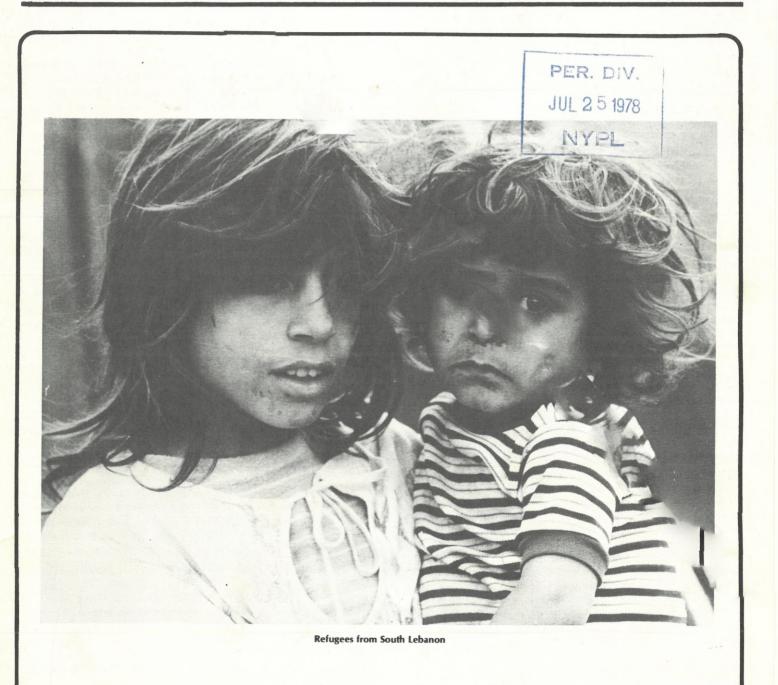


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ELEVEN YEARS OF OCCUPATION

The Palestinian territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, remnants of 1948 Palestine, are home to one and a half million Palestinians. Eleven years ago, these territories and their inhabitants came under the direct military occupation of Israel. In the West, the suffering of Palestinians living under Israeli rule has often been ignored or treated as a troublesome obstacle to peace. It has rarely been confronted straightforwardly. And meanwhile, the anger of the occupied grows, and a weariness of spirit about the possibility of the emergence of conditions in Palestine for peace.

As a consequence of the occupation, the Israelis too, in adopting a vision of being free only at the cost of denying the Palestinians their freedom, are themselves, in a sense, victims of occupation — the occupation of the human spirit by the racist negation of another people.

News from the West Bank last month again points to more Israeli conquest and expansion and away from peace. In May, the occupying authorities revoked the powers of attorney held by Palestinians living outside the area, whether in Arab countries or in Europe, North America or elsewhere in the world. This action allows the Israeli authorities to take over all land and homes owned by these Palestinians under a law called the "Law of Absentee Property." This involves, in the case of Palestinians living in non-Arab countries alone, no less than 11,000 homes and 100,000 acres of land. At this time, it appears that protest by Palestinians has managed to hold up the confiscation, but the history of the Absentee Property Law does not lead to optimism about the eventual conclusion.

This law was hastily introduced and implemented by Israel in 1948 to justify the takeover of all moveable ind immoveable property left behind by Palestinians (750,000) who fled or were physically expelled to the surrounding countries following the establishment of a Zionist entity in Palestine that year. Concurrently with this, was another law introduced with equal haste called the "Present Absentee Property Law" that Israel used to justify the takeover of the land, homes and farms of Palestinians who had not fled their country in 1948 but who happened to be "absent" at the time of the war — in most cases, peasants and farmers who had escaped to nearby villages for shelter. Whole families thus disenfranchised, would return home after the war to find that Jewish settlers were already living in their homes and tilling their land — and end up working as hired hands there.

Zionist attitudes to Palestinians, and Israel's mistreatment of them under occupation, have been decisively shaped long before 1967 or even 1948.

The problem that Israel claims as its basic concern — security — began long before Israel was established, or even before the first trickle of Jewish immigrants into Palestine took place around the First World War. It began with the early Zionists, who excluded from their considerations, and consistently tried to belittle, the fact that Palestine, where they intended to create a "Jewish State," was already inhabited by people who were not going to share Zionist ambitions about the superimposition of another people and another state in the country.

Few early Zionist activists and ideologues, in their writings or statements, addressed themselves to that problem. Some perceptive Zionists, however, did warn their colleagues of the danger that may result from ignoring this one crucial fact.

Asher Ginzberg, who wrote under the name of Ahad Ha'am, visited Palestine in 1891, to assess for himself what his fellow Zionists in Europe seemed to be planning with such facile ease.

Finding the country already inhabited by the Palestinians, he warned that it was "difficult, except upon sand dunes or stony hills, to find untilled soil in Palestine." Above all, he warned that the only way Jewish settlers could be accepted in Palestine would be in winning the good will of the Palestinians, interacting with them in dignity, respect and friendliness.

"Yet", he said in his article, entitled "Truth from Palestine," (in Zionism Reconsidered, New York 1970), "What do our brethren do in Palestine? Just the very opposite! Serfs they were in the lands of the diaspora and suddenly they found themselves in unrestricted freedom and this change has awakened in them an inclination to despotism. They treat the Arabs with hostility and cruelty, deprive them of their rights, offend them without cause and even boast of these deeds; and nobody amongst us opposed this despicable and dangerous inclination."

The warnings of Ginzberg went unheeded, as did those by Jewish activists in the next generation who shared Ginzberg's humanism and realistic grasp of the geopolitics of the region, such as Martin Buber and Judah Magnes.

But Zionism was not to be led by such men. The leadership of the Zionist movement, and the destiny of the Jews in Palestine (who, in the 1930s were now flooding into the country) was to be in the hands of men who knew nothing of the existence of the Palestinians there or imagined it could be dealt with by force — the latter concept being part of the colonial and racist ethos around the turn of the century when Third World peoples could be pushed around, dislocated, and massacred in the name of "civilization."

If it was a mistake to contemplate the creation of a Jewish State in Palestine, in ignorance of the existence of the Palestinian people there, without their consultation and over their pleas or protests, then it was a tragedy and an injustice to create one at the cost of expelling the Palestinians and denying them the right of repatriation.

The Zionists, by 1948 however, had succeeded. But a mistake that succeeds is still a mistake, especially when those who committed it will not now commit themselves to rectifying it.

From the onset of Israel's establishment, this mistake lay at the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict, dictated Israel's policies with the Arabs and is the origin of Israel's failure to achieve "security" in the Arab world and "recognition" from the Palestinians.

But in the final analysis, the "security" that Israel claims it needs from the Arab World and the acceptance that Jews in Palestine must have from Palestinian Arabs in order to be secure, must be sought not in the occupation of one people by another, but in a freedom from occupation and conquest.

Without the growth of this awareness, Israeli Jews will continue to be possessed by the notion that Palestinians can be indefinitely subjugated or that they will one day vanish. This is a vision that no Arab and no Palestinian can accept and that every Arab and every Palestinian will fight against.

Is it relevant, we ask, to talk at a time like this, after eleven years of military occupation and thirty years of exile, about "partial justice" for the Palestinians? In a time when Palestinian men and women are made to die in exile, and are made to emigrate from the West Bank and Gaza in order to be told that the land and homes they have left behind are no longer theirs by virtue of some law introduced by alien occupiers, in a time like this, is further colonization, masked by talk of "self-rule," and "Palestinian entity," pardonable?

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SAMI ESMAIL: THE CRIME OF SOLIDARITY

On Monday, June 12, an Israeli court sentenced 24 year-old Brooklyn-born Sami Esmail, an American citizen of Palestinian descent, to 15 months in prison for "membership in an illegal organization," (in this case the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine), having cleared him of another charge of contacting an enemy agent. International attention has focused on Sami Esmail's arrest, detention and trial and it has become one more testing ground for judging Israeli conduct on human rights.

Sami Esmail himself affirmed his innocence in his closing statement to the court: "Please I am completely innocent of all charges. My only crime is my political solidarity with the oppressed and homeless Palestinian people and other oppressed people in accordance with the U.S. Constitution. I don't understand how this could harm anybody. I am proud of this solidarity."

Esmail's statement illuminates an important feature of the Israeli legal system which, in fact, allows prosecution for what can reasonably be called the "crime of solidarity." Under the Extraterritorial Law of 1973, Israel granted itself the right to prosecute individuals of any citizenship for acts committed anywhere on the globe that are illegal under present Israeli law. Using this law. Israeli police arrested Sami Esmail at Lod Airport on December 21, 1977 as he arrived on an emergency visit to his dving father in Ramallah. Nothing Esmail was accused of in the whole course of his detention and trial was illegal in the country in which it allegedly occurred. In other words, distributing literature written by the Popular Front is not illegal on an American campus, nor is attending a Palestinian training camp in Libya (an action Esmail emphatically denies, although he freely admits to visiting that country) illegal in Libya. Although it is highly unusual and contrary to international law for a court to declare the entire world as its jurisdiction, Defense Attorney Felicia Langer's motion that Israel has no jurisdiction in this case was denied without explanation.

