

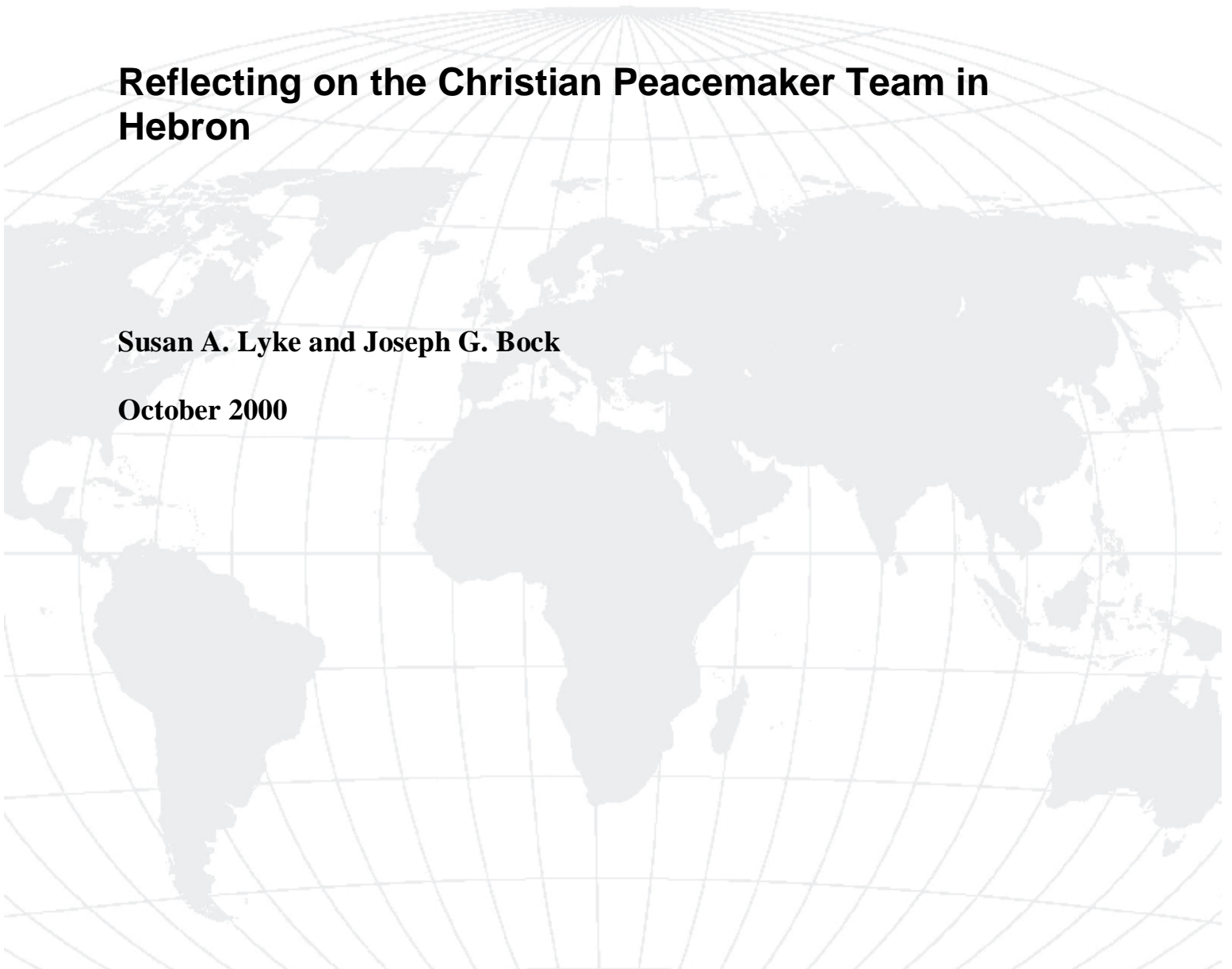
REFLECTING ON PEACE PRACTICE PROJECT

Case Study

Reflecting on the Christian Peacemaker Team in Hebron

Susan A. Lyke and Joseph G. Bock

October 2000



This document was developed as part of a collaborative learning project directed by CDA. It is part of a collection of documents that should be considered initial and partial findings of the project. These documents are written to allow for the identification of cross-cutting issues and themes across a range of situations. Each case represents the views and perspectives of a variety of people at the time when it was written.

These documents do not represent a final product of the project. While these documents may be cited, they remain working documents of a collaborative learning effort. Broad generalizations about the project's findings cannot be made from a single case.

CDA would like to acknowledge the generosity of the individuals and agencies involved in donating their time, experience and insights for these reports, and for their willingness to share their experiences.

Not all the documents written for any project have been made public. When people in the area where a report has been done have asked us to protect their anonymity and security, in deference to them and communities involved, we keep those documents private.

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*“One thing about nonviolence is making the other side work.
That’s time spent away from violence to others.”*

Dianne Roe

Christian Peacemaking Team member, Hebron, West Bank

The logo of the Christian Peacemaking Teams (CPT) is a pair of sandal-clad feet with the words, “Getting in the Way” superimposed on them. The mission of the “obstruction” is to challenge systems of injustice and to prevent violence throughout the world wherever CPT is invited.

This case study will examine the Christian Peacemaking Team in Hebron, West Bank. The case study will examine the repertoire of violence-detering efforts employed by CPT-Hebron in response to manifestations of injustice and conflict.

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF CHRISTIAN PEACEMAKING TEAMS

A. Mission and Initial Inspiration Leading to Creation of CPT

Christian Peacemaking Teams (CPT) is a multifaceted program sponsored by the “historic peace churches” — the Church of the Brethren congregations, General Mennonite Conference, and Friends United Meeting. It is organized for the protection of human rights and de-escalation of civil tension and unrest through nonviolent direct action, public witness and negotiation. CPT describes itself as a response to injustice and conflict through “biblically-based, spiritually-centered peacemaking.” The program is an outgrowth of a challenge issued to an international gathering of Mennonite congregations in 1984 by theologian Ron Sider.

In his speech, Sider challenged congregations from the Anabaptist tradition to take a lead in creating a new nonviolent approach to conflict resolution. He asked that they show their commitment to discipleship and “shalom” by preparing themselves for and developing non-violent peacekeeping forces. His call led to study groups in North American Anabaptist congregations, culminating in the creation of CPT in 1986.

