

COMMENTARY

A Palestinian's perspective on the peace process in Israel

By Fadi Ibsies

The movie *Schindler's List* made me feel a lot of sorrow for the Jews and the way they have been treated in the past, but what saddens me the most is that without world opinion and Israel's need for the U.S. support the vicious actions depicted in the movie are bound to repeat themselves.

I am a Palestinian who was born and raised under the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. I always lived my life wondering what it is like to live peacefully with the Israelis. When the expected Palestinian uprising began in December 1987 I, for one, was happy to see a change. I felt this was the only way for us to show the world the amount of humiliation and brutality we faced in the past and the humiliation and brutality we are still facing in the present day under occupation.

The first time I traveled to Jordan I was shocked by the animal treatment that the Palestinians received compared to the treatment a person from any other foreign country would receive. The journey from my home in the city of Ramallah to the city of Amman normally would take a two to two-and-a-half hour

drive.

But my family, because they are Palestinian, had to go to the Israeli military judge and stand in line for hours just to get a chance to talk to the judge. Assuming we got to see the judge before he left we had to give a good reason for a visit to Jordan. A good reason would get his majesty's approval stamp.

Then we had to travel over 20 miles to the border town of Jericho to buy special stamps that cost \$250 for every person traveling across the border into Jordan. We then had to put on our neon orange identification cards which are much like the yellow stars Jewish people were forced to wear in Nazi Germany. This paper preparation must be done a month prior to the visit.

When the day came that we had to cross the border we had to take a taxi to Jericho because no parking was available for Palestinian cars. After arrival in Jericho we were taken by bus to a human warehouse where more severe humiliation would begin. Once at the warehouse a three-hour line in over 100-degree weather awaited us while the Israelis double checked our papers.

If our papers were re-approved we were then moved

to an area where we had to surrender our shoes as well as all plastic and metal objects for X-ray. Plastic objects included baby bottles, baby toys, and almost every water container conceivable. Plastic objects confiscated from the Palestinians were kept by the Israelis never to be seen again.

An individual strip search for each Palestinian comes next. The men and women are then separated and move to a curtain booth where they are stripped down to their underwear. A metal detector is then passed over the person's entire body. We were then told to dress and move to a room where a giant pile of shoes awaited us. Each of us had to search through the pile in order to find our own pair of shoes.

From the time we handed our shoes over to the time we found our shoes nearly three hours had passed.

The Israeli soldiers told us to wait in a room that was overcrowded with people. Two Israeli women in uniform then took our bags to check every single item in them. After a delay of two hours we were handed our bags back and asked to leave on the bus that would take us

across the bridge.

When we reached the bridge the bus stopped before crossing it. We were told to leave the bus and wait outside. When we stepped off the bus we were told by other Palestinians that there was a water hose outside, but the line of people waiting to drink was too long, so my parents asked me to wait until we crossed the river to Jordan.

We got back on the bus with an Israeli soldier, who ten minutes before we crossed the river, started asking random people for papers. As he left the bus he said, "Have a nice day" in Arabic. We waited on the bus for another half-hour while the Israeli side waited for permission to send the bus across the bridge. After a total of ten hours we finally cross the the river to Jordan.

Palestinian people are fed up with the inhumane treatment they are receiving. A trip between two cities as far apart as Portland and Eugene should not take a whole day of suffering and humiliation.

While I may forgive and forget, many people who lost loved ones may not be so forgiving. I am all for the peace process, but I am afraid peace is out of reach, without solid evidence that would lead me to believe that Israel is going to change its attitude toward Palestinians. I believe that peace talks should resume only if Israel agrees to disarm settlers in the West Bank because there a great danger to the Palestinians since they are irrational in their use of guns almost all of the time.

Fadi Ibsies is a Biology student at the University.

COMMENTARY

The *Oregon Daily Emerald* welcomes commentaries from the public concerning topics of interest to the University community.

Commentaries should be between 600 and 800 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

The *Emerald* reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.

OPINION

13th Avenue ain't big enough for all of our umbrellas

Students were sent fleeing for their lives Wednesday in an attempt to avoid the unavoidable — the rain, one of the few consistent things about the state we live in.

Students sought shelter in the form of the EMU or class buildings. They sought shelter with each other. They sought shelter under that Columbia jacket that the mutant weather we've been having made them believe they weren't going to have to use until next winter.

Worse off, they sought shelter under umbrellas.

Black ones. Blue ones. Broken ones. New ones.

Ones that are so big you could keep your whole car dry under them.

Ultimately, they are a far worse hazard on sidewalks than



JAKE BERG

bikes or skateboards, which are not allowed on many of the same paths as walkers.

When the precipitation season begins (actually, it's yearlong), I'm reminded of how many people fail to honor those codes of humanity that used to be such givens. Remember the sayings "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" and "Love thy neighbor"?

I remember them, but the next time I get tagged in the head by one of those 10-foot wingspan

"golf" umbrellas or have to duck below some umbrella that's endangering the status of my jugular vein, I may say something.

If I'm in a good mood because you're the first to hit me, then I may politely say, "Excuse you."

If I'm on my third or fourth trip of the day up the narrow catwalks that 13th Avenue affords us, then I may politely say, "Go back to California."

But if I've had it with everyone's parasitic behavior, then the threats may be issued forth. I may (politely) ask, "Do you know what it feels like to have an umbrella shoved down your throat and then opened?"

Sure, I support your right to guard yourself from the weather, and to tell you the truth, I think it would be pretty damn funny if

I may (politely) ask, 'Do you know what it feels like to have an umbrella shoved down your throat and then opened?'

I saw somebody get knocked down by an umbrella. That would make me happy.

However, the fact is that it rarely rains in Eugene. For instance, most of the stuff that falls from the sky in the Willamette Valley would simply bounce off of the waterproof people of the Oregon Coast.

And I'd hate to ever be that person who ends up face down in a mud puddle because I got decked by the umbrella of someone too cheap to invest in a decent rain jacket. I also have a keen interest in keeping my face protected and in one piece —

some of those umbrellas could put your eye out faster than a BB gun, man.

So be kind to your fellow students and watch where you walk.

But if you decide to insist on doing a Mary Poppins impersonation every day it sprinkles in Eugene, stay away from this wet dog like you would someone with a petition to sign — unless, of course, it's a petition to ban the use of umbrellas on campus.

Jake Berg is the editor of the *Emerald*.

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