

First Report from Palestine 5-31-02

Starhawk is now in Palestine, acting as a Witness for Peace with the International Solidarity Movement. The group she is with is in a refugee camp outside Nablus, where Israeli troops have moved in. This report was relayed via cellphone by fellow witness Linda Sartor, and transcribed by Michelle Crawford, who says, "Yesterday Linda, Starhawk, and 14 other ISM people walked from Jerusalem to Nablus after learning of Israeli invasion there. Linda phoned in this today (May 31), which I'm reporting to you in her own words as closely as possible." Starhawk then got on the line and confirmed the report, and wanted people who check her web site to know what's going on. Here's Linda's report:

"We and an ambulance were met at the refugee camp by machine gun fire from the Israelis. We got in the ambulance for cover. It drove us to another entrance to the camp, where we got out and walked past tanks with our hands up. When we entered the camp, the Palestinian people greeted us with such gratitude, it was beautiful. I was cheered just knowing how much difference we make here. Six of the ISM people are now in a hospital to protect the people there. Others are in nearby homes in the camp to protect the women and children. I and six other ISM people [including Starhawk] are in a home with what I believe are the only remaining men in the camp; the Israelis are arresting all boys and men between 14 and 40 years old. In the house I'm in, 18 people live. Three brothers have already been arrested, some men have escaped. But there are still two males of arrestable age hiding here, and an older gentleman. We hope we can protect them.

"There is no electricity here, so I won't be able to recharge my cellphone batteries. I don't know how much more I'll be able to talk with you."

Other news Linda reported earlier today: "We heard that a young girl in Bethlehem wandered out of her home, not understanding curfew, and the Israeli soldiers grabbed her and took her away and wouldn't even let her parents talk with her first."

From Nablus, Starhawk and others are doing phone interviews with U.S. media (as long as their cellphones hold out!). So far interviews we know of have been on KPFA (94.1 FM in Bay Area, accessible world-wide via webcast & web site archives) and Bay Area news station KSRO. There are likely to be other interviews, check with your local stations and Pacifica network.

For updates and detailed information on the situation, check web site of the International Solidarity Movement at www.freepalestinecampaign.org.

Prayers for the safety of all, and for peace, are most welcome. We also suggest people inform themselves and share that information with others.

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