B. CPT Structure and Objectives

The Christian Peacemaking Teams is a faith-based response to areas of violent conflict, tension and militarization. Since 1993, CPT has been recruiting and training individuals to serve in the Christian Peacemaking Corps (CPC). Full-time Corps members commit to a three-year term of service. Other CPC members join as “reservists,” who commit to serve from two to eight weeks each year for three years. At present, there are 18 full-time corps members worldwide and 80 reservists, comprised of members of the three sponsoring denominations, as well as from Protestant and Catholic churches.

In addition to these traditional on-the-ground assignments, CPT organizes delegations of people to visit regions of conflict and to make a public witness to issues or areas of

injustice. Over the years, CPT has sent full-time or temporary teams of peacemakers to Haiti; Chiapas, Mexico; Pierre, South Dakota; Blenheim, Ontario; Hebron, West Bank; and additional areas. Other thrusts of CPT include conducting regional training workshops for 10-15 peacemakers from specific areas in North America and hosting an annual “Peacemaker Congress” to gather insights, stories and challenges from peacemakers within and outside of CPT. “Public witness” actions are included with all training and meeting events in which non-violent demonstrations are employed as a means of advocating for greater justice.

The objectives of the Christian Peacemaking Corps are:

- To advance the cause of lasting peace by giving skilled support to peacemakers working locally in situations of conflict;
- To inspire people and governments to discard violence in favor of nonviolent action as a means of settling differences;
- To provide home communities with first-hand information and resources for responding to worldwide situations of conflict, and to urge their active involvement; and
- To interpret a nonviolent perspective to the media.

C. CPT-Chicago to Field Relationship

The Christian Peacemaking Teams work intentionally with a decentralized power model. The Chicago headquarters has three staff members. An 11-person Steering Committee is comprised of people from all over North America. Several special initiatives and tasks, such as the Campaign for Secure Dwellings (designed to prevent the destruction of Palestinian homes in the West Bank) and the CPT e-mail network, are facilitated and coordinated by CPT staff and reservists outside of Chicago.

The CPT-Chicago headquarters is viewed by field staff members as a facilitator, with the peacemaker teams working with a great deal of autonomy. Staff members in Chicago recruit, select and train peacemakers, fundraise, assign peacemakers to various programs, and facilitate communication within peacemaker teams and throughout the wider network. The staff members of CPT-Chicago also serve as sounding boards for field peacemakers.

Interviewees shared a story to clarify the relationship between Chicago staff and field peacemakers: In 1999, CPT congregation members expressed concern about the presence of a U.S. fast food restaurant in an illegal settlement outside of Jerusalem. It was felt that consumer advocacy and, perhaps, a boycott could serve as an effective means of publicizing the fact that the Israeli settlement hosting the restaurant existed in the Palestinian territories counter to international resolutions. The attention on this in the U.S. press and in Jerusalem led to queries and a push for action from CPT supporters in North America. CPT-Chicago brought the situation to the attention of CPT-Hebron, asking whether this was something the Hebron peacemakers should take on. The Hebron peacemakers talked in turn with Hebronites, as well as with Israeli and Palestinian partners outside of Hebron. They concluded that the issue was not of priority to the people in

Hebron. The CPT-Hebron staff members relayed this to CPT-Chicago staff members, who in turn replied to CPT supporters who had pressed for action, explaining that the issue would not be pursued.

D. Training

Christian Peacemaking Corps members and reservists typically receive three weeks of training before heading to their assignments. At times, however, peacemakers have been assigned to country programs or actions before having formal training.

This training is intensive, following an 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. schedule. Included within the sessions are such topics as: living in community; working within a team; documenting human rights violations and racism; communication and listening skills; leading worship services; skills related to public witness and nonviolent direct action (including the use of role plays); negotiation strategies; cross-cultural work; and Biblical and spiritual foundations of nonviolence. Most of the peacemaker training sessions include one hour of silent meditation daily and an opportunity for trainees to tell their life stories.

CPT-Hebron peacemakers said that while the formal training is valuable, their on-the-job training has been more critical for the “nuts and bolts” of peacemaking. Using “action and reflection” was highlighted repeatedly as a helpful method of learning. It is expected that peacemakers follow every direct action with a time of debriefing and meditation. During this period, peacemakers review what took place, and discuss other options and consequences for the purpose of evaluating themselves and supporting one another.

In terms of the formal training prior to field work, role play was cited as crucial. It was felt that it helped peacemakers anticipate possible emotions, reactions, and consequences of a potentially violent situation.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT SETTING

This case study focuses on the work of the CPT project in Hebron, a city in the West Bank. As such, it is helpful to understand some of the history and contemporary context of Hebron.

A. History of Hebron, an Overview

Hebron has been called the oldest continuously occupied, unwalled city in the world. Evidence of occupation dates to at least the 2nd millennium BCE when the area was inhabited by Canaanites. Hebron’s Jewish history seems to have begun in about 2000 BCE when Abraham, his wife Sarah, and other family members lived and were buried there. During the first seven years of the rule of King David, Hebron served as the capital of the kingdom of the Israelites. Herod the Great built a wall around the tombs of Abraham and Sarah in 100 BCE. Christians built a church on top of the Herodian structure during Byzantine times. The church was converted to a mosque during the Arab conquest of 638. The mosque was later reconverted into a church by European Crusaders

and then again converted into a mosque by Mamluke Turks in 1260, after they expelled the Crusaders from the land.

In the 1500's, Jews fleeing from the Inquisitions in Europe founded a Jewish Quarter in Hebron. Moslems likewise fleeing Spain during the Inquisition also settled in Hebron and other parts of what is now Israel and the West Bank.

In the early 20th century, the Jewish population swelled as hundreds of Jews from Poland came to Hebron to study. Oral tradition and other historic records indicate that the Arab and Jewish residents of Hebron lived peaceably during this period.

The peaceable coexistence was shattered during the British Mandate period, in 1929, when a mob of Arab extremists massacred close to 70 Jews in the Jewish Quarter and wounded 60 others. The motivations behind the massacre remain unknown. Many Hebronites insist that the massacre resulted from trouble-making Arabs who lived outside of Hebron. Other people speculate that the massacre fit in with the "divide and conquer" policy of the British toward Arabs and Jews in order to establish control in the land.

In 1931, 31 Jewish families returned to Hebron. They were evacuated against their own desires by the British in 1936.

