

Peace Now: Courting Law & Order in the West Bank

For far too long, settlers in the West Bank have ridden roughshod over the law. The list of their illegal behaviors is long and legendary—attacking Israeli soldiers and police, stealing private Palestinian land, destroying Palestinian olive groves, vandalism, arson, and violating Israeli construction laws.

Regrettably, as attorney Talia Sasson pointed out in an official report that she wrote at the request of the Israeli government, official agencies have often aided this outrageous behavior or turned a blind eye to it.

Until now.

The Israeli Peace Now movement has launched a series of legal actions with the Israeli High Court of Justice to try to bring the law to bear against settlers who are used to flouting it.

- A Peace Now petition prompted the Israeli Interior Ministry to stop transferring government funds to the Settlers Council for its campaign against the Gaza disengagement;
- A Peace Now petition to the High Court of Justice forced the state to acknowledge that nine permanent houses built in the illegal outpost of Amona were constructed against the law and needed to be demolished. The state eventually carried out the demolition, despite violent resistance from the settlers;
- A Peace Now petition to the High Court of Justice froze the illegal construction of 3,000 settler housing units near the settlement of Modi'in Illit;
- And a Peace Now petition to the High Court of Justice resulted in a “show cause” order requiring the state to explain why it had not demolished 18 buildings at the illegal outposts of Hayovel and Haresha.

Peace Now's legal actions have led to a greater awareness about the need for Israel to deal with settler lawlessness on the West Bank.

Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert responded to settler rioting and illegal construction by noting, “In Judea and Samaria, disturbances of the peace are being committed and the legally constituted authorities are being challenged. These manifestations are becoming part of the population's way of life to no small degree. Up until now the law enforcement agencies in the various sectors have not acted with the required rigor. These phenomena must be prevented, law and order must be restored, and the law enforcement agencies must be obeyed.”

No matter how difficult the situation may become because of the recent Hamas victory, it can only be made worse by permitting the settlers' lawless behavior. Peace Now is the organization acting to stop their criminal conduct. Americans for Peace Now (APN) applauds the government's new approach to illegal settler activity, and we invite you to join us in supporting Peace Now's legal actions before the courts. Your contributions to APN help underwrite Peace Now's research, legal fees, and court costs associated with these cases.

Announcing the screening of:

***Land of the Settlers: A Journey Log*, directed by Chaim Yavin**

At

**Columbia College Hillel's 3rd
Annual Israeli Film Festival**

“The breath becomes short, the heart is choked with anger. This is the only human response to ‘The Land of the Settlers,’” wrote the Israeli daily, Yediot Aharonot.

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

6:30 pm Appetizers

7:00 pm Screening

Followed by a Panel Discussion

**Film Row Cinema at
Columbia College Chicago
1104 S. Wabash Ave. 8th Floor,
Chicago**

Free and open to the public

To learn more about how you can help promote Shalom Achshav and APN's efforts here in Chicago, across the US, with our elected officials in Washington, and in Israel, see our local web site at

www.chicagopeacenow.org or contact:

Americans for Peace Now

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