In pronouncing the sentence, the panel of three judges, as reported in the *New York Times* of June 13, "recognized that he (Esmail) had not come to Israel on a mission for the organization (the PFLP) but rather to visit his dying father." In the light of the judges' statement, the outcome of the trial seems a conviction in search of a crime.

Indeed, the charge of which Esmail was convicted — "membership in an illegal organization" — is itself open to scrutiny as one of the drastic laws instituted by the British in Palestine in 1945 called the "Defense Emergency Regulations." As



Sami Esmail leaving court after sentencing.

Felicia Langer noted, these laws define "guilt by association. . . According to this law, the organization of Menachem Begin is also illegal." As an American citizen, Sami Esmail's right of freedom of association is supposedly protected by the First Amendment, but the prosecutor gave a final blow to these rights when she introduced as testimony in the trial past violent actions of the PFLP and stated that anyone associated with that organization must be bad. She even added, referring to the 13 character witnesses for Esmail, that the fact that he was brilliant and a good student had to be used against him because such a person is more dangerous. So Sami Esmail was also condemned for his virtues.

Sami Esmail, then, was arrested and detained under laws that seriously infringe on his rights as an American citizen and curtail the rights of any defendant (the Defense Emergency Regulations). He was convicted under these laws by yet another illegal process — the extraction of confessions by physical and psychological intimidation, including prolonged sleepness, physical abuse, threats to himself and his family, and the skillful playing on his emotions as a son desperate to see his dying father.

Esmail's three "confessions" — signed after six days of interrogation and before seeing a lawyer — are the sole basis for his conviction. No substantial corroboration was introduced. The most damaging of the three confessions was written in Hebrew, a language Esmail does not understand and the two English confessions stylistically contradict each other. Significantly, the more harm-

ful one for Esmail was delivered by the Shin Bet, the Israeli secret police and Esmail's interrogators, after the first confession was apparently considered too mild.

Langer has pointed out that there was no evidence presented that showed in any way that Esmail was a member of the PFLP but simply that he spoke sympathetically and demonstrated support for the Palestinian cause. Langer told the court: "If the political actions done by my client are punishable, we would have to make prisoners of hundreds of thousands throughout the world, because more and more people are expressing support for the Palestinian cause."

This remark demonstrates that the significance of this trial goes beyond the fate of Sami Esmail. Both the laws themselves and the "flexible" Israeli interpretation of them endanger any Palestinian or any sympathizer with the plight of the Palestinians, if they travel to Israel. For Palestinians from the occupied territories studying abroad, Sami's conviction hits particularly hard, for they know that already Israeli policy actively attempts to prevent them from returning home to work and live.

Theoretically of course, the U.S. Government should have afforded Sami Esmail some protection as a citizen. But in fact, the U.S. not only did not protect Esmail's rights under the Constitution, but actively cooperated with his prosecutors. The June 13 New York Times refers to "published reports that the FBI tipped off the Israelis" to Esmail's emergency visit. The FBI admits to keeping a file on Esmail and also confirms that Esmail did nothing illegal in the United States. In addition, the U.S. refused to waive immunity for U.S. Assistant Consul Mark Davidson, who saw Sami Esmail during the period of his interrogation, to allow him to testify at the

Up to now, the U.S. Government has turned a deaf ear to letters and telegrams asking for intervention to improve Esmail's prison conditions and his treatment. On June 9, two days before the sentencing, representatives of the Palestine Human Rights Campaign presented an "Appeal on the Behalf of Sami Esmail" to the offices of Israeli Ambassador Simcha Dinitz and Pat Derian of the State Department's Human Rights Office. Signed by major figures in the religious, peace and civil liberties communities, the appeal urged clemency and demanded that Sami Esmail be allowed to go home to the U.S. So far, the Human Rights office has issued no response. The Israeli response, of course, was a 15 month prison sentence designed to be, Judge Dov

(Continued on page 11)



INDICTMENT OF THE OCCUPATION

A Speech by Felicia Langer

The following are excerpts from Israeli attorney Felicia Langer's address to the "Palestine Human Rights and Peace" Conference.

After the Gauls conquered Rome in the 4th Century B.C., there was a dispute between the victors and the vanquished as to the weight of gold which Rome had to put on the scale for its redemption. Then, the leader of the Gauls, Brennus, put his sword on the scales and exclaimed: "Vae Victis." ("Woe to the Vanquished.")

This is the true motto of the Israeli practices in the occupied territories from the very moment the first Israeli soldier put his foot there in June 1967. Little Israel became an empire and the oppression started. The conqueror made sure to wrap it in a legal cloak. The machinery of arrests and military trials commenced an era of institutionalized suppression of the will of the inhabitants, in order to persuade them that the only way is to comply with the occupation.

The basic law on which the occupiers were basing their actions was the Defence Emergency Regulations (1945), inherited from the British Mandate legislation. Those laws were bitterly attacked by Jewish lawyers during the British Mandate. Mr. Yacov Shimshon Shapiro, who later became Israeli Attorney General and Minister of Justice, had the following remarks to make in 1946 as regards the same laws which the Israeli Government applies nowadays in the occupied Arab territories and inside Israel toward the Israeli Arabs. "The system established in Palestine since the issue of the Defence laws is unparalleled in any civilized country; there were no such laws even in Nazi Germany. It is our duty to tell the whole world that the Defence laws passed by the British mandatory government of Palestine destroy the very foundation of justice in this land.'

It is unnecessary to comment on what kind of justice prevails now based on these laws.

Matters not covered by these regulations were legally defined as offences by hundreds of orders and regulations enacted by the military governors and commanders. First, the right to arrest. In the *Order for Security Regulations*, the penal code for the occupied territories, every soldier has the right to arrest an inhabitant, if there is a suspicion that he committed an offence. He does not need a warrant for 96 hours. A police officer has the right to extend this arrest for seven days, and then for another seven days, while a

military judge has the right to extend the detention up to six months.

What are the offences? Participating in a demonstration, contacting an enemy, who is mostly a relative, a brother, a father, a close friend, but the Israelis claim that he is a member of one of the Palestinian organizations which are illegal in the occupied territories and in Israel. One of my clients, an old man in the Golan Heights. was sentenced for contacting his son, who was in the eyes of the occupational law an enemy, and was sent to prison for this crime. Other illegal acts include spreading a leaflet, writing a slogan, raising a Palestinian flag, granting asylum to a son, a daughter, a brother and not reporting to the police about a suspicion that they may be involved in an illegal activity. Although the Israeli nation is the most highly militarily trained nation, any training is forbidden for the Palestinians; the armed resistance is a criminal offence, although according to U.N. resolutions fighters against foreign occupation or oppression have to be treated as prisoners of war. But Israel vehemently rejected this demand.

The most common offence is membership in an illegal organization according to the Emergency Regulations of 1945. The maximum penalty for membership or acting as a member, or rendering service to the organization, possessing a newspaper, attending a meeting, etc., is 10 years imprisonment. . .



Felicia Langer

Prison: Death Sentence by Installments

Those are the laws and the thousands convicted by these laws are scattered in the Israeli prisons. Together with them are those "administratively detained", some of them for years without any charge. Administrative detention is extended for unlimited periods. In other words, it can be life imprisonment.

Without any doubt, these thousands are prisoners of conscience, imprisoned for their beliefs. They are the best proof of the deep-rooted culture and the identity of the Palestinians.

The prisons are terribly overcrowded. There are new prisoners, day by day, including hundreds of demonstrators unable to pay the heavy fines imposed on them. Some are brothers and sisters of the victims of the Israeli Lebanese aggression, who were beaten, and put in prisons for showing their solidarity with the victims of cluster bombs. The occupier does not want to recognize that this is one people, one body in the occupied territories and in Lebanon and he can not hit one part of it without a response from another part. There is no such force under the sun which is able to suppress the natural feeling of a mother for her son and the love between brothers, not matter how far and for how long they have been dispersed and displaced.

The fresh air, the sunshine and sometimes even water are very precious in the prisons. Prisoners spend 23 hours in overcrowded cells, sleeping on the floor, sometimes sharing a mattress with another prisoner, as Sami Esmail does. The only space which a prisoner has is just enough to stretch his legs. This space is his living space, there he eats and reads and prays. And when he dares to complain, as Sami did, there is solitary confinement.. So, even the most elementary right to have humane conditions in prison is punishable. A complaint is an offence. My visit to Terry Fleener now are held in the presence of a quard, writing down every word we say to

The majority of the prisoners are ill. The medical treatment is inadequate. There is a long wait to see a doctor and when he prescribes a medicine, it does not mean that the prisoner gets it. Sami Esmail, as my last example of a lack of medical treatment, was treated only after my intervention and with the help of the prosecutor, during one of the sessions of his trial.

The prisoners do not comply with this bitter fate, which they call death sentence by installments. They are struggling for humane conditions and the only weapon they have are their bodies. Many were on hunger strike for months, but the stubborness of the establishment was not shaken.

