



The fall of the 'Berlin Wall' is remembered by architects

The Berlin Wall lasted 28 years (1961-1989). To the enjoyment of many thousands of German families and of millions of people worldwide it ended 25 years ago. Named by Willy Brandt 'Wall of Shame' its demolition was celebrated last 9th November. ARC•PEACE Newsletter dedicates this issue to people divided by walls of injustice.

ARC•PEACE Newsletter (NL) interviewed Honorary Members for life **Jim Morgan (JM)** and **Sven Thiberg (ST)**, and current Board Member **Osman El Kheir (OEK)** to share their sensations and thoughts about this historical fact. They accepted to do so as a homage to many who suffered and died due to the infamous 'Cold War' and in solidarity with those suffering oppression, eviction, discrimination and inhumane treatment from powerful world leaders, nowadays.



There are other 'walls of shame' around the world; they are the tridimensional expressions of human hatred and selfishness. Our personal and institutional positions include denouncing their existence and authors. It's just a mockery that powerful 'democratic' nations build walls and other shameful barriers, and commit crimes against humanity under elaborated and cynical justifications of national self defense and the protection of their own citizens' rights.

NL: Which was your first reaction when knowing about the construction of the Berlin Wall?

JM: What I recall is being proud that my government, under John Kennedy, had figured out a way, with the Berlin Air Lift, to outsmart the Soviets' intention to block land access to the portion of Berlin to be governed by the U.S. that had been previously agreed upon (probably in 1945). Mind you, in 1961 I had recently graduated from MIT with a Master's Degree in Architecture and was busy preparing myself to be a petit bourgeois; my political analysis at the time was undeveloped so I didn't really understand the Wall's significance.



ST: The construction of the Berlin Wall was a part of the escalating Cold War. One motive of the wall was to prevent the drainage of intellectual and educated young people from East Germany to the West.

Some tragic effects were the STASI¹ and an atmosphere of mistrust and slander.

My first reaction? To keep the contacts I already had and to intensify my professional connections with Eastern Europe.

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Nuclear Power & Nuclear Weapons, do they help to increase common good?
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Netanyahu: the architect builder of a 'wall of shame'

A political analysis on his critical decisions opposed even by his traditional allies. Is it the beginning of profound changes in the Middle East?



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The Social Nature of Architecture: An exclusive interview given by the prestigious Chilean

architect and social activist **Joan Mac Donald Maier** to NL, at ARCADIA III held in Madrid.



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ARC•PEACE has special consultative status at UN ECOSOC. This Newsletter has been edited by Graeme Bristol and Oscar Margenet Nadal. We expect to publish Newsletter No.44 by mid March 2015. All members are invited to send suggestions for articles, photos and projects! If you are interested, or have any suggestions, please contact us: secretariat@arcpeace.org

Visit our website: www.arcpeace.org and participate with us on Facebook and email groups.

(From Page 1: "The fall of the 'Berlin Wall' is.....)

NL: *Can non violent actions defeat hatred, and achieve peace better than armed actions? Why?*

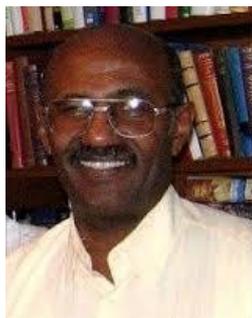
JM: Yes; as a Quaker², my committed belief is that military force leads only to destruction and human distress. If they can't stop a war, then must devote them to meeting needs of its victims who are left homeless and impoverished, afterwards. The problem is that, even today, those in charge of the most powerful nations (guess who I mean) seem unable to choose anything but military solutions when serious political conflicts arise. The promise of the United Nations, as a medium for substituting negotiation for aggression, has been essentially ignored since 1945. I have often joined with others to try to stop a potential war on several occasions; so I believe that almost always, once the fighting is over, what had been proposed by the "peacemakers" but not tried, could have been by far the better path than the one taken by national leaders.

ST: In my presentation to IADPPNW³ Conference in Prague I used the Palme Commission "Common Security"⁴ as an example of how to change from national (individual) mistrust and hatred to common security and confidence.

