

The Other Palestine

◆ Jane and Max Carter lead student summer trip to Palestine

BY OLIVIA L. RIORDAN
World/Back Page Editor

Palestinian youths throw rocks and Israeli soldiers shoot rubber-coated bullets every night on TV sets around the world. But that's not the whole story of the West Bank. There are everyday people, Israeli and Palestinian, who try to live everyday lives.

These everyday people were the ones seen by the Carter family and five Guilford students on the Middle East workcamp from June 23, 1997 to July 14, 1997. The first week was spent working at the Ramallah Friends Schools. The participants did landscaping around the new science building, removed rubble and debris, cleaned the Friends meetinghouse yard and even worked on the Friends Play Center for 5-year-olds in the Amari Refugee camp.

The second week of the trip was focused on learning about the Middle East through the eyes of Palestinians and Israelis in addition to providing physical labor to the Friends in the area. The Americans were joined by two Palestinian high school students. The

group visited Neve Shalom, an intentional community of Israeli Jews and Palestinians. They spoke with people like Adli Dana, an administrator at Bir Zeit University—a school that was closed down for 4 years during the *intifada* in which many of their students were killed.

During the last week of the trip the students travelled to Galilee, Bethlehem, Jacob's Well, Masada, the Dead Sea, Jericho, and Jerusalem.

In Hebron, on a visit to the Palestinian International Youth League and the Christian Peacemaker Teams, the work-campers came out of the marketplace and one block away they saw the Molotov cocktails, rocks, and rubber-coated bullets flying.

Max Carter describes the scene: "On one side were the Palestinians and on the other were the Israeli sol-

"On one side were the Palestinians and on the other were the Israeli soldiers and in the middle with their boom mikes and cameras, was the international press corps...it's a spectator sport."—Max Carter



Max Carter

The Middle East workcampers overlooking Jerusalem.

diers and in the middle with their boom mikes and cameras, was the international press corps ... it's a spectator sport."

They were then stopped by an Israeli patrol who said to the Christian Peacemaker Teams "I admire your efforts, but this is not the time for peacemaking." Max Carter described this incident and much of their time in the Middle East as "surreal."

Sophomore Lisa Lundeen learned from the many speakers and people she met on the trip that "peace is a process, not just an end result. It's relevant to Guilford—do what's right for you with the

faith that you are working to make a difference."

When asked if she was hopeful about the future of peace in the Middle East, Lisa Lundeen was rather pessimistic. Although she met some of the most hopeful and moderate Israelis and Palestinians, she worried about the power of terrorism because it is deemed "newsworthy."

Max Carter felt hopeful about the long-term future of Peace in the Middle East: "When I was there in the early '70s Golda Meir was the prime minister and she was saying 'There are no Palestinians.' Now I've seen worst enemies shake hands."

In the short term, like most of the people he met, Max Carter believes that things will get worse. In the autonomous regions conditions have worsened since the Oslo peace accords.

Fast Facts

North Korea

This fall's harvests are expected to be merely one eighth of the normal yield. In this third year of poor harvests, 37% of North Korean children suffer malnutrition. Aid is coming in from South Korea, China, Japan, and the United States.

Afghanistan

Taliban, a rural Islamic fundamentalist militia, seized

control of two thirds of Afghanistan last fall and banned education for women and girls. For the roughly 1.8 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan the education of females is still difficult. Due to lack of funds, only 4,000 girls (and 35,000 boys) are receiving elementary instruction.

Kenya

Thirty people were killed last week in Kenyan towns near the Indian Ocean. These murders are possibly intended to force out

people from tribes that usually do not support President Daniel arap Moi's ruling Kenyan African National Union Party before upcoming general elections.

Russia

The Mir space station encountered more difficulties on Monday when a computer malfunction interrupted data input from mission control near Moscow. Thus the docking exercise of the unmanned Progress cargo capsule is postponed. This most recent difficulty

occurred after the June 25 docking accident where the Spektr research module was damaged.

Bosnia

On Monday, NATO soldiers intervened in a conflict between rival Bosnian Serb police. Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic's supporters seized a building supposedly used to tap her phone lines. The rival hard-line nationalists then surrounded the building.