

# Israeli Jew supports Palestinian rights

The *Chutzpah* collective's statement on Israel and the Palestinians (ITT, May 3) argued that taking Israeli and Palestinian rights of self-determination to be mutually exclusive is a common and destructive attitude in the American left. I agree. However, their statement indicates a serious lack of understanding of Israeli/Palestinian history and realities.

There are two national movements, each claiming rights over one territory,

born to a Jewish mother—citizens of Israel or not.

Zionism, originally a response to European anti-Semitism, for the past 70 years took a different form from that of a movement for national self-determination—at least in regard to its Palestinian frontier. Since 1908, when Jewish settlements were established under the auspices of political Zionism in Palestine the creation of an exclusively Jewish national homeland was the goal, even though the majority of residents were Arab. By 1930, all important state institutions were formed and functioning, and full control was exercised over parts of the land. That meant the exclusion of Palestinians as peasants, laborers and merchants from lands previously owned and cultivated by Arabs and from the newly-developed Jewish economic system. In 1948, when Israel was established, the transition from pre-state to post-state institutions was smooth,

legally belongs to the Jewish people, whether they are citizens of Israel or not. This effectively covers 90 percent of the pre-1967 land surface of Israel; it does not include any of the land appropriated and expropriated from Palestinians for the dozens of "legal" Jewish settlements in the territories occupied by Israel for the past 10 years. Additional laws, regulations, administrative decrees and daily practices that generally exclude Arabs are too numerous to mention.

Under these circumstances, how can anyone say that "there are two legitimate and conflicting claims to self-determination in...Palestine" and that "socialists should give critical support to both movements?"

Relations of inequality between the settler-Jews and the Arabs of Palestine were well established by 1930, quite some time before the Holocaust, which is usually employed in defense of Zionism. Whether murder and rape "hastened the emigration to Israel after 1948" of Middle Eastern Jews is, at the very least, debatable; some Middle Eastern Jews attribute their emigration to promises and pressure by Zionists to acts of provocation, which is not to say that Jews were overly happy in Arab countries.

*Chutzpah's* description of Israel, its "strengths" and "problems" is even more amazing. To characterize Israel as "providing a home for many Jews, a multi-party political system and democratic rights" is precisely what any Israeli government, American Zionist organization and U.S. administration would do. As for the "democracy" part, I highly recommend Sabri Jiryis' *The Arabs in Israel* (Monthly Review, 1976) where the author, a former Israeli lawyer and a PLO dove, illustrates the limits to Israel's democracy. Three hundred thousand Israelis who left Israel for the U.S. and Canada are a living testimony to the quality of life for Jews at home in Israel.

The kibbutz, the core of Zionism's hold over the land, has always been at the forefront of the Zionist colonial efforts. Literally a frontier outpost, for years it served to expand the territories under pre-state Zionist development programs, and later on to shape Israel's borders. Incidentally, it has also often been used to settle the 1967-conquered territories. In Israel proper, the less than 5 percent of the Jews living in the kibbutzim are among the most privileged. Israeli Arabs are excluded from becoming members, since every kibbutz is

built on national land and paid with national funds—in most cases on land previously owned by Arabs. This, however, does not exclude "legal" and "illegal" employment of Palestinians as a cheap source of labor.

From the points raised so far, it is clear that one need not be a socialist to oppose Zionism, Israel's state ideology, the essence of which is ethnic discrimination. Consider a situation in which, say, blacks, or Jews, would be excluded from owning and leasing land and from employment on it in Manhattan in order to keep the center of New York white, or Christian.

The *Chutzpah* position accepts the Palestinians as "a people with a long history of oppression"—oppression, it is flatly stated, "by Israel and the Arab states." The fact that Israel's nature—the state belonging to the Jewish people, not to its citizens or to the country's inhabitants—is the direct cause for depriving the Palestinians of their nationhood and for their long history of oppression is not even mentioned. Neither are Palestinian present realities: the most peaceful acts of protest, in both the West-Bank and Israel proper, are harshly suppressed by military authorities.

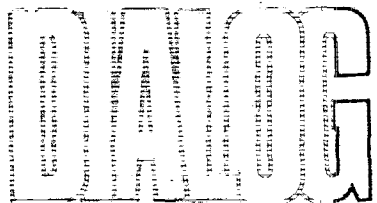
There is plenty to criticize about the Palestinian movement. But, to be valid, such criticism must be made in an historical context that recognizes present realities. PLO denial of Israeli-Jewish peoplehood should be understood in the light of the tremendously unequal power relations and the Palestinians' struggle for national survival.