The commission presented several new and old proposals. Already in my presentation I was skeptical to the outcome. Today we know more about hatred and less about confidence. How much hatred do you need to feed all destructive weapons in the world? Yes! Non violent actions are better than armed actions! But

NL: *Where were you when the Berlin Wall began to fall down? How did you react?*

OEK: I was in Prague, after an adventurous trip from Sudan, via Cairo and Moscow. Though my Aeroflot ticket had been issued by the Union of Soviet Architects and the kind Czechoslovakian Councilor had graciously rendered a special service by getting my visa in just one day and during the weekend, I reached the conference just a few hours before it started. Things went fine; many volunteers were striving to keep things in order and to the timetable in a packed huge hall.



It was in the evening that we were all stunted by the TV completely taken by news of the turmoil all over the East Block. Berlin Wall was being shuttered to pieces, who could believe his eyes?

It wasn't a single wall but in fact a double wall with a deadly corridor of about 150 meters wide cluttered with barbed wire, dogs, floodlights, mines and snipers who unhesitatingly claimed hundreds of lives. But people were rejoicing, dancing on top of its ruins.

We were witnessing history taking a dramatic turn.

The situation in Prague, outside the luxurious hotel, was boiling. Some courageous participants sneaked and joined the demonstrators. The final plenary session was almost frustrated; the organizers were in deep waters. Sven's wisdom was obviously behind the compromise. Thanks to his timely action we finalized the conference in a civilized way.



ST: I was in the conference hall or in my hotel when I first heard about the fall of the wall. My reaction was: How to assure that the conference will survive?

They were the most dramatic days in my

professional life. I learned a lot from my position back stage about happiness, sorrow, fear and hope.....

When I now read again the "Conclusions" and the "Declaration" of the Prague International Assembly I am surprised at how little (or nothing) of the turmoil in the Secretariat during the last hours is reflected in the documents.

I stayed in Prague some days after the conference and followed the process towards the "velvet revolution".

JM: Like Sven and Osman I was in Prague that 9th of November, 1989. The Czechoslovakian Architects CUO) hosted the meeting. The topic was "Militarism, Homelessness and the Environment."

The next morning, I was having breakfast in the hotel dining room when Paolo Soleri, the well-known visionary architect who was part of the U.S. delegation, came up to my table and asked if I knew what had happened in Berlin the previous evening. "No," I said, "please tell me." "The Berlin Wall has been destroyed," he said. I almost choked on my piece of toast. Little did we know that our government-backed host organization, the Union of Architects, would be gone within three or four weeks as well.

NL: *What practical actions can us decide - ARC•PEACE's professionals, academicians and students - to stop the government's transgressions on human rights, and our colleagues' breaches of code of ethics?*

ST: ARC•PEACE has a solid intellectual and ethical basis; a weak ground to continue from. I feel that ARC PEACE has come to an end of a period when "the first generation" dominated. We are now phasing out. A new start is needed with younger activists capable to formulate a new program of action. I leave the initiative to them.

(Conclusion and footnotes on Page 7)

“We were very lucky not to experience an accidental nuclear war”

By Oscar Margenet Nadal, based on an idea by Dick Urban Vestbro

Alice Slater, co-founder of Abolition 2000, is Director of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. She represents a real inspiration to people of good will who think that nuclear power and nuclear weaponry race impoverish the world and put at risk Planet Earth life. This article is a selection of wise answers given by this courageous woman to quite relevant questions¹.

Does nuclear weaponry race represent any potential danger to the world?

Alice Slater: It is estimated that there are 16,300 nuclear bombs on the planet. Essentially, just the possession of a nuclear arsenal is a form of use. When a bank robber walks into a bank and points a gun at people, even if the gun is never shot, it is still being used by the robber to bully and intimidate. That is what the possession of nuclear weapons means.

Is it true that possessing nuclear weapons increases a country's diplomatic credibility, internationally?

A.S.: It is an illusion to think that there are any security benefits to possessing nuclear weapons. USA and Russia compete to show who is stronger, when it actually makes us weaker and more vulnerable to accidents, hazardous waste issues, not to mention possible miscalculations. We were very lucky not to have experienced an accidental nuclear war.

Do you think it is important to continue the development of nuclear weapons or should the countries work on its elimination?

A. S.: With the planet facing catastrophic climate change, droughts, hurricanes, tsunamis, forest fires, from the excessive carbon emissions, we can little afford to spend our national treasures of money and intellectual power on nuclear technology - both for weapons and power. USA is contemplating one trillion dollars expenditures over 30 years on its nuclear arsenal. Russia and China, as well as India and Pakistan, have also been announcing new expenditures on this destructive and useless technology. Perhaps Asia can lead the way towards nuclear disarmament.

