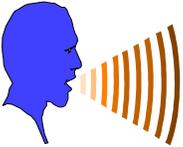




JERUSALEM ALERT!

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Wave of ethnic cleansing clears Palestinian homes

By Sherri Muzher

It's been said the "home is where the heart is." Try telling this to Israeli demolition teams, who come protected by hundreds of troops to destroy Palestinian homes. The United States has been critical. Yet, the Israeli government -- enjoying impunity since the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation began on Sept. 28, 2000 -- continues.

During the last campaign of home demolition, called "Operation Enjoyable Song," more than 32 shelters were demolished -- housing some 400 people. At the time, it was the worst act of destruction since the uprising began. That the civilized world remains silent as Palestinian civilians go homeless is difficult enough to comprehend, though nothing new. That the Israeli government seems to think making more Palestinians homeless builds trust and enhances an imaginary "cease-fire" is astonishing.

Sadly, home demolitions have been used as a form of collective punishment

and ethnic cleansing for many years. Even the Oslo Accords represented no reprieve for the destruction of Palestinian homes. In many cases, the demolitions accelerated.

The pretext has generally been that the homes are built without permits. Forget the fact that Palestinians trying to obtain permits is like pulling teeth. Forget the fact that a building permit could cost as much as \$20,000 and take five years to obtain. Forget the fact that Palestinians are often living in severely cramped spaces. Palestinians are not given permits because they "violate existing zoning laws."

Such adherence to laws by Israel is admirable, except that it has always been politically motivated.

Almost all the homes that have been demolished, or have received demolition orders, are situated near existing illegal Jewish settlements or bypass roads. The demolitions result in areas that prevent territorial contiguity between Palestinian population centers or neighboring Israeli military installations.

The logic can be quite astonishing, at times. Consider that in many cases, Palestinian homes have been demolished for being built too close to a Jewish edifice -- a structure that did not even exist when the Palestinian home was first constructed.

While Israel has targeted Palestinian homes for destruction, Israel has authorized massive housing construction, tax incentives, and roads and related infrastructure for illegal Jewish settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Even as thousands of completed units have stood empty, the Israeli Housing Ministry has authorized more illegal settlements. The ministry admitted that almost a quarter of all units built by the government in the West Bank between 1989 and 1992 had never been occupied.

Like the seizure of Palestinian ID cards in Jerusalem, house demolitions have served as another form of ethnic cleansing that is designed to keep the Palestinian population numbers down or

force them to leave. The Israeli rationale is: Lay as many facts on the ground before any potential final status negotiations, and it is believed the Palestinians will get much less than what they are expecting as a matter of right and law.

Homes have also been demolished as punishment. It was certainly a measure widely used during the first intifada from 1988-93. In fact, during its first four years, 786 homes were destroyed as reprisals against those who took part in the uprising.

It is also standard for the homes of the families of Palestinian suicide bombers to be destroyed, though they had nothing to do with their sons' decisions. One can only imagine the outrage that we, as Americans, would have felt if bulldozers demolished the home of Oklahoma City terrorist Timothy McVeigh's parents and siblings. Why make the whole family pay for the actions of an adult child?

With regard to Palestinians from the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention clearly states no resident of an occupied territory "may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed." It explicitly forbids collective punishment.

Unfortunately, the Fourth Geneva Convention has never mattered to Israel. Neither have UN resolutions or condemnations by human rights groups.

Many Israelis have repeated the tiring propaganda that Palestinians teach hate to their children. But does hate really need to be taught to a child who is forced to become homeless?

Sherri Muzher is a Mason, Mich., lawyer who is a free-lance writer for the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs. Write letters to letters@detnews.com. (Reprinted with special permission by The Detroit News.)

Palestinians can absorb whatever Israeli hurls at them

By Charly Reese



The Israelis bulldozed another 14 Palestinian homes this week in a refugee camp in Gaza. The United States said the act was "provocative." **Actually**, it was a war crime. Actually, what the Israelis have been doing to the Palestinians has been correctly characterized by the International Red Cross as war crimes and by a United Nations official as "an affront to civilization."

But, hey, you misled, sleeping Americans, you don't know what a breakthrough it is for the U.S. State Department to utter even the mildest criticism of some Israeli atrocity. "Provocative." Wow. Golly gee whiz. Old George W. Bush promised he would provide leadership, and that's real leadership, calling a war crime "provocative." Finally, after eight months of refusing to utter even that bland a criticism, he managed to say the destruction of homes so precious to such terribly poor people is "provocative." It is such an improvement over Warren Christopher. When he was secretary of state, the Israelis were indulging in one of their periodic and



gratuitous artillery attacks against villages in South Lebanon. A group of about 100 Lebanese women and children fled to a United Nations compound for safety. It didn't matter. The Israelis fired on it deliberately, as a subsequent U.N. investigation demonstrated. They were all killed, along with the U.N. peacekeepers. Bits

and pieces of their flesh hung like grotesque decorations, dripping blood from shattered debris and blasted trees. Do you know what Christopher said? "The United States urges both sides to show restraint."

