



MennoLetter from Jerusalem

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*A Middle East View for North American Mennonites
by Church Representative, Glenn Edward Witmer*



*“Modern evangelicals have distorted the Bible
to rationalize their uncritical political support for Israel.”*

—Ronald J. Sider, Evangelicals for Social Action

*“Ariel Sharon is not the average Israeli,
nor is the leader of Hamas the average Palestinian.”*

—Matthew Krabill, ministry intern in Israel/Palestine

“The stronger party [Israel] should give up its desire for one last lick.”

—Rev. Jesse Jackson, in Jerusalem



~MY VOICE ...

“Driven by Fear, Despair—and Hope!”

When the Rev. Jesse Jackson enters the room, people notice. Partly it's because of his size and the array of persons accompanying him, but also there is an air of expectancy that surpasses political colorings. Jesse talks the talk! His years of political forays—coupled with his Baptist-preacher training—guarantee a good performance. And that's what we got last Sunday at St. Stephen's Church in East Jerusalem. Jackson, a guest of the Middle East Council of Churches, had come to broker a children's aid plan for between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority, a task that no one could be seen hindering. "I'm convinced Israelis and Palestinians must live together," he said. "The Israeli government is driven by fear, the Palestinians by despair. There must be a third force driven by hope."

*“Using phrases like ‘moral equivalence’
serves no purpose but to vilify.”*

Jackson argued that the suicide bombers are not out to wipe Israel off the map. "At any rate, the idea of pushing the Jews into the sea is no longer an issue. But Palestinians have their backs against the wall and that's why something as futile as 'kill and be killed' rather than 'live and let live' is driving them to suicide attacks." [As this is being written, the ambulance sirens are screaming up the road outside. TV reporters are covering the latest bombing in the cafeteria at Hebrew University.] "Using phrases like 'moral equivalence' serves no purpose but to vilify. The stronger party [Israel] should give up its desire for one last lick," he said. "There are non-violent ways of protesting, and we must keep hope alive."

That hope seems far away yet, but creative ways of fighting are emerging...and heavily in the media. We have regularly pointed out the news battles that are being waged over the hearts and minds of the people, both within Israel and in the international community. In this issue we note misuse of statistics, partial truth-telling, selective reporting, and plain bad exegesis and theology—all in the name of furthering one's stance on the political issues. This month's *MennoLetter* again treats a number of these matters that are so crucial to our understanding of the situation. One cannot keep up with, nor absorb, all the information coming out from every quarter. So what remains is for us to be selective—but how? What does one read? What does one ignore?

Who can be trusted to tell the story—the way I want to hear it (for that’s often the basis for our news coverage selection. “If it’s not what I want to hear and believe? I’ll change stations!”

Ideally, all of our readers should come to Israel for a first-hand look; 20 international church people did just that for the Bat Kol Institute July Session, *Excavating the Word of God in the Book of Exodus*. An amazing time of study and worship ensued. Also, the church’s ministry internship allows for college youth to get hands on experience throughout the area—Palestinian and Israeli, Jew and Christian—and we report on one of those completing his assignment next week. Others might choose to express their concern—*outrage?*—by joining organizations that pressure their governments to respond to more clearly acceptable courses of action. Ron Sider’s has a plan open for all of us to get involved; see his article in this issue. And...what I find most interesting, many Israelis and other Jews are loudly organizing their own opposition against what they see as inappropriate behavior on the part of governments here in Israel and in the West.

I once winced while listening to Hanan Ashrawi accuse North American ‘evangelicals’ for their blind support for the Israeli position. She of course was referring to those of the ‘Christian Right’ groups, which also include denominations that label themselves ‘*evangelical*’. We note that it’s not just evangelicals who are sharply divided on Middle East issues. Jews too hold polar positions on what the Bible teaches, and how people must respond. Jesse Jackson is right; hope must be kept alive! —GEW

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## *Youth at ‘Ground Zero’ in the Middle East*

*A new program developed by a Mennonite Church agency[MMN-Elkhart] allows students to tie their academic work to practical, supervised experience in Israel, especially when courses focus on Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies.*

*This was the case for Matthew Krabill, an undergraduate at Eastern Mennonite University, Virginia, who wanted a practicum related to another of his college courses, Culture, Religion and Mission. Krabill spent an EMU semester in the Middle East last year, then chose this overseas program to extend his exposure to church work here.*

