

Israel occupied the Palestinian West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem in 1967. The United States occupied Iraq in 2003. Under the Fourth Geneva Convention, both the Palestinian and Iraqi peoples are "protected" populations. Yet for 37 years, Israel has engaged in practices that are grave breaches of international law. These include extra-judicial assassinations, torture, extended curfews and other forms

ISRAEL TRAINS US IRAQ FORCES IN "COUNTER-TERRORISM" AND TARGETED ASSASSINATIONS

Since the US invaded Iraq, Israeli commandos have been training US Special Forces at Fort Bragg, North Carolina in "counter-terrorism," including urban warfare, nighttime raids, and assassinations. US forces have also traveled to Israel for joint exercises. Brig. Gen. Michael Vane, deputy chief of staff at the US Army's

of the targeted person determined? According to Michael Sfar, a Tel Aviv attorney, "Today we execute people without trial. It's so simple. That's what we're doing. No one shows evidence to anyone" (*Washington Post*, July 30, 2003). This reminds one of what happened to the Abu Ghraib prisoners, as well as the six bound and hooded "suspects" reportedly executed by US-installed Iraqi prime minister Iyad Allawi.

DUAL OCCUPATIONS! WRONG IN IRAQ, WRONG IN PALESTINE

of collective punishment, the destruction of houses, agricultural lands, and civilian property, expulsions, and illegal imprisonment.

Since March 2003 the US has imported into Iraq many of the military measures that have brought poverty, repression, death and destruction to Palestinians, and failed to bring "security" to Israel. The parallel military occupation of Iraq has proven to be just as violent as Israel's control of Palestinian land and lives. Both occupations wreak havoc on the physical landscape and archeological and cultural heritage of the people. As the two occupations increasingly resemble each other, we must ask the question: if these policies have failed to bring peace to Palestine and Israel, aren't they destined to fail in Iraq?

Training and Doctrine Command, acknowledged that US troops had visited a mock-up of an Arab town used for Israeli training against Palestinians "to glean lessons learned from their counter-terrorist operations in urban areas" (*Associated Press*, December 13, 2003).

The brutal and illegal nature of the Israeli military occupation has repelled the international community, but not the United States. One US intelligence agent welcomed the alliance with Israeli forces as symbolic of a "new realism," explaining, "in Iraq, there are just some hearts and minds you can't win. Within the bounds of human rights, if you do make an example of certain villages it gets the attention of the others" (*Guardian*, December 9, 2003). Seymour Hersh reports that a key component of the US-Israeli training collaboration included assassinations, a hallmark of Israeli occupation policy for decades. According to one former senior US intelligence official, "This is basically an assassination program. This is a hunter-killer team." It may be more than coincidence that in the days before Israel's high-profile 2004 assassinations of Hamas leaders Sheikh Ahmad Yassin (a paraplegic murdered while in his wheelchair returning home from the mosque) and his successor, Dr. Abdel Aziz Rantisi, US officials quietly notified American and other international organizations in Gaza urging them to quickly move their staffs out of the Strip.

In the occupied territories Israeli assassins have used bombs, missiles, tanks, sniper fire, booby traps, and undercover death squads disguised as Arabs to kill over 100 Palestinian bystanders since late 2000. And how is the guilt

(*Sydney Morning Herald*, July 17, 2004)

The United States officially denounced Israel's assassination program until late 2002. Now both Bush and Kerry endorse this illegal policy. Moreover, reports have emerged that US covert squads, posed as Arabs, may be carrying out Israeli-style "hits" in Iraq (*Reuters*, December 11, 2003).

Extra-judicial executions are absolutely illegal under international human rights law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 32 and 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and Article 10 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The US and Israel are parties to all of them. There are no exceptions.

Beyond their illegality, the policies employed in Israel and Iraq have failed to bring peace or security to anyone. Israeli professor Steven Martin believes assassination "probably has cost more Israeli lives than it has saved." Martin Van Creveld, an Israeli military expert, believes the US is foolish to mimic Israeli policies in Iraq: "They are already doing things that we have been doing for years to no avail, like demolishing buildings ... like closing off villages in barbed wire. The Americans are coming here to try to mimic all kinds of techniques, but it's not going to do them any good." (*Associated Press*, December 13, 2003).

LIFE UNDER MILITARY OCCUPATIONS

"I see no difference between us and the Palestinians," an Iraqi named Tariq muttered as he waited to pass through the checkpoint outside Abu Hishma, now encircled by five



**END THE
OCCUPATION**
US CAMPAIGN TO END THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION

The US Campaign is a diverse coalition working for freedom from occupation and equal rights for all by challenging US policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Campaign is based on human rights and international law, providing a non-sectarian framework for everyone who supports its Call to Action. Its strategy is to inform, educate, and mobilize the public so as to change the US role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

miles of razor wire. “We didn’t expect anything like this after Saddam fell” (*New York Times*, December 7, 2003).

Checkpoints, concrete barricades, barbed wire fences, and identity cards: in parts of Iraq, the US is reproducing the dehumanizing landscape and siege conditions of Palestine. Israeli collective punishment has also included the demolition of thousands of homes since 2000. Now, to pressure suspected insurgents in Iraq, the US has also begun abducting and imprisoning their relatives and destroying their homes.