I wonder how he expected the shattered flesh of the dead Lebanese women and children to show restraint. Perhaps he thought that they should not bleed so profusely from their wounds. I think that was the very first time I felt ashamed to be an American, listening to that rat-faced, cold-blooded international lawyer brushing off an atrocity like a crumb on his expensive coat sleeve.

One day, Americans are going to wake up from more than 50 years of Zionist propaganda and suddenly feel like strangers in a strange land, to borrow the title of an old science-fiction work. They're finally going to see the simple truth:

Israelis drove Palestinians out of their own country and confiscated their land and wealth. Israelis refused to allow (and still refuse) Palestinian refugees to return, despite United Nations resolutions instructing them to do so. **In 1967**, the Israelis attacked and took the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. Since then, they have ruled it and still rule, despite U.N. resolutions against their actions.

Now, after dragging out so-called peace negotiations for 10 years — how can the simple question, "When are you going to withdraw from the territories you illegally occupy?" take 10 years? — the drama is heading toward a climax.

The Israelis have tried economic strangulation. They have tried to force the Palestinians to accept a chopped-up pseudo-country. They have tried killing their children, demolishing their homes and assassinating their leaders.

They tried uprooting their agricultural orchards and sealing the Palestinians off from normal travel.

By the way, where are you environmentalists while the Israelis commit this environmental atrocity? Don't you know how long it takes for an olive tree to reach maturity and start bearing fruit? I thought you were concerned about the environment. Oh, excuse me — not when it's a Palestinian environment. My mistake. I sometimes

forget who is a hypocrite and who isn't, because there are so many these days.

What's next, of course, is for the Israelis to take off the bloody glove and commit one super massacre in an attempt to drive the Palestinians out or to break their spirit. This is what the Palestinians expect. They are bracing for it. They know that the Israelis have elected the one politician, Ariel Sharon, willing to do it.

They figure they can absorb that blow. If the survivors can rise from the rubble and say to the Israelis, "You can bury us here, but you can never drive us out of our own country," then the Israelis will have exhausted their options. They will dump Sharon and replace him with somebody who will finally, at long last, do some serious talking.

It's already terrible what the Palestinians are going through, and this new assault, when it comes, will be far worse. They need the support now of decent people with the courage to stand up for human rights. As you can see, the Bush administration prefers to remain on its knees. Most members of Congress are afraid even to do that. They prefer the supine position, total prostration.

If you can't find the courage to speak out against evil financed with your tax money, then at least watch as Palestinian children show you how real men and women live and die with honor.

(Reprinted with special permission North America Syndicate.) Published July 13, 2001 Reach Charley Reese at 407-420-5315 or creese@orlandosentinel.com.

Israeli army: inhumane violence

Tue, 7 Aug 2001

By Patricia Smith

URGENT APPEAL

Yesterday 25 year old Palestinian, Mahdi Mizyed, was murdered in a violent, inhumane and unwarranted attack by Israeli soldiers in the northern West Bank. Mizyed and his three friends were sitting eating figs on farm land in area 'c', under complete Israeli control, near Tulkarem, when

an Israeli army jeep pulled over, and four soldiers jumped out and opened fire on the group, injuring Mizyed. His friends managed to take cover, but the soldiers grabbed Mizyed and dragged him away. His friends then witnessed the soldiers kicking Mizyed in the head and body and beating him with the butts of their guns, they beat him for ten minutes, until his skull was smashed and he was no longer moving. The Israeli army handed his body over to Palestinians at dawn today. Medical sources have since confirmed that the bullet wound he received in the leg was not sufficient to kill him. X-ray pictures of the skull show no entry and exit hole from a bullet, and doctors confirmed that he was killed by severe beating to the skull.

Mizyed's tragic and unnecessary death is not one of a kind. Only two weeks ago, Israeli soldiers detained Palestinians at a checkpoint, and abused them for over two hours. In that incident, with extreme brutality, the soldiers forced the passengers at gunpoint to beat one another, and then hit the passengers on their heads using helmets and guns.

The Israeli army's abuse of Palestinians is widespread. Numerous testimonies have been recorded, ranging from ritual degradation and humiliation at checkpoints, often including light ill-treatment, (such as slaps and kicks), to gross, and potentially fatal, physical violence. This unjustifiable and inhumane violence is indicative of the racist attitude of the Israeli occupying army towards the Palestinian people. Cases such as Mizyed's show a total disrespect and dehumanization of Palestinian citizens and their lives. It is an insult to notions of international human rights standards that such conduct is allowed to continue without widespread condemnation.

We call on you to urge the Israeli authorities to prevent the Israeli army's violent conduct, please address your appeals to:

Ariel Sharon, Prime Minister

pm@pmo.gov.il

Shimon Peres, Israeli Foreign Minister at sar@mofa.gov.il

Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, Israeli Minister of Defense at sar@mod.gov.il

For a detailed report on violence by Israeli security forces, see the Israeli human rights website, www.btselem.org

The Palestine Monitor, A PNGO Information Clearinghouse

The Scorecard

Information from Sept. 28, 2000 to May 31, 2001:

The following data is from the June 2001 edition of Between the Lines:

By Jerusalem Alert.