*Next week Matthew Krabill heads home after three months in Israel and the West Bank. —ed.*

*“What does ministry look like in Israel?”* That was the question we asked ourselves in the April planning stages of this first practicum effort to respond positively to EMU’s *Ministry Inquiry Program*. In order to help answer that question we decided to provide direct exposure to what Mennonite church agencies (such as Christian Peacemaker Teams, Mennonite Central Committee, Youth Evangelism Service, Mennonite Mission Network) are doing, as well as having contact with Messianic and traditional Jews, Palestinians (Christian and Muslim), and the ancient churches. (*Messianic Jews are Jews who are believers in Jesus, but don’t call themselves Christian because they still retain their Jewishness.*) This made up the program that was laid out for Matthew’s time in Israel/Palestine this summer.

*From being a farm-hand villager and ‘donkey handler’* in the Nazareth Village project to two weeks with YES youth teams on a Kibbutz abutting the Lebanese border, from living under curfew with a Palestinian Greek-Orthodox family in Beit Sahour to Bat Kol Institute lectures on Jewish worship and prayer, from the Golan Heights of Galilee to the arid Negev wilderness—Matthew filled his time with constant exposure to the people and the land. “I’ve had enough of Israeli soldiers and tanks, though” he muttered recently after having made yet another lengthy detour to bypass checkpoints getting in and out of Bethlehem. And his first-hand look at the devastation and poverty of Gaza suburbs had him shaking his head in despair.

*“Two weeks ago, I wrote about the pain that Israelis feel due to the conflict. This week I could write volumes about the hopelessness and suffering inflicted upon Palestinians living in the West Bank.”—Krabill*

From the start we felt that *people-contact* would be the most important element in this new youth program. Breaking down stereotypes, building relationships, hearing other sides to the stories—all these would contribute to a better understanding not only of the culture, but of how Western church projects and activities can play a useful role in the lives of people in this region. That seems to be the end result for Matthew, who combined extensive reading and interviewing with his day-to-day experiences. He will need time to internalize many of the feelings and frustrations he shared with the local Palestinians, and the historical and religious perspectives of the conflict that some Israelis spoke to him about. “Ariel Sharon is not the average Israeli, nor is the leader of

Hamas the average Palestinian,” he said. Understanding how the general public views things was one of the most profound experiences he had. One thing is certain: he returns to North America with a broader understanding of the issues, even if solutions seem less obvious.

*The September issue of MennoLetter will carry an article on the political turmoil from Matthew’s unique perspective of having spent time around tanks, under curfew, and inside devastated zones.*

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## ***Terrible Days of Mourning—Over 3200 Years!***

A large painting of ‘*The Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus*.’ that hangs in my living room was taken down for use in the Bat Kol Institute lecture by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman on July 17<sup>th</sup>—that’s *Tisha B’Av* on the Jewish calendar. [It’s also the 11<sup>th</sup> day of their 9<sup>th</sup> month—the original 9/11 of human tragedies!] The 20 international Bat Kol Bible students studying in Israel during July heard the story about the special date—and that evening sat in darkness on the synagogue floor to hear the traditional candlelight reading of the entire *Book of Lamentations* that begins a day of fasting to mourn a series of catastrophes in Jewish history:

*On Tisha B’Av, several national calamities occurred in Israel’s history:*

- [1] During the time of Moses, Jews in the desert accepted the slanderous report of the 12 Spies, and the decree was issued forbidding them from entering the Land of Israel (1312 BCE\*);
- [2] The First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians, led by Nebuchadnezzar; 100,000 Jews were slaughtered and millions more exiled (586 BCE);
- [3] The Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans, led by Titus. Some two million Jews died, and another one million were exiled. (70 CE);
- [4] The *Bar Kochba* revolt was crushed by Roman Emperor Hadrian; the city of Betar—the Jews’ last stand against the Romans—was captured and liquidated; over 100,000 Jews were slaughtered (135 BCE). The Temple area and its surroundings were plowed under by the Roman General Rufus. Jerusalem was rebuilt as a pagan city—renamed *Aelia Capitolina*—and access forbidden to Jews.

