

Beyond Fear and Violence in Israel/Palestine

Hear Jeff Halper

Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions



7 pm Weds Feb 04 2015, Memorial Univ.
Engineering Lecture Theatre [EN-2006]

Sponsors:

Anthropology Dept; United Church of Canada

A fair and just peace requires respect for human rights. Most of the most cogent critique of Israeli policy comes from Jewish writers and activists, many of whom are also Israeli. Thus there are no stereotypes; no group is monolithic.

Human rights violations are objectionable wherever they occur. This is not a religious issue (despite that it suits some to say so), it is political, and about land. Israel is not “singled out”, as some apologists pretend (instead, they should join us in urging Israel onto a better path). It’s not “anti-Semitic” to criticise violations of international law; nor is it “anti-Semitic” to urge reform (to abuse “anti-Semitic” in that way is an obscenity because it confuses and thus gives cover if not the illusion of legitimacy to actual anti-Semitism). Most faiths say that talking about any injustice is our minimal duty. Halting injustices is in Israel’s interests, and the world’s.

REBUILDING A DEMOLISHED PALESTINIAN HOME

ICAHD.org works to end the policy of house demolition. To rebuild Palestinian homes, it organises summer camps, bringing together Palestinians, Israelis, and internationals.

Why does Israel demolish houses? It’s a political (Zionist) objective. It cynically exploits excuses like ‘no building permit’, but “*There are no more construction permits for Palestinians,*” (as Col. Shlomo Politus, Civil Administration, told the Israeli Parliament in 2003), so it’s a problem/excuse created and managed by Israel.

Israel’s “Judaisation” policy means replacement of the Palestinian population with Zionists. House demolition is a tactic to add difficulty for Palestinians staying where they have lived for generations, or where they have lived since their families were forcibly expelled in 1947-8*.

(*Over 700,000 people forcibly expelled on ethnic grounds: their homes, farms, lands, businesses, properties, furniture, art, and even some bank accounts — all taken. Estimates put over 70% of ‘Israel’ as still subject to pre-Israel title that Israel refuses to respect).

Demolishing a home devastates a family’s life, often leaving the family homeless. Adding insult to injury, Israel often demands the family pay for the destruction of their own home.

The rebuilding of destroyed Palestinian homes, with participation of Israelis and internationals, is a powerful symbol for justice and reform.

Rebuilding a Palestinian home costs about \$30,000 (Cdn). Money raised for ICAHD covers rebuilding of a Palestinian homes destroyed by the Israeli army, and administrative costs. See icahd.org/eng

HOW CAN WE ALL HELP?

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Speakers from Palestine and Israel provide depth of information. Many of us already work for a just peace between the Palestinians and Israelis. Others, new to these issues, may seek

ways to become involved. Below are a few suggestions of what to do:

1. Continue to learn and teach about the issues around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Here are a few websites where you can find some of the latest news and analysis: [add ‘www’ etc.] • icahd.org • electronicintifada.net • mondowweiss.net • palestinechronicle.com • kibush.co.il • haaretz.com/news • maannews.net/eng • amnesty.ca • JewishVoiceForPeace.org = JVP.org, see their “101” page. Foundation for Middle East Peace, fmep.org, register for their E-mail “what we’re reading” list. • Halper et al (2009) “THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT: CHALLENGING SLOGANS THROUGH CRITICAL REFRAMING”.
2. Invite friends and neighbors, show a DVD in your living room, discuss. E.g: *The Roadmap to Apartheid*; *The Lab*; *Jerusalem the East Side Story*; *The Stones Cry Out*; *Budrus*; *Five Broken Cameras*; to name a few. See more: http://www.adc.org/fileadmin/ADC/Pdfs/Palestine_in_Film.pdf
3. Show a film for your community.
4. Find ways to support Palestinians and Israelis who advocate BDS (Boycott/Divestment/Sanctions), a nonviolent economic tool to persuade Israel to cease its human rights and other violations. Other nations (like Russia right now) are sanctioned for similar reasons, and there is no reason to ‘single out Israel’ for a pass. To find more about BDS and what you can do, see: www.bdsmovement.net/ ; www.pacbi.org/ ; www.gush-shalom.org/ ; www.icahd.org/ ; www.boycottisrael.info/ ; www.alhaq.org ; www.btselem.org
5. Read Ecumenical Accompanier blogs (www.united-church.ca/communications/news/general/141022) [cont’d...]