B. More Recent Tension

The more recent period of tension began in the 1960s. Hebron came under Israeli military occupation following the 1967 "Six Day War." In 1968, an American rabbi and his armed followers posing as Swiss tourists took over the one hotel in Hebron. They refused to leave. In response, the Israeli Army gave this group an abandoned military camp on the outskirts of Hebron rather than sanction their presence in the hotel. This site became the settlement Kiryat Arba.

In 1979, the rabbi's wife and several other women and their children moved into a building (Beit Hadassah) which had been built by the Jewish community in 1893 as a medical clinic. The Israeli military was called in immediately to protect them. More Israelis occupied additional buildings near the central market place, also protected heavily by Israeli military personnel.

In 1980, a group of guerrillas linked to Fatah (the main political faction of the Palestinian Liberation Organization) killed six yeshiva students with machine-gun fire and grenades in front of Beit Hadassah. The military authority responded by allowing two additional settlements to be established in the city center and by installing checkpoints within the city, bringing the central market district under its control.

Relations between the Arab residents and Israeli settlers continued to deteriorate. In February 1994, a Jewish Israeli settler from Kiryat Arba opened fire on Moslem worshippers inside the Il-Ibrahimi Mosque (at Abraham and Sarah's tomb) on the last

Friday of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting. Twenty-nine people died in the mosque, and 125 men and boys were wounded. The assassin was beaten to death by other worshippers. Israeli soldiers shot the men who killed the assassin. In addition, the Israeli military shot other Palestinians during the demonstrations that followed the massacre in response to a two-month curfew that was imposed on Palestinian residents. (The settlers were not placed under curfew during this time.) A monument to the assassin, identified as “the Martyr,” stood near the entrance to the Kiryat Araba settlement until the Israeli government issued an order to have it removed in 1999.

C. Current Status of Hebron, International Presence and Division of Authority

Presently, the city of Hebron is arguably the seat of political and religious extremism on both the Palestinian and Israeli sides, with members of some of the most militant groups residing in the larger surrounding Hebron district. In January 1997 much of the Hebron district was turned over to Palestinian control in implementation of the Oslo Accords, but Israelis kept control of the area held by Jewish settlers and that containing the tomb of Abraham and Sarah.

1. Overview of Present Conflict

Hebron has been a city of tension and violence between the 98 percent Arab/Palestinian population, the approximately 400 Orthodox Jewish Israelis living in newly established settlements within Hebron, and approximately 5,000 more living in the Kiryat Arba settlement just outside of Hebron. In addition to the Jewish residents, 1,200-plus Israeli soldiers of the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) are stationed within Hebron on a rotating basis. The vast majority of the Arab population is Moslem.

CPT has had a continuous presence in Hebron beginning in June 1995. Since that time, CPT staff members have been involved in strengthening local capacities for peace and conflict reduction in a variety of forms.

2. Participants in the Conflict

There are three major participants in the conflict at present. They include the Palestinian residents of Hebron, Orthodox Israeli settlers of Hebron, and an assortment of military and police officials. Ancillary participants include the Israeli government, U.S. government, the Palestinian Authority, TIPH (Temporary International Peacekeeping Force of Hebron), and militant groups operating with external support. We have included mention of the Israeli, U.S., and Palestinian governments because their framing of problems and potential/actual “solutions” can help fan the flames of tensions and exacerbate the conflict, or their statements and actions can have a positive effect for peace.

The Palestinian residents, numbering about 130,000, live within Hebron itself and within the wider Hebron District. While the city and district have been occupied by the State of Israel since 1967, redeployment agreements stemming from the 1993 Oslo Accords led to

a partial return of control for most of Hebron in 1995. At present, the Hebron district and parts of Hebron City itself are a jigsaw puzzle of control. Under the January 1997 Interim agreement H-1, or Area B, represents about 20 percent of Hebron wherein Israeli forces are still deployed for security due to the presence of settlers and holy sites while Palestinians are in control of civil administration. H-2, or Area A, includes about 80 percent of the population and is under control of the Palestinian police and civil administration.

The Palestinian population sees the conflict as a symptom of the wider occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel. The encroachment of the settlers is viewed as part of this process of occupation of territory. Many of the Palestinians will acknowledge their belief that there is room for Israelis and Palestinians to live together if the coexistence of either does not come at the expense of the other.

The 250 or so Israeli settler families within Hebron believe that the conflict is a manifestation of an ancient incompatibility of Jews and Arabs. The vast majority of the Hebron area settlers believe that God has called them to reclaim this land once and forever promised to Israel and which hosted significant events in Jewish history. There is no room for sharing, in the opinion of these settlers. The settlers coming to the settlements within and surrounding Hebron tend to be regarded differently from most other settler movements and associations, perhaps due to the history of massacres on both sides, the perceived extremism of the Hebron settlers, and the symbolic potency of the territory to all those embracing Abraham-ushered monotheism.

The approximately 1,200 IDF soldiers stationed in Hebron on a rotating four-month basis have a primary mandate to protect the settlers. Within Hebron itself and in the wider Hebron district, there is an approximate ratio of three IDF soldiers for every one settler. The vast majority of soldiers assigned to Hebron are male and fall between the ages of 18 and 21. Oftentimes they attempt to prevent violence from occurring in general and sometimes the soldiers help protect the Palestinians from settler-initiated violence. Some of the soldiers who have respect for the Palestinians have gone on record as regretting their presence within Hebron. Others have verbally abused and mocked the local non-settler population, standing by as settler youth kick, taunt, or otherwise hurt even adult Palestinians.

The international monitoring group called the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) was established in Hebron in May 1994. This group of observers, primarily from Scandinavian countries, was invited in response to Yasser Arafat's demand for international observers during this period of violence. The Israelis refused to allow UN observers into Hebron, so TIPH was created as a compromise. The mission of TIPH is to "monitor and report the effort to maintain normal life in the city of Hebron and thus create a feeling of security among the Palestinians." The approximately 120 TIPH personnel in Hebron at any given time patrol the streets and are often called on by Hebron residents to witness harassment. While TIPH can neither intervene in conflict nor disseminate information to the international community, it can and does report regularly to a joint

Israeli-Palestinian security committee and send reports to six nations cooperating in TIPH. The TIPH presence in Hebron had been suspended after its first three-month presence at the time of CPT's original presence in 1995 due to lack of agreement by Israel and the PLO. A second TIPH presence began following signing of an Interim agreement in January 1997. TIPH has been in Hebron continuously since then.

