



## **Dear Friends of our Sisters and Brothers in Palestine**

We thank you for your support during this last year.

The charity is small but it is as effective and as efficient as it could be, or nearly so! Although I have said it before, I say it again. 'Charity is no answer, whereas justice is.' But we need to stand in solidarity and give some ease to a few, whilst people wait for their very great suffering to end. The political elements for a solution are as fragile as ever. The pathways to a just end are knowledge and people power, a great swelling of popular will for good and for justice.

We have decided this year to save some pounds and to produce the newsletter simply on our photocopier. We hope it gives you a good picture of what we are up to, and what the people in the 'West Bank', East Jerusalem and Gaza are up against. Acts of racism, oppression and physical and mental harm are dealt out in every second of every day. But the end is nigh.

On 1 February, it will be the eighth anniversary of that day when the MV Barbara slipped its moorings from Haldon Quay, Torquay in the twilight to start its 16 day voyage to Palestine. It was a spirited thing to do; the central aim was to demonstrate our common humanity with a people who were so abused. There was the symbol of fifty tons of the best food in the hold. The voyage was a cry for the Palestinian people and a shout against the genocide of the bombardment and invasion of Iraq that was just 6 weeks away. Nothing was changed, but the movement for justice swells.

Those 1.2 tons of waste carpet wool we took were woven into fine Kelim rugs, bags and cushion covers by Sawaf and his family. The other day a young mother from Zaitoun purchased some of the covers. She said how beautiful they were. Those threads from 2003 will weave their way in love and art for many years to come and join us to those native people at the eastern end of the 'mediterraneus' - the inland sea.

Again, we thank you for your support and for being with us.

For truth, for reason and for justice

David Halpin FRCS Chairman of the Trustees.      January 2011

## Dove and Dolphin Newsletter No 11 January 2011

I write this on Sunday 16 January as the rain and wind beats from the west against the window.

What do you and I take for granted? A roof over head, food on the table, an easy way to education, freedom of movement and safety come to mind. What do our brothers and sisters take for granted in the remnants of Palestine?

In Al Khalil (Hebron) the Qawasmeh family are receiving mourners in the customary tent as I write in safety and comfort here. In the early hours of January 7, as Subhiyya Qawasmeh was saying her dawn prayers, an Israeli death squad broke into her family home in the city of Hebron and began to fire their weapons. When Subhiyya walked into the bedroom after hearing the shots, she found her 65-year-old husband Amr lying dead in a pool of blood in his bed, surrounded by bullet casings. Six members of the Hamas party had been imprisoned by the Palestinian 'Authority' for two years. They had gone on hunger strike recently and then been released as death loomed. One was a Qawasmeh but not Subhiyya's husband Amr. The Shin Bet has explained 'this was a mistaken identity'. So that is alright then.

In Al Quds, Judaisation proceeds apace. The Shepherd's Hotel in the Sheik Jarrah district has been demolished in a trice. It was purchased by Irving Moskowitz (1) in 1985. He made his fortune from building hospitals and running gambling casinos in California and bankrolls Ateret Cohanin (2) from his Florida home. 20 units for Jewish families will be built there. Moskowitz has funded settlements for zealous Zionist settlers in the West Bank who cause injury of all types to native people, their homes and land. The US, UK and the EU have mouthed their standard protestations. In the Silwan district of East Jerusalem the rate of eviction and demolition increases there too. This night a family will be waiting in fear. They will have a bundle of papers from the 'Israeli' courts where it has fought the eviction or demolition order, and they will have lost many thousands of shekels in this vain process. They always lose.

All other methods of ethnic cleansing are being applied to this eastern part which includes the Old City. For instance, if you have qualified as a doctor in Abu Dis, just over the 'wall' from the Mount of Olives, you cannot practice in East Jerusalem without a permit from the Israeli authorities. Aside from the inhumanity of it all, it is also illegal in international law. Every nation, including the UK and the US, reject the annexation of East Jerusalem by 'Israel' which followed the 1967 war.

