

Middle East Notes
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

June 8, 2017

Please note: Opinions expressed in the following articles do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns.



Read previous weeks' Middle East Notes at <http://maryknollogc.org/tag/middle-east-notes>

The five featured articles and the related links in this issue of the Middle East Notes focus on the [Pax Christi International](#) call for the immediate end of the 50-year Israeli occupation; the anniversary of the “6 Day War, and beginning of the occupation; the occupation as an “enemy” that could destroy the State of Israel; the successful end of the Palestinian prisoners’ hunger strike; President Trump’s visit to the Middle East; and two fine CMEP Bulletins with links to articles of special interest.

Commentary: [Jewish Voice for Peace](#) has prepared a brief video history of “Israel & Palestine: A Very Short Introduction.” For basic history, watch their short video “[Israel/Palestine Conflict 101](#).” The leaders of Israel seem to be addicted to persistent use of the “occupation substance,” which, while sustaining their political control, is also destroying the fabric of their country. The cost of this substance continues to increase, and the suppliers’ support of this addiction is decreasing. A considerable number of Israelis and their friends are becoming more aware of the terrible results of this addiction to occupation.

Excellent sources for information and links to articles concerning the State of Israel and the Palestinian people are:

[CMEP Bulletins](#) (Churches for Middle East Peace)

[FMEP](#) (Foundation for Middle East Peace)

[Americans for Peace Now - News Nosh](#)

[Jewish Voice for Peace](#)

Featured articles:

- In commemoration of 50 years of Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, [Pax Christi International](#) in collaboration with its members, urges the international community to call for the immediate end of the 50-year Israeli occupation and for the parties to reengage in a peace process in compliance with international law.
- [American Muslims for Palestine](#) notes that on Monday, June 5, Palestinians and their supporters will mark 50 years since the 1967 Six Day War, when Israeli forces occupied the remaining 22 percent of historic Palestine left over from the 1948 Nakba.
- Sami Michael writes in a [Ynet News](#) Op-ed that the Iranians are not the ones threatening our existence as a normal, civilized country. The occupation is the sworn enemy that could destroy the State of Israel.
- [The Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network](#) writes of their victory of the Strike of Freedom and Dignity, the battle of Palestinian hunger strikers in Israeli jails, confronting the occupier with their bodies and their lives.
- Nadav Eyal writes in [Ynet News](#) that President Trump used his Mideast visit to sell stuff—and he was very successful. He turned Saudi King Salman into his personal hero, and offered the Israelis sympathy; the Palestinians didn’t even get a right to self-determination.

1) [Press release: Pax Christi International in collaboration with its members, calls for the immediate end of the 50-year Israeli occupation and for a renewed peace process](#)

“Beginning with the Six Day war, 5-10 June, 1967, five decades of military occupation in disregard for international laws and U.N. resolutions and the willful expansion of settlements has led to dire conditions on the ground that systematically violate the human rights of the Palestinian people.

“It is time for the international community to say, ‘Enough!’, states Pax Christi International, in the light of this month’s 50th anniversary of the occupation.” ...

“For 50 years the international community has been witness to the denial of human rights and the deterioration of conditions throughout the occupied Palestinian territories. We have watched the slow ebbing of hope as lives are damaged by the policies of this occupation which:

- deny freedom of movement;
- limit access to critical services, especially health care;
- monitor and curtail access to basic necessities, especially water and electricity;
- diminish opportunities for education and employment;
- obstruct normal family life and the exercise of religious worship;
- negatively affect the Palestinian economic infrastructure, especially in the agricultural sector;
- punish legitimate, nonviolent expressions of resistance and protest;
- and impose regulations that create segregation and inequality.”

... “The current situation is not sustainable. Reaching a political solution is the only path to peace.

Therefore, Pax Christi International calls for the parties to return to the negotiating table to establish a peace agreement that recognizes and protects the human dignity and rights of the Palestinian and Israeli people as equals. We believe that the revival of a peace process must be based on a steadfast commitment to abide by international law and U.N. resolutions.

To promote and support such efforts for peace, Pax Christi International strongly recommends a ban on the sale and delivery of arms to Israel and Palestine and an immediate cessation of any military cooperation which contributes to violent conflict.” ...

2) [Commemorating 50 years since the Six Day War, American Muslims for Palestine, June 1, 2017](#)

“On Monday, June 5, Palestinians and their supporters will mark 50 years since the 1967 Six Day War, when Israeli forces occupied the remaining 22 percent of historic Palestine left over from the 1948 Nakba.

“During this military assault, which was surpassed in brutality only by Israel’s attack on Gaza in the summer of 2014, Zionist forces displaced another 350,000 Palestinians from their homes. Many refugees from 1948 were made refugees again.” ...

“The international community is losing patience with Israel’s occupation. This was evident by the passage of U.N Security Council Resolution 2334 in December 2016. Frustrated by Israel’s intransigence on peace talks with the Palestinians, the Obama administration abstained from vetoing the resolution that was supported by 14 out of the 15 Security Council members. The resolution refers to Israel as an ‘occupying power.’” ...

“‘While the Trump administration is more inclined to overlook Israel’s violations of Palestinian rights, it’s clear that the vast majority of members of the international community do not support Israeli policies that contravene international law,’ said Osama Abuirshaid, AMP national policy director.” ...

“2017: 100 years since the Balfour Declaration; 70 years since the partition of Palestine; 50 years of occupation of the remaining 22 percent of historic Palestine and 10 years of the siege on Gaza.”

