Israel Day of Celebration in Brookline in June of 2001. The Brookline police arrested him and broke up the demonstration. They charged him with "assault with a dangerous weapon" (his shod foot) claiming that a local Zionist had accused Jubran of kicking him from behind.

A police video-tape gave clear evidence of the truth: Jubran had not kicked anyone. An independent eye-witness told the police that the accuser had been the aggressor, bumping into Jubran and speaking aggressively. The police at first attempted to suppress this evidence, along with dispatch tapes showing that there had been an advance order to "arrest Jubran" and "clear the demonstration." As it turned out, the Brookline Police were also in the pay of the Israel Day of Celebration organiza-

ers, which included the Israeli Consulate; the Brookline Police had communicated information about the protest and protest organizers to the Israeli Consulate-an agent of a foreign government. After a long defense campaign, with 11 court appearances and lasting nearly a year, the Brookline court ultimately granted "pre-trial probation" and dismissed the charges.

Jubran went on to become a leading organizer of the New England Committee to Defend Palestine(NECDP), which helped to organize the June 9, 2002 protest against the Israel Day of Celebration. On November 2, 2002, the NECDP held its first fully independent event -a protest in commemoration of the disastrous Balfour Declaration of 1917-at which time it also announced publicly its principles: opposition to the existence of Israel as a colonial-settler state and support for a unified, democratic Palestine in all the historic territory of Palestine; full support for Palestinian human rights, including the right of Palestinians to resist colonization and the right of refugees to return their land; and an end of all US military, economic and political aid to Israel. Jubran led the demonstrators in a march through downtown Boston.

Two days later, on the morning of November 4, INS and FBI agents forced their way into Jubran's home in Rhode Island and demanded that he answer some questions. INS agent David Adkins told Jubran that if he would "please the ears" of the FBI, he would be free by that afternoon. If he failed to do so, he "could rot in jail for 50 years." Jubran said that he would only speak to them in the presence of an attorney. When he insisted on this right, the INS proceeded to arrest him.

Members of the NECDP formed a defense committee and organized a public pressure campaign to gain Jubran's release, hiring Nelson Brill to handle his legal defense.

Initially the INS insisted that it planned to hold Jubran indefinitely, and refused to cite the statutes under which it claimed authority to do so. INS agent Mike Clifford hung up the phone on Brill when he demanded this information.

On November 21, the INS finally granted a bond hearing and did not contest bond when it was set by the judge. It nevertheless affirmed that it would move forward with deportation against Jubran, now claiming that his Green Card-granted three years earlier-had been obtained fraudulently, based on an alleged false marriage.

As the case unfolded over the following year, the INS-which became Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the Department of Homeland Security while the case was pending-systematically abused institutional power, withholding evidence and intimidating witnesses. A little more than a week before the trial scheduled for July 24, federal agents visited members of Jubran's ex-wife's family, interrogating one of them for nine hours and threatening to take her children away if she testified on Jubran's behalf.

The prosecutor consistently failed to turn over documents, submissions of evidence, or witness lists. Jubran complied fully with these requirements. During the July 24 hearing, his ex-wife gave clear testimony that their marriage had been for love. The prosecutor submitted no evidence or witnesses to the contrary; instead, he used the proceedings to inquire about Jubran's political activities and other extraneous matters. The judge over-ruled all objections to this line of inquiry. Although the judge claimed that he was prepared to rule in Jubran's favor, he nevertheless granted the prosecutor time to prolong the case. It became clear to Jubran and the AJDC that the prosecutor was using the immigration proceedings to conduct a fishing expedition into Jubran's political community.

The most disturbing aspect of Jubran's trial was the tacit cooperation of his own lawyer with these proceedings. Brill made the appropriate political statements to the press: Jubran's case was one of political silencing, an attempt to intimidate the activist community. He filed letters objecting to some of the most outrageous acts of the prosecutor-most importantly, the intimidation of Jubran's witnesses. But he acted more as an officer of the court than as an advocate for his client's rights. He defied specific instructions from his client not to enter into agreements with the prosecutor without consulting him, most importantly not to agree to repeated further continuances that were being used to facilitate an illegitimate investigation. As the final date of the trial drew near, this cooperation grew worse: against Jubran's specific instructions, Brill agreed to a schedule for the trial itself that would have increased the ability of the prosecutor to use the trial as a means of conducting an illegitimate interrogation.

During his final trial on November 6, 2003, Jubran told the judge that he did not have faith in his lawyer and asked that he be granted time to obtain another. The judge told him that if he discharged his lawyer, he would be required to go on with the proceedings with no representation. The judge himself would proceed with direct questioning. Under these circumstances, Jubran requested voluntary departure. He would leave the country in January of 2004.

Further Cases

Two other members of the same Boston community of Palestinians were targeted during the same period. They will remain name-

less, since they have not chosen to make their cases public. One was a very active member of the religious community who had been effective in the local mosques in building support for public demonstrations. He was visited by the FBI at his work and home. Although his immigration status was valid and he engaged in no illegal activities, he decided to leave the country after witnessing the treatment of Abouazza and Jubran.

His roommate was not so fortunate. Agents discovered that he had some irregularities in his immigration papers and detained him. They threatened him with 10 years in detention if he refused to discuss his roommate and other members of the activist community. He told them that there was nothing to discuss, since no one was engaged in anything illegal. They detained him for another ten months before deporting him.

Civil Liberties Organizations: a Pattern of Inaction

In the course of the proceedings against Jubran, the Amer Jubran Defense Committee submitted FOIA petitions to local, state, and federal police agencies. We obtained extensive evidence of police surveillance of activists: twelve video tapes from the Boston police department; evidence of the sharing of photographs between the Brookline and Boston police departments-including photographs of Jubran and his supporters inside the Brookline court; and communications between local and federal police agencies. During the July 24 hearing, an agent John Blake of the Department of Homeland Security attempted to attend the proceedings as if he were a "member of the interested public," but was asked to leave after he was forced to reveal his true identity. The AJDC would later photograph him shadowing them at an anti-Ashcroft protest.

Jubran and members of the AJDC presented this information to civil liberties organizations, along with the record of federal abuse of institutional power in using immigration proceedings against Jubran to silence his political speech. In conversation, ACLU representatives affirmed that his case clearly showed a pattern of political harassment; they never followed-up with action on his behalf.

In August of 2003, Jubran wrote a letter to John Reinstein. Directed specifically to the ACLU, it expressed the failure of the civil liberties community in general to act in response to the unfolding repression of Palestinian activists in



Palestinian activist Amer Jubran, targeted for persecution, speaks at an antiwar rally in San Francisco in October, 2003.

(Repression, continued from page 7) Boston:

"I am writing you to express my lingering dissatisfaction with the Boston Chapter of the ACLU. [...]

The United States Government has targeted me because of my political beliefs and activities. The events that I have been subjected to in the last three years prove this beyond a doubt. Other Palestinian activists have been targeted as well.

The attacks on me started with Brookline case. I appreciated your involvement at the beginning of that affair. The information that we obtained from your inquiry was startling. This included the following discoveries:

- * The Israel Independence Day organizers paid the city of Brookline for police protection;
- * There was direct contact between the Brookline police captain and security officers at the Israeli consulate in Boston about our intention to protest on June 10;
- * Surveillance of our demonstration in Brookline was done specifically to obtain mug shots of demonstrators;
- * The FBI was contacted about local activists who only wished to express their political opinions.

Following this there continued to be other violations of my right to free speech and the linking of my name with September 11 by Brookline officials in the media. These events were of great significance to other activists and me. Yet, despite my numerous requests, you did not express any interest in following up with the any of above matters.

In the summer of 2002 Jaoudat Abouazza became the center of attention. His was a clear case of government targeting of Palestinian activists. On June 16, 2002, personnel at the Bristol County Jail extracted by force four teeth from Jaoudat's mouth, without using anesthesia. More disturbing was the fact that even though you saw the four wounds first hand and documented them with sketches, you did not provide any acknowledgement that this had happened. I hoped that you would at least confirm to the media, who did not think that I was a credible witness, what you saw that day. I did not then, and do not now, understand why you would not confirm what you saw.

Legal intervention was critical in the period while Jaoudat was still in custody-not only to remove him from the immediate danger of further abuse, but also to ensure that an independent medical and dental examination take place in time to document this act of torture. As it turned out, you helped us to obtain a lawyer [...] who was willing to take on a lawsuit on Jaoudat's behalf, but neither you nor [he] made any serious attempt to pursue either Jaoudat's immediate release or immediate access to independent medical personnel. By the time Jaoudat was released from custody on 'voluntary departure' to Canada and we were able to re-establish contact with him, it was already too late for X-rays to show conclusively what had taken place.