The West is now caught up in a new cold war.

Given the current political situation in the world, is there a risk that any of Nuclear-Weapon States will use the weapons against another country?

A. S.: I don't think any country would deliberately use nuclear weapons first, but we can't be lucky forever on accidental launch or misjudgments. The world remembers Russia's Colonel Petrov, in the Soviet bunker who disobeyed orders. We could have had a nuclear holocaust had he not done the right thing.

We also came very close to miscalculating the presence of nuclear weapons during the Cuban missile crisis. We shouldn't continue to push our luck! Some wise country or group of countries should take the lead and start the talks for elimination under monitoring, verification and a tight timeline.

Do you think any nuclear threat from Iran exists and what is your personal view on Iran's nuclear program? Is it peaceful?

A. S.: Iran is no more of a threat than other countries. Once you have the enrichment technology, you have the capacity to make the bomb, just as North Korea did. Every nuclear power plant is a bomb factory and the sooner we phase out nuclear power and rely on the abundant, clean, free energy of the sun, wind, water, geothermal we will all be safer, less poor, and may actually have some peace on earth.

What other countries could potentially possess nuclear weapons or facilities to create such weapons?

A. S.: Any country with a nuclear reactor has the capacity to develop a bomb. Brazil, Argentina, South Africa were on the way to making bombs and changed course. Japan has the capacity and every now and then its generals say that they should use enriched plutonium to make bombs. Brazil is enriching plutonium. USA is planning to sell nuclear technology to Saudi Arabia but they won't give us assurances that they won't enrich uranium.

How has been the Obama Presidency from the point of view of world peace and disarmament?

A. S.: USA is surrounding China and Russia with missiles and armaments (thus) provoking a new arms race.

If there is not much hope of change at the hands of a USA President, what help can be expected?

A. S.: A whole group at the UN called for nuclear disarmament talks based on humanitarian law. Ironically Japan didn't sign on, not wanting to disturb its shelter under the USA nuclear umbrella. **Abolition 2000** network is skipping the NPT² as a political statement as it has been so dishonored and keeps promising countries the keys to the bomb factory with nuclear power while threatening the nuclear have-nots who are thinking they might use that “peaceful” power to build their own bomb in the basement.

I think we will be seeing a lot more people power to stop this last gasp of the patriarchy as we move into a new sustainable paradigm.



Footnotes

1. Research and adaptation from two interviews given by Dr. Slater to *Rossiya Segodnya*, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, 17/10/2014; and to *Pressenza*, International Press Agency, 03/11/2012.

2. *Non Proliferation Treaty: UNODA defines it as the 'international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament'.*

Stop catastrophic climate change now!

Research and adaptation by Oscar Margenet Nadal, over an idea by Dick U. Vestbro

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s Synthesis Report was released same day ARC•PEACE held its UEA II online meeting. This article briefs the reaction on the IPCC from the NGO Friends of the Earth.



On last 2nd of November the IPCC released its Synthesis Report, the final in the "Fifth Assessment Report" process. The IPCC is a senior UN panel made up of thousands of climate scientists and this report marks its fifth 'assessment' since 1990 of the state of climate and knowledge¹.

The "Synthesis Report" builds on three reports released by the IPCC throughout 2013-2014. The UN report builds on three previous reports:

The first, released on September 2013, focused on the physical science basis of climate change (Working Group 1), a second one in March 2014 that outlined the experienced and projected impacts of climate change (Working Group 2).

1. Note of the Editors. The late Prof. F.E.Schumacher predicted current climate changes half a century ago in his best seller 'Small is Beautiful'. Friends of the Earth with the support of the Stockholm Environment Institute has produced a website to help illustrate what a fair share allocation of the existing carbon budget to keep temperatures well below 1.5c could be: www.climatefairshares.org

Marilú Sánchez represents Peru grassroots and ARC•PEACE at GLTN Meeting

The UN Habitat Program 'Global Land Tool Network' (GLTN) held an international meeting on 'Customary Land Tenure Security Tools' in the city of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on November 7th 2014.