It is beyond our capacity to delineate the role of externally-supported militant groups in fanning the flames of violence in Hebron. On the Jewish side, such groups as Kach seem to be involved and might have an influence. The death threats made by Kach members to CPT-Hebron and CPT-Chicago staff members are indicative of Kach involvement in Hebron ("Hebron: Christian Peacemaker Team Threatened by Kach Supporters," Press Release, January 20, 1998). Whereas on the Palestinian side, such groups as Hamas might be involved, exercising influence among Palestinian adherents.

3. Whom has the Conflict Affected?

The conflict has had numerous consequences for the Palestinians of the Hebron district. These have been conducted by settlers, IDF soldiers, and Palestinian police to a lesser degree. Some of the consequences also result from accords agreed to by both Israeli and Palestinian officials. The consequences include: the closure of Hebron University; the closure of the main roadway linking the main market with the road arteries from outside of Hebron; destruction of houses and property; imposed curfews and district closures; loss of jobs and income; loss of a sense of security and self esteem; dissection of the city and surrounding areas; pressure to "keep quiet" and "keep a low profile;" beatings and arrests; a shut down of an artery of the main market; general harassment including verbal and physical abuse; closure of the main mosque; denial of the right to demonstrate and protest nonviolently; and murder. As the conflict moves outward toward the settlements within the Hebron District but outside the city itself, the impact also includes: destruction and/or takeover of cultivated fields, land and property; denial of rights to build on or improve property and land (some of which is titled in a legal sense as under Ottoman rule, whereas in other places ancestral entitlement is asserted); and contamination of water systems.

Consequences of the conflict likewise affect the Israeli settlers. These include rock throwing, murder, bombings, and other violence. Other consequences must likewise be highlighted. These are supported by visual, subjective evidence only. These manifestations include: a deepening sense of "us-against-them;" living a persecuted, fenced-in, soldier-protected existence; and lack of felt security. It should be noted that the settlers have lived as though under siege from the onset of their presence in Hebron.

The large deployment of IDF soldiers to a scene of conflict, though not military threat, affects their comportment as well. The soldiers, trained for military action, find themselves more in a policing role for which they are ill prepared. It is evident from documented contacts with soldiers that Hebron is not a welcomed assignment for most of them.

III. CPT-HEBRON

The Christian Peacemaking Team in Hebron has had a continuous presence since sending its first full-time team there in June 1995. The assignment began when Hebron was under complete Israeli military control but pending redeployment of territory back to Palestinian control. The redeployment, which was to have been implemented by January 1996, did not occur until January 1997.

A. Team Composition and Organization

At any given time, the Hebron team is composed of two to six full-time peacemakers plus one or more short-term reservists. At the time of the writing of this case study, the CPT-Hebron team included a German volunteer serving as an intern for six months. The CPT-Hebron team also includes periodic CPT delegations. Members of the delegations come primarily from CPT-sponsoring congregations and others who answer the invitations to join these delegations as publicized in CPT's Signs of the Times newsletter and more frequent CPTNet website and e-mail correspondence. The delegations are invited for a discrete period of time to participate in a centralized effort of nonviolent direct action. Delegation actions have included selling tomatoes in a market that was to have been reopened for Palestinian vendors, and conducting two demonstrations against land confiscation.

Because CPT lacks a formal agreement with the government of Israel, peacemakers may stay in the country for up to three months by using a tourist visa. If their assignment is longer than this, they must physically leave the country and reenter in order to acquire another three-month visa. At least three CPT staff members have been denied reentry into Israel when seeking to return.

CPC peacemakers, reservists and delegation members working in Hebron wear red armbands with the CPT logo emblazoned in white. Early in the tenure of CPT-Hebron, team members wore similarly marked red baseball caps, but their use was discontinued due to the prevalence of such hats being worn by tourists. These accessories are aimed at distinguishing CPT members from the myriad of people in uniforms. In times of conflict and tension, it is felt that this can be important to signal to participants that CPT's conduct and actions are not intended to be violent.

The peacemakers are organized into a "team," with clearly defined roles. The team attempts to work as collectively as possible, making most decisions by consensus. Routine jobs, such as leading worship, facilitating meetings, and maintaining the daily log are rotated regularly. The team meets together daily for worship and organizational tasks such as scheduling, sending and responding to e-mails, and household matters.

While the majority of the Hebron Team's activities include its street presence, giving tours to visiting church groups, and responding to calls of concern from people in Hebron, it does undertake more deliberate actions. Each substantial action is to be preceded by an invitation or other request by the people and institutions to be involved. An example of this can be seen in the nonviolent direct action to literally take down the soldier-placed

obstacles barring entry to Hebron University. CPC members suggested the action to a University official. The official in turn presented it to the student and faculty group coordinating the nonviolent resistance movement. The university approved the action but requested two things: that CPT invite participation of Israeli peace activists and that CPT not publicize the University sanction and invitation. CPT members expressed concern about keeping the invitation quiet as its constituents and Steering Committee might be concerned that CPT was going ahead without local approval. However, recognizing the fear of retribution, CPT-Hebron agreed to these specific requests.

B. History of CPT-Hebron

It is helpful to chronicle some of the highlights of how CPT's work has unfolded in Hebron. What follows is not a comprehensive listing of activities but, rather, is intended to cover major events and actions. (Much of it is derived from various interviews and from Cole Hull and Kathleen Kern, "Background Information on Hebron," pp. 7-13.)

In Spring of 1995, CPT sent a 12-person delegation for 10-days to document Israeli settlement expansion that had occurred since the 1993 Oslo Accord and to explore possible involvement of CPT somewhere in the West Bank or Gaza during the upcoming re-deployment of Israeli troops. This visit was at the invitation of a Palestinian Christian human rights advocate, Zhougby Zhougby, to the CPT-Chicago office.

