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Dear AJDS members and supporters,

This month we mark the 50th year since Israel’s annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. For many Jews, this was cause for celebration. In Arabic, however, this event is called the Naksa, or ‘setback’. In terms of its traumatic resonance, this anniversary comes second to the cataclysmic establishment of a Jewish State in 1948, the Nakba, or ‘catastrophe’. But debates within the Jewish Left about wording, or the ranking of such devastating events, can at times feel like a distraction from the ongoing, escalating violence and severe restrictions on democratic rights and free speech.

To a growing number of Jews worldwide, it is unthinkable that such social injustice in Israel/Palestine should continue and escalate. This dissent was evident with the groundswell of expressions of solidarity for Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike in Israeli prisons. Military forces suppressed some demonstrations with violence; it was also used against the Sumud Freedom Camp at Sarura, a resettled Palestinian village in the northern West Bank, joined by hundreds of activists from around the world including AJDS executive members Jordy Silverstein and Rachel Liebhaber, there with the Centre for Jewish Nonviolence. This kind of peaceful action transcends internal divisions and minor differences, and makes successful and lasting connections that are stronger than any wall or other physical barrier.

In this spirit, the current issue of *Just Voices* brings together voices that inspire, inform, and strengthen our collective resolve to stand up for universal human rights in Israel/Palestine.

Yours,

Keren Rubinstein, AJDS Content Editor



Photograph taken by Sylvie Leber. View the full photo essay of her visit to Palestine at <http://www.ajds.org.au/2017/06/palestine-photographs-sylvie-leber/> and see back pages for more.



Fadel, a Palestinian resident of Sarura, resisting the second IDF raid. Ahmad al-Bazz/Activestills.org. Image found at <https://972mag.com/photos-a-week-of-joint-struggle-in-sumud-freedom-camp/127620/>.

AJDS Statement on the Israeli Occupation on its 50th Year

As we reach the 50-year milestone of Occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, the AJDS is devastated by the realities of the ongoing military occupation of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. It is both painful and tragic because we believe it can end. In presenting the historical background and detailing the ongoing devastation we acknowledge the Palestinian dispossession and hope to shift the narrative, one that has not shifted enough in 50 years. In the context of our own history it is incumbent on us to shout ENOUGH. We refuse to stay silent or participate, not in our name, we are witnesses who choose not to be bystanders.

Whilst the dispossession of Palestinians from their lands did not begin with the results of the 6 Day War – which is called the Naksa in Arabic, the Setback - the war played a significant role in emboldening messianic expansionist elements in Israeli society and amongst Zionists throughout the world, which has strongly impacted settlement expansion throughout the occupied territories, and ensured that years of “negotiations” have resulted in neither justice nor peace for Palestinians, or Israelis. While what is commonly termed ‘the Occupation’ began fifty years ago, we recognise that the history of violence against Palestinians in Israel and Palestine has its roots long before 1967. What is known in a Zionist narrative as the War of Independence of the State of Israel, is known to Palestinians and others as the Nakba, or Catastrophe in Arabic. It saw the mass dislocation of Palestinians from their land, with up to 800,000 Palestinians being forced to flee their homes and land and refused the right to return.

As a result of the occupation, every aspect of Palestinian life is controlled by Israeli administration: through checkpoints, refusal to grant development permits, home demolitions, arbitrary military arrests, curfews, collective punishment, tightened control of economic and development opportunities, and innumerable other practices. In Gaza, which has been described as an open-air prison, Israel controls the entry and exit of all goods. A 2015 UN Conference on Trade and Development reported that at current trends Gaza may become unlivable by 2020. In the West Bank and East Jerusalem, life is controlled at a minute level, and everyday extreme violence is enacted in order to remove Palestinians from their land. The Occupation, and those who enforce it, is incredibly creative and resilient, always able to find and invent new ways to hinder Palestinian life and work against Palestinian resistance (even as that resistance resolutely continues). The Israeli military industry and its global arms sales, relies on the Occupation. The Israeli economy is completely bound up in the Occupation.

Sadly, Israel’s policies have made it a pariah state in world opinion, with increasing international pressure to pursue action to end the occupation, including from a growing number of Jews and Jewish organisations outside Israel, who can no longer align their identities with a state for the Jewish people which repeatedly and systematically acts against their ethics and values.