In conclusion, the population in the prison, the political prisoners, did not give up their ideas and motivations. The authorities are mistaken thinking that if they have the bodies of the prisoners, they have them entirely. The ideas and beliefs are stronger than the bars. The prisoners know that they are not alone, that they are the sons and daughters of their people.

Collective Punishment

Personal responsibility is regarded as a cornerstone of the legal system, especially the penal one. Every criminal offence must consist of two factors — a guilty mind and a criminal act. Without those two factors being proven, there is no offence. This elementary principle has been ignored by oppressors of all times. Maybe it is disquieting to remember, but the Nazi leaders were tried in the Nuremberg trials for collective punishments. They had ignored the commandment of the Hague Convention of 1907, Pargr. 50, saying, "No collective punishment, monetary or otherwise, should be imposed on the population because of acts by individuals, since the population cannot be held responsible for them collectively."

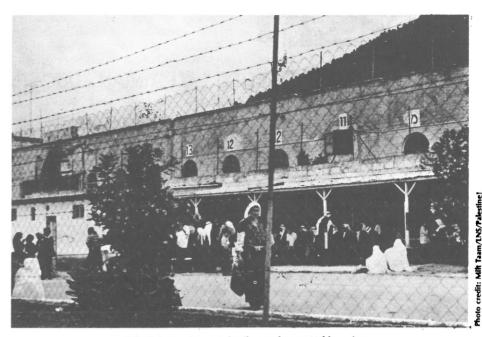
The 11th Geneva Convention of August 1948 stressed once again this sacred maxim, strengthened by the horrors of World War II.

In 1961, before Israel became an empire, the Israeli legislators thought it fit to outline the authority of an occupying power in a publication called "Authority in the Occupied Territory," published by the IDF Headquarters (Military Law Collection, 1961). "The Hague Convention of 1907 is in practice observed by the whole civilized world and as the various courts for war criminals stated after World War II these regulations will be considered bound to the rules stated in it to the same extent as it is bound to observe the rule of international law."

Nevertheless, the first legal act of the Israeli Army in the occupied territories dealt with imposition of a collective punishment.

It started in Emmaus, Beit Nuba and Yalu. In June of 1967, these three peaceful villages in the Latroun area were erased completely and the Arab inhabitants expelled without even their personal belongings. Now, there is a recreation center there.

During eleven long years, the collective punishment became a trade mark of the Israeli occupation. In the course of this action, almost 20,000 Arab houses were



Palestinians wait to see family members at Nablus prison.

demolished. The legal base for this action were the Emergency Regulations. A house is demolished by order of the Minister of Defence if one of its inhabitants is accused or even suspected of an illegal act against the authorities. The maxim of the Geneva Convention saying that reprisals against protected persons and their property are prohibited was and is ignored arrogantly, with the silent compliance of the U.S.A.

The other instances of collective punishment are those imposed on whole cities. In 1969, there was an order issued by the Ramallah Military Governor forbidding the purchase of sheep meat. In the middle of the grape season, in August 1970, the sale of grapes and their harvesting was forbidden, unless the notables of the area publicly denounce the actions of the Palestinian organizations and the PLO. During the demonstration in 1976-77, many demonstrators were shot, mostly young boys and girls. In April 1978 in Nablus the curfew was for seven days and the reason. as given in "Maariv" newspaper was that the inhabitants did not collaborate with the police. They were prevented also from selling their goods.

Even such an innocent expression of protest as closing shops, which is legal in Israel, is considered a crime by the occupiers. Those daring to do so in Hebron, Ramallah, Jericho, Nablus or East Jerusalem are endangering their livelihood. Many shops were closed as a punishment for months. Soldiers broke down many doors, thus not allowing even this peaceful way of protest against the wrongs of the occupation.

The pupils are the natural enemy of the occupiers. I have now many clients, aged

13-14 arrested for vandalism. They were harshly beaten in the Ramallah investigation center. What a bankruptcy it is to the occupier that children, who were babies in 1967, are fighting against the occupation.

The military governor of Gaza invented a new system of collective punishment. After the demonstrations, he passed from class to class and announced that he will not grant permits to the students to go abroad for studies. And because there is no place to study in Gaza, the number of workers will increase and the labor contractors will be glad.

Jewish settlers in the occupied territories, blessed by our Prime Minister recently, are taking young boys from Hebron to their private detention places, beating them and then releasing them. Not everybody is so lucky as the Beit Jala children with their broken legs and hands, that a *Time* reporter managed to interview them and to convince others that they were telling the truth and that it was confirmed by an Israeli journalist.

There is now a custom to compel the inhabitants of Palestinian cities to clean the stone barricades. Once a sheikh from Hebron was compelled to do so. As a Jew, a wife of a survivor of Nazi camps, I felt ashamed and offended, hearing about this treatment.

There is another way to collectively punish the students, by closing schools, by imposing heavy fines and imprisonment on those who have exams, by trials which resemble court-martials, sometimes without the slightest possibility for defense. Sometimes the fathers have to pay or go to prison for their children, an especially burdensome regulation for those responsible for large families, refugees or poor workers.

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BIR ZEIT UNIVERSITY: PALESTINIAN EDUCATION UNDER ATTACK



Students at Bir Zeit University, 1977

In the first week of May, the Military Governor in Ramallah denied work permits to seven foreign teachers working at nearby Bir Zeit University, one of two universities on the occupied West Bank. The seven professors — Hugh Harcourt, Walter Lehn, Donald Holroyd, Richard Lorch, Robert Atkins, Nafez Nazzal and Said Athamneh - have taught at Bir Zeit for varying lengths of time and are citizens of three different countries, the United States, Canada and England. All are popular, committed teachers. Significantly, four signed a January 6 open letter, circulated in the West Bank and abroad, protesting the "daily occurrence" of Israeli brutality towards students, citing the January 5 interrogation and beating of two Bir Zeit students, one of whom, Khalid Mohamad Abid-Rabboh, was hospitalized after he collapsed from the beating.

In the months following the January letter, this kind of repression has intensified as part of a general crackdown on the West Bank. The most publicized incident occurred in Beit Jalla in March when Israeli soldiers entered a classroom, threw U.S.-manufactured tear gas cannisters into the room and locked the door, causing students to jump out of second-story windows and injure themselves severely.

This episode provoked so much press attention that Defense Minister Ezer Weizman fired the Military Governor of the West Bank, Brigadier General David Hagoel. But there seems little chance that the policy itself is subject to change, as it is rooted both in the practice and the goals of the Israeli occupation.

In practice, students have been in the forefront of the resistance to the occupation

— a fact readily observed in West Bank demonstrations as 11 and 12 year old girls and boys still in their school uniforms pile stones in the road to block Israeli patrols. Indeed, as the Israelis imprison or fine older students (fines of 10,000 Israeli pounds are common), the leaders of student strikes become younger and younger.

But it is more than the fact that students are activists. The Israelis attack students because they are students. Israeli attorney Felicia Langer has observed that the educated Palestinian is a special target of the occupation. She noted that Israeli interrogation becomes more brutal when confronted with a prisoner who displays his or her intelligence and sensitivity: "They get more angry if someone answers them reasonably. It is better to conform to their image of Palestinians and pretend to be a peasant."

Since 1967, Israel has concentrated on removing from the West Bank and Gaza an entire strata of educators, professionals and community leaders. Bir Zeit University, as the major educational center, has a history of confrontation with this policy. Bir Zeit's educational aim, as stated in its catalog, is "to prepare young men and women for responsible leadership and useful citizenship in their community." Bir Zeit's President, Hanna Nasir, a respected leader on the West Bank, was deported to Jordan by the Israelis in November of 1974. One of 1600 such deportees since 1967, he continues to function in exile in the University's Amman office, and the college still lists him as the President.

In an interview with Bir Zeit's student council in the spring of 1977, students affirmed that Israeli repression only spurs Palestinian resistance. One of them

explained: "Even if you do nothing, you cannot feel secure so it is better to resist. Nothing is safe or guaranteed." The students launched into an animated discussion of their role in helping guard villagers at the village of Deir Abu Mashel. For a month, armed Israelis had entered this village at night and terrorized the villagers, presumably with the goal of forcing them off their land to make room for Israeli settlement. The Israelis finally stopped the harassment after students, West Bank mayors, Jewish members of the Israeli left, and others came to the village and guarded it at night. The students were enthusiastic about these actions because they went beyond student strikes and demonstrations "The settlement issue unifies everybody," they said.

The students reflected on the fate of the first class to graduate from Bir Zeit's new four-year program, begun in 1972. "We talk all the time about jobs, but what awaits us? Many of our first graduating class are unemployed. If they're lucky, perhaps a teaching job. If unlucky, imprisonment. We are afraid many of us will be forced to leave." Indeed, although there has been no statistical survey, it is estimated that 5000 educated Palestinians leave the West Bank each year.

