Dome of the Rock

Al-Aqsa

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Al-Aqsa Mosque

Quarterly Newsletter 8 May 2001

Vote Smart

As the next general election approaches the Muslims who have over the years religiously voted for Labour need to take stock of the individual MP's view before they cast their vote this year.

There are many local issues to be considered but the fate of Al Aqsa and in particular our Palestinian brothers and sisters need to play a pivotal role in their decision.

Within Labour party, like other main parties, which is traditionally a strong supporter of Israel is an organisation called "Labour Friends of Israel".

The Labour MP's who belong to this are strong supporters of Israeli policies and a website called 'VoteSmart' has been established by Muslims to make people aware of the past record of politicians.

The website records have been built up from sources including, replies to queries, Hansard publication and debates in Parliament.

The Muslims should ensure their MP serves their needs and represent their concerns rather than be used as fodder to nourish the political appetite of the MP.

Muslims need urgently to organise themselves locally and vote en-mass for the most suitable candidate in their area who will serve their needs.

The slow death of the Ummah

The last seven months has unfortunately seen the resolve of the Ummah for their brothers and sisters in Palestine dwindle as the oppressors have intensified their stranglehold.

The initial sympathy and concern driven by headline coverage in the media is slowly being shed away from the hearts almost in synchrony with the media's ambivalence to the sufferings, killings and maiming of the Palestinians.

Although most of the Western media has stopped reporting with a few exceptions, which have struggled to find space in the middle pages, the Israeli destructive forces have continued with their mayhem and onslaught upon the Palestinians and Al Aqsa Haram Sharif.

The recent tactics of enforcing strangleholds around Palestinian 'areas', which are a direct result of Oslo Peace Process, is suffocating the Palestinians, who have become totally surrounded and encircled by the Israelis.

The blockade, which has restricted entry and exit of the Palestinians, is a tactic being employed after cunning thought and consideration. The blockade is an idle tool, which has allowed the Israelis, continue with their oppression at the same time not becoming too obvious to the outside World. The US is party to this not insofar as the planning is concerned but financing the Israeli machinery. It is now obvious too, that whatever Israel does is sanctioned and approved by the US.

Besides the blockade the Israelis have adopted a policy of slow haemorrhaging of Palestinians, which again avoids headline news throughout the world but achieves the desired result for Israelis. They are targeting prominent Palestinians and assassinating them one by one every other day. Those they cannot assassinate are maimed and disabled for life.

The blockade which have created and made Palestinian areas into all but open prisons is already bringing starvation to an estimated 600, 000 people. The 24 hours curfew upon the Palestinians in cities like Hebron is further demoralising the populace. Insult is further added to the injury when we realise that over forty thousand Palestinians are locked up in their homes in Hebron so that the only a few hundred Jews inhabiting Hebron can roam freely.

The Israelis are employing a dual approach where the strangleholds and subsequent isolation hurts the Palestinians but at the same time is not horrendous enough to alarm the West and in particular the media.

These Israeli policies are based on the assumption that the Palestinians under duress will buckle and give up their aspiration for freedom and succumb to the Israeli demands.

These Israeli policies will only succeed if first the Palestinians capitulate, which past and recent history has proven highly unlikely and secondly we the bearers of human rights ignore the cry of the Palestinians.

This is without doubt the greatest hour of need for the Palestinians and we need to employ tactical methods to counteract the slow genocide of Palestinians.

Boycott Zionism

Boycott Strategies

Boycott at its simplest level could be a refusal to buy "Israeli" goods. Every Muslim can endeavour not to buy everyday items such as food and clothing, which are marked made in "Israel ". Another level of boycott is identifying organizations and companies that export from "Israel", trade with "Israel", invest in "Israel", or facilitate and encourage any of these things. Once facts have been established the information can be circulated. The boycott of Marks and Spencer arose because they were found to carry out massive trade with the Zionist State, and had a policy of promoting trade between Britain and "Israel".

There is also a general boycott of US goods being carried out by some Muslims, because of the US policy of giving huge financial, military, and political support to the Zionist State. This has started with every day items like fast food, which can easily be substituted. Obviously it is more difficult to find alternatives to sophisticated products. For the boycott to be effective it must take place over several years, and will involve Muslims and other anti-Zionists researching what they consume, and what alternatives there are.