The distinction between the right to self-determination and privileges gained through other people's oppression, has to always be borne in mind. Thus one should give critical support to the Palestinians while being very critical in rejecting Zionism. To defend state-imposed privileges is a truly peculiar position for socialists.

The "two-state solution" might or might not go toward satisfying the need for self-determination of both Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs. However, in itself the two-state idea is a non-solution. As long as inequality, domination and privilege prevail, Palestine will not be at peace.

—Yair Svoray  
Minneapolis, Minn.

Yair Svoray is an Israeli Jew living in the U.S.



## Criticism of the Palestinian movement must recognize present realities.

but the situation is far from symmetrical. In reality, the Palestinians, uprooted from their land and exiled from their country, are the ones striving for self-determination.

For Israeli Jews, living in the third most powerful country in the Middle-East (after Iran and Saudi-Arabia), the term "self-determination" is entirely inappropriate. Israeli Jews do suffer from economic hardship and the military burden, but here we are dealing with *privileges*, granted under the law and in practice, to all those fortunate enough to be

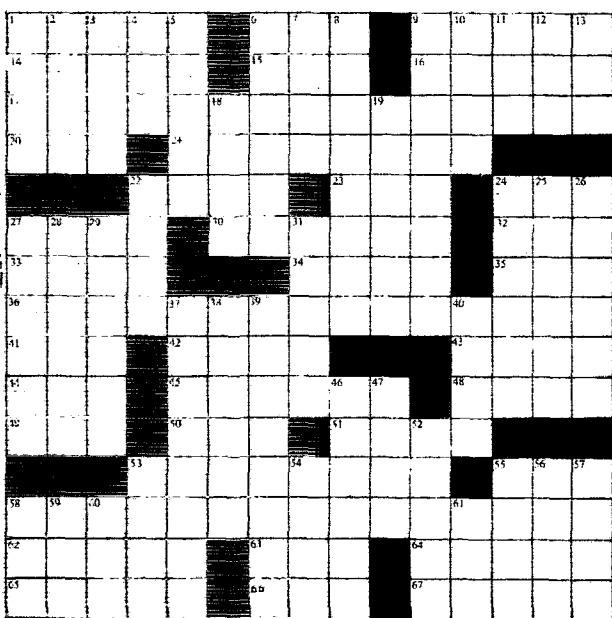
and exclusion of the Palestinian Arab population was greatly extended and legalized.

At the present, under Israel's Law of Return, any Jew—from Boston, Chicago or Minneapolis—is automatically granted Israeli citizenship and a right to "return" to Israel upon request. But a whole nation of Palestinians cannot return to their hometowns.

Other laws restrict ownership and leasing of, as well as any form of employment on, state-owned and state-administered lands to Jews. Here again, the land

## Not Just Housewives

Composed by David Mermelstein



- 7 "Back in the \_\_\_\_\_"
- 8 What income is to tariff, historically speaking (in US)
- 9 Imposed
- 10 Disciple of Christ
- 11 New Zealand clan
- 12 Insight
- 13 Unit of work
- 18 Gypsy
- 19 \_\_\_\_\_ later: what mesozoic is to paleozoic
- 22 Captive of Hercules
- 24 Calm or serene
- 25 Fuses an ore
- 26 Orson or Sumner
- 27 Wearing a hooded garment
- 28 Alloy containing copper and tin
- 29 Least savage
- 31 What a musical note might say to itself?
- 37 Raider celebration?
- 38 Concerning the Buckeye state
- 39 Jacopo, Francesco *et al.*, It. painters
- 40 Opposite of stet
- 46 Ph.D. or third
- 47 Heraldic border
- 52 "Drove my Chevy to the \_\_\_\_\_"

- 45 Step in square dance
- 48 Fewer
- 49 Let it be given: Pharm.
- 50 Doubtful utterances
- 51 Gardner
- 53 Name of Shirtwaist Co., fire of 1911 in which nearly 150 women died
- 55 Chatter
- 58 See 17 Across
- 62 Last name of It. liner in famous shipwreck
- 63 To be indebted
- 64 Weird
- 65 Saucy
- 66 Dir. of Tampa, from Chicago
- 67 Shapes of many mountain roads