- Number of churches totally destroyed by Israeli army: 28
- Number of mosques destroyed in same period: 30
- Number of Palestinian families displaced by Israeli Military operations: 4000
- Total area of West Bank: 5,860 sq.km (size of Delaware)
- Number of sectors the West Bank is divided into so that during closure (siege) no Palestinian can move from one sector to another: 64
- Number of artesian wells used for drinking water destroyed by Israeli troops: 108
- Length of municipal water network pipes destroyed by Israeli troops: 12,474ft
- Number of heads of cattle killed: 804
- Size of land area dragged by Israeli bulldozers and tanks (mainly in Gaza) 6.25 sq. miles
- No. of Palestinians arrested: 1850
- Percentage arrested who are children under the age of 18: 50%
- No. of schools closed: 41
- No. of teachers arrested: 15
- Unemployment rate in occupied territories: 56%
- Decline in GNP: 50.7%
- Amount lost in Palestinian agricultural sector by March 31: \$217,905,509
- No. of Palestinians killed by Israeli troops and settlers: 492
- No. of children under the age of 18 killed: 182
- No. of students killed: 77
- Number of doctors killed: 4 (3 Palestinians and 1 German)
- No. of Palestinians injured: 23,147
- Percentage of injured who are children: 40%

No. of injuries leading to permanent disability: 2200

No. of paramedics injured: 91

No. of journalists injured: 71

No. of Palestinian ambulances totally destroyed by Israeli attacks: 9

No. of Ambulances riddled by bullets: 82

Sources: Palestinian Center for Justice and Peace
CIA - The World Factbook 2000
Jerusalem Alert team.

What can still be done?

By Khalid Elolaimi

Although the damage is irreversible, a few things can still be done in order to STOP the killing of innocent children with our tax money.

1. First and most important is to look at the Israeli history and understand their objective. A good place to start is by reading Senator Paul Findely's book "Silent No More".

2. Examine all the unbiased special reports about Jerusalem situation.

3. Find out about the US role in the Mideast situation, and why the Israeli government is not complying with the UN resolution.

How can You help:

A) You can protest in several ways:

1. First, if you haven't signed a petition yet, please do so now.

http://www.petitiononline.com/48_67/petition.html

<http://www.petitiononline.com/warcrime/>

2. Express your protest directly to the institutions listed below.

3. Write letters to international news networks and magazines. It is important to get the whole world's attention.

4. If you are a U.S. Citizen you may try and involve congressman so that they

will put some pressure on Israeli government to STOP the MASSACRE against the innocent children of Jerusalem and the deconstruction of homes and a agricultural.

5. You can write your letters, with everything you have to say, and address them to various individuals such as the, President of the United State Bush, and Secretary of State

Colin L. Powell. Or you could leave them as an open letter. Tell them to STOP turning a blind eye to Israeli aggression, to cut off all foreign aid to Israel and call for an International force to protect the Palestinian people. We need to circulate letters from readers such as yourself through as many channels as possible. After you send your letters, send them by email to

Jerusalemalert@hotmail.com. We can also send these letters by fax to many destinations at once, including congress, the Israeli government, and the press.

This is the best way you can help. Please do it as soon as you can, as the time is now!

6. We may also need some help in translations from Hebrew-English or



Arabic to English. If you want to help with this please contact us at

Jerusalemalert@hotmail.com.

7. Forward the URL address JerusalemAlert.org to all your friends.

8. The most important of all is staying informed about the situation.

B) Help us raise money in support to provide some medical, shelter, food and financial relief for all those, who have

lost their children or homes by the Israeli military.

You can send donation to:

Jerusalem Alert;
WAMU Tigard Financial Center
Account number:
"325070760" 2593169161

United States Government CONTACT:

President George W. Bush

The White House

TEL: 202-456-1414

FAX: 202-456-2461

E-MAIL: president@whitehouse.gov

Vice President Richard B. Cheney

Vice.President@Whitehouse.gov

Laura Welch Bush

First.Lady@Whitehouse.gov

Secretary of State Colin Powell

U.S. Department of State

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

Washington, D.C. 20520

E-MAIL: secretary@state.gov

TEL: 202-647-3672

FAX: 202-261-8577

Questions:

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to send us an Email at: Jerusalemalert@hotmail.com,

Also visit our website

Jerusalemalert.org

Editors

David Morgan & Patrice Lumumba Ford
Khalid Elolaimi

Committee Members

Andy Day, David Morgan, Patrice Lumumba Ford, Raafat Alnaizy PhD, & Sasa Silajdzic

Treasurer

Khalid Elolaimi

Jerusalem Alert
P.O BOX 80186
Portland, OR 97280-1186

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