The Chief of the GLTN Dr. Clarissa Augustinus opened the meeting welcoming twenty four representatives from UN Habitat GLTN Program, LANDESA (Organization working in rural areas), Huairou Commission, Habitat for Humanity, Universities from Ghana, Kenya and Sub Sahara, and a Mexican research presentation from rural communities endorsed by Florida University. Indonesia from Asia and Peru from Latin America were chosen to participate in this exchange of field experiences. Estrategia NGO and Grassroots Women from Peru were represented by Marilú.

After all the presentations two work groups were formed to draft a questionnaire to be used by field researchers. "I was particularly impressed by the tools implemented by the African grassroots. I shall adapt

A final one on how to reduce climate pollution (known as 'mitigation') was produced on April 2014 (Working Group 3).

Friends of the Earth's International Climate campaigner, Asad Rehman, reacting on the Report said:

"Politicians can't say they weren't warned – climate change poses a catastrophic threat to our food, livelihoods and homes. David Cameron and EU Governments still haven't woken up to the threat we face - their recent decision to do little to cut emissions until 2030 puts the interests of big polluters ahead of people and the planet.

"If we want to avoid catastrophic climate change governments must stop dithering and take bold action to slash our carbon emissions by at least 80 per cent in the next 15 years. That means saying no to any new dirty energy sources, including fracking" affirmed Asad.

"Rich nations who are most responsible for the climate crisis we face need to provide a 'climate Marshall Plan' that provides finance and technology to protect all our futures. It's time to listen to the science, end our reliance on dirty fossil fuels and develop a safer future based on energy efficiency and clean renewable power," concluded the international campaigner from Friends of the Earth.

some of them in our work with Peruvian beneficiaries", added Marilú (right).

From 2015 the UN Habitat Program of GLTN is going to focus the programs of Customary Land Property Access Rights in Latin America and Asia.

"I held a personal talk with Clarissa Augustinus on behalf of ARC•PEACE International. She was quite interested in our vision and mission and invited me to apply for GLTN membership. I'm glad that we have already sent a letter following her suggestion" said Marilú.

"We now look forward to an excellent relationship with GLTN and produce many local projects as possible within an Asian-Latin American joint venture", concluded ARC•PEACE Co-Chair.



The social nature of Architecture at work

The intensive and extensive social work developed by the Chilean architect Joan Mac Donald is well known. She created strong links with poor people in distant corners of the world thanks to her clear vision of Architecture's social mission.

ARC•PEACE Newsletter had the privilege of meeting ARCADIA III's key speaker in Madrid. **Joan Mac Donald** (right) kindly conceded this exclusive interview which we have great pleasure of sharing to our readers' enjoyment.



NL: Could you partake of the fact that marked your architectural vocation?

JMDM: The focus of my professional performance has emerged gradually, due to various circumstances. This process started when I was studying Architecture. I was lucky to have excellent teachers who not only recognized my interest in "modest" architecture but also encouraged me to follow this path. Based on my own experience, I think that the best moment to capture the enthusiasm of architects –so they consider working for those who need us most– is at early stages of their education, and not necessarily at a post graduate level as it happens now.

Another event which influenced my career was the military coup which took place in 1973 in Chile, interrupting our democratic way of life. At that time I was starting my academic career in the area of social housing. All social issues – including housing for the poor- were considered politically dangerous by the authorities who took over Universities, so I had to leave behind my work at the School of Architecture. Looking backwards, this painful event turned out to be positive. It led me to work in the slums where the poor were brutally repressed at that time. How much I learned about courage, resilience and solidarity from the poor of my country, who in these painful circumstances never gave up their dreams and efforts for a better future!

From then on I have been fortunate to find many challenging opportunities to serve the poorest as an architect, at first in my country Chile, then in other parts of Latin America and later also in Africa and Asia. My professional life has been full of opportunities to learn and grow, and I enjoy every moment of it. I am certain now that conventional practice would never have been so exciting.

NL: Which are the main reasons behind your lasting engagement with grassroots communities?

JMDM: In our cities, the poor face many needs, and

must overcome huge obstacles to survive and to improve their habitat. They are chased out of the places where they have set up their makeshift homes, if land is needed for "proper" and lucrative projects. They are not allowed build modest homes because building codes conceived for the affluent sectors do not allow for realistic but gradual progress. They are not welcome in our cities. So they must come together to face this hostile environment. They do that naturally for there has always been solidarity among the poor.

So a "problem" - massive urban poverty – is turned into a powerful tool: by grouping, they become stronger to negotiate with authorities and other stakeholders in more balanced conditions. If we architects engage with communities and share with them our knowledge about urban and housing matters, we are really contributing to build better cities and homes.



