

Committees (in the occupied territories); and Meir Amor, an Israeli of Moroccan origin who, under the impact of serving in the Israeli army in Lebanon in 1982, joined Yesh Gvul (There is a Limit), and subsequently refused to serve in the occupied territories in 1988. All three of these persons are involved in the field of education.

The second panel's topic was entitled: Convening the International Peace Conference in Accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 43/176: Implications for Israel and the US of the Proclamation of the State of Palestine, the Palestinian Peace Initiative and the Intifada. The panelists were Mahdi Abdul Hadi, founder of the Arab Thought Forum in Jerusalem; Margaret McCormack, political consultant and former congressional aide; and Mattityahu Peled, chairman of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.

Discussions on these topics were supplemented by concrete, action-oriented workshops. The first day's workshops were on the overall theme of mobilizing public awareness in North America, addressing specific concerns such as:

- mobilizing support for Palestinian children as they are the particular victims of the Israeli occupation, both in terms of physical abuse and deprivation of education; this workshop stressed the need to work for permanent reopening of the schools;
- mobilizing support for Palestinian health services as one way of supporting the development of a Palestinian infrastructure leading to a future independent state;
- mobilizing support for victims of punitive violations of the 4th Geneva Convention, i.e., those who have suffered as a result of the Israeli policies of expulsion, house demolition, summary punishment, killing, etc; this workshop also focused on the situation of prisoners, torture and the unjust taxes levied on Palestinians under occupation;
- mobilizing concern for Palestinian workers and their conditions of work; this workshop emphasized the importance of establishing firmer relations between Palestinian and North

American union movements, intervening when Palestinian workers' rights are violated; it issued a condemnation of the Histadrut's discriminatory policies.

The above-mentioned workshops benefited from presentations by Palestinians involved in labor organizing and in the field of health in the occupied territories, namely Hani Mohd of the Progressive Trade Union Labor Front, and Dr. Umayeh Kamash of the Medical Relief Committees.

A special resolution was adopted at the symposium on the Israeli violation of the labor rights of Palestinians under occupation. Special note was taken of the policy recently introduced by Israeli Defense Minister Rabin, banning Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza from entering Israel without obtaining a special identity card which is refused to anyone with a record of political activity against the occupation, for this in effect denies the right to work in Israel to the majority of the West Bank and Gaza population. The resolution also noted the dehumanization involved in the Petah Tikva municipality's building of a fenced compound on the edge of Tel Aviv for confining Palestinian laborers who are seeking work.

The workshops on the second day of the symposium addressed questions related to coordinating action in North America for the purpose of organizing people-to-people campaigns, twinning projects and other means of increasing public awareness of the situation in the occupied territories.

CUT BACK US DOLLARS TO ISRAEL

On the background of these panels and workshops, the symposium ratified a declaration and plan of action which affirmed «the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in conformity with all relevant UN resolutions, including the right to self-determination without external interference, the right to establish an independent state under the leadership of the PLO, and the right of return,» and calling for an immediate end to the occupation. While affirming support to the intifada, the declaration called for an extraordinary session of the UN General Assembly to discuss

«the protection of the Palestinian people in the occupied territory... and dispatch an interim international peacekeeping force to replace the Israeli occupying forces in order to provide protection and ensure respect for the human and political rights of the Palestinian people of the West Bank and Gaza.» The resolution expressed special concern about «the role that racism, both de facto and de jure, plays in the situation and treatment of Palestinians inside and outside the 1967 occupied territory. We are particularly alarmed at the recently uncovered Israeli Ministry of Interior document directing the implementation of the 1986 (Markowitz) government commission report which calls for the eradication of tens of so-called 'unregistered' Palestinian villages within the green line.»

Two political campaigns stand out from among the various forms of action decided upon by the NGOs. The first is entitled Peace in Palestine and Israel in 1989. It involves gathering a quarter of a million signatures to be presented to the US Congress and White House on November 15th, calling on the US to recognize the PLO and the State of Palestine, the convention of an international peace conference and immediate steps to end the occupation.

The second campaign is by its nature more long-term. It is a project aimed at having the US government reduce aid to Israel by an amount equal to the sum expended by Israel to:

- maintain the belligerent occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, including East Jerusalem;
- maintain and expand settlements;
- violate Palestinians' human rights;
- maintain Ansar III;
- develop and stockpile an unmonitored nuclear arsenal; and
- provide military and financial aid to anti-democratic states, specifically South Africa, Chile, Haiti, Guatemala.

The idea of this campaign is first to embark on research and education that makes it clear to the US public how the US funds the occupation and also the link between US foreign aid and the decreased funding to domestic social programs. Subsequently, Congress will be lobbied to reduce aid to Israel in accordance with the above-listed criteria. ●