There have been some successes already. Sainsbury's in Egypt was closed down, by a vigorous boycott campaign despite the company denying that they supported the Zionist State. American Airlines who are planning to take over TWA are suggesting that they may axe their Tel Aviv route despite the route being profitable. The Zionist lobby believes this is due to the burgeoning boycott of American companies with an "Israeli" connection.

Investors in Israel

1. Motorola and General Motors affiliate, Delco, are considering a $1 billion chip plant in Israel.

2. Intel announced plans to build a $1.6 billion plant.

3. Volkswagen plans to invest $210 million in a Dead Sea Works Magnesium Metal Plant.

4. British Gas ended the boycott of major international oil companies on exploration in "Israel", by investing in the Zionist state.

5. AT &T the American telecommunications giant, will host the "Israeli" Defence Force website. The decision follows an attack by computer hackers which knocked down the IDF website. This was confirmed in a statement issued by the "Israeli" military October 26 2000.

6. Estee Lauder, the American Muslims for Jerusalem issued a press statement, calling for a boycott of Estee Lauder. The Chairman of Estee Lauder International Ronald Lauder is a Zionist working with the land grabbing Jewish National Fund, and opposing the right of return for Palestinians.

7. Sainsbury, Apparently spent a lot of money in Egypt, to tell the people to stop boycotting them, as they do NOT support Israel [Jewish Chronicle 17-11-00]. Lord David Sainsbury of Turville, who as the Minister for Science, visited Shenkar College, near Tel Aviv, to promote Anglo-Israeli R&D. He also spoke at the dinner of the Britain Israel Chamber of Commerce. Lord Sainsbury is NOT currently a director of the company and his shares are in a trust while he is a government minister

8. Tesco, according to the Jewish Chronicle, have made a deal with an Israeli software company, Point of Sale regarding worldwide computer links.*[Researched by IHRC]*

Facts and Figures on the Ongoing Palestinian Intifada
Sept 28th, 00 - April 16th, 01

Number of Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces and settlers: Total 440

- Palestinians in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem: 425
- Palestinians within 1948 Palestine: 13
- Palestinians in southern Lebanon:2
- Palestinian children below the age of 18: 138

Number of Palestinians injured by Israeli security forces and settlers: Total 13, 040

- Live ammunition: 2,584
- Rubber bullets: 4,759
- Tear gas: 4,082
- Miscellaneous: 1,615
- Children below the age of 18: 5,000
- Permanent Disabilities: 1,500

Palestinians arrested by Israeli authorities for political reasons: Total 2,576

- Within Israeli territories: 1,189
- Within Palestinian territories: 1,387

Residential Palestinian buildings completely destroyed by Israeli attacks: Total 559
Total of residential buildings shelled: 3,669
Number of olive trees uprooted form Palestinian land: 25,000
Total number of trees uprooted from Palestinian land: 181,000
Israeli attacks against doctors and ambulance drivers:

- No. of ambulance drivers killed: 3
- No. of doctors killed: 1
- No. of doctors and ambulance drivers injured: 160
- No. of ambulances hit: 109

Number of Palestinian schools shut down due to Israeli siege: 174
Number of Palestinian students deprived from attending school: 90,000
Impact of Israeli closures on Palestinian economic life:
No. of Palestinians unemployed due to the closures: 257,000
Unemployment rate in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip: 47%

[Compiled by MIFTAH]

Zionist President suggests sharing Aqsa with Muslims

In an insulting gesture to Muslims around the world, Zionist President Moshe Katsav has called for sharing the Aqsa Mosque between Muslim and Jews. The Zionist media said the call was made Friday and welcomed by Jewish religious circles.
Muslim officials in Palestine condemned the call as "euphemism for the Jewish intention to destroy one of Islam's holiest shrines." "He must be out of his mind, how could he expect Muslims to cede part of their holy shrines to the followers of another religion?" asked Muslim Wakf official in East Jerusalem Adnan al Husseini. Another Palestinian official, Ziad abu Ziad, also condemned the call as "a racist and hostile step aiming at encouraging Jewish extremists to desecrate the Islamic shrine." "This call, which may be viewed as innocent by those who don't know how the Jews think, should be viewed as an alarm bell for Muslims around the world. It means that the Jews are intent on destroying Islam's third holiest religious place." A few weeks ago, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon instructed his police to explore ways and means to allow Jews to "visit" the place. Sharon, say Muslim officials, is seeking more than just "visits" to the Haram al Sharif, but rather "religious right to pray and worship" in the place, in other words taking over parts or all of the Muslim shrine. [21 April 2001]