The only other word I had from you last summer was your contacting us, not to inquire about Jaoudat, but to ask some questions on behalf of Nancy Geffen of the Jewish Council of Greater Boston. You asked to negotiate with us on our plans to protest the Israeli Day of Independence in Boston on June 9, 2002.

Last fall the government arrested me and put me in jail for seventeen days, without charges. After I was released, I visited with you and talked about my case in the hope that you would defend me. I was comforted by your strong statement that I was arrested because of my political actions and openly expressed opinions. In this December meeting, you explained that you could not do anything related to immigration defense. I replied that the Amer Jubran Defense Committee would take care of that. You also commented that the FBI's targeting of me based on my political actions would be hard to expose. Since then, friends of mine, with limited legal resources, managed to obtain important information through FOIA requests. This information, consisting of police reports and videotapes, provides clear evidence of an established network of surveillance and information sharing between local police departments, the FBI, and the Department of Homeland Security. [...]

My case has reached a crucial juncture. The immigration judge has expressed his unwillingness to hear testimony concerning FBI witness intimidation; he suggested that the civil courts would be a more appropriate place to bring such allegations. A civil rights suit against the Department of Homeland Security is the next step that we must take -- a step that is both logical in my case, and necessary for defending the fundamental rights of others -- but this step will require serious legal support, not merely token gestures of interest.

With the limited resources of the Amer Jubran Defense Committee we managed to get a lot done. However, the government is getting bolder in attempting to harass, silence my dissent, and punish me, as well as others. More support is needed to stop these illegalities and to prevent further abuses. The ACLU is a respected organization. I have seen how eager ACLU is in protecting the freedom of expression of others, but for some reason this eagerness stops short with me. I am left to ask why?"

The ACLU replied by inviting Jubran to a meeting. Once again, Reinstein agreed that Jubran's case demonstrated political targeting and required action, but again no action followed. Reinstein was present during the final trial; his only intervention was to interrupt the proceedings to recommend that Jubran take the stand and submit to direct questioning by the judge-- without the protection of a lawyer.

Other organizations were no better. Bill Goodman, a civil liberties attorney and former director of the Center for Constitutional Rights looked at the case and suggested that it be the subject of a civil lawsuit. He promised to contact the Center for Constitutional Rights and ask for their support. On further follow-up calls, he insisted that nothing could be done until the immigration case was over. At an initial meeting, the local NLG representative made the outrageous claim that Jubran's arrest had nothing to do with his political activities, but was a mere coincidence of broad sweeps of the Muslim and Arab community. She would later threaten a member of Jubran's defense committee that other NECDP activists should not expect any help from the legal community after they had spoken publicly of their dissatisfaction with Brill-an NLG affiliated lawyer. Although the AJDC had hired Brill privately and paid him more than \$5,000, she spoke as though the NLG had provided Brill's services pro bono.

Response from the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), both local and national, was minimal. The local ADC took its cue primarily from the ACLU.

After the conclusion of the November 6 trial, members of the AJDC began to speak publicly about ACLU inaction. The Massachusetts ACLU Executive Director Carol Rose invited us to discuss our concerns in person. On December 3, 2003 we met with her, John Reinstein and Nancy Murray, and spoke of two things primarily:

- 1) The ACLU encouraged people to stand up for their rights-e.g. to insist on their right not to be questioned without an attorney. It then failed to act legally in their defense when they did so-this meant that the ACLU's campaign of community legal education tended only to put people in danger, since it gave them the false impression that they could expect a vigorous legal defense of their rights.
- 2) When the ACLU failed to take any legal action, it also undercut the credibility of the people targeted when they turned to the public for support.

Members of the AJDC had also been active in immigrant and detainee response networks in New England. One member had given the ACLU lists of names of individuals who reported abuse in detention.

ACLU representatives asked that detainees be encouraged to document these abuses in writing-an action that placed their testimony in the hands of prison guards, often the same ones who had subjected them to the abuse. In only one case did the ACLU send a lawyer to investigate further, after a delay of more than two weeks; by then the inmate had been transferred to another facility, and the lawyer did not attempt to investigate allegations of abuse by other prisoners at the same facility. The ACLU undertook no further follow-up action that might have protected the prisoners from reprisal.

Rose admitted that the ACLU had not won the faith of the Arab and Muslim community, and she looked to us for help providing some guidance for improvement. She asked us to put our concerns in a letter to her, and invited us to meet again in order to initiate a plan of further action. We sent a five-page letter reiterating what we had said in conversation; she replied by breaking off all correspondence.

In our meeting, ACLU attorney John Reinstein claimed that he had never been asked to

take any legal action on Jubran's behalf, neglecting to mention Jubran's letter. He also insisted that no legal action-such as a suit for a violation of Jubran's constitutional rights-could be taken under the circumstances. The Supreme Court had already decided in the case of the LA8 that the federal government could selectively prosecute immigrants for deportation because of their political views. It was thus futile to litigate the matter further.

The View Nationally

Amer Jubran and Sami al-Arian had shared the stage as Palestinian activists in DC on April 20, 2001. In February of 2003, Al-Arian would be arrested and imprisoned on charges of "supporting terrorism." For the next eight months he was forced to rely on court-appointed attorneys who

“We need an organization of radical lawyers who truly believe in the right of Palestinians to self-determination, including their right to speak out on behalf of their struggle here inside the US. Only such an organization will be willing to defend those rights zealously.”

did little to help him. Much of his time was spent in solitary confinement under 23 hour lockdown. Serious defense did not begin until his defense campaign was able to raise enough money to hire private attorneys in October of 2003.

His trial is finally coming to a conclusion. It has clearly been a case of targeting for political speech and other legal activities in support of Palestinian organizations.

The targeting of Palestinian political activists has taken place within a broader context of attacks on Arabs and Muslims. This has allowed the government to conceal the political nature of its campaign: specific attacks against activists can be hidden under sweeping policies. The overall purpose has nevertheless been to silence a community living within the US that has intimate knowledge of US imperial crimes in Palestine, Iraq and the surrounding region.

On the whole, the civil liberties community has protested against these sweeping attacks on Arab and Muslim men; it has-perhaps for this very reason-tended to distance itself from more overtly political cases. Few rallied around Ali Al-Timimi-a religious leader sentenced to life in prison for preaching in his mosque against US imperialism. Imprisonment specifically of politically oriented Muslims who support armed liberation of their countries has been normalized in the full range of US discourse, even in cases where "support" consists entirely of speech.

On April 9 of 2002 Lynne Stewart was arrested for vigorously defending Muslim cleric Shiek Omar Abdel Rahman. Many progressive lawyers expressed outrage, above all because the action targeted a member of their own community. Equal support has not been extended to her two assistants, Mohammed Yousry and Ahmed Sattar, arrested at the same time. Though Stewart herself has said that she, her client, and her two assistants have all been subject to the violation of the same basic right to freedom of speech, leading civil libertarian David Cole would write instead:

"So how did the prosecution meet its burden [against Stewart]? With classic McCarthy-era tactics: fearmongering and guilt by association. First, it tried Stewart together with Ahmed Sattar, an Egyptian-born US citizen against whom it had thousands of hours of wiretaps of communications with a terrorist group. Among other things, Sattar had issued a fake fatwa urging followers to "kill [Jews] wherever they are." By trying Stewart and Sattar together, the government could taint Stewart with Sattar's sins, even though, as was the case with the fatwa, she had nothing to do with them and no knowledge of them." ("The Lynne Stewart Trial," The Nation, February 17, 2005)

Notice that Cole takes Sattar's "sins" at face value; he describes telephone conversations as "communication with a terrorist group," adopting the government's language. He objects not so much to trying all three defendants for their speech, but rather to Ashcroft's "tainting" of Lynne Stewart by association.

Legal Action as Part of a Strategy for Change

Reinstein's comments about the futility of litigating the rights of immigrants to freedom of speech and equal protection of the law after the 1999 Supreme Court decision in the case of the LA8 must be understood in its full ideological context. In fact, progressive lawyers have a long history of litigating cases on principle as part of a larger strategy of political change.

At an NLG forum in San Francisco in November of 2003, David Cole and Jules Lobel gave a talk entitled "Fighting (for) Justice after September 11: the Threat to Civil Liberties and What We Can Do About It." Lobel's talk centered around the issues raised by his book, *Success Without Victory: Lost Legal Battles and the Long Road to Justice in America*. He affirmed that it was not only necessary to fight "winning cases" that establish precedent. Where poor legal precedents have already been established, it was still necessary to fight "losing cases" in order to build political movements-in some cases political movements that will help to change the law.