Besides these, other serious events have occurred on *Tisha B’av*: Pope Urban II declared the First Crusade, tens of thousands of Jews were killed, and many Jewish communities obliterated. The terrible Spanish Inquisition culminated with the expulsion of Jews from Spain on *Tisha B’Av* in 1492. World War I broke out on that day in 1914 when Russia declared war on Germany. German resentment from the war set the stage for the *Shoah*/Holocaust. The deportation of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto began on *Tisha B’Av*.

*\*Increasingly, academics and those involved in cross-cultural dialogue use the designations BCE & CE, (Before the) Common Era.*

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*An Open Letter from American Jews to the U.S. Government*

## ***“Both Have Suffered Great Wrongs...”***

*In the wake of the recent bloodshed* in the Middle East, many Israelis and Palestinians—and their supporters in the United States—have reverted to an *us-versus-them* thinking in which they see themselves as righteous victims and ignore or minimize the injustices they have done, and continue to do, to the other people. In fact, both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples have suffered great wrongs at the hands of the other, albeit in different and unequal ways; both have legitimate grievances, legitimate fears, and legitimate distrust of the other people’s willingness to compromise for the sake of peace.

*...The U.S. bears a special responsibility for the current tragic impasse*, by virtue of our massive economic and military support for the Israeli government: **\$500 per Israeli citizen per year!** Our country has an extraordinary leverage on Israeli policy, if only our government would dare to use it. As American Jews who care deeply about the long-term security of Israel, we call on our government to make continued aid conditional on Israeli acceptance of an internationally agreed two-state settlement... Rejectionists on both sides will of course attack any such settlement. —*excerpted from a full page ad in the New York Times*

## ~ OTHER VOICES...

*A lot is being written about the influence of the Christian Right on President Bush and the Congress, especially because of the new organization of Ralph Reed and Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein—“Stand by Israel”. The media have labeled these groups as “evangelicals,” co-opting the historical reformation term. Recently, Ronald J. Sider gathered a group of leaders who also consider themselves “evangelical” to write to President Bush to reject the way in which modern “evangelicals” have distorted the Bible to rationalize their uncritical political support for Israel.*

### *“Misusing the Bible, Misleading the President”*

*Uncritical support for virtually every Israeli government policy, no matter how unjust to the Palestinians, is one of conservative evangelicals’ more glaring exegetical and political mistakes. Repeatedly over the past months, stories in major newspapers have given the impression that all American evangelicals support Israeli Prime Minister Sharon no matter how harsh his repression of Palestinians. In fact, the stories have clearly implied that one of the reasons President Bush is one-sidedly supporting Sharon is because of massive pressure from American evangelicals.*

*“...if anything is clear in the Old Testament,  
it is that God demands justice from the people of Israel  
and everyone else, too.”*

*A fundamental misreading of the Bible lies behind this one-sided, unjust political stance. Yes, we should pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Yes, I believe, the Israelis should have their own state, free and secure in the Middle East. But if anything is clear in the Old Testament, it is that God demands justice from the people of Israel and everyone else, too. God punishes injustice and mistreatment of others.*

*A longing for a balanced, even-handed American approach that demands an end to Palestinian terrorism and Israeli invasions, pleading for justice and peace for everyone, prompted me to start thinking about initiating an evangelical statement urging balance. When I discovered that the Public Policy and Advocacy office of World Vision in Washington, DC, was working in the same direction, I gladly joined them to help draft a letter (copied below) to President Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell. The letter was endorsed by 49 evangelical Christian leaders. We are pursuing meetings with the President and Secretary of State. But we also want to add many more names in support of this letter. To join us, send your name, church affiliation, city and state to *Evangelicals for Social Action*: [ronsider@esa-online.org](mailto:ronsider@esa-online.org).*

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*Dear Mr. President,*

*We write as American Evangelical Christians concerned for the well-being of all the children of Abraham in the Middle East: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim. We urge you to employ an even-handed policy toward Israeli and Palestinian leadership so that this bloody conflict will come to a speedy close and both peoples can live without fear and in a spirit of shalom/salaam. An even-handed U.S. policy towards Israelis and Palestinians does not give a blank check to either side, nor does it bless violence by either side. An even-handed policy affirms the valid interests of Israelis and Palestinians: both states free, economically viable and secure, with normal relations between Israel and all its Arab neighbors.*