Joan Mac Donald pictured in Thailand with members of a community well organized to build their own homes.

NL: Most professional associations have code of ethics; the UIA's organic chart includes one for its national members. Could you quote a couple of examples of unethical professional behaviour not sanctioned by the national and international responsible bodies?

What is to be changed in our professional practices to better position architects in the public opinion?

JMDM: It seems to me that codes of ethics mostly focus on sanctioning quality of buildings and architectural work. But our responsibility towards the poorest is rarely mentioned.

Nobody seems to worry that we are neglecting our responsibility towards homelessness.

(Ends at page 6)

(From page 5: 'The social nature of Architecture at work')

Can there be a more shocking professional behavior than a profession mainly focused on building expensive crystal towers while more than one billion people in our cities desperately need technical assistance to improve their neighborhoods and cities?



Families from Ruanda are posing with our interviewee before starting to work under her on-site cooperation.

NL: The political wrong practices born of many corrupt Estates are undeniable facts. What's your opinion about working in joint programs with the Estate? Could you give us some examples of official-community work for the common good that not necessarily give the credit to the ruling party?

There is so much to do in the field of human settlements that we should not discard any help or resource, but use them wisely to favour the poor. If there are chances to utilize pro-poor public programs, my advice is to do so.

When a family needs a roof over their heads or a latrine that frees them from having to defecate in the open: who cares where the resources came from, or if a politician or government brags about that?

These apprehensions do not come from those in real needs, but from better off sectors who are far from facing the brutal struggle to survive day to day.

NL: University education covers a large number of disciplines, many of them with diffuse borders. Which aspects of current architectural education should – in your experienced opinion – be strengthened; and what others should be updated, or even introduced for the formation of the architect much needed by our current society?

JMDM: As I mentioned before, future architects who will be really useful to work with poor communities have to be formed right from the start. As early as possible they should get in touch with that reality so that from then on they can process all educational inputs properly. They will probably ask their educators to teach more about processes and not only about designing and building, as in the informal world processes are very important and products very scarce. They will have to learn how to interact with communities, how to properly assess their needs and propose ways of meeting them, etc. In short, deep changes may be required in architectural education if we want to train architects prepared to take over professional responsibility for the poorest

NL: As a conclusion, could you share with us three of your cherished highlights of ARCADIA III?

- JMDM:**
- a) Energy and creativity of the young architects' proposals.
 - b) Convergence of many visions towards a common goal of cooperating with the most vulnerable.
 - c) Awareness about the urgent need of change within our profession.

NL: Thank you Joan; we hope that your professional integrity and commitment with Architecture and the poor become contagious.

By Oscar Margenet Nadal

ARC•PEACE "Book on Planning under different Political Systems", is coming out!

When this NL was about to be published, Sven Thiberg announced that the Book on Planning was almost edited. So we are in a position to inform about its prompt publication on our website.

This editorial effort meant time, dedication and money. We want to give a great thanks to The Swedish Association of Architects and the Head of Department of Urban Planning and Environment at KTH for their practical support and donations.

Also to the Editorial Team composed by Dick Urban Vestbro, Sven Thiberg, Osman El Kheir and Lina Suleiman; without their responsible work this initiative had never materialized.

There is still an outstanding sum to be refunded. That's why the Fundraising Committee designed the voucher seen on the right.

It has been up loaded in ARCPEACE website, on Facebook & Email Groups. You can contribute to this editorial achievement by donating a small amount.

Thank you!

AFC•PEACE will publish an e-book entitled:
"Architecture and Planning
under Different Political Systems"
The e-book will include 15 essays already written in English by contributors with diverse backgrounds and countries of origin; different viewpoints and professional perspectives. To make this important project possible and accelerate publishing this book, we need your kind contribution.
The authors have contributed their essays at no cost.
Considered to contribute with the production of the e-book!
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Calling ethnic people to rebuild the city!

All contributors will receive a formal receipt from ARC•PEACE Secretariat

ARC•PEACE family looks forward to Dick's prompt recovery

Our dear friend and prestigious colleague, Dick Urban Vestbro, ARC•PEACE veteran Secretary, had a stroke on August 24, 2014 at Gothenburg and is now undergoing treatment at home.