The occupation which has occurred since 1967 is a continuation of a systemic dislocation of one people for the sake of another. It is an occupation which has always been, and continues to be, carried out by all levels of Israeli society. It is an

occupation which has been widely condemned by the international community. It is an occupation involving the construction of Jewish Israeli settlements which are deemed illegal according to International law and have created a clear obstacle to peace and justice. It is an occupation which relies on a conscription army and a national population who refuse to see, or interact with, Palestinians as fellow humans.

As hopelessness intensifies in the face of what seems like an intractable situation, and as the international community repeatedly fails to bring about a just resolution, we encourage people to take action in their communities and within global movements, in coalition with, and led by Palestinians, to understand, educate and oppose the actions of the occupation and the broader dispossession of Palestinian people. As a Jewish organisation, we stand resolutely against the policies of occupation, dispossession and oppression. Instead we highlight the Jewish and universal values which call us to stand against such injustice, and foster Jewish identities that contribute to a world in which such violence ceases to exist. We call on the Israeli government, and Israeli society, to show that there is a partner for peace who can meet with Palestinians in order to bring about a just peace in the region. We call on our Australian Jewish communities to join us in refusing to support the ongoing occupation, in order to be part of a global movement which will ensure that there is not another 50 years of such violence.

Some brief facts on the occupation (there are many more, of course. The occupation is dynamic, flexible, and comprehensive):

- In 2011, the World Bank projected that the Palestinian

GDP could have increased by \$3.4 billion a year if it weren't for restrictions Israel imposes in area C of the West Bank.

- The Palestinian Authority, the governing body of Palestinians in areas A and B of the West Bank requires the consent of Israeli authorities on all decisions.
- The West Bank is littered with Israeli checkpoints controlling the movement of Palestinians. Each Palestinian town or village in the West Bank has a barrier at every entrance which the Israeli military can close without warning. The entire Palestinian society in the West Bank can be prevented from moving around within twenty minutes.
- A military court system applied in West Bank, which tries thousands of Palestinians every year.
- Israel restricts development and access to land in the West Bank, denying building permits and enacting home demolitions
- Whilst the figure of 2% is often spouted as the amount of land taken up by settlements, this does not take into account the infrastructure and adjacent lands seized to accommodate the settlements, and the lands that fall under settlement regional land management authorities, amounting to around 36% of the West Bank (according to B'Tselem). Lands which do not have settlements on them are still controlled by settlers and the settlement regime: there are roads throughout the West Bank on which only settlers can drive, and the army – together with settlers – will forcibly remove Palestinians from areas around settlements.
- The army regularly declares public spaces, and private homes, Closed Military Zones, in order to close off Palestinian access to spaces.
- Jewish settlements built in East Jerusalem (which is cut off from the rest of the West Bank) surround the Palestinian region.

- In East Jerusalem Palestinians are forcibly removed from their homes for Jews to move in.
- Israel controls who can travel in and out of the occupied territories, as well as controlling travel in between villages in some instances.

Gaza:

- A 2015 UN Conference on Trade and Development reported that at current trends Gaza may become unliveable by 2020.
- Since June 2007 Israel has maintained control of all border crossings except Rafah in Egypt, which is not suitable for transport of goods, only people. Israel also controls sea and air space, forbidding Palestinians to build air or sea ports, and bans almost all export out of Gaza.
- 95% of water is non-potable.
- residents receive electricity for a few hours each day.
- Since 2007 three wars have been launched on the besieged population of Gaza with thousands of casualties and a large civilian death toll.

This statement was issued 6 June 2017.

“Report from the ground: Sumud Freedom Camp”

By Jordy Silverstein

Overland, 23 May 2017

On Saturday morning I woke up at Sumud: Freedom Camp. The camp is set up in Sarura, a reclaimed Palestinian village in the South Hebron Hills in the West Bank. It has been built on the principle of sumud, steadfastness. Between 1980 and 1998 the people of Sarura were expelled from their lands through the violence of the Israeli army into nearby villages and towns, such as At-Tuwani, Hebron and Yatta. They have remained displaced

since that time, until Sumud Freedom Camp was established on Friday. An unprecedented coalition, invited and led by the families of Sarura and other local Palestinian organisations, has worked together to provide a new home and a new space for resistance, as well as a new mode for articulating claims for Palestinian justice.