Thus it was necessary to continue to challenge slavery in the courts after Dred Scott, since this was a part of building the movement to abolish slavery. It was equally useful to litigate against US military intervention in Central America-though bound to lose-because this would contribute to public education and the building of a movement to stop US military intervention.

This analysis leads to an important corollary: although a civil liberties attorney might take a "winning case" on principle in defense of freedom of speech for a cause he does not support, he will not take a "losing case" if the only consequence will be to build support for that cause. A "progressive" attorney might defend the free-speech rights of a Nazi or pedophile if he believes that it will set a valuable precedent in defense of the free-speech rights of all. He might take a "losing case" if he supports the political cause it represents.

Based on the official position of the National Lawyer's Guild in support of the Palestinian Right of Return and other similar positions, one would expect strong support in NLG chapters across the nation for the rights of Palestinian activists in the US. The NLG has historically helped in the defense of Palestinians; David Cole continues to represent the LA8 in their ongoing appeals.

In Boston, this support has not been forthcoming from any of the existing organizations. In addition, active members of the civil liberties community who have taken public stands on the Palestinian cause have clearly been on the side of "left Zionism." Our experience suggests that "left-Zionists" in particular may have an interest in silencing Palestinian activists, since this allows them to dominate what passes for "pro-Palestinian" politics in the US. Palestinians who call for strong positions in support of their full historic rights to land and their right to defend themselves from colonial settlers "by any means necessary" are frequently repudiated and shut out of public venues by these same nominal "pro-Palestinians."

Will ideologically committed "left-Zionists" be likely to continue mounting challenges to the rules of "ideological exclusion" if they are not likely to win cases in the current ideological climate? Will they do so if one consequence will be to give Palestinian radicals a larger voice in the political movement?

There are individual lawyers in the existing civil liberties organizations who genuinely fight for the rights of Palestinians. There are young legal activists who support the full range of Palestinian rights. But these individuals are buried under the larger organizations and have no coherent voice.

Locally, in our attempts to fight repression, we have found that we cannot in good conscience provide Arabs and Muslims asking for legal aid with NLG, ACLU or ADC contact information, since we cannot rely on their genuine help. This is especially true in cases of activists targeted for their political views. Local immigrant rights and civil liberties organizations have largely confined their challenges to post-9/11 government action to defending what they call "innocent immigrants"-this means primarily non-political people who have been arrested as a result of racial profiling or other sweeping institutional and legislative actions. Even here their record has been shoddy.

We need an organization of radical lawyers who truly believe in the right of Palestinians to self-determination, including their right to speak out on behalf of their struggle here inside the US. Only such an organization will be willing to defend those rights zealously.

(Solidarity, continued from Page 2)

occupation and oppression by any means necessary was both divisive and damaging. It attempted to create a U.S.-based movement that rejected or marginalized fundamental Palestinian concerns and demands and demanded political adherence to a minimalist program of "two states" and "two peoples."

Such advocacy, that sought to replace Palestinian demands with those of Zionist reformists, was and is fundamentally contradictory to the nature of a solidarity movement. Solidarity movements do not bring about national liberation - the people struggling for their own liberation achieve those victories. In South Africa, the African people obtained victory; in Vietnam, the Vietnamese; in Cuba, the Cubans; and in every other national liberation movement. In Palestine, the Palestinian people - in their entirety, in exile, in the West Bank and Gaza and in Palestine 48 - will achieve liberation. It is the duty of the solidarity movement to provide needed and wanted political and moral support, open space for organizing, advocacy and resistance, and unite people from various backgrounds and areas in common interest against occupation and oppression, taking political leadership and direction from the demands and goals of those who are on the front lines of struggle.

The recent elections in the West Bank and Gaza speak sharply to the question of minimalist demands and the popularity and necessity of a program that addresses core issues - the right to return for all Palestinians to all of historic Palestine, self-determination and independence for Palestinians, and the right to and continuation of resistance against an illegitimate colonial state dedicated to the extermination of Palestinian Arabs as a people. Its results can, in many ways, be read as a rejection of the principles of the Oslo agreement and its disastrous aftermath, and an affirmation of basic principles - including the necessity of internal Palestinian organizing, and strengthening and rebuilding Palestinian institutions that are representative, without corruption, as part of the struggle for national liberation - in Palestine and in the diaspora. This return to basic principles is steadfast, bold and confident; in the face of threats from the Zionist state, the U.S. and the EU to starve the Palestinian people into submission and to militarily attack the West Bank and Gaza.

Despite these threats, the Palestinians voting in the West Bank and Gaza stated clearly that their rights were not for sale and, just as they have struggled for fifty-eight years, they will continue to struggle for their national liberation despite brutality and oppression.

There are several important effects and lessons of these elections for the solidarity movement. First, the threats from the U.S. government that have continued unabated since the elections must be addressed. The solidarity movement must make clear that, just as it is unacceptable that our tax dollars go to fund the ongoing oppression of the Palestinian people and the dispossession of Palestinian refugees, it is similarly unacceptable to threaten the Palestinian people with further oppression and with starvation for daring to exercise their democratic rights to choose their own representation. As the U.S. hypocritically portrays itself as a beacon of "democracy" to Arab nations, as it occupies Iraq and attempts to set up a proxy regime, it has done everything it can to undermine the democratic processes in the West Bank and Gaza and to directly threaten the Palestinians of those territories for choosing their own path of representation and resistance. Palestinians have been building their own institutions and representative democratic structures for a very long time; that the U.S. and its allies in the EU, the leadership of the UN and elsewhere see fit to lecture Arabs and Palestinians about democracy while threatening them for practicing it is the height of hypocrisy, and it is up to the solidarity movement to educate people on a grassroots basis about the reality of Palestinian politics and Palestinian democracy, and to build a viable counter-force that can make itself clearly heard in opposition to these threats against the Palestinian people.

In addition, the elections evidenced a bold, confident result and advocacy that is much-needed within the solidarity movement. In many ways, the choice presented was that between the continuation of a "peace process" that has brought nothing but continued violence and repression into Palestinian lives, and the continuation of resistance until liberation, and the latter was the clear winner. The clarity of a national liberation movement that upholds the fundamental principles of the Palestinian movement as not only possible, but necessary, for justice, provides a clear ethical and moral discourse that rejects racist, exclusionary ideologies such as Zionism, rejects colonialism and imperialism in all of its forms, and affirms the fundamental right of people to self-determination and the right of the displaced to return to their homes, properties and lands.

Rather than being "unrealistic," solidarity advocacy that embraces the full rights of Palestinians, on Palestinians' terms, rather than seeking those acceptable to their oppressors, provides a clear discourse for understanding Palestinian history and supporting the ongoing national liberation movement.

These principles do not apply only in addressing the Palestinians within Palestine, but to the entire Palestinian people. The recent conference of Palestinian exiles in Geneva, combined with the initiatives of the right to return movement, speak to the urgent need of revitalizing and rebuilding the institutions of the PLO, and organizing the Palestinian community in exile. This focus on a return to the community and building institutions that represent those communities speaks to new responsibilities for the solidarity movement. As Palestinian exile communities organize themselves to build Palestinian institutions, it is imperative that solidarity activists provide full solidarity and support to these initiatives. Just as Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, and in Palestine 48, are struggling for national liberation, so are Palestinians in exile. The majority of the Palestinian population is in exile, and political, social and community institutions that represent and address the needs and interests of this sector of the Palestinian nation require the full support of the solidarity movement. Community centers, youth programs and community meetings are the direct practice of the Palestinian national liberation movement and the rebuilding of Palestinian national institutions. Many Palestinians in exile are active in the solidarity movement as well as the community movement; non-Palestinians also have a duty to be active in building support and sustenance for these community structures, as well as continuing public advocacy among the broad public in support of the Palestinian movement for liberation and return.

It is often fashionable to consider direct action in support of Palestine to be that which takes place in the West Bank and Gaza, and while Palestinians there are certainly on the front lines of both oppression and resistance, it is also direct action in support of Palestinian organizing to help fundraise for a community center, to recruit Palestinian and Arab youth for a youth program, or to help call meetings that rebuild representative structures of the Palestinian community. The unity of the Palestinian Arab people in all of their sectors and the need for revitalization of their institutions in all sectors has perhaps never been more clear, and solidarity activists are also part of supporting and providing solidarity to that process.