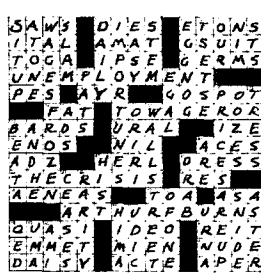
### Across:

- 1 IWW organizer at 21 Across
- 6 Merrimack
- 9 Snow unit
- 14 Pacific island group
- 15 Scl. Harold Laski taught at
- 16 Spare or wear
- 17 Title and editors of a documentary history on women at work, with 36 and 58 Across
- 20 Sunday lect.
- 21 Site of 1912 textile strike
- 22 Of Wight, Man or Cephal
- 23 Sift: Eng. Dial.
- 24 Dir. of Tampa, from N.Y.C.
- 27 Medicinal bark
- 28 Prepared for publication
- 32 Underfoot
- 33 Stage of childhood
- 34 Japanese ship
- 35 Neighbor of Ind.
- 36 See 17 Across
- 41 Washington and Carter never told one?
- 42 Academic organ, *et al.*
- 43 Suffix for cigar or leather
- 44 Senators from Mass.

### Down:

- 1 New Deal farm org., *et al.*
- 2 Kind of duck
- 3 Norse giant
- 4 Follows neither
- 5 Brads
- 6 Often characteristic of gems

answers to last week's puzzle:



## More Letters

### Time is ripe

Editor:

I wish your new newspaper every success in bringing the socialist alternatives and options before the American people. You are working under a handicap because the capitalists have a tight grip on our country's TV and radio industries.

It seems to me that the time is ripe for the American left to have a conference and decide what type of socialist worker managed and controlled economic system would be best to propose for our country. Freely elected socialism is making impressive gains in many parts of the world today and each country seems to favor different types of worker-managed socialist economic systems.

—Frank Fink Jr.  
Willowick, Ohio

### Impressed

Editor:

I am impressed by your newspaper. It is without doubt one of the most exciting publications to be produced by the North American left in a long while. Enclosed please find a check for \$15.

—Grid Hall  
Madison, Wisc.

### An upper

Editor:

Haven't had time to read all of the copy you sent but what I read looked

very, very good. Your publication is much needed. I did subscribe to the *Guardian* but got tired of the way they put out the info. After reading a few pages, you just seemed to get more and more discouraged. Maybe the left isn't winning many victories but there are a lot of good women and men who are fighting hard to make this a more just earth. After working many years on UFW boycotts and strikes, I know this for sure and it's up to papers on the left to raise our morale by letting us know some of the good things that are happening.

Will share your paper with others and hope to get them to subscribe too.

—Jerry Robinett  
Tucson, Ariz.

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Rich Stromberg

## Should you fight TV violence?

By David Talbot

Throughout the 1976-77 television season an intensive campaign was waged by public groups, media activists and politicians to reduce the amount of violence in TV programming. The high concentration of rapes, murders and assaults on TV, charged critics, is responsible for making children more hostile and aggressive, desensitizing the public to real-life violence, and creating the kind of mass psychology that readily accepts police-state methods as a way of fighting crime.

The National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting, led by former FCC commissioner Nicholas Johnson, began ranking TV shows by their levels of violence last year, and publicly identifying those corporations that sponsored the most violent programs.

Last fall the House communications subcommittee conducted hearings in Los Angeles on the subject of TV violence, and in March reopened its investigation in Washington.

In April the national leadership of the PTA announced that their organization was putting the three networks on "probation" until the end of 1977 and would monitor them to see whether they reduced the amount of violence in entertainment programs during that period.

In May, the California Medical Association declared that broadcasters should be held "civilly accountable" for televised acts "which lead to foreseeable harm."

### A two-part strategy.

Alarmed by the growing wave of criticism, the television industry has begun to maneuver and return fire. Network executives recently launched a two-part counter-offensive designed to stem any further public intervention in their private domain.

As a concession to the violence critics the networks purged several "action" shows from their upcoming fall schedules, including "Delvecchio," "Streets of San Francisco," and "Dog and Cat." The new season will be loaded with more sitcoms, sci fi fantasies, and frontier sagas. The police/detective shows that do remain on the air will undergo some changes.