Bir Zeit's 550 students come from all strata of Palestinian society — about 15% from private schools and an equal percentage from refugee camps. About one-third are women. Women students have made an extra effort to reach Bir Zeit. One mentions a difficulty: "Every Arab boy reads the newspapers but a girl's upbringing does not include this." Others speak of problems with their families: "Many of our families are refugees and our parents have been through many wars. They have been disappointed by many things. They want a good life for us, but they are frightened by our political activity." A first-year student adds that family attitudes are changing - for example, family councils have begun to include young people. As Palestinian youth as seasoned by struggle, the older people begin to listen to them.

Bir Zeit students are determined to relate to their villages and families. Some tour West Bank villages with a dance troupe, doing the dabke, a Palestinian folk dance at village festivals. Students and teachers also fight to preserve the cultural heritage of Palestine—dance, music, poetry. Such activities are also under attack. One prominent theatre

group, Ballaleen, was forced to disband after harassment of its members and imprisonment of one of its leaders.

Yet Bir Zeit survives, and is an active center for learning, as well as resistance. In fact, Bir Zeit is expanding to a new 50 acre campus made possible by donations from the Arab world and the international community. Scholars at Bir Zeit are at work on the pressing problems of the West Bank: development of local industry, land alienation, strategies of survival of a people under occupation, analyzing the literature and new cultural forms that have developed in the eleven years of the occupation. In a 1977 paper entitled "Cultural Policies of the Israeli Occupation Towards Palestinians,"

Hanna Nasir stresses that the battle for education and for preservation of Palestinian culture cannot depend on the "unsupported efforts of Palestinians under occupation. . . The first steps to be taken are to build our Palestinian institutions, our organizations, our societies and our systems — all at a level that will restore confidence in ourselves and will help us create the Palestinian we want." He issued a call for teachers to come to the West Bank: "It takes people — intelligent, dedicated, educated and aware of the tremendous problems that we face. It takes people that can and are willing to go to the occupied areas and live and work there."

At this moment, seven of these dedicated

teachers are being forced to leave their students and the West Bank, with no grounds given by the Israelis for their dismissal. Such an action is a blow to the Bir Zeit that Hanna Nasir envisions, and a blow to present and future Palestinian students. Mohammed Hallaj, head of Bir Zeit's liberal arts program, remarked according to the Washington Post of June 24: "This sort of thing can cripple us. We're under tremendous pressure from the military governor, but if they take away our faculty, what do we have left?" Protest has begun among human rights organizations and it remains to be seen if academic associations will also lodge a complaint at the treatment of these seven educators.



CONFERENCE ADDRESSES PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

Princeton professor Richard Falk, speaking to the "Palestinian Human Rights and Peace" conference held May 20-21 in Washington, D.C., argued compellingly that Americans concerned about peace in the Middle East must combat the "politics of invisibility" that shroud the issue of Palestinian human rights. Palestinian self-determination and human rights, Falk said, have "been kept off the agenda in the Middle East," even though they are the central issues to be solved in the search for a genuine peace in the area.

The conference itself, in fact, sponsored by the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, was an initial step towards defeating these "politics of invisibility." Over 200 people from across the nation gathered at American University to listen to speeches by Falk, Israeli attorney Felicia Langer, Dr. Alan George of the Council for the Advancement of Arab British Understanding, Dr. Eqbal Ahmed of the Transnational Institute and PHRC Chairperson Jim Zogby, and to attend a series of workshops.

Only one year before, in the spring of 1977, 25 people attended the founding meeting of the PHRC, so this conference represented a significant increase in interest and organization. 10 organizations and 100 individuals — among them Senator James Abourezk, Professor Noam Chomsky, Representative John Conyers, and Jimmy Durham of the International Indian Treaty Council — sponsored the conference.

Key issues addressed in the workshops were political prisoners, torture and deportees, Israeli settlements on occupied territory and U.S. policy towards the Middle East. These will form the themes of campaigns which will be developed by the

PHRC. The urgency of organizing around settlements — called by one participant "de facto annexation" and defending the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza against increased Israeli repression lent a special intensity to discussions of organizing strategy. Participants stressed the necessity of addressing both specific violations of human rights of Palestinians and the larger issues of Israeli occupation and annexation. The settlement workshop, for example, discussed defending individual Palestinian villages from land confiscation, as well as attacked Begin's "self-rule" plan as perpetuating settlement and conquest.

At a roundtable discussion, John Sullivan of the American Friends Service Committee, Sheila Ryan of the New York Palestine Solidarity Committee and David Mandel of the Coalition of Concerned Progressive Jews gave their organization's views on the relation of Palestinian human rights to peace in the Middle East. Sullivan urged mutual recognition by Israelis and Palestinians as a key to peace, a view which led to a sustained debate with the audience. Ryan addressed the necessity of affirming Palestinian self-determination and recog-



Palestine Human Rights Conference

nizing the PLO as central to human rights work, and cited projects and campaigns by the PSC as examples.

David Mandel focused on the importance of work within the Jewish community and the formation of alliances with progressive Israelis. To illustrate his point, he passed out a leaflet prepared by his group and given to marchers in the Salute to Israel parade May 7 in New York which declared "No More War Between Arab and Jew! Palestinian Self-Determination: The Only Way to Peace for the Israeli and Arab Peoples." Affirming that many Israelis do not benefit from the occupation, the leaflet went on to point out: "Identifying world Jewry with the Israeli government's expansionist policies only fosters anti-Semitism, as does aligning Israel and world Jewry with repressive regimes around the world. Since when does fighting anti-Semitism included military and economic support of South Africa?. . . In our long history of resistance to anti-Semitism and racism, we have always found ourselves opposed — for our very lives — to the kinds of regimes being courted by the Israeli government. History must not record that we Jews were silent while in our name, barbarities were being committed against the Palestinian and Lebanese people."

In the main, discussion and debate were friendly and the final result of the conference was an increased unity. Regional Working Groups of the PHRC were established in 9 cities — Detroit, New York, Columbus, Washington, San Francisco, Atlanta, East Lansing, and Houston.

The Palestine Human Rights Campaign can be reached by writing: PHRC, 1322 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 or calling 202-296-5043.



Bedouins Protest Land Confiscation, Actions of Green Patrol

In a rare public demonstration, Bedouins from the Negev Desert, who are Israeli citizens, gathered in front of the Israeli Knesset in May to protest continued land confiscation in the Negev and the demolition of Bedouin houses. The 40,000 Bedouins living in the Negev have been under increasing attack from the "Green Patrol," a secret police unit headed by Agricultural Minister Ariel Sharon, On May 17, the Green Patrol bulldozed a number of Bedouin dwellings as reported in the New York Times of June 19. Bedouins charge that the Green Patrol harassed women and children and that even personal belongings were destroyed by the bulldozers because residents did not have enough time to pack.

So far, Minister Sharon has dismissed these accusations as "wild stories," and stereotyped Bedouins as liars, declaring in the *Jerusalem Post* of June 6 that "even lie detectors don't work on Bedouins." Other Israelis however have deplored the Green Patrol's "vigilante actions" (editorial in the *Jerusalem Post*) and one scholar and journalist, Yosef Goell said that "democracy in Israel" must mean at its bare minimum that "the fate of 40,000 people should not be decided secretly and arbitrarily."

Bedouins are also fighting land confiscation in the Israeli courts but up to now, the courts have done nothing, and land confiscation continues. Bedouin land has become the site of Israeli "development towns" in the Negev, settlements which do not permit Arab residents. Ibrahim Abu Regaiq, a Bedouin member of the Histradrut, said in an interview with the New York Times, that: "I know that in a democratic state no individual has the right to punish another individual. You must go to court, not punish in the middle of the desert."

Eleven Arab Teenagers in Maskobiya Prison Tortured

The Arab youngsters' ages vary from 13 to 16 years and their story, as told to their lawyers, was reinforced by the scars on their bodies. 13 year old Ibrahim Halih Abel-Moati from Kalendia refugee camp on the West Bank was arrested at home and taken immediately to Ramallah prison. There Ibrahim was repeatedly beaten all over his body with fists and clubs. He said: "With the club, they also hit me on the vital parts of my body. What they wanted was a confession that I threw rocks and Molotov cocktails at buses in our camp. They did not believe me



Bedouin surveys destruction of his home in Abu Talul.

when I denied having anything to do with the accusations and went on hitting me. Look at my leg, do you see the scars? Every part of my body aches. I feel weak and sick."

"The interrogators threatened me that my mother and sister will be brought here and will be raped right in front of me if I don't admit that I attacked the bus. Then I confessed to the accusations."

Another 13 year old, Mohammad Ahmad Abdullah Mteir, also from Kalendia camp said that "Sami and Yousef, the interrogators, forced me with their torture to confess that I threw rocks and Molotov cocktails at the bus and jeep at Kalendia refugee camp. They hit me all over my body and on my vital areas as well. They put my head in an opening in a chair and I was told to lift the chair repeatedly with my head. They also pulled my hair and forced me on the ground on my stomach and kicked me again and again. Sami then grabbed my throat and said 'I'll choke you to death if you don't confess.' I was put in solitary confinement for 13 days and when I asked for water to drink I was told to drink the water which is intended to wash the bathroom, which is dirty and smelly. What can I do," Mohammed said, "That is the way they treated me. I am a thirteen year old boy.'