Solidarity is, of course, not charity. Rather, it is the unification of people and movements in support of common interests and against common enemies. Every dollar spent to prop up the Zionist occupation in Palestine is a dollar not spent on education, health care and housing. The power obtained through the maintenance of the Zionist entity in Palestine - and the occupation of Iraq - and the resulting disruption and repression of Arab political unity and strength is the same power that allows imperialist threats and oppression of other nations around the world. The people of the U.S. don't benefit from oppressing Palestinians - but the small elite who also profit from racism and oppression around the world and at home do benefit. There is great power to be found in building alliances with oppressed communities and nations and people of color groups and communities in solidarity with Palestine. The nature

of the racist Zionist state, as an illegitimate colonial entity practicing apartheid, is not dissimilar to that of apartheid South Africa, nor to the U.S. or Canada as against their indigenous populations. Indigenous groups struggling for their national rights, oppressed communities struggling for their national rights, and movements working to support anti-imperialist forces internationally all can draw strength from the support of the Palestinian and Palestine solidarity movement, just as it is imperative that our movement receive the full support and alliance of these communities. We have common enemies, and, more importantly, common goals - freedom from racism, colonialism and oppression.

Within the antiwar movement and the broad progressive movement, the same forces that would label Palestine extraneous or divisive are those who would leave aside addressing fundamental issues of racism and oppression within the U.S. or who would label an anti-imperialist approach "unrealistic." On the contrary, an anti-imperialist approach to solidarity organizing addresses a fundamental issue - why the Zionist project in Palestine is backed by the full support of the U.S. government, why it continues to be critical for their strategy, and what provides the means to stand in opposition to that support. As progressive forces internationally, particularly in Latin America - Venezuela and Bolivia are particularly striking examples - gather strength, our movement can draw strength from their victories against imperialism, as theirs can build strength from ours. Recognizing the international character of the Palestinian movement as a key struggle against imperialism, and the Palestinian national liberation movement as a longtime bulwark against the total victory of imperialism in the Arab nation, provides a mechanism to recognize and establish true international solidarity among national liberation movements. This solidarity is anything but unrealistic - it is achievable, powerful, and necessary, and enables the growth and strengthening of a meaningful progressive movement in the U.S. that rejects imperialist discourse in its entirety and embraces full support for national liberation, in Palestine and everywhere.

An antiwar movement that fails to recognize that the ongoing occupation of Palestine is integrally connected with the occupation of Iraq - both parts of one assault on the Arab nation, designed to splinter Arab political strength and unity, provide a constant military threat against Arab mobilization and maintain economic and political power - in a country whose government provides \$15 million daily to fund that occupation, is not an antiwar movement. A social justice movement that refuses to recognize the justice of the Palestinian movement is not a social justice movement. It is our duty as solidarity activists to ensure that such is not the case in the United States, and to ensure that the centrality of Palestine is properly recognized and that the forces who try to silence that centrality are isolated.

Solidarity activists are often subject to threats, intimidation and repression. From the outright jailing of Palestinian activists like Sami al-Arian and the ongoing prosecution of the Los Angeles 8 to the daily struggles on campuses and in communities to obtain space against constant Zionist and administrative threats and repression, to the threats of death and bodily harm regularly inveighed against

(Continued on Page 12)

(Elections, Continued from Page 1) ty, including the United Nations, and some of the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), many extremely well-funded, which have been continuously making the argument that, as the Electronic Intifada website co-founder Ali Abunimah wrote, "Palestinian 'reform,' rather than an end to the Israeli occupation, is the way to resolve the conflict."

These ruling class (PA) and NGO-based Palestinians, as well as the Quartet (Russia, the EU, the UN, and the U.S.), have been essentially lobbying for a two state solution, one that does not take into consideration the political, social, and economic demands of the majority of the Palestinian people, in Palestine and the shatat. So the PLC elections must be analyzed in the context of the worldwide movement of Palestinian social forces, those that are shifting once again to the re-establishment of the institutions of the PLO, especially the reformation of the PNC.

A few months ago, a historic conference took place in Geneva, Switzerland, in which over 90 shatat Palestinians from across the world, including a delegation from North America, met to debate the state of Palestinian affairs in the Diaspora. These attendees agreed to begin discussions about rebuilding Palestinian-led institutions in North America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America, with the ultimate goal of organizing PNC elections in these regions. This is imperative to understand, for if this movement in the shatat is successful, the new PLC members will ultimately become members-at-large of the PNC, and exiled and refugee Palestinians will again take their rightful place in the leadership of the worldwide Palestinian National Movement, under the auspices of a rejuvenated PLO.

Hamas must understand this as well, because the masses of Palestinians who marked their votes for the Islamic Resistance Movement were not voting for a specific Hamas program; in fact, it did not offer one. They were not voting for an indiscriminate ideological shift to an Islamic solution for the Palestinian people. These revolutionary forces of workers, peasants, women, teachers, students, and youth, among others, were voting for a change in discourse, for a popular, democratic representation that they have not experienced since Oslo and the demise of the PLO. They fought the Israeli and U.S. war machines for this vote, and they deserve to join their exiled and refugee compatriots in establishing unified institutions that will continue the struggle for national liberation.

Now that Hamas has the opportunity to work with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to appoint ministers approved by the PLC and, at least nominally, govern in the West Bank and Gaza, the PA must become a different entity. One that understands that the Palestinians are still in the national liberation stage of their struggle and the importance of re-forming the PNC and the PLO in this context, disavows corruption, governs by democratic principles, and never attempts to negotiate away the core demands of the Palestinian National Movement—among them the right of resistance, the Right of Return, freedom for all political prisoners, and an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

A number of Palestinian political prisoners won seats in the PLC, most notably Marwan Al-Barghouthi, leader of Fatah's armed wing, the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, and Ahmad Saadat of the PFLP. Saadat is being illegally held (according to a Palestinian High Court decision) in a PA detention camp in Jericho, and Hamas will be expected to release him and many others being held there as well.

There is also some concern that Fatah will challenge Hamas' victory in the streets, and we have already seen a few armed Fatah demonstrations that led to clashes with Hamas. But the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade criticized the organizers (probably referring to Mohammad Dahlan and Jibril Rajoub, soon to be ex-PA security "chiefs" who have little popular support and are widely considered favorites of the U.S. and Israel) of these demonstrations as the "ones who spread corruption and greatly contributed to the humiliating Fatah defeat."

The Palestinian people have spoken in a collective, unified, and strong voice. The Palestinian shatat is also speaking, congratulating its compatriots, supporting the continued resistance to Israeli/U.S. occupation and colonialism, and expecting the PLC election returns to lead to renewed popular support for worldwide Palestinian representation in the decisions of its leadership.

(Diaspora, Continued from Page 6) 5. Bolstering the steadfastness of our people in Occupied Palestine—this requires the channeling of material, political and moral support to the Palestinians whose lives continue to be ravaged by the Zionist occupiers.

6. We must ensure that any organizational body that may result from this conference be a democratic and transparent one, with a clear and unifying political message that reflects the Palestinian Thawabet (fundamentals) of Liberation and Return.

7. Devising and implementing effective media and independent fundraising campaigns. The latter must be guided by the values and norms of frugality and fiscal self-sufficiency. Expenses related to the present and upcoming, founding conference must be kept to the bare minimum. We need to learn from past experience when poor financial management was the norm. Therefore, we suggest that a committee is established for the purpose of fundraising for the founding conference and in order to ensure sound and transparent fiscal practices.

The following are general suggestions to consider in relation to possible income sources:

- Donations from conference participants.
- Donations (with no strings attached) from expatriate Palestinian and Arab communities.
- Donations (with no strings attached) from any Palestinian, Arab or foreign institutions.
- The Palestine National Fund.

8. The conference must lay the grounds for the process which will result in the drafting of a political program and a set of bylaws. We suggest that all participants submit their input on both issues in a written form. They must do so before November 25 in order to allow ample time for reading by other members of the preparatory committee. The conference would then appoint a committee to draft the final documents, which would then be presented for discussion, amending and adoption at the founding convention, which we envision to take place within a year.

CONCLUSION

We know that the burden is heavy and the times are trying. But, we are certain that the Palestinian and Arab people will emerge victorious. This is not a rhetorical statement. Rather, it is a one that is based on a reading of modern Palestinian and Arab history.

It is from the perseverance, sacrifices, and unyielding optimism of the Palestinian people that we seek the determination to continue on the path treaded by our forbearers.

Zionism in Boston

by Richard Hugus

With few people being aware of it, the state of Israel has established key outposts in Boston, Massachusetts. It is customary for other countries to maintain embassies and consulates in large cities in the US, but in Boston, Israel, in addition to its consulate, and on top of its Anti-Defamation League and its Combined Jewish Philanthropies, also has two unique, nationally known organizations working especially for its interests. They are CAMERA - the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America - and the David Project Center for Jewish Leadership.