Palestinians have access to about 12% of the land of Palestine. But every inch of that small portion is occupied. Gaza is about one tenth of that 12% and it is occupied in every way according to international law. For instance, all ingress and egress of people is controlled by Israel, or its surrogate Egypt. Armed force is used to confine the fishermen to a few miles from shore, to kill farmers near the borders and others from the skies. The air space is riven with drones, attack helicopters and the roar and sonic booms of F16s. The tempo of all this is increasing and General Askenazi hints at another 'war' being inevitable.

I have just written a paper derived from reports by the excellent Defence for Children International – Palestine entitled '**The methodical shooting of boys at work in Gaza by snipers of the Israeli Occupation Force**'. A hundred or so men and boys collect concrete rubble each day near the Erez border control post. Since March 2010 twenty-three children (boys

below the age of 18) have been shot in a leg by Israeli snipers. (3) The British Medical Journal turned it down. Meanwhile it has been widely disseminated through the www.

I tell you of this inhumanity because you must know the truth. When you give these people your kind support, you must know the reality. A good deal of the work of the myriad charities in Palestine, and especially in Gaza is 'one step forwards and two back'. We therefore try to ensure that our help is practical, tangible and lasting. The very successful Optics Centre is a good example; getting spectacles of the right prescription, quickly and cheaply is greatly valued.

We continue to support the Al Jazeera Sports Club in its work with disabled athletes, and the Turathona Craft and Cultural Centre. The former is receiving grants to pay the drivers of the special vehicles and we are considering a grant to the latter for the building of a changing room, showers and cafeteria by the swimming pool. We might increase the number of scholars we help but only if Nihad can be sure the sponsors get reports from the young people every 6 months.

We allocated 10,000 dollars for the making of uniforms this summer. 975 were made for girls and boys. The cloth was imported and precious employment was given. The cloth no doubt came in through the tunnels. The western press call it 'smuggling'. One machinist spoke of dusting off his machine for the first time in 5 years! There is extreme poverty in Gaza. Half the breadwinners have no jobs and 80 per cent live below the poverty line of \$1.6 per day per family member. The gift of a uniform is welcome.

**Nihad:- The donkey cart.** "At first he did well, but during the 'war' he was injured and his health was very poor. His donkey was killed during the 'war'. He could not pay the D&D. He asked if we could help by cancelling his debts to us. However, he gets some shekels by using his brother's donkey sometimes. He is a successful man, and can find solutions. **The taxi car** It is a very successful project. He has paid most payments until now. There is no problem with him."

It is very important that I write of the agony of the people in Palestine and the absence of any protection through international law. I see there are 23 essays on my web site that are devoted to Palestine. I have not been to Gaza since the summer of 2008. I hope to go in the latter half of March if verbal permission from the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is still extant.

A highlight was the visit of Nihad Taha who represents us in Gaza. I persisted and got him a visitor's visa from a British Consulate in the Middle East. Yousef Zawahreh PhD is one of our key trustees. He had arranged his accommodation and met him at Heathrow. Nihad spent 5 days with us here. We had two business mornings, the first being a full written audit of all our activities. On the last day we had an informal lunch so some of our local supporters could meet Nihad and Yousef.

We were very pleased that Nihad was allowed to leave the internment camp, albeit for only 10 days.

This poem by A.H.Clough came on a postcard after the last newsletter. Third verse -

*For while the tired waves, vainly breaking  
Seem here no painful inch to gain  
Far back through creeks and inlets making  
Comes silent, flooding in, the main*

There was this message "Never give up, never. Your efforts are ...." They were the words of my father. One of several joys in the hard slog for justice, is the very good people you meet along the stony path. **Please encourage your friends to help us.**

For truth, reason and justice **David**

1. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irving\\_Moskowitz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irving_Moskowitz)
2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ateret\\_Cohanim](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ateret_Cohanim)
3. [http://www.dci-pal.org/english/doc/press/UA\\_4\\_10\\_Children\\_of\\_the\\_Gravel\\_UPDATE\\_29\\_DEC\\_%202010\(b\).pdf](http://www.dci-pal.org/english/doc/press/UA_4_10_Children_of_the_Gravel_UPDATE_29_DEC_%202010(b).pdf)