Yousef Abel Shafour Abel Rahman, a 14 year old, Mohammad Freiry Ahi Abu Rah, 13 years old, Mohammad Khalid Mahmoud Abdullah, 13 years old, Mohammad Humdan Zuhran, 15 years old, Nabib Mahmoud Nabi Ahmad, 13 years old, Khalid Mohammad Mustafa, 14 years old, Ahmad Shokri Farran, 14 years old, Samir Abdel Hadi, 15 years old — all from Kalendia refugee camp and Mahmoud Adam Said from East Jerusalem all told the same stories about Yousef and Sami, the interrogators. Most seemed to have been arrested around the 22nd of April and all were accused of the same crimes, throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails at a bus in the camp.

The same acts of torture seem to have been used against all of them with some varieties: waking them up at night and beating them, hanging them with their feet up and their heads down and stuffing their mouths and noses with plastic for short periods and repeating these acts continuously. Mohammad Frairy Abu Rah also said that "Yousef and Sami poured some kind of lighter fluid over my head and lit a match and warned that they will harm me if I don't confess. At some point, I fainted and a doctor was brought to me. Then the torture started all over again."

Others told of being forced to undress for long hours, as repeated insults and threats to their lives were hurled at them.

Translated from Al-Ittihad, May 23, 1978

Gur Reveals Israeli Policy Towards Civilians

This remarkably frank interview with General Mordechai Gur, head of the Israeli forces in South Lebanon, and excerpted below, appeared originally in *Al-Hameshmar* of May 10, 1978 and was translated by Israel Shahak.

Over the past few weeks we've been spending a lot of time in Lebanon. The scene that revealed itself there was truly astonishing. IDF soldiers were found looting and breaking into shops and demoslishing houses, even when no signs of terrorists could be detected. What has happened to the IDF? What has happened to its renowned ethics of warfare?...

... When you tell people, who were raised on the ethics of "Thou shall not kill!" to "Go to war and kill the enemy" then everything is permitted. The minute you overturn the moral code then everything else is permitted. . .

But who overturns the code?

The very fact of the command: "Kill the enemy."

True. But first one must identify the enemy.

The soldier does not have this problem. The issue is, are we going out to war or are we not?

But in the case of meeting a civilian population?

In Jaffa, there was once a civilian population or was there not? In Haifa there was a hostile civilian population or was there not? Did they leave one apartment untouched or unlooted?

Assuming that the Lebanon war was not the last war, how can a young Israeli be prepared for a meeting with civilians during the fighting?

The men who fought in the Litani operation (the Lebanon invasion) were prepared in principle, not in details. This civilian population, in the midst of whom we fought, is a population that has been sheltering the terrorists for over 10 years... I myself, as a front commander, shelled them for two and a half years. After the slaughter in Avivim I bombed and shelled four villages with no formal permission...

Indiscriminately?

What discrimination? The people of Irbid (a town in East Jordan shelled 1968-1970) did nothing when I bombed and shelled them. . . What has come over you? Are you forgetting your history?

Our official military statements always spoke about retaliations against the sources of fire and reprisals waged only against terrorist targets. Come on, really... Don't you know that the Jordan Valley was emptied during the war of attrition?

In other words, when you are talking about a bombardment (by the IDF) you mean we did it indiscriminately?

I don't have a selective memory. I have been serving in the army for 30 full years. You think I don't know what we did all those years? What we did along the Suez canal? We created one and a half million refugees. Really where do you think you are?... How come this population of Southern Lebanon all of a sudden becomes a righteous one? They knew what the terrorists were doing...

Are you saying that the population is punishable?

Certainly, I have never had any doubts about that.

For the full text, send 50¢ to "Shahak Reports," Palestine Human Rights Campaign, 1322 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Israel Keeps Hold on Lebanon

The PLO Executive Committee in a statement issued June 16th called the Israeli policy of turning over occupied areas of Southern Lebanon to Israel's rightist allies instead of to UNIFIL forces, "a masked continuation of the occupation and an extension of Israeli domination over these

areas." This, in fact, the Executive Committee stated, "rewards the aggressor for his aggression" and is "against the will of the international community."

Israeli activities in the South were in themselves a signal of continued involvement in that area: on May 31, Israelis launched a heavy and concentrated artillery bombardment of civilian areas in Nabatiya and surrounding villages, and on June 9, in an amphibious assault, the Israelis attacked Dahr-al-Bourj near Sidon killing civilians and blowing up houses.

JDL Uses Terror Tactics to Block "The Palestinian"

The Jewish Defense League firebombed a Los Angeles movie theatre on June 16 in an attempt to prevent the screening of Vanessa Redgrave's film "The Palestinian." A previous movie theatre, the Samuel Godwyn Theatre had cancelled its engagement to show the film. "The Palestinian," however, played to a full house and finished a successful two week engagement.

Vanessa Redgrave is the sponsor of a resolution, signed by 73 other actors, which was presented to British Equity, the British performer's union. The resolution demanded a boycott of Israel because of "Israel's brutal invasion and terror bombing of South Lebanon."

(Newsbriefs continued on page 12)

LOOTING IN LEBANON

The following is an English language translation of a scarny (frivolous) ad which was published in Al-Hameshmar newspaper on April 14, 1978. "Al-Hameshmar" is a Hebrew-language newspaper published in Tel Aviv and the organ of the Mapam party, a Zionist-leftist party. This ad was published after repeated reports of Israeli soldiers in South Lebanon are being engaged in widespread looting.

The ad reads:

LOOTING IN SOUTH LEBANON

Excellent sets of furniture, televisions, rugs, transistor radios and much more! For those who did not steal the property left behind after the 1948 war,

For those who did not haul goods away from Gaza after the 1956 war,

For those who did not loot in the West Bank in 1967,

And for those who did not steal from American supplies in 1973,

Here is your chance! Don't just stand there, this time do something for your own house!

Contact the General Agent for the town of Tibnin.

Remember if you hesitate, the Phalangists are waiting, they will beat you to it!

ביזה בדרום לבנון

מערכות ריהוט מפוארות טלוויזיה שטיחים טרנזיסטורים ועוד ועוד.

אתה שלא תפסת חזקה ברכוש נטוש ב־48 אתה שלא שללת שלל בעזה ב־56 אתה שלא בזזת בז בגדה ב־67 אתה שלא גנבת מתוך המשלוחים האמריקנים ב־73

> הפעם אל תעמוד מנגד! הפעם עשה למען ביתך!

> סוכנות מרכזית: העיירה תיבנין.

זכור !!! אם פתמהמה -אנשי הפאלאנגות יסרימו אותר.



A Look At Israel's Record

It's only logical that the illegality of the Israeli occupation of Arab land is brought up once again to the attention of the world, as Israel celebrates the 30th anniversary of its existence, an existence built on the ruins of the Palestinian people who are now living in exile or under occupation. Israel and international law, as understood by the majority of world nations, seem mutually contradictory. Israel's actions in the last thirty years can be depicted as a chain of progressively hostile reactions to resolutions passed by the United Nations. Nowhere is this more clear than in the aftermath of the 1967 war — the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan and parts of the Sinai.

Israel's justification for this occupation has generally been couched in terms of selfdefence. Self-defence as an inherent right of nations was defined by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations which states whether explicitly or implicitly that an "armed attack" is a necessary prerequisite for invoking the right of self-defence. This was further explained in the course of General Assembly discussions in 1955, by the Mexican delegate who said: "For the use of force in self-defence to be possible under the Charter, such force must be immediately subsequent to and proportional to the armed attack to which it was an answer." Without these conditions, the act becomes a "reprisal" which is inconsistent with the purpose of the United Nations.

In 1967, when the Arab-Israeli war broke out, Israel's response was neither subsequent nor proportional to an Arab military initiative. As a matter of fact, the Israelis were the first to strike in 1967, as came to be known at a later date.

Furthermore, Israeli response in the name of self-defence to an alleged Arab aggression can not be accepted as a justification for Israel's continued occupation and annexation of Arab territory. Article 3 of the U.N.'s definition of aggression states: "the invasion or attack by the armed forces of a state of the territory of another state or any military occupation however temporary resulting from such an invasion or attack, or any annexation by the use of force of the territory of another state of part thereof, is labelled as aggression."

Israel's violation of international law and United Nations resolutions becomes the rule and not the exception. In the past thirty years, Israel has violated more laws and resolutions than any other nation in modern history. And it has done this aided and protected by total U.S. military, economic

and political support.

Nevertheless, Israel's illegitimate conduct does not end at the United Nations. As a matter of fact, Israel's frustrations at international condemnation often seem to backfire on the people under its rule. The more conscious the world becomes of Israel's aggressive activities, the more vicious is the torture and persecution to which people under its rule are subjugated.