The ARC•PEACE family is wholeheartedly with Ann Mari and their daughter Jenny at these difficult times; and I pray for his speedy recovery and back to normal life quickly.

Dick's sudden illness is shocking and unbelievable. Over the past few years though he had at times felt the stress of hard work I had always found him as active as ever. His indomitable spirit of being agile and sincere professional had always kept him going. I am sure he will be back to that spirit soon.

As an international organization ARC•PEACE has had an illuminating history. Contributions from stalwarts namely Tician Papachristou, Yuri Platonov, Jim Morgan, Akio Hayashi and Sven Thiberg, have been outstanding. Dick as the Secretary has been the nerve centre for ARC•PEACE activities over long years. His need for a backup was never put in place.

Oscar Margenet Nadal had been part time helping Dick as decided at GA 2012, Copenhagen. But it was only at GA 2014, Vienna that Oscar was elected as Vice-Secretary, a new Ex Com position.

(From Page 2: "The fall of the 'Berlin Wall' is....)

JM: ARC•PEACE has served, for more than twenty seven years, as a beacon of hope and ethical practice to both those in our related professions and those beyond our community, in government and in the wider civil society.

It has been a painful and disappointing experience most of the time. I liken it to trying to row on our little boat upstream against the flood current of a great river ever since we began in 1987.

And yet I have seen, over and over, how people, upon learning of our existence, are thrilled to realize that there are architects and planners organized to stand up for what is right, not just live their lives pursuing "business as usual."

Dick's sudden absence from the Secretariat obviously created a vacuum. Everything of ARC•PEACE seemed halted as in a crisis. However, a group of ExCom and Board members soon decided to begin to manage the crisis. The Vice-Secretary called for a monthly online meeting under the name Urgent Emergency Assembly (UEA). Up to nine ExCom members managed to connect at some of the four UEA meetings already held.

This misfortune has brought us good lessons for the future of ARC•PEACE. We know now that ARC•PEACE responsibilities pave a hard way that must be shared more equitably avoiding over dependence on a few or a single member. A necessity emphasized by Dick many times.

Records for the organization should be kept in a manner which enables easy access to the ExCom and the Board members. I think that all crises come to strengthen committed people; that this one would instill among ARC•PEACE members a stronger sense of voluntarism to share responsibilities following GA Vienna task list, as often reminded.

Let us look ahead for a more coordinated and cooperative contribution from all ARC•PEACE membership including the experienced support from Dick, in the near future.

Bijay Misra

I believe that, if nothing else, the continued publication of the ARC•PEACE newsletter over all of these decades has been a meaningful expression of our purpose. I am fully aware of the struggles taking place within the UN for moral principles in the face of raw political power.

As a U.S. citizen, I have been deeply embarrassed to watch the American Empire at work. Nonetheless, I am proud of the contribution ARC•PEACE has made there. In terms of raising professional ethics, continued effort to be heard within the International Union of Architects, among other such groups, is the most useful thing we can do. Finally, I agree with Sven Thiberg that it is time for a new generation of ARC•PEACE leaders to develop their own program of action for the future.

Interview and Research by Oscar Margenet Nadal

Footnotes

¹. STASI was the official state security service of the German Democratic Republic, colloquially known as East Germany, described as one of the most effective and repressive intelligence and secret police agencies to ever have existed.

². Also known as the Religious Society of Friends, Quakers are known from their social activities in favour of the poor and well known efforts including abolition of any form of slavery, prison reform, and social justice projects to have founded banks and financial institutions including Barclays, Lloyds, and Friends Provident; manufacturing companies including Clarks, Cadbury, Rowntree, and Fry's.

³. IADPPNW. That was the acronym for International Architects Designers and Planners for the Prevention of Nuclear War adopted when the NGO was founded on July 1987 at Brighton (UK) on occasion of the UIA 16th World Congress.

⁴. Palme Commission "Common Security" was formed to examine international security problems in the way the Brandt Commission reported on international development issues. Among the more novel or interesting suggestions are the establishment of a battlefield nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Europe, a chemical-weapon-free zone in Europe, and talks among the conventional weapons-supplier states as well as with recipient states on guidelines for regulating arms transfers.