There is no listing on CAMERA's web site of the individuals involved in it, and no address is given other than a Boston post office box. CAMERA describes itself as "a media-monitoring, research and membership organization devoted to promoting accurate and balanced coverage of Israel and the Middle East."(1) "Accurate and balanced," as the terms are used here, means pro-Israel and anti-Arab. For example, recent articles up on CAMERA's web site attack authors who have seen fit to "malign" the mortally stricken Ariel Sharon for his involvement in the 1982 massacres at Sabra and Shatila. CAMERA is an organization of thought police for Israel which comes down with both feet on any publication that contradicts Zionist dogma. Public butchers like Ariel Sharon are in need of vigilant propagandists because their crimes are so obvious. This is also the case for Israel as a whole, with its murdering of Palestinian children, its constant land confiscation, its uprooting of olive trees, its stealing of resources, its program of slow genocide.

Is there any other nation on earth that has such structures built into US society? Do the French, for example, have people watching everything that's printed about France, and jump on anyone who's "anti-French"? Burundi and Paraguay have about the same population size as Israel (about 6 million). Would we expect these countries to have as much sway over what is said about it in US journals as Israel does? Yet Israel somehow has the ability and the resources to do this.

The second outpost, the David Project, has a web site which also lists a Boston post office box, and names one Charles Jacobs as its president. The site says that "by promoting a fair and honest understanding of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the David Project leads the ideological effort against the forces intent on defaming, weakening and destroying the Jewish State."(2) Examples of "fair and honest" reporting of the Arab side of the "Arab-Israeli conflict" are non-existent on this web site. In its "Campus support" section, the David Project declares that it "serves as a resource for pro-Israel campus activism." So, we see again that "fair and honest" simply means "pro-Israel."

The David Project's first major action was blocking an endowment for a chair in Islamic Studies at the Harvard Divinity School. The Project's "Director of Campus Strategy," Rachel Fish, based this 2003 smear campaign on the fact that the money for the endowment was to come from the President of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan, whose Zayed Center, according to the Project, "promoted anti-American, anti-Israel, and anti-Semitic writings and lectures." Did the David Project Director of Campus Strategy, in the interest of fairness and balance, raise any questions about the endowment of the chair of Felix Frankfurter Professor of Law at Harvard, occupied by torture advocate Alan Dershowitz? No. The Project couldn't even come up with an obvious human rights issue like Pentagon funding for weapons research at MIT. It attacked funding for a chair in Islamic studies because it did not want students of Islam to have either a voice or respectability at Harvard or in the Boston area.

After successfully blocking the Harvard endowment, the David Project went on in late 2004 to produce the movie "Columbia Unbecoming" which targets Professor Joseph

Arab Women Active in Arts and Media

by Fazoura Zaki

Brooklyn, NY. January 20, 2006—At a catering hall in Bensonhurst, the scene is festive: a large room bustling with women, girls and children celebrating the recent wedding of their friend, sister, daughter, in-law, niece. While half of the crowd dances to the Arabic music booming out of two large speakers propped up on chairs, the other half enjoys the company and the scenery, occasionally taking a turn at the dance floor as the music shifts every now and then. The older women want to hear more Khaligi, while pop seems to be the order of the evening.

A small litter of fashionably dressed teens stops every so often to harass the Dj's, two Arab girls, ages thirteen and sixteen. The Dj's are eager to please, but mutter dark and frantic statements to each other: "I'm never going to do this again." "I'd rather be dancing." "What the hell is Khaligi?" "Forget Khaligi, they want hip hop." You can't play hip hop now; The grandmothers are dancing!" And this goes on for some hours: the sixteen year old "Harara," focused and frustrated and the younger Lebwaz, ready and waiting for her chance to play her specialty, American music.

I rushed back from a telephone break when I heard "Run It," by Chris Brown. I was astonished to find the crowd unaffected, girls and grandmothers alike grooving to the music. It was not the dancing that surprised me. It was the fact that these kids continued to transition back and forth from between Arabic and American music and kept the crowd moving, a feat that I have only seen seasoned Dj's pull off.


That was my first exposure to AWAAM: Arab Women Active in the Arts and Media, an organization that provides leadership opportunities to Arab and Muslim young women and girls. In addition to learning how to mix music and produce videos, members learn the ins and outs of community organizing and gain first hand experience in the social justice movement in New York.

I noticed later that night that while the Dj's did their thing, their accomplices were busy recruiting prospective members throughout the crowd. Myself, an African-American Muslim woman almost thirty, I wished that I could have had such an opportunity when I was younger. AWAAM's Spring Program begins February 19. Pass it on to any Arab or Muslim New Yorker between the ages of twelve and twenty that you think could use some inspiration or a place to speak her mind.

We're Putting on a Workshop

At the NYC GRASSROOTS MEDIA CONFERENCE

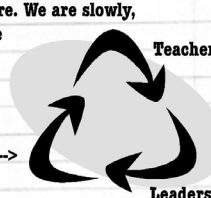
Join us and you'll see two drafts of our new video, "Terrorism." Learn how to say what you mean and mean what you say in your videos. Current, past, and future AWAAM members can come for free. This is an all day trip on February 11 to the far away island of Manhattan, where we will be lunching on a local delicacy known as PeatZah. Find out more about the Conference at www.nycgrassrootsmedia.org



Leadership Program Takes the Steering Wheel

Our Leadership Program, which is made up of members who have been around for a while, is planning and doing outreach for our Spring Weekend Program. In addition, they're learning about group infrastructure. We are slowly, but surely figuring out what shape AWAAM will take.

Teachers



Learners -->

Leaders

ATTENTION: Spring Weekend Program Starting February 19:

We are now accepting applications for our Spring Weekend Program, meeting two times per month from February to May. If you are interested, please contact us for more information




FAQ: is it FREE?

Answer: Yes

Email: info@awaam.org
Call: 818)399-9851
Or check out our website: www.awaam.org


AWAAM In the Classroom??

Yes, Starting in February, AWAAM will be collaborating with Al-Noor School English and Computer Graphics teachers to bring Video Production into an eighth grade girls English class. Last year's after school video program at Al-Noor brought us "What makes you Laugh?" and "Religion and Politics." Critics are waiting to see what the Noor girls will come up with next.

Our Resident DJs Are throwing it down!!!

If you want us to spin at your next event, contact us.



Massad of Columbia University's Department of Middle East studies for allegedly intimidating pro-Israel students. M. Junaid Alam, current editor of Lefthook, describes one of the Columbia students who made charges against Massad: a "student who was a lead organizer for the film, Ariel Beery, boasts an impressive resume: he served as a spokesman for the Israeli military, is the head of the on-campus Zionist group, and is also an agent and informer for Daniel Pipes' notorious CampusWatch.org website, where students are encouraged to 'report' their professors' political views if they are deemed insufficiently servile to the conservative party line."(3) A total of eleven articles by Ariel Beery appear on Daniel Pipes' witch-hunting "Campus Watch," an organization which says it is devoted to "monitoring Middle East studies on campus."(4) Like Campus Watch, the David Project claims that it "serves as a resource for pro-Israel campus activism." But, as Alam points out, such advocacy is in conflict with its claim elsewhere to fairness and honesty. Among other obvious biases in "Columbia Unbecoming," Massad is given no chance for a rebuttal. The movie has been called a right wing attack on academic freedom and the 1st Amendment right to free speech. But it's more than that. It's an attack on the fact that Zionist oppression of Palestine is real. The right wing attack on Ward Churchill at the University of Colorado is much the same - an apparent assault on academic freedom is really an assault on an articulation of the fact of US crimes of genocide. It's an assault on the truth waged for ideological ends.

A film crew from the David Project didn't just happen to be strolling through the Columbia Campus and witness alleged abuse of Israeli students. The production of "Columbia Unbecoming" has every appearance of having been planned in advance, from Zionist activist "victims" to dissemination of a finished product which the David Project disingenuously claims it never meant for public viewing. Israel is clearly aware that it is losing the propaganda battle on US campuses. Since it is unable to match its opponents argument for argument, it instead attacks their integrity.

In other cases, Zionists attempt to protect Israel by posing as the strongest advocates for "peace." One example is the Israel Project, based in Washington and Jerusalem. The Israel Project commissioned a study which found that . . .

"Never in the modern history of the

(Continued on Page 11)

(Zionism, continued from Page 10) Jewish state has there been more outspoken public opposition on the ELITE college campuses to the basic principles and tenets of Israel. To be brutally frank, if current trends are not averted, America's core commitment to and alliance with Israel may not survive."

The researcher recommended the following response:

"The only way for Israel to create sympathy is to be the side working hardest for peace. The best case for Israel is to demonstrate that she is willing to go twice as far as her neighbors to establish peace."(5)

The strategy that devolves from this is to co-opt peace and justice organizations on college campuses with the message of Israel's benevolence, while the David Project's strategy is to simply attack individuals and organizations who might be in a position to counter such propaganda.

