



Deep Faith. Courageous Spirit. Action for Justice.

A Reflection on the Current Violence in Gaza

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Gaza and its 1.5 million people living shoulder-to-shoulder and elbow-to-elbow are on the nightly news again. Six days into the most recent Israeli bombings of Gaza, Israeli troops are amassing at the border and threatening land invasion.

As you may know I spent more than nine months in Gaza living and working there as a Meta Peace Team member. I love our Palestinian and Jewish brothers and sisters deeply and my heart is with them as they endure these latest onslaughts.

I am a pacifist, so throughout my time in Gaza I spoke out publically against the launching of Gaza rockets into Israel. At the same time I have always opposed the Israeli land-grab of Palestinian land, the occupation and the merciless, often repeated Israeli bombings and invasions of Gaza.

To me the most meaningful analysis of what is happening in Israel and Gaza is found in the wisdom of Dom Helder Camara's classic work titled, *The Spiral of Violence*, (1971). The "spiral of violence" is Dom Helder's symbol for the central problem of his time.

I believe the spiral of violence speaks to our time too. Here's how it unfolds: first, there is the violence of poverty and oppression that keeps more than two-thirds of the world's people in a sub-human condition; second, there is the violence of revolt when peaceful demands have no effect; third, there is the violence of repression when the powerful try to crush the demands of the poor and oppressed ... Achieving justice is the only way to move to resolution. Necessarily, the starting place is to end the original, structural violence of poverty and oppression.

This brings us to Gaza today. Did you ever wonder how 1.5 million people ended up imprisoned in Gaza, a tiny patch of land 25 miles long and three to seven miles wide? This question is important because before 1948 there were only 15 original families/tribes in Gaza. So how on Earth did 1.5 million people end up there?

Here is a helpful resource. This past week I read an article by Robert Fisk titled, ["The True Gaza Story That Israelis Are Hiding."](#) This article presents an overview of the situation, insights on the right to self-defense and some surprising information about the original residents of one Palestinian village now called Sderot or Sederot, the present-day Israeli town we hear about on the nightly news.

Mr. Fisk's article also sheds light on the spiral of violence happening in the Palestinian/ Israeli conflict today.

For more resources on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, go to the [IHM Peace and Global Solidarity](#) page.