

# CanPalNet

Canada-Palestine Support Network  
www.canpalnet.ca



**"An eye for an eye -  
until we all go blind."  
-Gandhi**

September 2001

We join people across Canada in extending our sympathies to all those who lost loved ones and suffered injuries in the Sept. 11 bombings, and in unreservedly denouncing the use of terrorist attacks on civilian targets.

While recognizing the despair and fury sown in the Middle East by United States foreign policy over the past half century, we cannot fail to note that the atrocities have set back the struggle for peace and social justice in the region.



Only a few weeks earlier, in an inspiring show of international solidarity with the Palestinian people, tens of thousands of South Africans marched through the streets of Durban against Israeli apartheid and the ravages of military occupation. Faced with the censure of the international community in the halls of the United Nations conference on racism and

intolerance, the United States and Israel fled South Africa in disgrace.

But today, all that seems a world away.

A noxious campaign of jingoism and xenophobia now dominates the media. Voices of ignorance and prejudice are inciting others to make Arabs and Muslims scapegoats for the carnage in NYC and Washington DC.

Calls for massive military strikes against nations alleged to be hosting terrorists are endlessly repeated, employing the same logic of collective punishment as the terrorists.

We reject the plans for a new war that will only serve to wreak havoc and destruction, inducting a new generation into the ranks of those whose desperation knows no bounds.

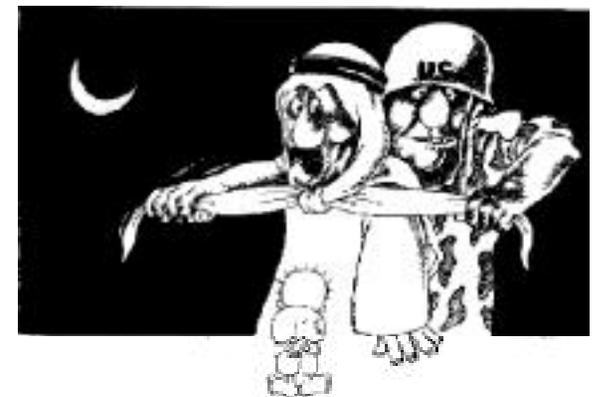
We reject the use of emergency powers and draconian legislation to muffle dissent and eliminate the growing opposition to our corporate world order.

We affirm our resolve to defend minority groups - Arabs and Muslims being the most vulnerable - from police persecution and vigilante humiliation and attack, and we call on all people of conscience to speak out against the scapegoating of Arabs and Muslims at home and abroad.

The formation of a broadband peace movement against the new US/NATO war plans is of vital importance. Such a movement must campaign for an end to the mass murder of Iraqi civilians under sanctions and the Israeli occupation and siege of Palestinians in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza.

In the wake of the Sept. 11 atrocities, we demand our government leaders ensure that justice be served by protecting civilians of all countries throughout the world from war crimes and terrorist actions.

Ignorance of the inhuman policies being pursued by the United States and its allies throughout the Middle East, leaves us all too susceptible to the campaign of dehumanization being waged against tens of millions of men, women and children locked out of the distributive networks of the industrialized world.





The Canadian government pretends there can be an "even-handedness" between the stone thrower and the tank. The Canadian government policy toward the Palestinians must be changed, as it eventually was changed toward apartheid South Africa and Indonesian occupation of East Timor. International law and major United Nations resolutions provide clear guidelines for solidarity work.

Our government has not called for Israel to abide by the Fourth Geneva Convention when it comes to Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. We must bring our government to do so.

The United Nations Security Council and General Assembly have called on Israel to end its occupation of the territories it invaded in June 1967 (the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem). We must press our government to work for the enforcement of this resolution.

Palestinians in the hundreds of thousands have been dispossessed of their homes and land and made stateless refugees by Israeli military occupation. The United Nations passed a resolution, as early as 1948, consistently reaffirmed that Palestinian refugees have the right to return to their homes and lands. The Canadian government has been acting in open defiance of this elementary justice.

**CanPalNet** gathers Canadians of all backgrounds who support the human, democratic, and national rights of the Palestinian people.

**CanPalNet** aims to change the policies and actions of the Canadian government so that these come to support the rights of the Palestinian people.

**CanPalNet** guides itself by United Nations resolutions affirming Palestinians' right of return and calling for an end to the Israeli occupation.

**CanPalNet** similarly guides itself by accumulated international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, which upholds the equal worth and dignity of persons regardless of their ethnic or religious identity, and which affirms democratic rights and opposes apartheid structures.

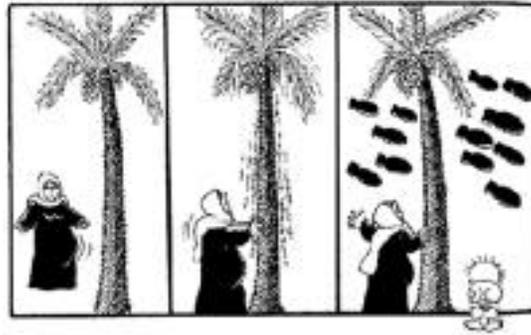
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(cont.)

The American dream, fueled by the US-led oil crusade into the Middle East, has been an unmitigated nightmare for countless millions in the region. The unequal exchange of a single natural resource, oil, in return for vast and deadly arsenals placed in the hands of corrupt and ruthless ruling cliques have turned entire populations into the hostages of western financed armies and security systems.

Yet in the West, their anger and fury is being interpreted as an innate lack of civilization, a predisposition to evil.

So it was that in the aftermath of bombing, a video clip of a few dozen school children celebrating in East Jerusalem was repeatedly shown to North Americans & Europeans to inculcate the proper identification of Palestinians - not as victims of racism and violence - but as the enemies of civilization.



The images supposedly spoke for themselves, and in so doing concealed not only the age and immaturity of the actors, but the very basic fact that these were children in a city under a brutal military occupation sponsored by the United States, children who have seen hundreds of their peers shot down in cold blood by Israeli army gunmen using weapons supplied by the United States.

Meanwhile, the great compassion shown by tens of thousands of Palestinians, who rose above their own justifiable anger at the policies of the US government by reaching out to fellow human beings at a tragic moment, was studiously ignored. Likewise ignored was Israel's intensification of its campaign of siege, assassination and collective punishment against the Palestinian population in the occupied territories, as the world's attention was focussed on the bombings.

The Canadian government's readiness to fall into line behind the US once again reveals our need for an independent and consistent Canadian foreign policy. Our most-favoured Middle Eastern ally, Israel, has refused to sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty. Though it is internationally acknowledged to possess a prodigious arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, the danger this poses to the peoples of the Middle East has yet to be addressed by the Canadian government.

By rewarding Israel's repeated flouting of UN resolutions, its systematic violation of the Geneva conventions, its policies of apartheid and occupation, Ottawa has sent a message to the peoples of the Middle East that Canada is committed to the escalation of their insecurity and the denial of their basic democratic aspirations to self-determination.

The time for change is long overdue.



The cartoons in this pamphlet are the work of Naji el-Ali, a Palestinian cartoonist (1936 - 1987).