During Friday and Saturday, as part of a delegation from the Center for Jewish Nonviolence of approximately 150 Jews from around the world – more Jews from outside Israel than have ever before come together for such a project – and working alongside the Popular Committee for the South Hebron Hills, Youth Against Settlements, Holy Land Trust, All That's Left and Combatants for Peace, we engaged in a profound act of co-resistance: we planted Palestinian flags, cleared cave homes that dispossessed families had been forced out of by settlers from the nearby settlement of Maon, the IDF and the Israeli legal system, made roads and cleared paths, set up tents, engaged in conversations and learning, and we shared stories.



Walking into Sarura.

On Saturday afternoon my work group joined in the task of concreting the floor of a cave. About fifty of us passed buckets of water along the line in order to make the concrete, which was

then passed in buckets down a different line into the cave, where a Palestinian community member lay it down, turning a soft floor into a concreted floor, fit for the family to live in to return to their land. For a time I stood in the cave handing over buckets of concrete – a row of us passing buckets on one side, four Palestinian boys and men on the other, and with a loudspeaker blaring Palestinian music behind us, we danced and sang alongside the bucket passing. This was a moment of resistance that was cultural, physical, and spiritual.

On Saturday evening we stood around the fire, dancing dabke, clapping and celebrating. We had finished a delicious dinner and we were making moves to watch a Combatants for Peace documentary projected onto a screen in the community centre, or to take on the night watch duty to look out for settlers and the army, or to continue talking and dancing by the fire. At 11 pm the army moved in on the camp. At first heading to our generator, they pushed and shoved people in their movement to steal it, thus cutting off the fairy lights that had brightened the camp. They then moved on to the tents, destroying one sleeping tent, then the supply tent, and then moved on the main community centre and sleeping tent. They took selfies of themselves with us as their background. One Palestinian nonviolent activist, Riyadh Al Halees, was verbally threatened by a soldier who said to him, ‘I will kill you one day.’ They were consistently, frighteningly, violent.

But as the soldiers moved around the camp, we stood in their way. Palestinians, Jews from around the world, and Israelis, stood together with arms entwined, singing and chanting, photographing, filming and livestreaming. One Palestinian boy stood on a wall and led the chants for a while. Issa Amro, the

head of Youth Against Settlements, made jokes. We made it clear to the soldiers that the whole world was watching, and that we would not stand down. We would continue to resist, together, nonviolently.



‘Welcome to Sarura’

Coming as part of the Center for Jewish Nonviolence (CJNV) delegation, we were clear about the role that we played. As Jews from outside Israel, we were asserting that we were invested in the idea that Jews’ and Palestinians’ lives are intertwined. That our resistance practices and strategies need to work together, not out of obligation, but because we believe and feel it to be true. We were also clear that we were being led in this co-resistance work by Palestinians and that we would do the justice work that they required of us.

Throughout, it was clear that we must recognise the ways that we are able to use our bodies differently to assert claims and further protests. It was evident – in the vast time that the army was there – that the fact that we were largely Ashkenazi Jews meant something to them. It meant that they were hesitant to use extreme violence against us. They pushed and shoved, hit some people with the ends of their guns, and pointed their guns at people’s bodies. And over the two days that we were

there, when the settlers from the nearby settlement came to harass us, they never enacted physical violence. We know that if we were not there, the violence used against Palestinians would have been vastly harsher. This is part of, after all, the violence Palestinians experience everyday.

Over the days after the camp’s establishment, more and more Palestinians came to join us. They shared their histories, told all of us their vital stories of dispossession and of their continued subjection to the routine violence of the Occupation. They told us that they were inspired by the camp, that they would take the model back to their villages and work to replicate it, and that it meant something important that so many Jews from around the world came to Palestine to stand shoulder to shoulder with Palestinians in the fight. One man from a village near Qalqilya, in the north of the West Bank, arrived by the fire at midnight on Friday and told us that he had travelled for six hours to be there, after he heard about the camp that was being set up. He wanted to be part of the moment, to replicate it for his village, and to encourage Israelis and internationals to join him. We energised and moved each other as our stories intermingled.

For this is the important part: all of us, both present at the camp and around the world watching on through online videos and photos, or reading articles like this, must share these stories to understand the violence, and to ensure that what the army, settlers and government enact upon Palestinians – the ways that lives are controlled and harmed – is known and understood. We must engage not just with the individual stories, but with the powerful and entrenched structures of oppression and dispossession, that must be undone.



View of Sarura.