The Israelis, in the name of national security and in defiance of all the laws pertaining to human rights, have created laws of their own whose purposes are the liquidation of the Arab presence in the occupied territories and the exertion of tremendous pressure on Arabs so they may leave the country, which will, in turn, make it easier for the Israelis to perpetuate their rule.

For instance, a law such as the "Law of Absentee Property" authorizes the occupier to expropriate the property of the occupied if the latter is considered "absent" by the occupier. A factual account of such happenings was reported in numerous magazines, books, articles, and major newspapers. For example, the New York Times, in an article by Anthony Lewis on May 25, 1978, spoke of the experience of Mr. Aziz Shehade, a man of 65, and a respected and successful West Bank lawyer. Mr. Shedade, according to Mr. Lewis, had bought some property near Ramallah from a cousin who had lived in Canada for years. When Mr. Shedade took the "title documents to the Israeli military government to register the transfer in the routine way, he was told that the sale could not go through; the land had been taken over by the custodian of absentee property.'

The New York Times also recorded the story of an old woman who lived in a house she had built years ago in Jenin. When the old woman decided to give a third of the property to each of two brothers living abroad, the occupation official came to the house and told her that her brothers' share had gone to the Custodian — She now must pay rent on the home she built herself.

The people, as well as land and property, are under attack. For instance, since 1967, 40,000 Palestinians have been imprisoned, the overwhelming majority held in administrative detention without trial. On May 3, 1971, the Israeli newspaper *Ma'ariv* reported: "In Gaza Strip alone, 5,620 Palestinians including men over 80 and children of 12-14 had been sentenced to life

imprisonment."

Israel Shahak, Chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights has warned: "The Israeli conquest really has genocidal tendencies towards the Palestinian people, a people as a whole, if it is followed up. It really can bring the abolition of the Palestinian in Palestine. This is a very real danger."

Amnesty International, the International Red Cross, the U.N. Commission of Human Rights and the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights have all reported and documented the tortures to which Palestinian prisoners are subjected by Israeli authorities.

The Israeli violation of all possible international laws go even further to include destruction of property. Between 1967-1975, Israel destroyed more than 19,000 houses in the Occupied Territories, leaving 100,000 homeless. Even refugee shelters were destroyed. In the Gaza Strip, the occupation authorities destroyed 2,540 shelters between August 1971 and April 1973 alone. This was said to have been done in the course of operations for "paving security roads," lessening population and so on.

More expressive of the Israeli intentions is their great preoccupation with settlement programs. Israeli investment in constructing settlements in the West Bank, usually on the ruins of Arab land, is proceeding at a rapid pace and has become a major obstacle to peace.

Between 1967-1977 Israeli settlements were founded on Arab land occupied in 1967. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 58 settlements were established. The land appropriated for these settlements is usually taken by one of several methods. One method involves the forcible expropriation of land. Another involves a nominal compensation for the original owners. A third authorizes the transfer of property of Palestinians living abroad to government ownership. The settlements tend to be viewed as permanent, which adds to Arab fears and doubts about the possibility of any future Israeli withdrawal from Arab land.

Every individual settlement serves as an example of the bigger state of Israel and its racist and exclusivist policies. Settlements are solidly built and surrounded with barbed wire. Arabs are not allowed in the settlements, with the exception of a few where Arabs work as cheap hired labor.

West Bankers react sharply to settlement, for they believe that the settlement



Palestinian house marked for demolition in Rafah



Israeli settlement in the Jordan Valley, West Bank.

program is part of an Israeli policy which aims at creating exclusive Jewish enclaves throughout the entire West Bank — in cities and towns as well as the countryside, at the expense of Arab land and freedoms. The settlement program has resulted in the destruction of Arab villages and the physical transformation of Arab cities, most notably the city of Jerusalem.

In the Sinai coast, 10,000 Bedouins were displaced between 1969-1972 to pave the way for the Israeli governor to establish more settlements. The Bedouins now live in barbed wire compounds with limited mobility, sometimes working as cheap labor in the newly-established settlements which were once Bedouin land.

For the Israeli settlement program to succeed, the acquisition, by whatever means, of Arab land becomes inevitable. The Israelis expropriate Arab lands, which might have been used for field crops, vegetables, vineyards, citrus groves or land to graze sheep and goats. In other words, the Arab land expropriated was as viable and useful to the Arab people as it would be to anybody else.

The Israeli settlement program is a direct, explicit violation of international law and laws pertaining to human rights. The U.S. itself, declared the Israeli settler activity illegal and a hindrance towards peace.

Contrary to the Israeli claim that

settlement can serve as a prelude to coexistence, the relationship between settlers and Arabs is non-existent or hostile. There are neither economic relations between the settlements and surrounding villages, nor education or social ties between them.

Lynne Barbee/MERIP

The settlements are another Israeli provocation to the Arabs and the world. This is another manifestation of the longstanding Zionist assumptions that they are entitled to an Israel that extends from the Euphrates to the Nile. Indeed, aggression and expansion are watchwords appropriate to Israel.

Former Prisoner Issues Appeal

On November 10, 1974, the Israeli military authorities arrested Hala Taher, a school teacher, while she was teaching a class in the village of Beit Eba on the West Bank. She spent one year and three months at Ramleh prison without trial, subjected to physical torture. She was later sentenced to twelve years in prison for "resisting Israeli military occupation." Her physical health deteriorated and after much pressure from international human rights organizations. she was released and deported to Jordan. In a hospital in Damascus where she is recuperating, she discussed Israeli repression and torture in prisons. Hala Taher remembered:

"I was subjected to all kinds of physical and psychological torture the first few months in prison. Despite extreme pressure, I did not collapse so the Israeli authorities finally accused me of "resisting occupation" and sentenced me to twelve years in prison.

I spent three years in prison and learned how to defy the Israeli authorities with other Palestinian women. We struggled to improve the inhuman conditions in prison and to maintain our Palestinian national identity.

The Israeli prison authorities used many harsh techniques to persecute us and break our spirit. They denied us the right to educate ourselves, to read books. They imposed collective punishment and forced labor on us. But through our collective efforts and strikes, we were able to regain our rights, especially getting books to read, stopping forced labor for the Israeli army and getting a holiday on Labor Day, May 1.

Most of the political prisoners support the PLO and consider it our legitimate representative. We all ask the PLO to assist the Palestinian people under occupation and to support their Arab institutions and we urge more unity and democratic discussion within the PLO.

We also ask the PLO to conduct an international campaign on behalf of the Palestinian women in Israeli prisons who are suffering from poor health and all kinds of diseases. A number of Palestinian women in Israeli prisons suffer from internal inflamations, kidney disease, loss of eyesight, ulcers and so on. We also urge humanitarian organizations to assist the families of political prisoners who are suffering due to lack of income or support.

Sami Esmail

(Continued from page 3)

Leven admitted, "sufficient to act as a deterrent" to other American students. In complying with the prosecutor's request for a stiff sentence that would be a "deterrent," the judges in fact affirmed that Esmail's trial was a "political trial." But, as Langer has noted, this deterrent is supposed to affect "hundreds of thousands throughout the world" who support the Palestinian cause. This is finally the most important point and a point Sami Esmail, who left the court where he was sentenced smiling and making the "V" sign for victory with his upraised hand, understands very well: that to make a crime of solidarity will only make that solidarity grow and give more people, and in this case more Americans, insight into both the repression faced by Palestinians and their determination to resist.

For more information and news about follow-up actions to defend Esmail, write the National Committee to Defend the Human Rights of Sami Esmail, 1118 South Harrison Road, East Lansing, Michigan 48323.



Middle East Film Festival

Eleven years after the fall of Jerusalem, June 7 was declared Hani Janwhariyyeh Day at the Middle East Film Festival held in New York June 4-10. Jawhariyyeh, a Palestinian filmmaker from Jerusalem and a pioneer who established the Palestine Cinema Institute, was killed while filming the ongoing battles of the Lebanese Civil War. Some of his footage of the civil war was shown during the festival.

This first festival of Middle Eastern films held at Bleeker Street Cinema, was organized by Faye Ginsburg and Israeli filmmaker Ilan Ziv and featured films from a number of Middle East countries, including Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Turkey and Iran.

Among the films shown, the films of four Israeli filmmakers raised the most controversy. These documentaries signalled a beginning in the breakdown of stereotyped images of Israelis as well as of Palestinians.

Historically, Shimon Louvish was the first Israeli filmmaker who dared, in his documentary *To Live in Freedom*, to show how the Zionist dream became the nightmare of the Palestinian people, and this film was also the first to suggest a settlement of the Palestinian national question. In recent years, an increasing number of Israeli filmmakers have begun to pose more critical questions on the screen, often to the dismay of the Israeli authorities.

Abraham and Isaac by Ilan Ziv, also screened at the festival, penetrated the heart of the problems as it questioned the

justice of sacrificing one's life in order to maintain a militarist state based on injustice. Unfortunately, his documentary *Sakhnin* in which he portrays the Palestinian experience under Israeli occupation was not shown during the festival.