The delegation met with Israeli and Palestinian peace and human rights workers in the West Bank and Israel, explaining their work in other areas of the world and asking whether there might be a use for them somewhere in the region. As this team traveled, Hebron was brought to their attention recurrently as the place with the greatest tension and need for a peacemaking presence. (This was almost exactly one year following the bloodshed within Il-Ibrahimi Mosque.) At the time, the violence in the Hebron area was intense and seemed a microcosm of the larger conflict in Israel and the West Bank and Gaza. There were no internationals or Israeli peace workers in Hebron at that time (E-mail interview with Wendy Lehman, March-May 2000). A staff person of the Hebron Municipality, Ahlam Muhtasib, said she thought that activities associated with CPT's violence-detering presence in Haiti would be helpful in Hebron. She commented that "that is exactly what we need here in Hebron — people who will live in the city and write what they see happening" (Kathleen Kern and Wendy Lehman, "Teaching Nonviolence in Hebron," pp. 37-38). She spoke with the mayor of Hebron, Mustafa Natsche, and an invitation was issued to CPT from the Mayor's office in April 1995. The original four-member CPT delegation was sent to Hebron in June 1995.

Members of the first four-person team envisioned their presence in Hebron would last six months, to cover the period preceding the re-deployment of Israel from Hebron and one month following redeployment. As one member stated, "We would have been aghast had we known that five years later things would still be in limbo" (E-mail from Kathleen Kern, May 6, 2000).

The early work of the original four-member CPT team included: explaining their presence to the local Palestinian population; identifying local peace groups and initiatives with which to work; discerning the immediate focus of CPT-Hebron based upon formal and informal discussions with Hebron residents and leaders; helping to rebuild homes demolished by the Israeli military because they harbored fugitives or were nearby houses harboring fugitives; establishing a “street presence,” especially along the seams of settlements in the heart of Hebron wherein most of the conflict simmered; and living with at-risk families (i.e. those facing harassment or threats from either soldiers or settlers). This final action was discontinued as the Middle Eastern cultural value of hospitality meant that CPT members became, in effect, burdens on the hosting families who continually offered them red-carpet treatment. CPT still stays with some families — particularly those facing house demolitions — but maintains adjacent male and female CPT member apartments inside Hebron itself.

In July 1995, CPT staff members Cliff Kindy and Jeff Heie were detained for nine hours for accompanying a water tank truck sent by the Hebron City government to a cistern outside the municipality. Deliveries had been stopped after nearby settlers repeatedly broke the windshield of the truck. When the two CPT staff members were detained, CPT rallied international attention, resulting in the Israeli public demanding that the Israeli government rectify the water transport problem.

In September 1995, after physical aggression by settlers at the Palestinian Qurtuba girls’ school upon the hanging of the Palestinian flag, CPT began a daily presence at the school. Nevertheless, the headmistress soon requested that CPT withdraw for fear that their presence might further exacerbate the situation by raising its profile. CPT withdrew, but continued to accompany school attendees as they walked home in an effort to prevent violence near settlements.

In February 1996, the team set up what they referred to as a “symbolic ‘Oslo II’ tomato stand” in the vegetable market which had been closed since the Goldstein massacre. According to the Oslo accords, the market was to have been reopened no later than January. All tomatoes were sold with no arrests. During the same month, CPT staff members Dianne Roe and Robert Naiman were arrested for following a young man who had been picked up by the police following the destruction of houses in between settlements Kiryat Arba and Givat Ha Harsina. The police threatened to deport the two CPT staff members, but an international fax campaign resulted in the police not appearing at the deportation hearing which followed three days in jail and four under house arrest.

In March 1996, CPT staff members began riding the Jerusalem #18 bus from 6:00 to 9:00 a.m. after it had been blown up by suicide bombers two weeks in a row. CPT notified Palestinian, Israeli, and international contacts and journalists that it would have team members riding the bus. No additional bombings occurred at that time. In addition, CPT staff members, along with Israeli and international activists, took food to the Al-Fawar refugee camp that had been under complete closure since the bombings due to the fact that the bombers were believed to have resided there.

Hebron University was also closed due to the suicide bombings. In April, CPT began teaching about non-violence with a group of about 25 students during a “teach in” near the front gate. Israeli soldiers eventually broke up the sessions.

Also in April 1996, CPT worked closely with the Israeli Peace Now organization in using international faxes and e-mail to prevail upon the Israeli government, with the help of Prime Minister Shimon Peres, to not demolish 60 Palestinian houses near the settlements of Kiryat Arba and Givat Ha Harsina.

In May 1996, a Palestinian farmer invited CPT to help him dig up olive trees that settlers had planted in his wheat fields. CPT staff members re-planted the olive trees on settlement property, where they were attacked by settlers and detained by the IDF. The four CPT staff members involved were imprisoned and released after three days (with the exception of one who was in jail for four days) under the condition that they not return to Hebron. By October, during the planting season, with CPT, Rabbis for Human Rights, and Peace Now arguing for the farmer’s legal rights, the farmer plowed the field around the olive trees, provoking confrontations with settlers and invoking inconsistent protection by the IDF and police.

On December 9, 1996, CPT staff members accompanied roughly 200 Hebron University students who entered the campus in violation of its closure. During the two weeks that followed, students held “sit ins” near the front gate in the mornings. Finally, on December 28 the University was reopened, perhaps due in part to CPT’s urgent action alerts that fostered international pressure.

In March 1997, CPT staff members launched a 700-hour fast, symbolic of the 700 Palestinian homes that were slated to be demolished by the Israeli government. (Usually, these homes lacked a building permit and, hence, were viewed as illegal by the Israeli government. Palestinians, on the other hand, generally express frustration about applying for a permit to build property on their own land and facing what appear to them to be inordinate delays and capricious, un-transparent, and almost non-existent building permit issuance.) Palestinians contributed a tent to the CPT staff members, and many Palestinians, Israeli peace activists and international supporters joined in at least part of the fast. Throughout the 29-day period, Palestinian victims of home demolitions and land confiscation stopped by the tent to tell their stories. As the fast was winding down, on the Western Christian calendar of Good Friday (before Easter), CPT staff members, an Israeli rabbi, and two Palestinians began to rebuild a house that had been demolished the previous February. The rabbi was released on bond. The CPT staff members were jailed for four days. The two Palestinians were jailed for 13 days, during which they suffered from beatings and sleep deprivation.