This camp in itself won't end the Occupation, nor redress the injustices of the Nakba (the Palestinian word for catastrophe, for the creation of the State of Israel and the dispossession of Palestinians from 1948, which continues, in the way that all settler colonies do). These are both vast in their implications and methodologies. Indeed, we had earlier spent the week in different parts of the West Bank, cleaning gardens, clearing rubbish, participating in prisoner hunger strike protests, building a restaurant, and being harassed by the army and settlers. I worked with a group in the gardens of a woman named Fatima, helping to clear rubbish and debris thrown by Baruch Marzel (a renowned Kahanist) and other settlers who live above her property. We planted flowers and herbs with Fatima before the settlers starting filming us, before the army arrived and made the space – her and her children's house – a Closed Military Zone, thus kicking us out of it. As the army tore down our tents, we told them that 'we will rebuild together.' And we are doing this. On Sunday morning, those of the Palestinians and the CJNV delegation who remained, along with others who were able to get around the newly-established checkpoints and arrive to help, sang songs of resistance from different times and places, rebuilt tents, moved materials to new homes, and ensured that the camp continues. Fadel, who was evicted in 1997 and whose cave home we had concreted, moved

home. Every day new people arrive to join in the coalition.

We learn something new by being in a space, that I know. But we also learn something new by interacting with others online, and by doing co-resistance work with those for whom existence is resistance. In Australia – like the other settler colonies that many of us in the CJNV delegation came from – we walk on land that Indigenous peoples have been dispossessed of, and we also have an important role to play in ensuring that Aboriginal people can return and live on their lands. This work is vitaly transnational: as we stand alongside those at home, we must see these connections, and work across borders and boundaries to ensure that everyone everywhere lives a just life, in the manner of their choosing.



Sarura resident, Fadel.

This coalition, and the Sumud Freedom Camp it built, and the CJNV delegation in general, isn't perfect. There are important critiques to be made. Alongside this are the feelings both that the dispossession and its material manifestations are so entrenched that they are permanent and unshakeable, and that one day it will all be overturned and there will be justice for Palestinians in this land. Our actions at times felt profoundly contradictory, complicated and ambivalent. But it all plays a part in a larger struggle, and opens up new frameworks for understanding, resistance and partnership. This is perhaps the best that all of us can hope for: to work together in deep, meaningful and resilient partnership with

others in ways that are ethical and just, understanding that until we are all liberated, no one is. And Palestinian liberation is thus the priority.

The hashtag for the camp and the project is #wearesumud, because we are in this together, producing a new future, facing off violence, steadfast to the end.

The payment for this piece is being donated to Sumud Freedom Camp. You can make a donation to keep this coalitional work going at the [Sumud Freedom Camp generosity page](#).

Images provided by the author.

This article was originally published in [Overland](#) and reprinted with permission.

The 1967 Occupation and propositions for Palestinian statehood: extracts from a lecture by Dr. Micaela Sahhar

The following is a heavily redacted version of a lecture delivered by Dr. Micaela Sahhar at Monash University in April 2017 as a guest lecturer in a course titled 'the Arab-Israeli Conflict' coordinated by the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation. The lecture delved into key issues in our understanding of Israel/Palestine, the so-called conflict and the significance of historical narration and (mis)representation. The lecture was accompanied by a powerpoint presentation of which we bring you a few slides. With the author's permission, below are sections from the lecture that focused on the occupation of 1967, and critical issues in the discussion of two states:

"...An idea prevalent in Israeli national narrative is that there is a significant and ultimately devastating shift between the creation of the State in 1948 and the Six Day War in 1967. In many

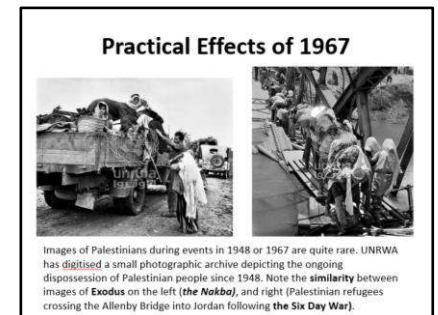
conventional narratives, 1967 is the date to which Occupation is attributed, and serves as the axiomatic moment in which it is said that Israel 'lost its way'.