*We commend your stated support for a Palestinian state with 1967 borders, and encourage you to move boldly forward so that the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for their own state may be realized. We abhor and condemn the suicide bombings of the last 22 months and the failure of the Palestinian Authority in the first year of the intifada to stop the violence against Israeli citizens.*

*We grieve over the loss of life, particularly among children, and the suffering by Israelis and Palestinians. The longer the bloodletting continues, the more difficult it will be*

*for both sides to reconcile with each other.*

*We urge you to provide the leadership necessary for peacemaking in the Middle East by vigorously opposing injustice, including the continued unlawful and degrading Israeli settlement movement. The theft of Palestinian land and the destruction of Palestinian homes and fields are surely some of the major causes of the strife that has resulted in terrorism and the loss of so many Israeli and Palestinian lives. The continued Israeli military occupation that daily humiliates ordinary Palestinians is also having disastrous effects on the Israeli soul.*

*Mr. President, the American evangelical community is not a monolithic bloc in full and firm support of present Israeli policy. Significant numbers of American evangelicals reject the way some have distorted biblical passages as their rationale for uncritical support for every policy and action of the Israeli government instead of judging all actions—of both Israelis and Palestinians—on the basis of biblical standards of justice. The great Hebrew prophets, Isaiah and Jeremiah, declared in the Old Testament that God calls all nations and all people to do justice one to another, and to protect the oppressed, the alien, the fatherless, and the widow.*

*Finally, Mr. President, be assured of our prayers for you and your cabinet as you lead our nation in this troubled time. May the strength and peace of the Lord be with you.*

*Sincerely,*

Ronald J. Sider, President, *Evangelicals for Social Action*

Leighton Ford, President, *Leighton Ford Ministries*

Richard J. Mouw, President, *Fuller Seminary*

David Neff, Editor, *Christianity Today*

Philip Yancey, *Author*

Marilyn Borst, Executive Director, *Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding*

Richard Stearns, President, *World Vision US*

Donald Wagner, Director, *Center for Middle East Studies, North Park University*

*+ over 40 others.*

—For more: “*Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding*”: [www.emeu.net](http://www.emeu.net). [courtesy Fred Strickert]

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***At 23:55 on Monday, 22 July 2002, an Israeli F-16 fighter jet*** launched a missile at a

150-square-meter, two-storey apartment building located in the densely populated al-Daraj neighborhood in Gaza City. Sheikh Salah Shehadeh, who was wanted by the Israeli occupying forces, and his family live on the upper floor of the building. The missile directly hit the apartment building, totally destroying it and one other house. Four other homes sustained serious damage.

Fifteen Palestinian civilians, including 9 children, were killed. Most of the more than 70 wounded were women and children. Statements made by the Israeli occupying forces, asserted that the purpose of the attack was the assassination of Hamas leader, Sheikh Salah Mustafa Shehadeh, 49.

An Israeli Foreign Ministry official said the attack was a “strike against a known terrorist who is responsible for hundreds of attacks on Israeli civilians in recent years.” He expressed regret for the loss of life.

“To our great sorrow, in these operations sometimes, and in military operations, civilians are also killed.” —For more: Palestinian Center for Human Rights, [www.pchrgaza.org](http://www.pchrgaza.org)

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### ***“Are Occupiers War Criminals?”***

*A Belgian court has set back efforts to prosecute Ariel Sharon* for atrocities committed in 1982 in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon. The Court ruled that its laws did not apply to persons who are not physically present in Belgium. Lawyers plan to appeal. Even if they can overturn this ruling, however, they face an uphill battle in light of the decision earlier this year by the International Criminal Court rejecting a similar prosecution of a Congolese minister on grounds of diplomatic immunity. [Cont'd...]

*Notwithstanding that victory in the Belgian court*, Israel—like the United States—is taking no chances on having its politicians and citizens subjected to international war crimes prosecutions in the future. The U.S. refused to sign the U.N. treaty establishing the newly constituted International Criminal Court; Israel signed the treaty but has now given notice that it will not ratify it. Israel expressed particular concern that the ICC has defined “war crime” to include the movement of populations into occupied territories. •



Rabbi Arthur Waskow

*“...if someone is coming to kill you, kill him first.”*

*The recent events in Gaza and in Israel and in Washington* are like a lightning-storm that illumines some very deep issues in the current agony of the Jewish people. We now know that [the day before the Israeli attack on Gaza], intense negotiations among various Pales-tinian militias—including some like *Tanzim* that had resorted to terrorist mass murders—had resulted in an agreement to halt all attacks against Israeli civilians. A Hamas top leader had publicly moved in this direction as well. According to a story in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* the US Government had persuaded Saudi Arabia to cut off all money to Hamas unless it agreed to this as well. The Israeli government knew all these facts.