The David Project's newest cause is to block the continued construction of a mosque being built by the Islamic Society of Boston in Roxbury. The mosque is 85% completed. The David Project opposes the mosque because of "Saudi Arabia funding hatred of infidels, Christians, [and] Jews, in American mosques", and says that "various individuals who have been affiliated and directly involved with the Islamic Society of Boston (ISB) have defended acts of terrorism, and have publicly engaged in the worst sort of anti-Semitic and other hate speech."(6,7)

Of course, the accusations are part of wider Israeli and US government attacks on Arabs and Muslims being carried out directly, and with open brutality, in Palestine and Iraq. The David Project's defamation of the Islamic Society of Boston was created by people opposed to Muslims as Muslims, for purely political ends.

Given the history of US genocide in Iraq over the past 15 years, and the fact that the dominant religion in the US is Christianity, one could make a good case that Christians are heavily involved in terrorism. Yet it would be unthinkable to oppose the construction of an Episcopal Church in Boston. Would a Catholic church be opposed because certain priests had been found to be pedophiles? Would a synagogue be opposed because of support among rabbis for a foreign state founded on genocide against the Palestinian people? But somehow people find it legitimate to say that a mosque might be connected to "terrorists" and therefore should not be built. What country in the Arab world has caused as much mayhem, murder, and suffering in recent world history as the US? Yet the dominant culture in the US feels it is in a position to question Arabs.

In the past year, the David Project joined forces in the anti-mosque effort with, among others, former CNN reporter Steve Emerson, who made the ridiculous 1994 "documentary" *Terrorists Among Us: Jihad In America*. The Islamic Society of Boston has filed a libel suit against Emerson, the David Project, the right wing Boston Herald, Fox News, Dennis Hale, and others for mounting an intentional smear campaign for the purpose of preventing the mosque from being completed. Dennis Hale, a Boston College professor, is president of the Judeo-Christian Alliance, an initiative of the David Project. From the umbrella of the David Project, he heads a front group called "Citizens for Peace and Tolerance."(8)

Boston has a recent history of persecution of supporters of Palestine. The well-known Boston activist Amer Jubran is one example. In 2000 Jubran was arrested at a legal protest of an "Israel Independence Day" celebration in Brookline, a city adjacent to Boston. The Brookline police were paid \$10,600 by the Jewish Community Relations Council and the Israeli Consulate to cover the event. The Brookline police who arrested Jubran were in contact with the Israeli Consulate prior to the arrest. The charges were either invented or pre-arranged. It is important to remember here that the Israeli Consulate represents a foreign government. It is not appropriate for a police force in a US city to be employed by, advised by, or report to, a foreign government. Blindness to this issue is part of US politics from Boston to the national level in Washington, where Israel and AIPAC get away with what would be called gross political interference, infiltration, bribery, and espionage if it were any other country. Others have commented on Israel's status as a 51st state, but Connecticut or New Hampshire would not be able to bend politics in Massachusetts in this way, and all of these states together would not be able to match Israel's power in Washington. It might be more accurate to say that Israel is a meta-state, a state above others, which takes from and manipulates the US polity as it sees fit.

In November 2002 Amer Jubran was arrested again, this time without any charges at all, two days after leading a march organized by the New England Committee to Defend Palestine. He was ultimately harassed out of the country by court proceedings under the Department of Homeland Security. At that time, mass arrests of Arab and Muslim immigrants were being motivated nationwide by Justice Department Zionists John Ashcroft and Michael Chertoff. Without question, Boston Zionists were behind the order to have Jubran "removed," just as he was earlier in Brookline. The judge in the case, Leonard Shapiro, had the gall to declare that the two-year, million dollar investigation of Jubran was about alleged immigration issues and was not a political trial.

A second example is Jaoudat Abouazza, another Palestinian who, for his attempts to organize a protest of a June 2002 "Israel Independence Day" celebration in Boston Common, was arrested on phony charges by Cambridge police, subjected to torture in the Bristol County Jail (involuntary extraction of four teeth without anaesthesia), and ultimately deported to Canada. Abouazza's treatment was meant to send a message to the Arab American community in Boston to stay off the streets. This was during the time of Sharon's "Operation Defensive Shield" in Palestine, which had brought many Arab Americans to the streets in protest. Abouazza was betrayed in his court case by the head of the Boston ACLU, who personally visited him in jail, saw the evidence of his torture, and did nothing about it. With few exceptions the liberal legal establishment turned its back on the Homeland Security attacks on Arabs and Muslims, both in Boston and the country as a whole.

A final example is Boston City Councilor Chuck Turner. In October 2005, speaking at a rally for the renewal of the Voting Rights Act, Turner pointed out the irony of people supporting voting rights in the US while the US provides generous funding to Israel, which openly deprives Palestinians of voting rights. Turner was immediately called on the carpet for this by a local newspaper, *The Jewish Advocate*, and by the New England Anti-Defamation League (ADL). In a letter responding to the ADL, Turner said, "a great injustice is being perpetrated against the Palestinians. I believe that all human beings of conscience have a responsibility to speak out and demand an end of our federal government's support of its perpetuation." He included a postscript to his letter, stating flatly: "you have no right to label someone as prejudiced or Anti Semitic because you disagree with their views on Israel's treatment of the Palestinians." This sentiment expresses the feelings of many, many people concerned about the oppression of Palestine who are fed up with being intimidated by this one cheap argument over and over again when they express this concern.

Chuck Turner is a very popular and well-liked African American leader in Boston. The ADL has a special record of conflict with African American leaders who cross the line by criticizing Israel as he did. The ADL mounted a notorious attack on Amiri Baraka for his October 2001 poem, "Somebody Blew Up America", which asked a hundred questions about who may have been involved in 9/11, and which did not exclude Israel. In the poem Baraka asks, "Who know why Five Israelis was filming the explosion /And cracking they sides at the notion."(9)

In October 2002, Baraka responded to the ADL smear campaign against him by reminding readers that in the 1960's Stokeley Carmichael (later Kwame Ture) of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee was denounced by the ADL for calling Zionism "the

enemy of humanity." Baraka reminded readers of ADL accusations of "Black anti-Semitism" leveled at the Black liberation movement when it criticized Israel's support for Apartheid South Africa. He recalled ADL's position against affirmative action. He also recalled the AIPAC/ADL campaign against the Congresswoman from Georgia, Cynthia McKinney.(10)

Others have documented the ADL's spying on and collecting dossiers not only on black liberation and anti-Apartheid groups but the American Indian Movement, Central America solidarity groups, Pacifica, ACT UP, Arab Americans, and supporters of Palestine. In an article in *The Village Voice* in 1993 Robert I. Friedman points out that right wing hate groups were not the ADL's first concern: he quotes an ADL official who stated that "the real danger to Jews is posed not by the right -- but by a coalition of leftists, blacks, and Arabs, who in his view threaten the fabric of democracy in America, as well as the state of Israel."(11)

Zionists in the US have a long history of working in the civil rights movement or with groups on the Left as long as they kept Israel out of the discussion. Israel was not discussed during the days of rage against the Vietnam war. Nor during the wars in Central America. Nor during the beginning of the devastation of Iraq in 1991. Israel is explicitly not discussed today from the stage of rallies hosted by the national peace organization, United for Peace with Justice. Until they were exposed in 1993, and perhaps afterward, spies for the ADL actively infiltrated Left and Arab American organizations in order to collect intelligence and to report people to both local authorities and to foreign governments, like South Africa and Israel. In one or two cases, activists who the ADL informed on were killed. Today the ADL's main business is to ally with causes for social justice to make sure that the people who work in these causes either avoid or stay "on message" when it comes to the question of human rights violations in Israel - a monstrosity not to be discussed.

The ADL today has a law enforcement training program for police in cities all over the US. In April, 2004 the ADL held a training session for Boston area campus police on "responding to hate crimes and also instances when activism and expression become intimidation, harassment, and threats."(12) Note the special attention to "activism." Boston police have also had tête-à-têtes with Israeli police. In one meeting, said Boston Police Chief James Hussey, the Israeli police "were able to share with our intelligence people and some of the people out in the streets the issues that they deal with," (13) Another program was set up in 2002 by the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs to send US police to Israel.(14) Because its alleged security failures on 9/11, an Israeli was called in to handle security at Boston's Logan Airport, his main qualification being Israel's supposed special knowledge of the ways of terrorists.