In November 1999, CPT staff members tried to prevent the Makorot water company from removing pipes for irrigating a Palestinian family’s fields that hooked to a settlement water line without a permit. CPT staff members felt that the water line was justified in light of

the larger quantities of water used by settlements compared to Palestinian villagers nearby (their estimate was that the settler-to-villager water usage ratio was roughly 80:20). Two CPT staff members jumped into the hole dug by the company to detach the irrigation line. Other CPT staff members distracted the Makorot workers while others put rocks into the hole. Three CPT staff members were arrested by Israeli police and were detained for three hours for refusing to sign papers that they could not read due to not knowing Hebrew (“CPTers Arrested for Trying to Prevent Uprooting of Irrigation Lines in Beqa’a Valley,” e-mail from CPT-Hebron, November 30, 1999).

On the evening of December 25, 1999, in the Beqa’a Valley East of Hebron, a group of settlers carrying flaming torches intimidated a Palestinian family, destroyed property, and announced that they would return on December 28 to tear down the family’s home in order to begin a settlement there. On December 27, groups of Israelis started arriving at the site to prevent the destruction of the home. Eventually, the Israeli government promised to protect the family and their home. CPT staff members had publicized the threat and concluded that they “learned again that focusing the light of public attention on injustice can make a big difference” (Art Gish, “Love Overcomes Fear in Hebron,” p. 5).

In November 1999, eleven CPT staff members and a supporting delegation were arrested for selling tomatoes in Hebron’s Hasbahe Market after seven minutes of selling (“Israeli Police Detain Eleven CPTers for Selling Tomatoes,” CPT-Hebron Press Release, November 26, 1999). All were released without charges. In contrast, in June 2000, a similar selling of tomatoes was undertaken in the still-closed market. But in this case, Israeli police did not interfere (CPT-Hebron e-mail, June 13, 2000).

On January 10, 1999, two CPT staff members were arrested after standing in front of rifles held up by Israeli soldiers who appeared to be ready to fire on a group of Palestinians. The demonstrators, at their own initiative, were protesting a curfew. The CPT staff members yelled: “This is a nonviolent demonstration. They are not throwing rocks.” The soldiers lowered their guns and pushed the CPT staff members away while other soldiers detonated sound grenades. People ran. Some youngsters grabbed rocks and prepared to throw them. The soldiers again readied to fire. The CPT staff members again moved in front of the barrels of the guns. They were joined by a Palestinian. (Which, incidentally, made one of the CPT staff members concerned. She stated, reflecting on it later, “I thought to myself: What have we done here. I don’t think it’s very likely that they will pull the trigger on me. But he’s a Palestinian. What’s going to happen to him?”) A few rocks were hurled before Palestinian leaders were able to stop the youngsters. No one was hurt. One soldier slapped a CPT staff member twice. After the two were arrested, another CPT staff member who was left behind heard this comment from a Palestinian who had participated in the demonstration: “Thank you. You have done your work. I’m convinced that if CPT hadn’t interfered when the soldiers were ready to fire, the situation would have immediately become violent” (Mark Frey, “CPTers Arrested for ‘Getting in the Way’ at Nonviolent Palestinian Demonstration,” e-mail message, January 10, 1999).

In February 2000 a “buckets of soil” campaign was launched in which Israelis, Palestinians and CPT staff members and supporters literally dumped soil onto an area of the Beqa’a Valley that was going to become a settlement as a means of protesting land confiscation (Jamey Bouwmeester, “Hebron: Buckets of Soil Campaign Against Land Confiscation Begins,” e-mail of February 11, 2000). At the same time, CPT-Hebron, the Israeli Committee against House Demolitions, and the Palestinian Land Defense Committee joined together to urge people throughout Canada and the United States to send envelopes of soil to various Israeli consulates to object to “the Israeli government’s expropriation of far more land than it has turned over to the Palestinians under the Wye and Sharm al-Sheikh agreements” (“Hebron Urgent Action: Send Packets of Soil to Israeli Gov’t,” February 11, 2000).

Throughout the period, an internal mechanism used by CPT-Hebron was “Dialogue Partners.” Generally, this networking linked together Israeli peace groups with Palestinian Muslims and Christians, and foreign Christians and Jews (mainly) with Palestinian Muslims and Christians.

C. Summary of CPT Activity

The CPT-Hebron mission consistently has been to advocate for structural justice while trying to prevent violence. CPT’s involvement within the Hebron District has had three major thrusts that can be called phases in terms of program intensity: violence-detering street presence, networking between groups and individuals of good will, and work to prevent housing demolitions and land confiscation (E-mail from Kathleen Kern, May 6, 2000).

IV. DESCRIPTION OF WHAT HAPPENED AS A RESULT OF THE ACTIVITY

How do CPT staff know when something is effective? In all of our interviews and queries, we could not find CPT staff members willing to accept “ownership” or primary responsibility for effectiveness of their actions and presence in Hebron. This can be explained by their perceived mandate which is measured by a sense of “faithfulness” in responding to injustice rather than a more defined, tangible quantification of effectiveness such as might be ascribed to a traditional NGO or governmental initiative. CPT-Hebron staff members reiterated repeatedly that its direction was sought and given by representatives of local institutions and individual residents. However, when talking to CPT staff members and local residents, these might be considered as indicators of effectiveness:

1. CPT commitment and actions in Hebron modeled a new repertoire of responses to conflict, violence and injustice for local institutions and individuals. CPT-Hebron staff members identified many instances of nonviolent responses to violence and conflict. At times, CPT members offered actions independent of local participation. These, in effect, modeled new nonviolent actions. One example of this was the Hebron vegetable market actions, where CPT staff members and delegations sold tomatoes.

This important market was shut down by the Israeli military following the 1992 massacre but was scheduled to be reopened no later than January 1996. When the deadline passed but the market remained closed, CPT staff members, with approval of the Hebron municipality, coordinated a tomato sale within the former marketplace. This was not only a protest against the market being closed but also served as a concrete example of how commitments made in various governmental agreements were not being carried out in a timely fashion. It was felt that the tomato sales had symbolic value locally as well as internationally.