*“Was it because the Sharon government is uninterested in a peace agreement with a Palestinian state...?”*

*For months the Israeli government had targeted Sheikh Shehadeh* to be assassinated because of his role in planning terrorist attacks, but had held off—according to Israel government statements—because they could not be certain of avoiding killing civilians. At midnight last Monday night, 90 minutes after *Tanzim* signed their commitment to cease bombings, which was to be published in an Israeli, Pales-tinian, and US paper within two days, the Israeli military dropped a bomb on Gaza, aimed at Shehadeh himself. This bomb was dropped on an apartment complex at midnight, and killed 15 civilians, mostly sleeping children, and shattered the agreement signed that very evening by the *Tanzim*.

Why, after what the Israeli government says were several months of shadowing Shehadeh and

refraining from killing him to avoid killing civilians, did the Israeli government order him killed when it was 99% certain to mean the killing of civilians nearby? Was the reason that the Sharon government was desperate to shatter the impending cease-fires lest they force Israel into a peace negotiation moving toward a viable Palestine alongside Israel? Was it because the Sharon government is uninterested in a peace agreement with a Palestinian state and wants total control of all territory west of the Jordan and the destruction of all efforts at Palestinian self-government and possible statehood?

*The Talmud teaches that if someone is coming to kill you, kill him first.* It does not teach to kill him and nine sleeping children. (In fact it teaches that you cannot kill an innocent person even to save your own life.) It does NOT teach that if someone, even a murderer, is in the midst of deciding NOT to kill you, to kill him anyway. It does not teach to kill him to prevent the taking of a step toward peace that may save Jewish lives, as well as other lives. The Israeli government has said since the bombing that it had no expectation that the cease-fire commit-ment would matter. But now we know that with the Saudi cash in jeopardy, there was very good reason to think that indeed it might matter.

So...did the Sharon government do this bombing *despite* the likelihood it would shatter a serious step toward ending violence, or *because* it was likely to shatter that effort? Does the Sharon government [hold the] vision that Israel can control the whole West Bank/Gaza and shatter every vestige of Palestinian nationalism? What would such a *total-control* policy do to the future of Israel, the Jewish people, the Palestinian and other Arab peoples—the world as a whole?

—For more: *Shalom Center*: [www.shalomctr.org](http://www.shalomctr.org)

...*But other responsible voices give a different perspective:*

“ Hamas is a fundamentalist Islamic group which has never recognized Israel’s right to exist. It has prosecuted its war without any moral restraint. Its terrorists have not been merely careless but have deliberately targeted civilians, exploding bombs in circumstances designed to maximize the number of innocent men, women and children killed... Hamas is not interested in negotiation or accommodation with the Jewish state, simply its extermination.” —*The Times of London*

*And to sum it up?*—U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said: “This is a war that has been forced upon us by terrorists... We are making great efforts not to hurt civilians, but if civilians are hurt, the entire responsibility for such is upon the terrorists who use them as cover...”

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“There are not many other cities in the world..”

...in which tanks have the run of the streets and fire shells into population centers,” writes Gideon Levy in Jerusalem’s *Ha’aretz* newspaper. But they do in the West Bank, and the result has been disastrous, killing civilians and destroying infrastructure and private property. Levy’s analysis is fairly conservative: without calling the presence or even objectives of the Israeli occupying army into question, he limits himself largely to criticizing their *methods*, which include the use of tank shells for civilian crowd control. “There is absolutely no justification for such disproportionate force,” Levy argues; “less lethal methods can be used without jeopardizing the safety of IDF soldiers. Tanks must be removed from the cities, and soldiers must stop firing on civilians at once.”