The ADL claims to work in support of civil rights for everyone. It has sponsored "No Place for Hate Programs" in cities and towns throughout the United States. But under cover of a slogan which no one would think to oppose (who is for hate?), it is ironically doing just what it says it's against: promoting hatred of a defined minority group - Arabs and Muslims in the US - and ultimately defending racist Israel as it attempts to get rid of the same people in Palestine. The ADL program should be titled, "No Place For Hate, Unless You're Arab." The final irony is that the protesters against defamation are themselves the defamers. The David Project, for example, is not for fairness and honesty; it's out to make Arab Americans look bad, and to stop them from having a voice. What a convenient setup: define criticism of Israel as hate speech, outlaw hate speech, and thereby outlaw criticism of Israel. In fact, defense of Israel becomes a righteous cause. ADL agitation in this area is a direct service to another country. Town boards voting to become "No Place For Hate" communities are unaware that the ADL is a political action organization serving some very ugly Zionist interests.

The David Project's president, Charles Jacobs, is also on the Board of Directors of another organization, with headquarters on Tremont Street in downtown Boston - the American Anti-Slavery Group. On the internet the organization is known as "iAbolish.com." The American Anti-Slavery Group says that it works "to abolish modern-day slavery around the world, focusing primarily on systems of chattel slavery in Sudan and Mauritania."(15) The American Anti-Slavery Group's connection to Israel seems to be that it provides a platform for Charles Jacobs to criticize Arabs in Sudan, and Arabs in general (an important part of the Zionist project) as roundabout support for Israel. For Zionism to work, and for Israel to be seen as a legitimate state, the Arab world must be seen as second class, connected to terrorism, and fatally opposed to decent western values. In the case of the Columbia campus, the Boston mosque, and Sudan, Jacobs uses the same subterfuge as the ADL: Zionism under the cover of civil rights. Students should be treated fairly, terrorism should not be involved in faith, and slavery is an abomination, so listen to the rest of our message - Israel is a struggling democracy, a David fighting Goliath in modern times, and anyone who says otherwise is really a hater of Jewish people.

In a 2003 article for MIT's *Thistle*, Aimée Smith covers a talk on Sudan given by Charles Jacobs. She quotes the reaction of a female Muslim student attendee who described the talk at length:

"Dr. Jacobs' talk expressed blatantly racist and anti-Islamic views. In fact, I have never seen Islamophobia exuded so blatantly at a public forum at MIT, nor such racist views aired at a panel discussion on human rights. Dr. Jacobs' topic was child slavery in Sudan and he started off by speaking about the Arab Muslims in Sudan's north conducting their interpretation of a jihad against the Black Christians in the south. He then offered a theory on why the situation wasn't receiving sufficient international attention. It was because a white race wasn't the perpetrator of this crime. The West tends to get more agitated about a human rights issue, he argued, when they feel that they are somehow responsible for it."

"White people, he continued, tend to be more concerned in general about human rights abuses than others. Waving his arm around the room, he said, 'see, most of you at this event are white people.'"

"After this Dr. Jacobs forgot about Sudan entirely and set into the Muslim world with gusto. He named a few Islamic countries and began elaborating on human rights abuses there. Now, ever since that ill-fated day two years ago, I (and many other Muslims) have been trying to come to terms with the bitter reality that it is becoming increasingly acceptable to publicly make negative, sweeping statements about Islam. According to Dr. Jacobs, however, it has become 'taboo' in the West to criticize Islam and the Muslims. Well, he sure smashed his imagined taboos to bits. The way he went on, it was clear he believed that human rights abuses occur only in Muslim countries - he didn't cite the example of a single non-Muslim country. At about this point I got so disgusted that I had to walk out, along with another Muslim student...I suppose Dr. Jacobs thought that being non-white, we were just bored of all this human rights talk."(16)

Coincidentally, *Thistle* columnist Aimée Smith was arrested twice at MIT for her "activism" on campus - once for leafletting and once for talking back to a cop. The first arrest was in June 2004, just two months after the ADL campus training session. Ms. Smith was well known on the MIT campus as an activist for Palestine. Both arrests were ultimately thrown out of court.

An added incentive to the American Anti-Slavery Group campaign against Arabs in Sudan is its ability, by making it look like Arabs are attacking Africans in Sudan, to divide African Americans from Arabs in the US. Not clearly understood by many people is the fact that both parties in the Sudan dispute are dark-skinned, that the slavery which does exist in Sudan is of a much different kind than that in the US in the 18th and 19th century, and that it is a problem exacerbated by US interference and agitation in that country in the first place. Furthermore, neither Zionists nor the US are anywhere near having the moral standing to criticize Sudan, considering their behavior in their own countries, and in

(Zionism, continued from Page 11) the rest of the world. The US simply does not have humanitarian goals in the world, despite its rhetoric. However, African Americans are obviously sensitive to the issue of slavery, and have been recruited by the Anti-Slavery Group. In August 2004, for example, the actor Danny Glover was arrested in front of the Sudan embassy in Washington, D.C. as an Anti-Slavery Group supporter. Most likely without their knowing it, African Americans, and alleged Sudanese victims, have lent support to what is at bottom a far-removed Zionist cause.

The American Anti-Slavery Group, already inside the US power structure, garners additional approval from that structure by lending support to US government efforts to divide Sudan in order to gain access to oil supplies in Darfur. In the 1990's, Jimmy Carter remarked that "the people in Sudan want to resolve the conflict. The biggest obstacle is US government policy. The US is committed to overthrowing the government in Khartoum. Any sort of peace effort is aborted, basically by policies of the United States...Instead of working for peace in Sudan, the US government has basically promoted a continuation of the war." (17)

Israel benefits from Zionist spin on the story of slavery in Sudan by being able to point to this spin and say, "Why pick on us?" Writing for the Palestine Solidarity Review Fall 2005 issue, Shemon Salam says of the US-based campaign to divest from Sudan,

"a sincere divestment campaign would have to function on a principled basis of being against colonialism, empire (which would include the Israeli and U.S. regime) and racism; something which Zionists cannot but fail to do considering the basic tenants of Zionism are in direct contradiction with anti-racism and anti-imperialism. Having a historical record of collaboration with Nazism, Fascism, and U.S. empire, Zionism has proven itself no friend to these democratic principles . . ." (18)

In short, Zionists choose to exploit Sudan in order to set themselves up as the winners in a competition of greater and lesser racists.

Finally, the position of Dr. Steven Steinlight as executive director of the American Anti-Slavery Group should be noted. (19) A former Director of National Affairs of the American Jewish Committee, Dr. Steinlight shines a light on what is called in Israel "the demographic problem" but in this case as it relates to the United States. In an unbelievably racist October 2001 essay, "The Jewish Stake in America's Changing Demography," Steinlight says that it's time for the Jewish community of America to "stop censoring ourselves" and openly deal with the threat posed to Jewish power if US immigration policy allows a bunch of Arabs, Mexicans and Third World peoples to cross the border. The threat? - an insufficient understanding, on their part, of Jewish history.

In Steinlight's own words:

"Will a country in which enormous demographic and cultural change, fueled by unceasing large-scale non-European immigration, remain one in which Jewish life will continue to flourish as nowhere else in the history of the Diaspora? In an America in which people of color form the plurality, as has already happened in California, most with little or no historical experience with or knowledge of Jews, will Jewish sensitivities continue to enjoy extraordinarily high levels of deference and will Jewish interests continue to receive special protection? Does it matter that the majority non-European immigrants have no historical experience of the Holocaust or knowledge of the persecution of Jews over the ages and see Jews only as the most privileged and powerful of white Americans? Is it important that Latinos, who know us almost entirely as employers for the menial low-wage cash services they perform for us (such as blowing the leaves from our lawns in Beverly Hills or doing our laundry in Short Hills), will soon form one quarter of the nation's population?"

As for Muslims:

"Far more potentially perilous, does it matter to Jews and for American support for Israel when the Jewish State arguably faces existential peril that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the United States? That undoubtedly at some point in the next 20 years Muslims will outnumber Jews, and that Muslims with an "Islamic agenda" are growing active politically through a widespread network of national organizations?"

Asians are also a problem:

"For perhaps another generation, an optimistic forecast, the Jewish community is thus in a position where it will be able to divide and conquer and enter into selective coalitions that support our agendas. But the day will surely come when an effective Asian-American alliance will actually bring Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, Koreans, Vietnamese, and the rest closer together."

Steinlight tops off his paranoid rant by suggesting that Latinos may be conspiring in a "reconquista" or re-conquering of the US Southwest - yet another threat to Jewish power. For a good education in Zionist racism, Steinlight's essay can be found at the web site of the Center for Immigration Studies. (20) Probably because of his obviousness, Steinlight is not listed in the "Who We Are" section of the American Anti-Slavery's "iAbolish" website.