... I will talk about 1967, but with my qualifications in mind, I will in particular demonstrate why, although I am beginning with 1967, the extent to which it is arbitrary, both as a date for Occupation and as a date which marks fundamental shifts in the ideologies which have produced the seemingly intractable scenario of the Israel-Palestinian conflict today. I would say that for Palestinians, while there are material changes created by the Six Day War, and while it is the date at which an idea of Occupation commences, in fact this is a date that forms part of a continuum of processes that crystallise in the creation of the Israeli State in 1948. Subsequently, the borders (unstable and undeclared as they are) acquired in 1967 have been cited by a succession of Israeli statesmen as central to an idea of Israel's secureability and defensibility. Israel's New Historian Ilan Pappé notes that there is an irony to this rhetoric, as the apparent securability of the post-67 borders is based on a boundary with the Jordan River. Yet, as Pappé point out, even a frail old man could leap over the Jordan River in places. More critically even than this however, is I think the mythology around which 1967 stands in Israeli society as the moment at which Israel starts to lose its moral authority in terms of relations with the Palestinian population. That in 1967 Occupation commences and that this slowly undermines the character of relations between Israelis and Palestinians in the new dynamic that it creates of Occupier and Occupied. To the contrary, and again this is an argument that has been made by Ilan Pappé, it is of great significance to note that in 1963, four years before the actual Occupation, the Israeli military was ready with a

judicial and administrative structure for ruling the lives of one million Palestinians. This is highly significant in so far as it indicates that the relations of Occupation created in 1967 were not only anticipated but that they were planned for. Moreover, that the Occupation that commences in 1967 was seen as a companion strategy to ensure certain needs of the Israeli State as envisaged in the Zionist plan enacted in 1948. In this regard, Pappé views 1948 as an incomplete project, which is more or less completed, albeit in a different form, in 1967. Pappé has argued for this reason as I do now that 1967 is hardly a central date but that the so called completion of the State project in respect to the Palestinian population might have been executed at an earlier time and particularly in the four years in which an infrastructure for Occupation had been established between 1963 and 1967. But of course, the plan does not take the same form as the earlier 'ethnic cleansing' of Palestine or even quite the same form in terms of land expropriation and dispossession that occurs at this earlier date either. Pappé explains why this is the case..."

"...So from a Palestinian view, and perhaps what I would describe in Pappé as the post-Zionist view of 1967, this date is just one part of the Zionist colonisation project, crystallised in a material sense in 1948 but for which the foundations are laid much earlier. They are certainly laid, although perhaps they seem unlikely at the time, long before the rise of Adolph Hitler between the World Wars, or his genocidal attempt to enact the 'Final Solution' by way of the Holocaust, which undoubtedly affected an enormous number of Jewish people. But in this account, what the Holocaust explains in terms of the contemporary Israel-Palestinian conflict is hardly why the creation of Israel was *necessary* or *inevitable*; rather it explains why the Western conscious found the

ethnic cleansing of Palestine, their expropriation and dispossession from their home land, to be an acceptable exchange for Eurocentric guilt around the horrors of the Holocaust."



"...1967 remains a date of considerable psychological significance to Israel. Indeed the Six Day War is considered to be a great military success for Israel; yet as a result of this, it seems it has created a particularly problematic and psychologically deforming legacy for subsequent generations of Jewish-Israelis. As Ghassan Hage has argued, Israel's success in 1967 tragically heralded the birth of the kind of hyper-militarism on display in Operation Cast Lead (which I will come to later in this lecture), since Israelis started to believe 'that omnipotence was not just a fantasy but an actual possibility'. He continues that the promise of omnipotence has since become 'the standard that various Israeli governments use to legitimise themselves to their population', which has led many Israelis to believe 'that this is the very function of Israel', and produced 'an inability to live with another that constitutes even a minimum danger to me'."



"...A particularly iconic image of what Israel has described as the liberation, recapturing or

reunification of Jerusalem, portrays three paratroopers at the Western Wall. The photograph is considered a ‘defining image of the conflict’ and one of the ‘best known photographs in Israel’s history’, while the photographer, David Rubinger, was later anointed by former Israeli President Shimon Peres, ‘the photographer of the nation in the making’. The central figure in the image has removed his helmet, revealing his blond hair (truly a model Sabra!) and looks upwards in a pose reminiscent of religious artworks of the last millennia – a visual embodiment of what Hage describes as Israeli’s moment of omnipotence realised in the Six Day War. As in the photography of Capa, there is no trace of the enemy; rather, they must be inferred in the representation of IDF success. This photographic representation of 1967 is echoed in international headlines of the event. *The New York Times*, for example, ran a story entitled ‘Israel Rules Out Return to Frontiers’, in which Israel’s Minister for Information, Yisrael Gailille [sic] states that ‘Israel could not live with arrangements that were supposed to have served as a preliminary to peace, but that have been stretched out for two decades’.