2. It can be argued that CPT involvement in Hebron strengthened local capacities for peace in building and supporting “connectors” between various groups. CPT peacemakers in Hebron began by identifying local peacemakers within both the Israeli and Palestinian communities. Continually, CPT attempted to facilitate the work of other institutions and individuals. Likewise, when other groups shouldered more of the violence deterring actions, then CPT moved away from those efforts. Here are three examples. First, during the interim between the two TIPH mandates, CPT took on the role of witnessing injustices and violence. Once TIPH personnel returned to Hebron in 1997, CPT worked through them. Second, in January 1997, CPT helped facilitate nonviolent demonstrations with leaders from the University of Hebron to reopen the closed school. CPT staff members also taught “English classes” on nonviolence (so named so that they would not be viewed as threatening) outside the locked gates and listened to students, faculty and administrators as they wrestled with their response to the closure. Often they found themselves in the role of supporting students and faculty who led the nonviolent movement. And, third, The Israeli Committee Against Demolitions (ICAD) formed largely from CPT initiatives. It was designed to build a strong coalition between an Israeli peace group, the Hebron Land Defense Committee, and the Palestinian Land Defense Committee. As ICAD has taken greater responsibility for monitoring and working against housing demolitions and land confiscations, CPT has begun to pull back and to reexamine its role in this area.
3. CPT-Hebron has cultivated solidarity and concern for oppressed people regardless of its political efficacy. While CPT members do not expend energy determining cause and effect around their advocacy efforts, they do encourage their supporters in North America and indeed around the world to become aware of and respond to the injustices that they witness in Hebron. Two prominent “vehicles” for this have included CPTNet e-mail communication and delegation visits. Through its e-mail communication, CPT peacemakers told stories from their experiences. They wrote about situations of injustice as well as signs of hope. At times they directly encouraged their readers to respond to a particular situation by writing to or visiting an elected official or embassy/consulate official. The “soil protest” is one example. CPT communication also put a very personal spin on international negotiations concerning Hebron and indeed Israeli/Palestinian affairs in general. The 700 hour fast was one example of the attempt to personalize the otherwise abstract issue (for outsiders) of home demolitions.
4. In December 1996, Hebron University was reopened following its closure that resulted from a wave of suicide bombings. CPT had sent out urgent action appeals that might

have been instrumental in garnering international pressure that helped facilitate the reopening.

5. CPT members became “conflict lightning rods,” absorbing aggression which would have been directed at others. This type of effectiveness assumes that CPT staff members, being outsiders, are able to serve as “whipping persons” for the insiders who would otherwise encounter much more significant aggression. But this does not always seem to be the case, as when Palestinians who participated in various activities along with CPT staff members faced much more severe punishment (such as in March 1997 when Palestinians joined in the reconstruction of a demolished Palestinian home and, as a result, suffered 13 days of imprisonment and associated beatings and sleep deprivation).
6. CPT staff members seem to have had some success in preventing discrete acts of violence. The most extreme example was the instance in which they stood in front of the gun barrels of IDF soldiers who were readying to fire. And yet, this raised another troubling outsider-insider question. To what extent do outsiders, especially Americans in view of the role of the United States in Middle East politics, enjoy quasi-protection, in a physical sense, from serious physical harm as compared to the relative lack of that protection of at least some insiders (in this case, Palestinians)?
7. CPT staff members felt like they were somewhat successful in their attempts to humanize “the other.” They cited numerous examples of deliberate efforts to humanize participants in the conflict (especially Palestinians, Israelis and IDF Soldiers). “We try and remind people that this [situation] isn’t about *good* people and *bad* people. The problem is the power structure” (Interview with Dianne Roe, April 12, 2000).
8. CPT seems to have injected a sense of hope in what can often seem to be a hopeless situation. As one Palestinian woman stated, CPT staff members and reservists “...give us hope. They hear our stories and they share them in North America. They write letters and they sleep in tents for us. This way we know we are not alone. It is only a small drop in a large sea, but it gives us hope” (CPTNet e-mail, June 28, 2000).

V. ANALYSIS

1. CPT seems to be effective in networking together groups that are most like them in their approach to problems. For instance, CPT worked well with Israeli peace groups and foreign delegations but found it more difficult to sustain peace building efforts with those that lacked organizational strength.
2. Freedom from mainstream agencies and church/denominational offices seems to strengthen CPT’s responsiveness. CPT staff members and reservists do not seem to be worried about doing something which might damage the image of a church office or that might inhibit funding opportunities.
3. CPT pursues initiatives that have mutual outsider-insider interest. In building “global solidarity,” CPT seeks to identify and implement projects that motivate people both in the conflict situation and in North America.

4. CPT has an emphasis on discernment. It is expected that this spiritual discipline will be used during the application process, in deciding what to do, and in debriefing after an event.
5. Sometimes local people who knowingly join in with CPT in various activities face considerable hardship as a result. And sometimes local people ask CPT to not become involved for fear of the repercussions. In maintaining due respect for such sentiments, CPT must be diligent in detecting insider anxiety.
6. Being faith-based can be an advantage. As Hull and Kern observed: “The team has found in discussions with devout Muslims that the fact our work is faith-based makes a difference to them: while they may not understand (or trust) those with a strong humanist ethic wanting to assist, they do understand people wanting to help because God has called them to do so” (Cole Hull and Kathleen Kern, “Background Information on Hebron,” p. 4).
7. One criticism leveled against CPT-Hebron staff members is that that they exacerbate tension (Philip Bentley, “A Better Way to Make Peace,” pp. 15-16). Clearly, CPT does exacerbate tension in some situations, such as when team members encouraged the Palestinian farmer to plow around the olive trees that had been planted on the farmer’s land by Israeli settlers. In so doing, the team members were pursuing what Fisher et al. call *conflict intensification* rather than trying to prevent *conflict escalation*. Fisher et al. argue that the former makes “hidden conflict more visible and open, for purposeful, nonviolent ends,” whereas preventing the latter is needed as “levels of tension and violence are increasing” (*Working with Conflict*, p. 5). Conflict intensification, of course, must be used judiciously and outsiders need to be respectful of the wishes of insiders who might end up suffering much more severe consequences of the added tension and attention that outsiders bring. But CPT-Hebron seems to have done so as, for instance, when the headmistress of the girls school asked that CPT staff members not continue to be present at the school which elected to fly a Palestinian flag.
8. Another accusation leveled against CPT-Hebron staff members is that they add to the polarization of the situation and, in the process, demonize one side by siding with another (Philip Bentley, “A Better Way to Make Peace,” p. 16). This is the heart of a debate among conflict transformation practitioners about the relative merits of impartiality versus being partial. And yet, it is more complicated than that. Our experiences with CPT-Hebron indicate that team members have made deliberate efforts to befriend settlers. In fact, CPT-Hebron staff members go out of their way to try to talk with settlers. The settlers, though, seem to reject CPT, in a sense polarizing the situation themselves. And, yes, CPT-Hebron staff members would say that they are not impartial in the conflict inasmuch as there is an asymmetrical power relationship and clear winners and losers in that relationship. They feel that it is entirely appropriate to stand up for justice whenever there is injustice and that it would be in-genuine to mince words by claiming impartiality. But they seem to be aware of the danger associated with such a posture. One regularly hears them struggle with “trying not to hate ‘the other’ side” (in this case, settlers). And, although it was a very small program activity relative to the portion that “sides” with Palestinians, CPT staff members did ride Jerusalem bus #18 after it had been blown up twice by Palestinian

