

BAY AREA WOMEN IN BLACK

AN APRIL SURPRISE

Jimmy Carter's announcement of his planned meeting this weekend in Syria with Khaled Mashaal, the exiled leader of Hamas, has been received with both surprise and consternation. This action is in keeping with Jimmy Carter's established history of trying to bring an end to conflict.

Few in the United States remember that in 1979 Jimmy Carter facilitated post-1967-war peace agreement between Israel and Egypt, after many failed attempts by others. It was also Jimmy Carter who, in 1980, tried to fashion some kind of rapprochement between Iran and the United States. While this attempt failed, the Nobel Awards Committee acknowledged his actions when they awarded him the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002. This "April Surprise" is Carter's latest effort to fulfill a vision for peace in the Middle East.

This courageous man has again taken the proverbial bull by the horns and decided to meet with Hamas, one of the Palestinian political parties involved in the ongoing dispute with Israel over the occupation of Palestinian lands. While Hamas was democratically elected in a process the U.S supported, it has been labeled a terrorist organization by President Bush and Prime Minister Olmert of Israel, and was refused a place at the table in the peace talks held in Annapolis last November.



According to an April 14 Associated Press article, when Jimmy Carter was in Ramallah (a city in the West Bank occupied territories), he asked a senior Hamas politician, Nasser Shaer, what Carter could do to achieve peace between the Palestinians and Israel. Mr. Shaer told him, "the possibility for peace is high." Carter's initiative in reaching out to all parties needs support to make peace happen, as it could result in an all important ceasefire by Hamas. We hope that Jimmy Carter's efforts can help

create a realistic foundation for peace talks, by bringing together those who are in a position to help make peace happen.

May Carter's attempt be justified, and may he help to find a meaningful way to a just peace for the people of Israel and Palestine!

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ASK YOUR REPRESENTATIVE TO:

Support and stand behind the efforts of Jimmy Carter, and those who seek lasting peace in the Middle East.

Join International, Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations in urging Israel to:

- Remove the settlements and stop their expansion
- Stop destroying Palestinian homes and livelihood
- Tear down the wall
- Allow Palestinians equal right of access throughout Israel Palestine.

Representative Barbara Lee

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Bay Area Women in Black are Jews and allies who stand against militaristic and fundamentalist leadership in all countries, including our own. We wear black as a sign of our mourning for all the Iraqi, Israeli and Palestinian lives that have been lost as a result of war, militarization and violence. As part of the international movement of Women in Black, we seek to transform women's mourning for the dead into a powerful refusal of the inevitability of war.



Join us at the Grand Lake Theater every Saturday at noon to register your protest and your presences as we continue to urge the end of the US military and financial support for Israel's disastrous occupation.

The group with flags and signs supporting Israel is the San Francisco Voice for Israel, a local group who oppose Bay Area Women in Black 's criticism of the policies of the Israeli government and military. BAWIB is not anti-Israel. BAWIB believes Israel's occupation is wrong and deprives Palestinians of basic human rights. BAWIB calls for the end of the occupation and its violent effects on Israelis and Palestinians. The flyers distributed by Voice for Israel do not accurately reflect BAWIB.