



ously quoted interview, Schiff confirms that reservists are generally still reporting for service, regardless of their political views: «There are many cases in which commanders sent reservists home after finding that more men than expected have reported for duty.» The soldiers themselves continue to do what is required of them. One soldier said after serving in the territories: «The experiences here have pushed the left-leaning soldiers more to the right. Personally, I haven't changed my basic opinions, but on the smaller, more immediate issues of keeping order, I'm more hard-headed» (*Jerusalem Post International Edition*, February 6, 1988). A survey reported by Israeli radio on August 7, 1989, tells something about the composition of the army of the near future. The Education Ministry commissioned the survey to examine the motivation of future recruits, the first of its kind since the uprising began. It showed that 40% of future recruits «hate most or all Arabs»; 90% would volunteer if not drafted; and most high school students believe there will be another Arab-Israeli conflict in the future.

Security reduced to absurdity

At least verbally, the military seems to now be adopting a more long-term approach to dealing with the intifada. In April, West Bank Commander Mordechai declared: «We will act as if the intifada is going to last for 100 years.» In September, army strategists told the cabinet that plans should be made for the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip at least up until the end of the century.

Whether such plans can succeed is another matter. What the intifada has achieved until now is not so much threatening Israel in the military sense, but reducing to absurdity all previous conceptions of security, deterrence, etc. This threatens the coherence of the military institution which until now has made only tactical adjustments in dealing with the Palestinians under occupation. Although it was proven futile in suppressing the intifada, repression is still the dominant trend in Israeli security thinking about the occupied territories. This is clearly seen in the detention policy. Six new detention centers have been established during the uprising, plus the fact that 13 temporary detention centers, dubbed the chicken coops, are being used to hold people for months at a time. Yet in June, the Israeli press reported plans to open a new center in Khan Yunis due to overcrowding in Ansar II and III. In July, *Haaretz* ran the following headlines: «The IDF plans to double the containment capacity of prisons in the territories...expectations are for 20,000 captives next year according to an estimate that the intifada will continue and even become more dangerous. The annual expense of the 8,600 present captives is 219 million Israeli Shekels.» As the move began to extend administrative detention terms to one year, rather than six months, Rabin announced the intention to increase prison capacity on Israeli army radio, June 10th, saying: «Reality forces us to hold more people because those (in prison) have proved not to be deterrent enough.»

Failure to find new ways of dealing with the problem stems

from Zionism's colonial roots which require covering up all traces of the Palestinian reality in order to justify Israel's existence and practices. In this sense, security has always been a euphemism for suppressing the Palestinian identity, and this concept is so imbedded in the state and its workings as to seem virtually irreversible, despite all rational indications that the present approach is failing. Thus, it is no surprise that a Tel Aviv University poll found that 70% of the Israeli public favors harsher measures against the intifada, even as President Hertzog was saying on Israeli radio, May 9th: «If we damage our democratic system, our very existence is at stake,» referring to the settlers taking the law into their own hands.

Transport Minister Katsav expressed the prevailing concept of security when he said on Israeli radio on May 11th: «The free movement of Palestinians in sovereign Israel has become dangerous.» Ben Dror Yemeni, an Oriental Jewish peace activist, writing in *Yediot Aharonot*, May 15, gave an interesting perspective on the demonstrations that broke out after attacks on Israelis: «Unlike the organizers, the participants in these demonstrations in Ashdod and Ashkelon do not care about Greater Israel, as they do not care about greater Hungary. What they want is to get rid of the constant fear that a son, brother or neighbor will not come home because of a cold-blooded murder. At the bottom line, what they want, even if unconsciously, is to separate ourselves from the intifada, from the assaults, from the murders, the damage which is caused to us and to them» (*Israel and Palestine*, July 1989). One can only note that such sentiments could be channeled into support for either withdrawal or mass expulsion of Palestinians. A report from the Tel Aviv University Strategic Studies Center referred to a poll which showed that Israeli public opinion was becoming more hard-line on short-term issues (increased support to repression vs. the intifada), even while becoming a Palestinian state rose to 25%, compared to 20% at the onset of the intifada). However, despite the failure of a military solution to the intifada, 38% think increased military strength is a better means than negotiations for preventing war with the Arab states, as opposed to 27% who thought so in 1987 (*Guardian*, August 26, 1989).

In fact, the stage had been set for public acceptance of brutality not only by Zionism's long colonial history, but also by immediately preceding events. In «Occupier's Law and the Uprising,» Raja Shehadeh writes: «It was the report issued at the end of October 1987 by the Landau Commission, the Public commission of inquiry set up by the prime minister to look into the activities of Shin Beit (the General Security Services) in the wake of the (Izzat Nafsu case, that went farther than any previously published official document in condoning on security grounds excesses and practices at odds with international law) (*Journal of Palestine Studies* 67, spring 1988). The commission ruled that a «moderate measure of physical pressure is not to be avoided» when other means fail, justifying the open secret of Shin Beit torture