

# Poll examines attitudes of Palestians, Israelis

JERUSALEM (CNS) - While 92 percent of Palestinians continue to support armed attacks against Israeli soldiers and settlers, a recent survey said 71 percent of Palestinian respondents favored a return to peace talks.

Sixty percent of the Israeli population would support the return to negotiations under conditions described by U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell in a Nov. 19 speech in which he called for the implementation of a cease-fire, an end to incitement against Israel, U.S. support for a Palestinian state, the end of Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, and a freeze of settlements.

The survey found that 57 percent of Israelis support the dismantling of most of the Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories as part of a peace agreement.

The public opinion survey, conducted by the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research in Ramallah, West Bank, was a continuation of an ongoing research project. The current poll was designed to examine the impact of Mideast violence and the U.S.-declared war against terrorism on the perception of terrorism and the attitudes toward peace and reconciliation among Israelis and Palestinians.

A representative sample of 1,055 Israelis, including 499 Israeli Arabs, was interviewed by telephone Nov. 29-Dec. 16, with a sampling error of 3.9 percent. The Palestinian survey was conducted a week later due to military restrictions on the movement of the interviewers. A repre-

sentative sample of 1,357 Palestinians from the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem was interviewed face-to-face, with a sampling error of 3 percent.

Respondents were asked to speculate about the chances for reconciliation between the two peoples in the hypothetical aftermath of a successful conclusion of negotiations and the establishment of a Palestinian state recognized by Israel.

Seventy-three percent of Palestinians and 76 percent of Israelis said they would support reconciliation between the two peoples under conditions of peace and a Palestinian state. Only 46 percent of the Palestinians believe that such reconciliation is possible, compared to 65 percent of the Israelis. Forty-one percent of Palestinians and 31 percent of Israelis believe it "is not possible ever."



Debbie Hill/CNS

Heidi Aref, a Palestinian-American planning to meet protesters for an interfaith vigil in Jerusalem, is blocked by an Israeli soldier Dec. 31.



# Catholic Courier

DIocese of Rochester, New York

VOL. 113 NO. 1

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2002

75¢

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## Poverty hits children hardest

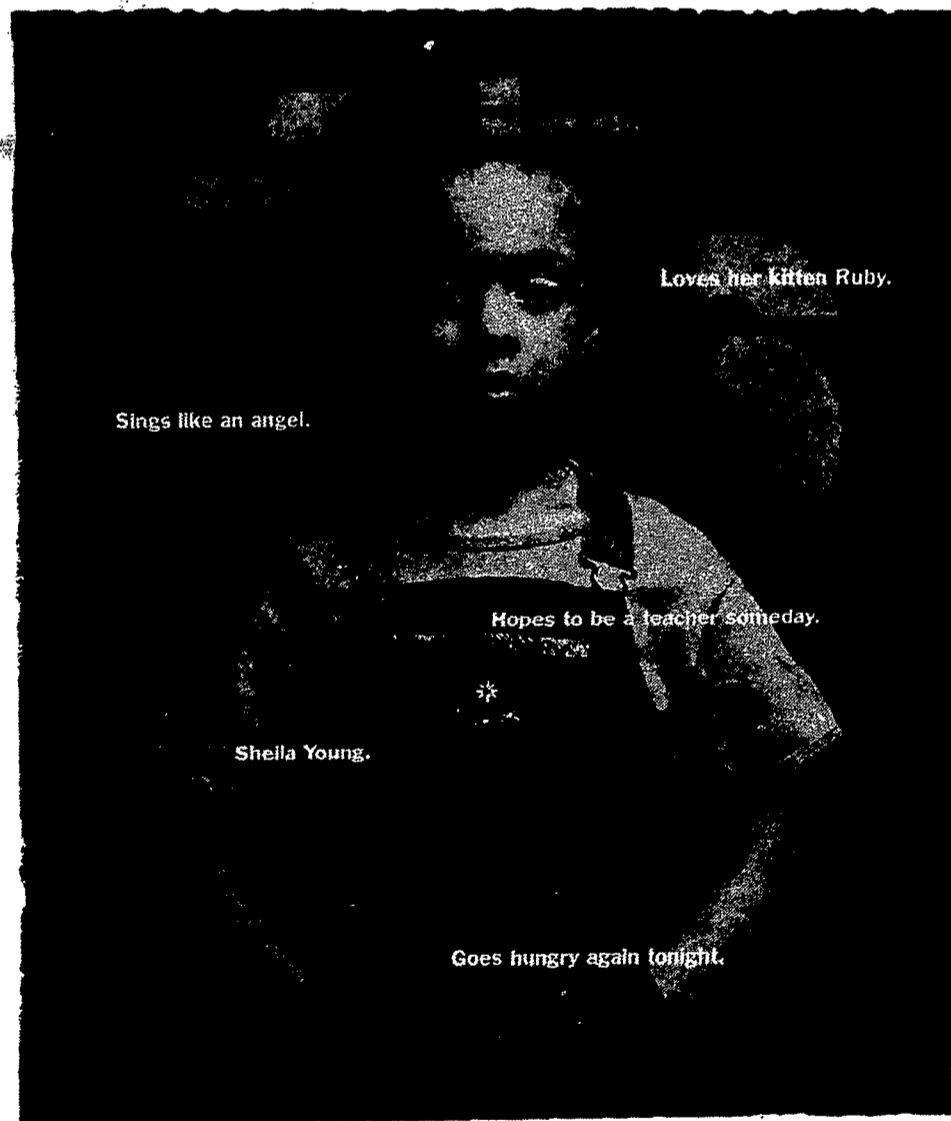
EDITORS' NOTE: This article is the first in an occasional series on children's issues.

Scripture says the kingdom of heaven belongs to children. Here on earth, however, the kingdom of poverty contains within its boundaries one of every six American children, according to Father Robert J. Vitillo, executive director of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the U.S. bishops' anti-poverty office.

"There's a special vulnerability of children," he said of poor youngsters. "They can't really chart their future, but their future is charted for them."

On Jan. 8, Father Vitillo was to kick off the second phase of CCHD's three-year campaign to increase awareness of poverty in America, with a speech before the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. In 2001, CCHD - which has designated January "Poverty Awareness Month" - promoted the first year of the campaign through public service announcements that told of "Poverty U.S.A.," a fictitious state home to more than 32 million U.S. residents, more residents than any New York, Florida or Texas.

Last year's campaign was a success, Father Vitillo said, noting CCHD garnered donated advertising through various media that would have cost \$6 million otherwise. Newspapers, including the Catholic Courier, extensively covered...  
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Catholic Campaign for Human Development

"There's a special vulnerability of children"

STORY BY ROB CULLIVAN