suicide bombers in an effort to prevent such violence against Israelis. In addition, CPT staff members welcomed the involvement of Israeli Jews in various activities, and built significant partnerships with Israeli NGOs to the point, it appears, that CPT was instrumental in the formation of an Israeli NGO dealing with house demolitions. The challenge, it seems, is to stand for justice, using conflict intensification judiciously and respectfully, while taking measures to prevent the demonization of “the other.” This is, perhaps, a bit different from the “empowerment approach” used by development practitioners working with the poor and marginalized throughout the world, since that approach might well lead to the type of polarization and demonization about which Philip Bentley is concerned (“A Better Way to Peace”). It involves taking a stand alongside victims — whether they be farmers who can no longer plow their land or bus-riders who no longer feel safe riding buses — while seeing the humanness in the perpetrators of harm, listening to them, taking measures to not allow one’s statements or thinking to become prejudicial, and to constantly reach out in all directions. (It is noteworthy in this context to mention that CPT-Hebron has been instrumental in attempting to prevent anti-Semitism among various Christian denominations. See CPT Steering Committee, “A Letter to Our Churches about Anti-Semitism.”)

9. Another concern we have heard about CPT-Hebron is that in the process of conducting demonstrations it is possible to get caught up in the dynamics of the process in an inward looking fashion. For instance, during our tour of a site of a demolished house, a CPT reservist spoke affectionately, with a somewhat peculiar, excited tone, about a planned “action.” While this, in and of itself, is not a problem, it does hint at the risk of pursuing initiatives while potentially getting motivations and, hence, the strategy, out of alignment. We have not seen evidence of CPT-Hebron getting out of alignment in the sense of disrespecting local initiatives, sensitivities, or cautions, but perhaps the stress and emotionally taxing nature of this type of work can lead to motivational distortion unless measures are taken to prevent it. Perhaps there is wisdom in the practice of bringing in new staff members, reservists, and delegations with regularity in light of this potential problem. Of course, CPT staff members would argue that their most effective means of keeping in proper alignment is regular prayer and reflection.

VI. ADDENDUM

- A. Here are other criteria and observations cited by CPT members and reservists by which they evaluate whether their efforts have helped to prevent or to exacerbate conflict in their areas of operation:
 - The decrease in home demolitions since CPT began focusing on them. In the Hebron District, the number of demolitions overall are down. There were 20 planned house demolitions in 1997 in a specific area. Only five were demolished. The other 15 may not have been due to CPT’s presence. (However, demolitions continue and the IDF has changed its strategy so that demolitions occur with far less notice and are carried out like “military maneuvers.”)
 - The change in IDF strategies in demolitions.
 - Changes in approaches of government offices.
 - Feedback from local people.

- When others carry the work forward.
- The seriousness with which they are treated.
- The adamancy by which some people attempt to discourage them from being involved.
- The number of people asking and talking about the tension in Hebron.
- The frequency of calls from journalists about the situation in Hebron.
- The regularity with which people call them to report potential or actual violence.
- The fact that some families, despite the risk of a second or third demolition, choose to rebuild as a sign of resistance.
- The establishment of local organizations designed to safeguard peace (such as the Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions, which was inspired, at least in part, and supported by CPT's work).
- Being invited to join a nonviolent walk from the Hebron municipal offices to the Hebron University campus.
- Being asked by a Hebron University professor to cut a fence erected illegally around his field. (The CPT staff members left a note explaining who they were and why they cut the fence down.)

B. Here are some observations we heard about CPT's training programs:

- The most helpful part of their training is in their role plays before going to a field program, followed by on the job training and debriefing.
- Effective debriefing requires that there be trust among CPT staff members and reservists so that they can speak candidly about fears, criticism, etc.
- Role play exercises need to anticipate and help people learn how to cope with feelings and emotions that they will likely face. For a faith-based organization, such anticipation might be placed into a spiritual context. As one CPT staff member observed, "What is helpful is to be surrounded by a spirituality of non-violence because the natural thing is to become violent."
- Actual conflict among CPT staff members can serve as a useful form of learning how to apply negotiation and mediation skills.

C. Here are some "keys to success" voiced by various CPT staff members and reservists:

- Try not to be another NGO.
- Use action-reflection. Debrief after every action.
- Check constantly with local partners and people in order to stay "on track."
- Maintain autonomy and keep away from being managed by offices far away.
- Do not want/need credit.
- Maintain spiritual centered-ness.
- Continually take stock in "who we are" to determine "what we should be doing."
- Get away from Hebron for renewal.
- Constantly assess and reevaluate: "Who's doing what?," "Who needs a voice?," "What are oppressed people asking for?" Reevaluate direction with regularity.

INTERVIEWS

1. Rick Carter, CPT Peacemaker, Jerusalem, April 2, 2000
2. Anita Fast, CPT Peacemaker, Jerusalem, April 2, 2000
3. Mark Frey, CPT Peacemaker, Hebron, West Bank, April 6, 1999
4. Reinhard Kober, CPT Intern, Jerusalem, April 2, 2000
5. Natasha Krahn, CPT Peacemaker, Jerusalem, April 2, 2000
6. Dianne Roe, CPT Peacemaker, Jerusalem, April 2 and 12, 2000
7. Pierre Shantz, CPT Peacemaker, Hebron, West Bank, October 1998

E-MAIL INTERVIEWS

1. Jeff Heie, former CPT Peacemaker, April 2000
2. Kathleen Kern, CPT Network Coordinator, March-May 2000
3. Cliff Kindy, CPT Peacemaker, April 2000
4. Wendy Lehman, former CPT Peacemaker, March-May 2000
5. Gene Stoltzfus, CPT-Chicago, March and April 2000

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