So this is the beginning of Occupation, although as I am suggesting to you, a continuation of the effects of 1948 and the geopolitical machinations that make this possible, of which you are no doubt aware, notwithstanding that I may have narrated such events with a different inflection; but it also sets up a series of narratives for Israelis about Israel, and entrenches the Western amnesia or disinterest in the condition of Palestinians from the time of the *Nakba*.”

“...Since Oslo, there has been a vacuum of any decolonization agenda. Rather, the project of an ‘economy for peace’ has been paramount, in which Palestinians ‘still reside under the Israeli

colonial project, yet at the same time are meant to feel liberated under the reign of the postcolonial Palestinian Authority (PA) ‘state’ project’ (Toukan 2014, 225). Yet for all of this, it seems important to recognise that an ‘economy for peace’ and the limited social imaginary it has defined, occurs under the conditions of 227 separated cantons which comprise the West Bank Areas A and B as determined by Oslo. While these two Areas were designated as a kind of Archipelago of the PA, Israelis continue to control borders, economy and natural resources in both these Areas (in addition to their control of the West Bank Area C) which, as the sheer number of sections so defined suggests, create often insurmountable disruption to Palestinians, not only through discontinuity but the way in which Occupation itself prevents Palestinians from using or connecting space (Toukan 2014, 215-216, Handel 2009, “What, 181). This creates what Handel describes as a decreasing affinity by Palestinians to “‘distant” areas’, notwithstanding that these may not be more than a few kilometres away (Handel 2009, 184). Thus at a purely practical level, as long as any section of Palestinian territory is not only permeable but controlled as it currently is by Israel, ‘Israel should still be considered sovereign in Palestinian territories, if only because it is Israel itself that can declare the exception that would allow it to annul the legal status of this ‘border” (Weizman 2007, 218).

Ariel Handel contends that in fact Israeli Occupation has been ‘refined to the point of maintaining [a] situation of continuous disaster’ (Handel 2009, 194). This generation of uncertainty, which creates a particular affinity with one’s own city and decreasing affinity with places nearby, shrinks the traversable horizon of a Palestinian in the West Bank, such that the restriction of a West Bank

identity card does not secure face value access to the West Bank as a whole, but rather has a highly restricted ‘use value’. Taking use value into account, one may find it impossible to move from different sections designated as Area A, due to the role of Occupation in obstructing passage: the distance of a journey itself might become infinite when obstruction renders it impossible (Handel 2009, 188). It is clear that spatial control as it pertains to Palestinian movement, (an inadvertent but highly effective byproduct of the infrastructure of settlements) (Handel 2009, 209) entrenches both geographical and psychological dissonances.”



“...I should also draw attention here to my use of terminology as ‘the 48 territories’. This is what Palestinians often refer to Israel as. Whatever problem you may have with that language, what it does draw attention to, I think, is in the first place Palestinian connection to the entirety of the geography of historic Palestine, but secondly, it underlines the fact that when we are talking about the Israel-Palestinian conflict we are not simply talking about Palestinians in the West Bank and Jewish-Israelis in Israel. To the contrary, Palestinians who remain in 48, a group which Israel often refer to as the Arab-Israelis, now constitute around 20% of the population of Israel proper. I am not addressing you today about possible solutions for the conflict, although in many ways my research is very interested in how narratives are told and how we could tell them better in order to acknowledge the position of every stake holder in the conflict. But even so, I hope

in problematizing the narratives attached to so called key historic events, that you can also see that, for example, a solution based on the West Bank and Gaza Strip would exclude not only the 48-ers but also the diaspora, such as myself. For anyone who is Jewish in the audience but does not hold an Israeli passport, you might like to consider that it is simpler for you to take up residence in Jerusalem, the city my grandparents and father are from, than it is for me. That might seem ok to you too – privilege is a wonderful thing for those who have it and privilege is hard to recognise, much less give up. But if nothing else, what I am trying to underline here is that we all do ourselves a disservice when we imagine the conflict can be compartmentalized.

Compartmentalised for example by removing West Bank settlements or saying to Palestinians here, in the West Bank or the Gaza Strip you can establish your homeland, or in separating Palestinian issues between the West Bank or Gaza from the issues faced by Palestinians in the 48 territories or in refugee camps in Lebanon or in middle-class suburbs of Michigan.”