Such collective punishment is against the law: Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states, “no protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties and likewise all means of intimidation or of terrorism are prohibited.” Again, there are no exceptions.

FROM JENIN TO FALLUJAH

In urban areas, the US-Israeli collaboration has had a particularly devastating effect on civilians. In April 2002, using tanks, helicopter gunships and bulldozers, Israeli forces invaded and re-occupied the Jenin refugee camp. While Israel and its US supporters denied it was a “massacre,” it was later revealed that Israel had deliberately denied access to the wounded, bulldozed or destroyed hundreds of buildings, and had killed dozens of civilians, including 7 women and 9 children. (*Amnesty International*, “Shielded From Scrutiny,” November 4, 2002). Human Rights Watch investigators concluded that, “Israeli forces committed serious violations of international humanitarian law, some amounting prima facie to war crimes” (“Jenin—IDF Military Operations,” May 3, 2002).

Instead of condemning the assault, the United States provided Israel with political cover by sponsoring Israel’s stonewalling of a UN fact-finding mission, which had been mandated by Security Council resolution 1405. Moreover, it was later revealed that the US military used the invasion of Jenin as a model for urban warfare in Iraq and met with Israeli officials to learn their tactics (*Independent*, March 29, 2003). The BBC also reported on April 1, 2003 that US military personnel visited Jenin after the invasion to “see how to work with a military bulldozer.”

In April 2004, US troops applied these Israeli tactics in Iraq when they attempted to “pacify”

the rebellious city of Fallujah. For a month, US forces bombed and raided the city of 300,000, causing severe shortages of food and medicine. Reports emerged of assaults on ambulances and medical convoys (*BBC*, April 23, 2004). One senior US commander warned that America could turn Fallujah into “a killing field in a couple of days” (*New York Times*, April 22, 2004). Indeed, the violence was wholesale. Rahul Mahajan, a journalist in Fallujah during the siege, reported that at least half of the roughly 600 killed were women and children. The similarities to Jenin were striking. Beyond the identical tactics used, both assaults failed in their stated objectives by further radicalizing the local populations. The war crimes committed by occupation forces in Jenin and Fallujah did nothing to bring safety to Palestinians, Israelis, Iraqis or Americans. The summer 2004 US assault and occupation of the Iraqi Shi’a holy city of Najaf brought similar death and destruction, and did nothing to bring peace.

TORTURE AND SECRET PRISONS

The Abu Ghraib torture scandal awoke Americans to the realities of war and occupation. Less publicized were the parallels and connections to Israeli prisons and interrogation policy. Facility 1391 is a secret Israeli prison where due process is nonexistent and inmates can disappear forever. “Our main conclusion is that it exists to make torture possible,” writes Israeli human rights activist Manal Hazzan (*Guardian*, November 14, 2003).

Although Israel officially banned torture in 1999, outlawing many previously legal inhumane techniques, a recent survey by the Public Committee against Torture in Israel reveals that 58 percent of Palestinians detained during the current uprising report being subjected to beatings, shaking, being forced to assume painful positions, having wooden batons inserted into the rectum, having handcuffs intentionally tightened, being hooded for long periods, and not being permitted to sleep or go to the toilet.

Israeli prison culture has been replicated in US-occupied Iraq. Dozens of prisoners have been killed, others have disappeared from the public record, becoming “ghost detainees,” and the torture at Abu Ghraib resulted from an explicit rejection of international law at the highest levels of the US government

(*Washington Post*, June 8, 2004). Moreover, Brig. Gen. Janis Karpinski, formerly in charge of Abu Ghraib, claims that Israeli agents are aiding US interrogators throughout Iraq’s secretive prison system (*BBC*, July 3, 2004).

TWO WRONGS DON’T MAKE A RIGHT

The US has long been Israel’s key financial, military and diplomatic sponsor, often in violation of international law or domestic laws such as the Arms Export Control Act. Now, instead of bringing democracy to the whole Middle East, the US invasion of Iraq has brought a another military occupation to the already volatile region. Now the US and Israel actively collaborate on occupation strategy, urban warfare training, assassinations, and interrogation techniques, even though these same policies have failed to bring peace after 37 years of Israeli occupation of Palestine. Israeli and US occupation policies are all illegal, brutal, dehumanizing, and incapable of bringing about a just, lasting, or comprehensive peace.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1) Work for an end to the occupation of Iraq. United for Peace and Justice (www.unitedforpeace.org) and its member groups organize teach-ins, and demonstrations to end the occupation in Iraq.

2) Work for an end to Israel’s occupation of Palestine. The US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation (www.endtheoccupation.org) provides resources, materials, and actions for its member groups to end US support for Israel’s occupation.

3) Uphold the rule of law! Only the law will protect the people of Palestine and Iraq, as well as of Israel and the United States. Educate yourself and others on the key texts of international law—the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the convention on civil and political rights; and economic, social and cultural rights; and the Geneva Conventions. Refer to them in your writings, talks, and actions.