Netanyahu: the architect & builder of a 'wall of shame'

Translated and adapted from a report by Patricia R. White, special envoy in Jerusalem, 'El País' (Spanish newspaper) 27/11/2014, by Oscar Margenet Nadal



Only the most extreme right wing of the Israeli Government supports now Benjamin Netanyahu (*Left photo*). While USA President Obama was defeated by Republicans in last Congress elections, Israeli Prime Minister continues winding on the right and his detractors increase in number; especially after the bill he wants to enforce that

would define Israel as a "Jewish nation state". The norm promoted by Netanyahu would affect 1.9 million people, almost 25% of the Israeli 8.2 million population of which 20% is Arabic. **That would mean discrimination of any citizen not Jewish, not only Arabs but a number of minorities too.**

Neither the Attorney General nor the moderate members of his coalition support this builder of world's longest 'wall of shame' dividing Palestinians dwellers and Israeli settlers. Internationally, a growing number of voices in the European Union and the United States call 'undemocratic and racist' his proposed rule. The latest heavyweight to join the criticism was the Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, member of the Likud party like Netanyahu Rivlin says that the law goes against the 'Declaration of Independence' of the State of Israel.

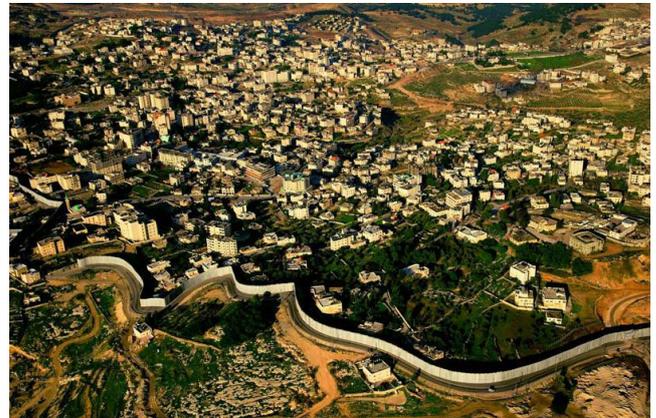
"Parents of the Declaration of Independence, very wisely, insisted that the Arabs in Israel communities and other groups should not feel like Jews felt during the exile", Rivlin said during a recent speech. He stressed that the **"Arab community is not a minority (and that) Arab children represent a quarter of the total in primary school"** while ultra-Orthodox school children of the same age are "one fifth" said the Israeli President.

Yohanan Plesner, president of the Institute of Israel for Democracy and former Member of the Knesset said **"Politicians sometimes considered only temporary achievements and do not take into account the common good."**

Justice Minister Tzipi Livni has already announced he will fight with all his strength so that the law is not approved. And in the event of early elections, Netanyahu insists to establish himself as a defender of the Jews. Plesner entered in contradiction with the Prime Minister: **It is "absurd" that politicians insist in laws that are "harmful" when the "real problems that affect the daily lives of citizens" demand the urgent reform of current socio-economic system, as requested by the "indignant movement", he added.**

The head of the Shin Bet internal security forces, Yoram Cohen, had to correct past statements by Netanyahu accusing the president of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, of inciting terrorist acts. **"Abbas does not incite terrorism"**, said Cohen.

Also, the police chief, Yohanan Danino, did call calm on politicians. **"Let's do everything to prevent the situation from deteriorating"** encouraged the police chief.



Aerial view of the 'wall of shame' being built by Netanyahu to 'defend' land occupied to Palestinians by Israeli Armed Forces.

Yariv Levin, another Likud MK, had presented a plan of eight measures to combat terrorism. Netanyahu's bill includes **'the immediate homes demolition of Palestinians who commit terrorist acts'**; also the withdrawal of citizenship, including their families' if they enter into attacks and their deportation to Gaza.

Don't miss following articles to be published on our Newsletters from mid March 2015!

The birth of new ARC•PEACE chapters: Reports by Leila Ayoub (Tunisia) and Oscar Margenet Nadal (Spain); also about encouraging talks on the real possibility of setting other chapters in European and Latin American countries.

New approach to architectural and planning education: by Graeme Bristol and Bijay Misra.

Increasing ARC•PEACE communications: Henry Cardona and Ben Spencer explain how this is being achieved.

Architectural Students assume their social responsibility: socially committed students from Brazil, Honduras and Spain reveal through their spontaneous practical actions that University educational programs need urgent updating.

Researchers and Academicians cooperate with grassroots groups: highlights from Indonesia, Bolivia and Brazil.

Please remember: you are welcome as a Newsletter contributor. Contact: secretariat@arcpeace.org