### Behind the dispute over the anti-violence campaign is the fear that censorship, once started, will not stop.

ABC programming chief Fred Silverman told network affiliates in May that "Baretta" will "move away from the gritty street scenes" and concentrate on "the role playing" that the show's undercover police hero does "so well and humorously." "Starsky and Hutch," ABC's only other remaining cop show, will de-emphasize the shoot-outs and pistol whippings and focus more on "the interpersonal relationship between the two lead characters," according to Silverman.

The second part of the networks' strategy involves taking a strong public stand against viewer pressure groups and branding any further efforts to influence TV programming as "censorship."

### A united front against critics.

On April 12 ABC-TV president Frederick Pierce delivered a speech in Los Angeles condemning the pressure put on advertisers and government agencies to lower the level of video violence. He called upon the Hollywood production community—all those writers, producers, actors, and story editors responsible for manufacturing TV shows—to join with the networks in a united front against the industry's outside critics.

Hollywood's major TV producers answered Pierce's call the following week by forming a committee to counteract pressure groups activities. Sy Salkowitz, president of 20th Century-Fox Television and a member of the committee, said he feared that the growing violence controversy could lead to government intervention in broadcasting.

Producer Norman Lear ("All in the Family," "Maude," "Good Times," etc.), who took a leading role in last year's battle against the networks' Family Hour, was also among those who joined the committee. Lear agrees there should be less violence on television but he is strongly against putting pressure on sponsors to achieve that end.

"It bothers me on First Amendment grounds," Lear told IN THESE TIMES. "When you fool around with sponsors, requesting them to boycott shows and so forth, there's always the possibility of further censorship. What other way can it grow? It's like a fungus."

### L.A. writers' forum.

It is impossible at this point to determine how others involved in shaping the TV product will line up on this issue. Television writers, however, were given a chance to hear both sides and voice their responses on June 2 when the Writers Guild of America, West, sponsored a panel discussion on the TV violence controversy in Los Angeles. Members of the panel included Van Gordon Sauter, chief censor at CBS; Frank Price, president of Universal TV, the largest supplier of television programs; and Nicholas Johnson. The discussion was moderated by Writers Guild president David Rintels.

Sauter claimed that the "violence problem is almost a thing of the past." He said that CBS had cut the amount of violence in its shows by 36 percent in recent years. He pointed out that the upcoming season will have fewer police shows; but, he added, CBS will not completely do away with this TV genre. "The action/adventure series is a legitimate form of entertainment."

Sauter insisted that television offered the public "an incredible variety of programming. It is up to the individual viewer to determine what is proper for himself or herself to watch."

Sauter said he saw "something ominous" in the growing pressure exerted by public groups to influence network programming. "There are many organizations throughout the country prepared to besiege advertisers with letters [about shows they dislike]. We should be concerned. Now it's violence in dramatic shows. Next it will be sex. Then it will be violence on TV news."

Price also came to the defense of network TV. "I think television has been extremely beneficial for the United States and the world," he said.

"TV had a strong impact on the Vietnam war. All these supposedly 'brutalized' children who were the first generation to grow up on TV did not run off to Vietnam. The violence they saw on TV was a turn-off. They did not want to go out and kill people. The children raised on television turned around our national policy."

Price said that Nicholas Johnson and his supporters were "well-meaning in their desire to have less violence," but denounced their tactics. By putting pressure on TV sponsors to reduce violence in their shows, he said, they were legitimizing advertisers' involvement in program content. The result, he warned, will be more vacuous programming.

"I would say you're going to have a much vaster wasteland than ever. You can see it already in the fall schedule. The networks are falling all over themselves to put on situation comedies."

### Writer/viewer unity.

Johnson began his remarks by making a strong plea for writer/viewer unity. He said it was in the public's interest to have TV artists win more control over their material. "The basic issue we're talking about tonight," he said, "is creative freedom for writers, actors and producers. The freedom to do the very best you are capable of. We want to create the conditions under which that would be possible."

Johnson said TV's preoccupation with violence prevented writers from exploring other dramatic areas. He charged that network executives have forced writers to add gratuitous violence to their scripts to make them more sensational. "Now that doesn't serve your interests or our interests," said Johnson. "When violence is used it should be at your best, when it makes sense."

It is the networks, Johnson told the audience of writers, who "have historically been your enemy." It is they, he said, who tell writers what they can and cannot write. Now the leaders of the

Continued on page 19.