“...In November 2012, the United Nations General Assembly put a bid for recognition of Palestinian statehood to the vote. The only material right which attached to that recognition as far as I can see, was that it would entitle the Palestinians to membership of the International Criminal Court (ICC). This would afford them legal recourse against Israel in future military operations such as Operation Cast Lead or Operation Pillar of Cloud, an operation that had been concluded in Gaza not eight days earlier. At the time, and even though the US and Israel were not going to support that bid, both states nevertheless tried to insist that the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, agree to waive the right to become a signatory to the ICC. At the very

least, this says a great deal about how current Palestinian leadership is an entity easily intimidated. At the very least it speaks to the great disparity in negotiating parties, which is increasingly acknowledged, although in practical terms a fact difficult to adequately redress.

Similarly, after Protective Edge, first Sweden and then the British Parliament indicated that they were prepared to throw their weight behind the principle of recognizing a Palestinian state - moves that were received as something momentous. But once we consider what recognition of a Palestinian state signifies symbolically, that is, a magnification of Palestinian struggle in the international imaginary, we should be careful to consider substantively and not just symbolically, what such recognition actually means. Beyond the victory of awareness, recognition of a Palestinian state seems to me an unfortunate continuation of the dead-end thinking that poses the inevitability of a two state solution. It is a recognition that acts as a white wash, circumventing the fundamental issues of Palestinian rights and grievances, which can never be accommodated within this framework of two states. To bring into focus the reasons why I think we should be wary of state recognition let me pose some additional questions. What difference does this recognition make? What does recognition of a Palestinian state actually avail the Palestinians of? And why now?

Discussing this with Palestinian friends in 2014 I was somewhat astonished to find that they were more buoyant about the news than I. Explaining why he welcomed the move, one friend suggested that in the case of Britain (a non-binding motion), it drew attention to Israeli racism, and could act as an important conceptual signal in isolating that. He also felt that in the case of Sweden, we would

increasingly see an effect in how states relate to Israel's clear breaches of international law within the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Palestinians know, if nothing else, that ours is a long road to justice, and so perhaps these are shifts in which we should take heart.

But it was the comments of an Israeli friend who declared *'it feels like a lot of rhetoric'*, that I found I could relate to most. Over the last few years commentators and negotiators have increasingly declared that a two-state solution is dead. So in this respect, it seems like a peculiar moment to try and revive that model through recognition of Palestinian statehood. She expressed concern about the lack of cohesion to a Palestinian state – a Palestine without access to water resources; carved up by Israel's separation wall – which recognition such as this simply can't address. She also noted that recognition could have the effect of absolving Israel of its responsibility to the non-Jewish citizens of Israel (predominately Palestinians) whose citizenship is widely documented to be of a second-class kind. But most of all, she felt that recognition was complicit in a politics of deflection, one that replaces substantive issues with trivialities, the proverbial band aid to remedy a shark bite. *Is this the best you can do?* She asked. She argued this initiative seemed to be a disengagement from the Boycott Divestment and Sanction movement which has applied real pressure on Israel to date in a way that state recognition cannot. Finally, she made the connection, which is one I think we should all be making, between Operation Protective Edge and this initiative – as if recognition was a rhetorical reward to Palestinians still reeling in the aftermath of such horror – deeming it a truly inadequate response.”

“...While these all these developments have positively influenced conceptualisation of the conflict, they engage in kinds of thinking that have an intermediate value only. This is in part due to their function as strategies, rather than ends in themselves, but additionally because, if viewed as ends, they will circumscribe the kinds of change which are both necessary and possible, for example, by de-politicising Palestinian claims in the case of legal approaches, which reduces the Palestinian issue to a humanitarian problem. Without insistence on progress beyond these strategies, they will become complicit in perpetuating a technique of conservative governance by which the ongoing dynamic of the conflict is treated as ‘a state of permanent crisis’ and utilised to ensure that the stasis of the situation is perpetually reproduced (Hage 2015. 34-6).