Instead, Edna Politti's lyrical documentary, An Israeli Women Testifies for the Palestinians, attested to the nature of Palestinian attachment to the land. Her intervies with Palestinian students and workers, peasants and countrypoeple, were a poignant testimony that contrasted with interviews with Israeli children.

We Are All Jewish Arabs in Israel by Igaal Niddam illustrated the second-class state of Oriental Jews in Israel. Niddam argues in his film that Oriental Jews who form the majority of the Israeli population could become the bridge of rapprochement with the Palestinians and the neighboring Arabs.

It is not coincidental that each one of the these filmmakers at present chooses to live outside Israel. Niddam, who is originally from Morocco now carries a Swiss passport, Politti, originally from Lebanon presently resides in Paris, Ziv lives in New York City, and Louvish lives in London.

The rise of a new, progressive cinema in Israel has been aptly recognized by the Palestinian leadership last year when the first Hani Jawhariyyeh Memorial Award was offered by the P.L.O. at the Leipzig International Film Festival to Israeli filmmaker Mario Offenburg for his documentary The Struggle for the Land of Palestine in Israel.

Newsbriefs (Continued from page 9)

Israeli Prisoner of War Interviewed

In a television interview, the Israeli prisoner, Amram Abraham, said that he was fine and that he is being treated well by his captors. Abraham was captured on April 4th by members of the Palestinian forces in the area of Ras El Ain, Lebanon, during the Israeli invasion of that country. He also said that he is being medically tended to by doctors of the Palestinian movement. In the interview, he also appealed to his wife and family asking them not to worry about him.

When Abraham's mother was interviewed on the Israeli television after seeing her son on Lebanese T.V., she said that her feelings were confirmed the minute she knew he was still alive. "It seems," she said, "he is in good hands and they are treating him like one of their sons. I hope," she ended, "that he will be back with us soon."

It should be mentioned that the Palestinian forces agreed to release Abraham in exchange for some Palestinian prisoners who are being held in Israeli prisons. Contacts have been underway under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the U.N. for some time now in order to bring about the exchange.

Translated from Al-Ittihad, May 5, 1978.



Memories, Poalo Ganna, Italy.



Left to right: Faisal Arabo, whose Detroit radio program "The Arab Voice in Detroit reaches 100,000 listeners each week, receives an award for his outstanding achievements from Mr. Ismail Sarsour, member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Arab Association. In the middle is Dr. Abdullah Wajeeh, First Vice-President of the United Holy Land Fund's Executive Committee.

International Art Exhibit for Palestine

The International Art Exhibition for Palestine which recently opened up in Beirut is the first large-scale illustration of the solidarity of internationally-acclaimed artists with the struggle of the Palestinian people. Vanguard artists from over 20 countries headed by masters incuding the Spanish artist Juan Miro contributed original works as an expression of solidarity with the Palestinian people. The Parisbased, exiled Chilean artist Matta explained his own reasons for contributing to the exhibit when he wrote: "the artist is mainly the re-creation of the verb 'to see,' and the world refuses to see (the Palestinians), just as for so long the world was blind to Auschwitz."

Matta's words seem to speak for the works of the 183 contributing artists who, although they came from countries as far away as Australia and Japan, yet Palestine was their common focus. Other artists were from France, Poland, India, Peru, U.S.A., Italy, Brazil, Roumania, Denmark, Cuba, Germany, Argentina, and the U.S.S.R. Artists from the Arab world were from Lebanon, Iraq, Algeria, North Yemen, Kuwait, Syria, and Morocco. Palestine was represented by 14 of its native artists.

Works exhibited included oils on canvas, acrylics, watercolors, gouaches, as well as woodcuts, lithographs, silkscreens, etchings, and sculptures in bronze and wood. The diverse media reflected the variety of methods in expression, both between traditional and experimental means and between figurative and abstract themes.

Sculptor and poet Mona Saudi, a major organizer of the exhibit, worked through the PLO Office of Unified Information to open up channels of communication with artists around the world. She writes in an

introductory note to the catalog that this project is only the beginning of fortifying the Palestinian cultural front. She further explains that all works of art in this exhibit will, after a tour around the world, constitute part of a future Museum of Soldarity with Palestine.

Ironically, ever since the establishment of the state of Israel, the native cultural heritage of the Palestinian people has been adopted by the new immigrant population as their own, while denying this culture to the Palestinians. This exhibition of art not only reconfirms the Palestinian cultural heritage versus Israel's usurpation of a native culture but it also illustrates how, at a crucial historical moment visionaries from the international community stand against Israel's ethnocentricity and racism, pointing out the urgency of solidarity with the long struggle of the Palestinian people.

The struggle waged by the people of Palestine was never confined to military operations, as it never was an isolated conflict merely obsessed with the national geographic boundaries of an ancestral homeland. Instead, the Palestinian battlefront has been a horizon encompassing both political and cultural challenges. Just as Vietnamese experience had become a global symbol of defiance, the unfolding of Palestinian liberation, which carries within it seeds of a new vision for Western Asia, has become a source of inspiration to an increasing number of progressive writers, artists and filmmakers around the world.

Catalogs of this exhibition, including color reproductions, are available from P.L.O. Unified Information, Plastic Arts Section, P.O. Box 8984, Beirut, Lebanon.

The Last Letter

Kamal Nasser, a Palestinian poet and a member of the PLO, was assassinated by the Israelis on April 10, 1973 in Beirut. Another prominent Palestinian poet, Rasheed Hussein, who himself was to die in a tragic fire in New York City, wrote this poem after Kamal Nasser's death in the form of a letter by Kamal to his mother.

Beloved mother.

My great lady!

Before I die, I search for your eyes in my notebooks.

Writing about your simple dreams I find your heart drowned in bullets Beloved lady,

My first and last beloved.

What can I say when the bullets sing above my forehead like the rain?

What can I say to those who "free" the stars from the orbit of the moon?

What can I say to dogs chained to the princess's bed?

We promised "We will meet" and parted.
We spent our lives on the road.

We had said: "we will meet" Then we planted in our hearts

new homes and trees And when the rain fell bullets poured as well, my beloved,

While rats in fancy hotels went on searching for a princess on their way out the door.

Beloved mother!
Your name if Jaffa
Be as you were, the gardens of Safed
Don't wait for a Friday
nor for a Sunday
You are the bell and the minaret
You are my first poem
My first and last
Beloved.

Rasheed Hussein







Palestinian Martyrs, Matta, Chile



Dedicated to You, My Dear Palestine

by Shiba Mitsuyo

The earth no longer smiles
Where the children were broken to pieces,
Where the anger was buried of those first killed by guns;
The earth where the weeping mothers fell down
Screaming and kissing its clay;
Olive trees pulled out, sheep burned to ashes,
Houses swept down by a sea of flames.
The earth no longer smiles
While people are running away in panic,
While people are driven into the torture chambers in
bloodstained clothes,
And while people are burnt like firewood in air raids.

Oh my dear children, who walked about the roads Crying for a school to study in, and a place to pray, A change of clothes and a drink of water. Yesterday you were on the barricades, Carrying sandbags in your small arms, Protecting your mothers with guns in your hand at the doors.

From under the stones of the occupied land, From the bundles of plundered barley, From the tombs of the martyred victims, Were handed down to you the weapons. Fighters have been born from every house Rising up to defend their naked lives.

Today you are the soldiers of the vanguard, You are gentle lovers writing letters In the blood-soaked hollows. You will never leave sorrow behind, You will never escape from unhappiness, You will redeem your captured brothers Offering yourself to the sacred cause.

You are now the captains in the air Directing the course toward freedom.

Oh Palestine, the burning eyes full of hope, The invincible ranks of courageous fighters Who will rise up again and again, No matter how often the shells may strike them We see you coming to us all the way With the fighting pens and papers over the world, By fighters with pen and paper all over the world, By workers who print and carry,

A little girl in a wheelchair was reading your message, An aged poor laborer was clipping your photograph, Mothers sitting in the fields were firmly shaking your hands, Protesting against the plunder of their farms by tear-gas bombs In the silence of the fighters in prison, In the small demonstrations repeated, In the hunger strikes in the frozen night, In the eyes gouged out by torture, In the courts where death sentences were passed, We see you always in the vanguard.

Oh Palestine, the broad passionate breast, The champion of freedom who brings back the light And self-confidence to the crushed people. From the muzzles of your guns will come forth The love cherished in the long struggles. When you bring the bright spring back to us, The olive trees will put forth young shoots From the bullet marks that are left in your body. The earth will smile again, Like an infant newly-born.

