

Puzzled

By William Alonzo



—Say, John, the advisory board of *This Week in Palestine* suggested a confusing theme for its March 2016 issue: “OUR BETTER HALF.” Do we personally have a good HALF and a better HALF? Are our arms BETTER than our legs or our hearts BETTER than our brains?

—Well, Peter, maybe they are talking in general about rich and poor. Rich people are BETTER than poor people, since they have money to squander, paying much more for ordinary items than they are worth, simply because they are signe/designer items. Don’t they know that all items are produced in China or Bangladesh, by slave laborers? It’s simply the labels that are different.

—What are you talking about? These rich people are only 1 percent of the population. Here we are talking about HALF, 50 percent. Surely, they refer to merchants.

—You mean, Peter, like the shopkeepers along Salah Eddine Street, with shops full of goods but empty of customers? They are standing at the doors of their shops, waiting for the sun to shine on them so they can receive their daily dose of Vitamin D while watching the children as they leave school.

—You got it, John. HALF of the population, mainly in the poor countries, are children. Are they the BETTER HALF? They don’t have to carry heavy school bags, they have iPads. They don’t have to learn languages, their mobile phones translate. They don’t have to find their way to their friends’ houses, GPS is there. Do they need to visit their friends? No, Facebook is ready to do it for them.

—BUT they are now facing global warming, climate change, stronger earthquakes, tsunamis, nuclear fear, war.... Definitely,

they are not BETTER than grownups, even though they are in the 50-percent category.

—Then we are the BETTER HALF. We run to work daily, face traffic challenges to reach the office on time, serve people, solve their problems. Even our bosses are running, travelling from country to country to promote our cause in conferences and discussions. Meeting with important personalities like Angela Merkel....

—Stop, Peter, now it comes to my mind: the advisory board is talking about women. Of course! They constitute HALF of the population of the world. That solves part of the confusing subject or even less. “OUR BETTER HALF.” Are women only HALF? What are we talking about?

—Look! Can’t you remember, on the day of your marriage, the priest united you with your wife and he read a passage from the Holy Scripture saying: from now on you will be one body?

—So wives are our HALF, but again the board still mentions OUR BETTER HALF.

—Come now, think of it. Don’t wives know BETTER than we how to create children, how to raise them, how to care for them, how to feed them, how to educate them, how to advise us, how to prevent us from behaving rashly? And on top of that they have that touch of adding a pickled olive to our plain sandwich, of lifting our spirits by a smile, of cajoling us, of standing by us, of encouraging us. Remember, behind every great man is a woman. To top it all, they go daily to work, like us.

—That explains the confusing subject. Now I know why HALF the advisory board are women.

William Alonzo is an administrator who is happily retired.