Thank you so very much for contributing to peace by coming to hear about the Israel-Palestine issue!

Be not discouraged: it can be depressing to realise that this conflict has ground along for over 60 years (but not hundreds, as some people dismissively say).

The good grounds for optimism and encouragement is that the world now is learning the facts, getting past the P-R that for decades dominated, learning *how* to care.

Resolution of this issue could ease resolution of other issues, especially in the Middle East.

So please keep talking, keep listening, and don't be discouraged. You have good reason to be optimistic.

Tour Organisers

Independent Jewish Voices Canada, IJVCANADA.org

UNITED NETWORK for a JUST PEACE in PALESTINE and ISRAEL: UNJPPI.org.

Sponsors: • United Church of Canada • Anglican Church of Canada • Canadian Friends of Sabeel • Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers) • United Jewish People's Order.

Feb 07 Hosting Sponsor: Anthropology, Memorial U. of Newfoundland.

[cont'd] ACTION

6. St. John's events: follow 'Palestine Solidarity' on Facebook.
7. Join UNJPPI, IJVcanada.org, Amnesty, etc.
8. Join the action of the United Church of Canada against settlement products, particularly SodaStream, Ahava and Keter.
9. Stop buying from companies that profit from the Occupation (e.g. Hewlett-Packard).
10. Learn how the Jewish National Fund supports house demolitions, and join IJV's campaign to revoke its charitable status in Canada (ijvcanada.org).
11. Immunise yourself against common tricks in argument (esp. see 12). Here are some:
 - [a] "Israel is unfairly singled out". True? No. Many countries' actions are criticised. Should Israel be singled out for protection from criticism?
 - [b] "Israel represents all Jews". No; not all Jewish people are Zionists. Israel is a Zionist project, and its claim to represent all Jewish people is rejected by many Jewish people.
 - [c] NGOMonitor charges that ICAHD "*explicitly advocates for the end of the state of Israel as the nation state of the Jewish people*"; here, the reader is supposed to think "end of Israel", but watch that modifier, "Jewish state". ICAHD simply wants Israel to become a decent state that doesn't abuse anybody's human rights or privilege one ethnic/religious group. Remember that Israel alone has destroyed the possibility of the two-state solution by relentless settlement building on Palestinian land, and the Charter of Likud (Netanyahu's party) explicitly rules out a Palestinian state west of the Jordan river. (Read Henry Siegman's "*The Great Middle East Peace Process Scam*".)
 - [d] Names like NGOMonitor or Honestreportingcanada suggest sincerity, but they are merely Israel's right wing's selective targeting of human rights organisations. Because that's where they have problems! But why not fix the problems rather than go after the folks that

are pointing them out?

[e] "It's complicated"; maybe so, but should complication shelter human-rights abuse?

12. Oppose erosion of civil liberties; oppose attempts to criminalise criticism of Israel (recent statements by Harper, Blaney) by calling it "the new anti-semitism". Such conflation of decent criticism with bigotry is a cynical assault on decency, on democracy, and on free expression as guaranteed by the Charter. It is an obscene hijacking of the Holocaust for political gain. It's also bad for Israel because it seeks to shelter violations (like home demolitions) of civil and human rights by Israel, and thus delay a just and fair peace.
 13. Talk and write to your M.P. Demand clear answers. Do they, or do they not, oppose violations of human rights? What'll they do about it?
 14. Travel to Israel and Palestine; see the situation for yourself. Hear Palestinians talk about life under occupation and life as second class citizens in Israel and the many ways they are resisting the Israeli military occupation and the injustice and inequality in Israel. Hear Israeli activists talk about their work towards Palestinian rights and a just peace.
 15. Organize a witness tour to Palestine and Israel; join CPT (Christian Peacemaker Teams).
- ## FINANCIAL SUPPORT
16. Donate to Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions, ICAHD.org.
 17. Donate to the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program or to the people of Gaza through the United Church of Canada
 18. Donate to other human-rights organisations.