Vale of tears -Tear or poison gas?

The school playground in the village of Al-Khader, near Bethlehem, has been a children's battleground for the past six months: pupils finish classes at midday and congregate to throw stones at the Israeli soldiers stationed in the hills around their homes. The confrontation was relatively trouble-free until last month when soldiers fired tear gas into the playground. One canister landed only a few feet from 13-year-old Sliman Salah, enveloping him in a cloud of gas described by witnesses as an unfamiliar, yellow colour. Within a minute he was unconscious.

By the time Salah arrived at the private Yamamah hospital, his body was racked by violent spasms and convulsions, his breathing was sporadic and his pupils tightly constricted. The French doctor who admitted him was baffled. Annie Dudin, a paediatrician who has worked in the West Bank for 15 years, has treated dozens of victims of gas inhalation, during the first Intifada, but had never seen symptoms like Salah's before.

Normally, victims recover after a few minutes away from tear gas. In more severe cases, oxygen and an injection of glucose may be needed to stop coughing fits and dry up streaming eyes. Neither treatment worked with Salah. His seizures continued until he was given large doses of anti-convulsants and only slowly did he regain consciousness.

"I have seen nothing like this before," Dudin said. "I would have expected these sorts of symptoms in a case of severe poisoning. But to treat him properly, I needed to know what chemicals he had been exposed to."

Later, Salah was transferred to Hussein Hospital in nearby Beit Jala, to be put under the care of neurologist Nabir Musleh. Tests suggested that the boy had been poisoned, but doctors again had no idea how to treat him.

Within 24 hours of his release, Salah was having convulsions and had to be readmitted. His symptoms were finally brought under control five days after his exposure to the gas. But Salah's father says the boy is still suffering from stomach pains, vomiting, dizziness and breathing problems.

Salah is just one of a spate of such cases in the Bethlehem area in the past month. Another tear gas victim recently arrived unconscious at the Yamamah having convulsive fits and Hussein Hospital has reported a rapid increase in untreatable patients since the first such case was admitted in late February.

The new cases in Bethlehem follow a pattern first seen in the Gaza Strip in mid-February, when a large crowd was tear-gassed near Khan Younis refugee camp. Ten men were admitted to Nasser Hospital suffering from seizures that doctors could not treat. Many other patients vomited for days afterwards.

Because of Israel's strict blockade of Gaza, the cases were difficult to verify at the time. But local Palestinian doctors raised concerns that Israel might have started using a new, concentrated form of tear gas or combining different gases.

The Israeli Defence Force says it uses only standard CS gas, although it admits that in some clashes it has also used smoke screen gases to protect its soldiers. It believes the victims' complaints are caused by "anxiety." That conclusion has been dismissed by doctors, including one of the few Western medics in the Gaza Strip. Helen Brisco of Médecins Sans Frontières, says the Khan Younis patients she treated were clinically ill and that in the more serious cases, patients had severe muscle paralysis.

Brisco's and Dudin's observations are supported by an investigation carried out by the Palestinian Ministry of Health, which took air samples at Khan Younis as well as blood samples of patients. Its preliminary findings suggest that Israel used a cocktail of gases in much higher concentrations than before.

Dudin is also sceptical of Israel's explanations. "Sliman's condition was certainly not one of anxiety. It is very difficult for me to say what he was exposed to. Without knowing the chemicals involved, I cannot run the necessary tests, but his symptoms were compatible with exposure to a strong poison. This suggests to me that the gas being used by Israel is no longer safe." *Jonathan Cook Al-Ahram Weekly On-line 5 - 11 April 2001 Issue No.528*

Shaykh Qardawi criticises slackness in boycotting

Shaykh Yusuf Qardawi in a Juma Khutba in Doha criticised the Muslims' slackness in boycotting goods manufactured by companies that support Israel.