Denunciations of and divestment from Sudan have become part of polite political discourse from University administrations to the halls of Congress thanks to organizations like the American Anti-Slavery Group. In April 2004 Harvard University made a decision to divest from a company called PetroChina because of its involvement with Sudan. But divestment from companies that do business with Israel is quite another matter. In 2004, when the Somerville, Massachusetts Board of Aldermen was asked to divest town funds connected to Israel, it was called an attack on Jewish people, a case of anti-Semitism. The Israeli Consul General - that is, a representative of a foreign government from the Israeli consulate in Boston - was called in. ADL also got involved, and the divestment resolution finally failed. Its failure was not due to right wing Zionism. It was due to progressive liberalism. The first Alderman to speak against the divestment resolution did so not on the basis that Israel had to be supported, but on the basis of an argument that to be fair the Board needed to hear "both sides of the story." This argument could not be opposed by decent folk - progressives and liberals would be horrified at being called unfair. For the sake of fairness, the resolution was tabled, Zionists were invited in, and being "fair" to a racist state won the day. Liberalism became the means for an attack on the truth that the history of Zionism in Palestine is a history of genocide. The right couldn't have dreamed of a better subterfuge than the one the left obligingly handed them.

In fact, there is a right and wrong. In the case of Zionist oppression of the Palestinians, ideas like "hearing both sides, appreciating complexity, understanding competing rights, showing tolerance, having fairness and balance" are all code words which provide a cover for the weak to sell out the oppressed. They do so because of their fear of the oppressor. The words are a cover for the ignoring of an ugly, ongoing crime. They're also a cover for what even a small child could see is the truth of the matter - a child especially, because she hasn't been inundated with a lifetime of sugar-coated, official-sounding lies.

Where is Zion? Originally it was an actual place - a mountain in Al Quds, or Jerusalem. Then it became a mythical promised land. To African slaves in the US it was a future with freedom from bondage, and a Christian heaven. To Rastafarians, it is a place in Africa to which they will return. But Zion as a promised land has also been co-opted by thieves like the European colonial settlers in North America, who thought the land they stole from indigenous nations was given to them through "manifest destiny." To the European colonial settlers in Palestine, hijacking the Hebrew myth, Zion was the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, stolen from another indigenous people. The flag set up by these settlers to create a state on the land they stole has two blue lines. These lines symbolize yet another, more ambitious Zion, occupying all the land between the Nile in Egypt and the Euphrates in Iraq.

The only Zion colonial imperialists have really managed to create is a place in peo-

ple's minds where truth is defined by might, the motives of might are presented in fine Enlightenment language as velvet lies, and those they oppress and steal from suffer almost without recognition. Such is the case of Iraq and Afghanistan and a multitude of other countries at the hand of the US, and of Palestine at the hand of Israel. The US and Israel are the same thing; both got where they are through lying. When it comes down to it, their Zion turns out to be a totalitarian state founded on the corruption of terms like "equality, civil rights, peace, and tolerance."

1 http://www.camera.org/index.asp?x_context=24; 2 <http://www.davidproject.org/>; 3 <http://palestineblogs.com/archives/2005/03/20/the-witchhunts-continue-columbia-university-and-the-new-anti-semitism/>; 4 <http://www.campus-watch.org/docs/author/Ariel+Beery>; 5 http://www.zionism-israel.com/equine/Explaining_Zionism.htm; 6 http://www.davidproject.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=37&Itemid=54; 7 http://www.davidproject.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=33&Itemid=46; 8 <http://www.judeo-christianalliance.org/PressReleases/042105.htm>; 9 <http://www.amiribaraka.com/blew.html>; 10 <http://www.counterpunch.org/baraka1007.html>; 11 <http://www.websbells.com/adlwatch/news22.htm>; 12 http://www.adl.org/learn/adl-law_enforcement/Boston_Campus_Police_Training.htm?LEARN_Cat=Training&LEARN_SubCat=Training; 13 http://www.israelinsider.com/channels/security/articles/sec_0131.htm; 14 <http://www.globalsearch.ca/index.php?context=viewArticle&code=CHI20050725&articleId=736>; 15 <http://www.iabolish.com/aasg/index.html>; 16 <http://mit.edu/thistle/www/v15/1/zionists.html>; 17 <http://web.mit.edu/justice/www/sudan.html>; 18 <http://psreview.org/content/view/full/43/99>; 19 http://www.latinschool.org/latintoday/article_176.shtml; 20 <http://www.cis.org/articles/2001/back1301.html>

Sudan Needs Aid, Not Divestment

by Isma'il Kamal

The tragedy of Darfur, for all of us Sudanese, is and will remain a deep scar for years to come. The causes and roots of the conflict are, however, complex and intertwined. This is why many of us are baffled to the oversimplified and misleading portrayal of the conflict as Arabs against black Africans.

One of the tools of the anti-Sudan campaign has been to call for "divestment" from companies dealing with Sudan. But the recent proposal presented to the regents of the University of California, calling for divestment from Sudan (to be voted on Jan. 19 at UC San Diego) contains a precatious clause: "A policy of divestment from a foreign government shall be adopted by the University only when the United States government declares that a foreign regime is committing acts of genocide." This proposal consequently ignores the findings of many other international bodies and leaves it solely up to the US government to be the "moral compass" of the public.

Given the recent fumbles of U.S. policy makers (WMDs, Abu Ghraib, domestic spying, etc.), one has to seriously put this clause to question. In fact, such a clause would have made it impossible for the University of California to divest from Apartheid South Africa in 1986.

Sadly, the Darfur tragedy has become a source of "political opportunism" for many groups. The fact that the U.S. government has declared Darfur a "genocide" - contradicting the investigative reports of the U.N., EU, African Union and Doctors Without Borders - should raise legitimate questions. Pointing this out should not belittle the scope of the tragedy and in some sense it does not matter what we call it. However, let us consider the following. Former U.S. ambassador to the U.N., John Danforth, remarked in a BBC interview that describing the conflict as "genocide" was done for "internal consumption" in an election year. The Guardian journalist, Peter Hallward wrote: "Bush's opportunity to adopt an election-season cause [in 2004] that can appeal simultaneously to fundamentalist Christians, the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, multilateralist liberals and the altruistic 'left'... [was]... too tempting to pass up." Jonathan Steele, another journalist, points to the "Arab bashing" that has accompanied the anti-Sudan campaign. Hence, I cannot help but suspect that the above "embedded" clause represents a commitment by some in the University of California's divest from Sudan campaign to the current U.S. administration's unilateralism in international affairs.

Sudan has a new transitional Government of National Unity (GONU) that has been in place for a year, since the end of the civil war in the South. Is the divestment campaign seeking to destabilize GONU? The divestment from Sudan campaign claims that divestment will not hurt the Sudanese people, but given the fact that the UC system is the largest public university system in the country, divestment will only encourage many other universities and public institutions to do the same, thus denying Sudan needed foreign investment funds for relief and reconstruction.

Divestment is essentially an economic sanction. Former Southern Sudanese rebel turned Vice President John Garang, and his successor, Salva Kiir, have both expressed opposition to sanctions. The divestment campaign ignores a fact made by even some of the Sudanese government's harshest critics such as pan-Africanist writer Dr. Abdul Raheem Tujadeen in his article titled "Darfur rebels are the major obstacle to peace." I know that many sincerely wish to help the afflicted of Sudan and help bring an end to this conflict, and to them we are grateful; I also recognize that the Darfur issue is being exploited by some for political purposes. While the UC regents may very well vote in favor of divestment, for this campaign has much "star power" behind it, it will do so ignoring the input of many of us Sudanese who have been left out, as everyone claims to be solving our problems. I nevertheless urge the UC regents to vote this proposal down. Sudan does not need sanctions or divestment. Sudan needs help.

(Solidarity, Continued from Page 9) activists for Palestine, the Zionist movement has attempted a campaign of intimidation in order to silence the Palestine solidarity movement. It is time to meet that intimidation with boldness - not with apologies, hesitation, or silence, but with confidence and assurance that justice, liberation and return can, and will, prevail. The Zionists have, and will continue to repeatedly attempt to demand that solidarity activists condemn or disassociate themselves from Palestinian resistance, or "acknowledge the legitimacy" of the Zionist entity. Conceding to their threats and demands will achieve nothing for the movement but standing aside from the very people with which it claims to support. Despite fifty-eight years of oppression and dispossession, the Palestinian people have continued to struggle, and to resist, in Palestine and in exile. We can do no less now.

Solidarity activists owe it to the Palestinian people to support Palestinian resistance in Palestine in all of its forms, and to build resistance within North America - demonstrations, events, lectures, community organizing - that works within to build solidarity with the total liberation of all of historic Palestine, to rebuild and revitalize the institutions that will lead that liberation struggle, and to popularize a vision of justice in Palestine - a vision of return, of liberation, and of a truly free Palestine.