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Shamai Leibowitz

*“Where there is no Justice, there is no Peace.”*

*I am an Orthodox Jew* and a criminal defense attorney in Tel Aviv. I am also a tank gunner in reserve duty, and part of a group of some 1000 soldiers who have *refused to serve* in the occupied territories. Many of them were imprisoned in military jails in the past few months. In his recent speech with descriptions he envisions for the utopian Palestinian State in the far future, George W. Bush managed to avoid any mention of the present situation in the same parcel of land where all these things are to materialize. We can only wonder how long it will take him to realize that his plan is useless and meaningless.

*No mention of the fact that all West Bank cities had been invaded* by Israeli military forces; that hundreds of thousands of inhabitants are imprisoned in their homes, civilians appearing on city streets are being shot at like dogs by Israeli tanks and Apache helicopters. His failure to understand that no progress can be made while a whole nation is being brutally occupied is the basic policy, and serves as the best explanation why his Middle East plans have consistently become colossal failures. We are now witnessing a situation in which 3.5 million people have no future, no hope, no vision, other than to become terrorists and avenge the continued harassment and shelling by the Israeli army’s helicopters, tanks, and artillery. The terror attacks are abhorrent. They have no justification in any sane polity. However, no amount of condemnation stops them. Bush fails to comprehend that the suicide bombings are a product of mass starvation and humiliation of the Palestinian people; only an immediate end to the Israeli occupation will bring an immediate end to the Palestinian uprising.

*Can you expect a rape victim  
to negotiate with her attacker?*

*Can you expect a slave to negotiate with his master?*

Our Jewish sources teach us that *where there is no justice, there is no peace*. The idea behind the Oslo accords, namely that we could ‘negotiate’ a peace agreement while remaining the Occupying Power, has proven to be romantic nonsense. Can you expect a rape victim to negotiate with her attacker? Can you expect a slave to negotiate with his master? Most Israelis know deep in their hearts that once we stop humiliating and oppressing this nation, we will return to become a safe and secure democratic Israel living next to a viable Palestinian State.

The Greek Orthodox Church in Jerusalem has removed Father Atallah Hanna as its spokesman.

Hanna had recently expressed his outspoken support for Palestinian suicide murderers.

Arinous I, the Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem, said that the Orthodox Church “voices its sympathy with the victims of terrorism and violence.”—*Wall Street Journal*

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*The threat of terror attacks has made many Israelis wary* of socializing in public places, and citizen response is often channeled into debate about access to recreation. For instance, one Jerusalem neighborhood initiated a campaign to “Take back the cafes.” Writer Shira Robinson says that it is deeply problematic for popular debate to be centered around such issues. She writes: “Posing Israel’s security in terms of citizens’ access to leisure has become a powerful means of depoliticizing the occupation and ignoring why Palestinians resist it.”

Moreover, by eliding leisure with lifestyle, and lifestyle with national identity, the suicide bombings are given false importance, as existential threats to the state itself. As such, many Jewish citizens hide behind the notion that there is ‘no choice’ but to take viciously oppressive action against Palestinians and impose harsh political restrictions on dissent in Israel. —*Middle East Report*

*Amnesty International has come under a great deal of criticism... for its tough stand on Israeli actions and lack of similar criticism of anti-Israel terror. In a new report, the group condemns such acts and calls terror against civilians by Palestinian groups ‘crimes against humanity’ and suggests that they may qualify as war crimes as well.*

*In what might be the most significant part of the report, it says that “Attacks on civilians are not permitted under any internationally recognized standard of law, whether they are committed in the context of a struggle against military occupation or any other context.” This rejects a commonly expressed Arab rationale for terror tactics.*

## ~ YOUR VOICE...

Reader’s comments, suggestions for articles, and critiques are welcomed. Please write to us.

*“Thank you for this informative newsletter. It is refreshing to read material like this... You are so right that we need to be ‘pro-people’ and not take sides.”*

*“What a wonderful approach to providing insight into a complex situation. I appreciate the open and non-judgmental reporting of different and often times conflicting perspectives!”*

*“I no longer wish to receive the newsletter. I fail to see the balance in the issues I have read. I do not believe the Israelis to be blameless, but do not find your coverage fair to them either, in downplaying Palestinian responsibility for much of what has been happening.”*

*“I live in New Zealand and could probably be described as a pseudo-Anabaptist! I first learnt of Mennonites and Anabaptists a few years ago...I’m more and more attracted to the Anabaptist approach to Christian community and I’m working through how to live out such an approach in my local context. Thanks for the really helpful resource you’re providing.”*

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