See also:

[50 voices 50 years: Lara Friedman](#),

[Opinion Fifty Years, Fifty Lies](#), Gideon Levy

[50 Years of Israeli Military Occupation FAQs](#)

[Beyond the Binary: Two States, One State, Failed State, No State](#)

3) [The disgrace of the occupation](#), Sami Michael, Ynet News, June 5, 2017

“As we mark 50 years since the beginning of the occupation, it is only right that we examine the balance of our existence in this volatile part of the world.

“Unfortunately for the occupiers and those who preach about it, the Israeli occupation took place after the collapse of the empires based on occupation for the sake of settlement. The British and French empires collapsed not only because of military victories. Settling in a foreign country through violent measures, the empires realized, is not worthwhile. Not only did the settlement lead to bloodshed, it also depleted the national coffers. Even slavery did not disappear from this world for humane reasons, but because buying and keeping a slave became expensive and was not longer worthwhile.

“We have poured millions into the settlements over the past 50 years at the expense of Israeli taxpayers, and especially at the expense of nurturing development towns and villages, poor neighborhoods and impoverished populations, including the elderly people who poured their hearts into building this country. The fruit of prosperity borne by this lost and deprived generation is now enjoyed by several thousand people who have become the masters of our fate.”

“Every occupation is a crime according to humane, universal and democratic values. The moral corruption in Israeli society is reflected in the perpetuating the occupation, whose advocates have no problem using shameful incitement, intimidation and threats to that end.” ...

“Unfortunately, within Israel, I don’t see a courageous and determined person on the horizon who will muster the courage to crush the snake that is consistently consuming our humane and democratic values and poisoning our life. All we can do is hope for salvation from the outside.

“I spent half my life under the heavy shadow of the occupation. The Iranians are not the ones threatening our existence as a normal, civilized country. They are up to their neck in the thousands-of-years-old conflict between the Shiite world and the Sunni world.” ...

See also:

[Gideon Levy What I've Seen in 30 Years of Reporting on the Israeli Occupation](#)

[15,000 Rally in Tel Aviv in Support of Two-state Solution](#)

[A Palestinians Daily Commute through an Israeli checkpoint](#)

4) [Victory, Towards Liberation: Salute to the Palestinian Prisoners and the Struggle for Freedom](#), Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, May 27, 2017

“On the occasion of the victory of the Strike of Freedom and Dignity, the valiant battle of Palestinian hunger strikers in Israeli jails, confronting the occupier with their bodies and their lives, we salute the Palestinian prisoners on achieving their victory, not only for themselves and their families, but for the entire Palestinian people and global movement for justice and liberation. We salute and congratulate the prisoners on their victory after 40 days of sacrifice, steadfastness and endless struggle.” ...

Sign up to receive Middle East Notes by email: www.maryknollogc.com

“On 17 April, Palestinian Prisoners’ Day, 1500 Palestinian prisoners out of nearly 6500 imprisoned in Israeli jails launched their strike for a series of demands. These demands were straightforward, focusing on the restoration of family visits, the right to education, access to media and health care. Among the accomplishments of the strike is the restoration of the second monthly family visit, cancelled last year by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) under the pretext of budget cuts, despite pledges from at least August 2016 to cover the costs of the second monthly visit for Palestinian prisoners.” ...

“Fundamentally, the Palestinian prisoners’ movement is and remains a voice and a power of resistance that continues to confront the occupier on a daily basis. This strike was not only about family visits, medical care and basic human rights; fundamentally, it was an assertion of Palestinian resistance, rejection of the occupier, and power to struggle, not only for specific demands, but for freedom, return and liberation.” ...

5) [Donald Trump, the seller of dreams](#), Nadav Eyal, Ynet News, May 27, 2017

“The US president used his Mideast visit to sell stuff—and he was very successful. He turned Saudi King Salman into his personal hero, and offered the Israelis sympathy. The Palestinians didn’t even get a right to self-determination, but Trump is such a good salesman that even they are satisfied. Like at the end of an evening with too much alcohol, US President Donald Trump took off and left behind a deep feeling of emptiness. All we are left with are the memories, and they too are fading away.” ...

“The power of speech, however, was in the things the American president didn’t say: He didn’t speak about two states for two people, didn’t discuss the Palestinians’ right to self-determination, avoided any mention of a territorial compromise and reiterated the American commitment (from the George W. Bush and Barack Obama eras) that Iran would not obtain a nuclear weapon.

“On the other hand, there was no deep recognition of the Jewish people and State of Israel’s historical connection to Jerusalem either. There was definitely no declaration of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, and mum’s the word when it comes to the chance that Trump would move the US embassy to the capital. It’s perfectly clear that storming the hills and building in all parts of Judea and Samaria is out of the question as far as the Trump administration is concerned.” ...

See also:

[All Trump left Israelis with is a lot of hot air](#)

[Trump Must Solve Netanyahu’s ‘No-Solution’ Option And Bring Israel’s Apartheid To An End](#)

[Opinion Trump’s Israel Trip Was One Big Gaslighting Charade](#)

[Analysis The Miracle Didn’t Happen: Trump Never Said ‘Palestinian State’](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP):

May 26, 2017 - [\[Bulletin\] Peace Deal vs. Peace Process?](#)

This bulletin has fine links concerning President Trump’s visit to Israel and Palestine.

Jun 02, 2017 - [\[Bulletin Special Edition\] 50 Years Too Long: A CMEP Advocacy Event](#)

This bulletin has many links concerning the “6 Day War”.