طفلة صغيرة جالسة على كرسي للمتعدين تقرأ رسالتك كان عامل كهل يحتفظ بصورتك أسهات تصمد في الحقول احتجاجاً ضعد القنابل المسيله للدموع التي اغتصبت المزرعة في يشدن على يدك بشدة في صمت المحاربين الدسرى في المظاهرات الصغيرة المتكررة في الإضراب عن الطعام خلال الليل المتجمة. في الأعراب عن الطعام خلال الليل المتجمة. في الأعين التي تقتلع أثناء التعذيب في المحاكم التي تقتلع أثناء التعذيب

يا فاسطين يا صدراً رحباً مشتعلاً المنداقيين الذين يسترجعون الشمس المحترقة و الثقة للشعب المقهور الشمس المحترقة المحبه التي تعلمتموها خلال أيام الصراع الطويلة سوف تنطق من فوهات بنادةك سوف تنبت الزيتونة من الجروح الباقة في جسمك و من تلك الأغصان اللينة سوف تبتسم الارض الاول مرلا ابتسامة الرضيع و

تحت أحجار الارض المحتله من رزم الشعير المسروق من أسماء الشهداء الأبرار أمنات الشهداء الأبرار أمنات الشهداء الأبرار ولا المحاربون في كل بيت صامدين بثبات لحماية الأرواج العارية اليوم انتم المدائيين في الحظ الأمامي وائتم العشاق الطيبون تكتبوا الرسائل في أخاديد الارض سوف لن تتركوا حزناً ورائكم أبداً سوف لن تتركوا حزناً ورائكم أبداً سوف لن تتركعوا من الارض البائسه تصروا على فديتها بأرواحكم سوف المن تسترجعوا الراقق الأسرى سوف تسترجعوا الرقاق الأسرى سوف تسترجعوا الرقاق الأسرى سوف تحولون الإتجالا نحو الحربة

يا فلسطين المحترقة يا مُفتَّحة العيون قلعة المحاربين الشجعان المنيعة الذين ينهضون مرة بعد أخرى بعد تكرار القصف ، بعد الأيدى والارجل المبتورة يا فلسطين المحاربه أنت معنا في أيد عمال المطابع أنتمنا في أيد عمال المطابع في أيد العمال الكادحين في أيد العمال الكادحين في أيد اللهال الكادحين في المدائر، الذي يتعدى المحيطات

الاهداء إليك يا فلسطين الحبيبة ميتمو شيبا

لن تبتسم الارض بعد الان حيث تمزق الاطفال إرباً إزااً حيث تمزق الاطفال إرباً إزااً حيث تمزق الاطفال إرباً إزااً حيث سقطت الاسهات باكيات على أولاد و بنات لن يعود وا يقبلن الطين يقبلن الطين مولوا القطعان إلى رماد سقطت البيوت الى الارض ناراً ملتهبة لن تبتسم الارض بعد الآن وقتما يمرب الناس عليهم ثيا با دامية عليهم ثيا با دامية وقتما تحرق القابل الناس وقتما تحرق القابل الناس

يا أطفالي الاعزاء ، تسيرون في الطريق باكون دون مدرسة تدرسون فيها ولا مكان تصلون فيه دون ثباب تبدلونها دون ماء يخفف من جوعكم البارحة كنتم قابعون وراء المتاريس تجرون أكياس الرمل بأيدرصغيرة واقفين على الأبواب حاملين البنادق لحماية أمهاتكم

MY SON, KUNTA KINTE

by Felicia Langer

This article, written by Felicia Langer, about Sami Ismail was published in Al-Ittihad newspaper in May 1978 in Israel.

He didn't come to us chained. He was chained in his homeland. Those who came from abroad and usurped his country wanted to obliterate his national identity, as had happened to his African brother. But soon they discovered that the Palestinian Kunta Kinte was stubborn and attached to his identity like his brother, whom they admired when he appeared on the TV screen.

They decided to track him down everywhere. And they knew that their long arm will catch him despite the thousands of miles, because their hatred knows no borders. They, too, are attached to their goal: That this Kunta Kinte, whose roots here are deep, has no right to exist.

And so in an evening in the darkness of jail, I met him. A man who had a beard, was pale, hazel-eyed, in shabby clothes and skinny. In a trembling voice he told me a little of his trail of sorrows. I listened to him, stunned as if an electric current went through my body and suddenly as if he wanted to alleviate my distress he smiled a smile like a ray of light in that cold, dark and oppressive cell.

The Israeli prosecutor tried to erase from his face, while in court, that same smile that

warmed both of us in jail, when she said to the judges in the anger of somebody who lost her cool, "Look, he is still smiling." I saw myself in a dream as if I were his mother, the Jewish mother of the Palestinian Kunta Kinte, who was not saved from the persecution of his oppressors by the American flage under which he was raised.

He told me one day, "I want a mother." And so we ask forgiveness of his mother overseas and we promise not to downgrade her rights or her love and kindness to him. In full view of police escort in a crowded street in Israel, I adopted him and clutched his chained hands and that is how Kunta Kinte became a brother to my only son.

My pride in him is as strong as their hatred of him. They hate him because he was educated abroad, was cultured, eloquent and handsome.

The words they spoke at him were like poisonous arrows. When he answered politely, they got angrier to the extent that they prevented him from seeing his dying father and taunted him saying, "You don't care much for your father" when he was about to die. Now his father can't even rest in peace.

Then I saw him tremble and heard him scream angrily, "Do you think I'm not a human being? Do you think I don't have

feelings?" But his questions remained unanswered — and I worried for their revenge. And it wasn't long in coming. The hours that passed from when they told me they put him in prison until I visited him were like eternity.

He returned with a beard and grubby clothes. My heart was depressed but I saw a determination in his eyes which I hadn't noticed before in the darkness of jail. They had succeeded in hardening and stiffening his spirit.

He sat beside me and told me how they insulted and tortured him and then turned around and accused him of attacking them. They wanted to degrade him before my own eyes and to destroy what was beautiful about him so they threw him in a filthy cell and fed him poison as if he were a dog. "I thought in the beginning I would not eat and then I remembered what was said to Kunta Kinte, 'Eat always when you are in prison.' And as he talked to me and apologized for being so dirty, I was thinking of ways to get him out of their hands because in a short while I will leave and he will remain in jail. And as if he read my mind he said, "It's time to say goodby. Don't worry, please." He calmed me down and I walked with him to his prison cell.

Editorial (Continued from page 2)

Chaim Weizmann, long before the establishment of Israel, once declared tht the world would judge Zionism by the way it interacted with Palestinian Arabs.

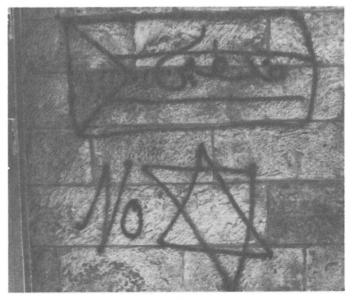
This was a prophetic statement.

The outside world waited half a century to gain a picture of the relationship between the Zionist movement and Palestinians and to pass its judgement. Two and a half years ago, the United Nations General Assembly declared Zionism a form of racism and racial discrimination.



To Our Readers:

Palestine Perspectives welcomes letters to the editor, reports of local activities, photographs and news items of interest.



Slogans on wall in Jerusalem.

Felicia Langer (continued from page 5)

The police are beating people on the streets of Nablus. The military governors are forbidding the mayors to meet and to discuss politics. Recently, the mayor of Jericho was warned not to hold even a social lunch. The Shiloh settlers (the fake archeological settlement) are catching Arab children who throw stones or shout against them, putting them in Shiloh, and only after the parents come and promise that the children will behave properly are they released.

Towards Peace

We are a nation which has suffered tremendously for ages. A nation of refugees and victims of fascism, which has been indoctrinated for years by the Zionist theory and practice to ignore and to despise the rights of the Arabs, especially those of the Palestinians, and to speak to them in the language of rifles, bombs and prison cells.

In a letter to Angela Davis, while she was in prison, James Baldwin has written: "One might have hoped that, by this hour, the very sight of chains on black flesh, or the very sight of chains, would be so intolerable a sight for the American people, and so unbearable a memory, that they would themselves spontaneously rise up and strike off the manacles. But, no, they appear to glory in their chains; now, more than ever, they appear to measure their safety in chains and corpses."

Many years have passed since the moment these words were written. Angela is free. But as to our rulers, they are still

measuring their safety by chains and corpses. But recently something was changed. I am happy to say that by now thousands of Israelis came to a conclusion that only a solution, as I have just stated, is able to break once and forever the vicious circle of blood, sweat and tears. The thousands, demanding PEACE NOW, do not want any more chains and corpses, which the Begin government is offering us day by day. They are struggling together with the progressive forces in Israel against the disasterous policy of our government, isolated and ostracized by almost all the

world, but still very dangerous in its blind stubbornness.

The Palestinians have rights as human beings, as a people. They will not give them up. They have paid for them with a sea of blood and they are ready to sacrifice more and more until they are recognized.

In our era, the policy of expansion at the expense of other peoples is condemned to death. The day it dies will be one of the happiest days for all the peoples in the Middle East, so thirsty for peace.

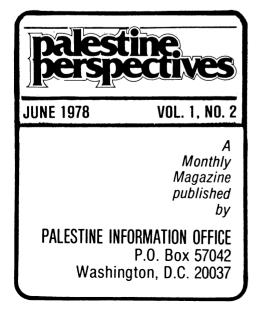
Blessed are those who by their struggle are bringing near this promised day.

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