The Shaykh called for persisting in boycotting goods similar to the case in the early weeks of the Al Aqsa Intifada.

He said that believers do not relax in such a matter especially after they had displayed determination to go ahead in such an act. He further recommended supporting the Palestinian intifada through boycotting and all other means.

The Shaykh explained that Jihad for the sake of Allah could be realised through both soul and money, adding that there were other kinds of Jihad as well.

Seminar on Palestine

A two-day seminar on issues relating to Palestine
Saturday 15th & Sunday 16th September 2001
Leicester University, Leicester.

Topics to include:

- The Origin of Crisis
- International Law
- Arab & Islamic Worlds involvement
- Genesis of Oslo
- US & European involvement
- Christian Zionism
- The Cost of Zionist Project
- Al Aqsa Intifada
- Future Scenarios

PLUS Workshops, Quiz and Much More

Lecturers to include:
Dr Azzam Tamimi, Dr Daud Abdullah, Dr Basheer Nafi, Dr Farid al Shaiyal, Dr Ghada Karmi, Ibrahim Hewitt, Rev Stephen Sizer, Rev Garth Hewitt, Dr John Rose.

Registration
Name & Add
_____
_____
Pcode_____Tel_____

COST:

1. Seminar, Accommodation & Food [Friday 5pm to Sunday 5pm]:
   - £40
   - £20 Full Time Students
2. Day attendance:
   - £15 per day [indicate Saturday or Sunday]
   - £30 for Saturday & Sunday
   - £10 per day FT Students [indicate Saturday or Sunday]
   - £20 for both days

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Sometimes I feel we are Nazis

An Israeli female conscript whose job involves searching Arab women and children who visit their relatives in an Israeli jail told the Yediot Ahranot, an Israeli paper, " I often feel we [Israelis] are Nazis."

"My job is to search and frisk some 500 Arab women and their children, I have to wear a bullet-proof vest and plastic gloves, I search their belongings, garments, shoes and sensitive parts of the body…I notice their sullen hostility towards us, I see how tormented, how exhausted, how humiliated they are…and I'm supposed to make no regret or remorse about it…I guess I sometimes feel we are Nazis."

The Israeli paper further quoted the soldier, identified as Helna Gldotsky, as saying that, "I felt that I was behaving like an animal towards those Arabs."

"Sometimes I say to myself, Enough! I can't continue to do this to them, and at one point, I felt I was a victim, just like them."

To receive updates on Palestine

E Mail: info@aqsa.org.uk

Request to be put on the mailing list

Palestinian Islamic leader blasts Arab states for failing to support Intifada

Shaykh Nayef Rajoub, a prominent leader in the Hebron area, used strong words to describe what is widely perceived here as official Arab "inaction bordering on indifference" towards the Palestinian plight. "They make verbal declarations of solidarity with us, but they refuse to allow their people to demonstrate against American connivance with the Zionists."

Shaykh Rajoub accused Arab regimes of being insincere about fighting the Zionist regime and supporting the Palestinians gaining freedom and liberation. "Arab regimes are not willing to sacrifice their relations with the US for the sake of the Palestinians. All they do is pay lip services to the Palestinian cause for domestic consumption." Asked what Arab and Islamic states could do to help the Palestinians, Rajoub said Arabs and Muslims can do much to help the Palestinians provided they have the political will to do so. "If only one Arab state decides to boycott American products, the United States would be forced to review its blind support for the Zionist entity." Rajoub recognized that the main problem with Arab regimes is that they are not answerable to public opinion. "The fact of the matter is that the masses are in a valley and the regimes in another distant valley," said Rajoub, voicing a traditional Palestinian proverb. Rajoub opined that divergence between the two camps (the regimes and the masses) is increasing rapidly due to the growing exposure to the mass media. "The masses want freedom and more freedom, and the regimes are stonewalling. This situation can't last for very long, an explosion will take place soon, maybe sooner than many people think."

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