But ultimately I think we need to ask what could we replace a system of repression – concrete and psychological, legal and narrative – with, to enable us to think about productive future relations between Israelis and Palestinians, less invested in denial and more invested in a whole network of acknowledgements. Change will be inevitably slow because it requires the conversation to be entirely re-routed. To strip back assumptions and make space for listening to perspectives that have not been visible and more than that have been actively undermined, discredited and ignored. [Rashid] Khalidi, in thinking about the pathway to change says: ‘it took generations to establish the myths Israel was built on, and it will take years to deconstruct them, as well as for the generations who believe in them to lose their influence’. To conclude I want to mention the work of Israeli political scientist Marcelo Svirsky who argues that ‘Israel’s nationalist and militarist projects should not be taken at

face value but as productions concomitant with the evolution of specific Israeli subjectivities and modes of being’. Much as Edward Said urged us to peel back the facts of colonialism to imagine new futures, Svirsky argues that nothing short of cultural transformation is required. I think in conclusion this is the point worth asserting. That nothing less than the struggle to transform our subjectivities, both as an internal struggle and an ‘external struggle to defy social institutions’, will do.”

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Laila El-Haddad, Excerpts from *Gaza Mom* (2013) (pp.213, 219-20, 254-5)

— — — — The Story of the Year

Gaza City, Palestine, December 18 2006

The Middle East has made its fair share of headlines this year – from the stunning victory of Hamas in January’s Palestinian elections to the sudden death of Ariel “the butcher” Sharon to Israel’s blitzkrieg of Lebanon.

But perhaps the most harrowing – and sidelined – story of the year has been the story of Gaza and its gradual abandonment.

During the past nine months, Israel, backed by the United States and Europe, has methodically laid waste to a society of 1.5 million people, hermetically sealing in its residents, impoverishing it to unprecedented levels on par with Africa, besieging its land and people like never before – punishing them where no crime existed.

Is it the first time in history, according to John Dugard at the United Nations, that an occupied people have been subject to international sanctions, especially sanctions of this magnitude and rigor.

Before our very eyes, local powers have clouded together to create a strip of land more isolated than North Korea itself, sentencing Gaza’s residents to a living death in the world’s largest internment camp, largely to the acquiescence of global powers.

The result has been Gaza’s gradual decline into anarchy and the unravelling of its entire social, political, and economic fabric.

The moral of the story is: Beware of whom you vote for.

And it will serve as potent reminder from here on in of the

consequences of elect in the wrong party.

And that, to me, is the story of the year.

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The Honey's Just Better over There

Gaza City, Palestine, May 6, 2007

We went to my father's farm on Friday. Spring is here. The flowers are in full bloom. Gaza has a little more colour to it, and, for just a few weeks, the gritty, grey horizon of unfinished cinderblocks is disrupted. Purple Jacaranda flowers burst into full blossom on the city streets, and the Jundi Park's hibiscus bushes are enflamed in vibrant reds.

It's also the best time to get some local honey – the good stuff, not the ones where the bees' diet is supplemented with sugar. As things go here, honey is expensive – at least 50 to 70 shekels per kilo (\$12 to \$17 per pound), depending on quality.

So my mother's friend and I strike up a conversation about honey. She tells me about her friend who lost everything and is now in debt after her bees gathered pollen from their neighbour's farm, newly treated with pesticides for the spring.

They dropped like, well, bees, and half her hive was gone, just like that. "The poor thing was crying on the phone. It was a project she'd started with a microloan from the Ministry of Agriculture.

"But anyway, the honey is better near the border," she adds.

"Near the border?" I inquire.

"Yes, you know the Imsaddar household. Their farms are near the border with Israel in eastern Gaza... Their bees fly across the border and gather pollen from the eucalyptus trees and orange groves in their farms. So the honey is just better."

How is it that honey from bees gathering pollen from trees across the border is better? Is it because the flowers are freer? Less empty, or trapped, or sad? Less occupied, perhaps?

"I think they just have more trees and flowers there. After all, most of our groves were razed during the Intifada," another friend explained.

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There is No "Safe"

Durham, North Carolina, December 31, 2008

My father just called. I have learned to expect that the 9pm call is not a jovial one: It is usually to alert me of some awful thing transpiring around them. It helps, in whatever way, to broadcast this event that has yet to be broadcast to the world, to whomever you can. In this case, that person is me.

I see the number on my caller identification; my heart races. I answer my cell phone.

"We... are under... heavy bombardment. Heavy bombardment," says my father in terrified, articulated syllables.

"They are bombing the Legislative Council building next to our house. They are bombing just down our street."

"Baba... are you safe, are you both safe?" I ask, not knowing what else to say.

"I have to go now... I have to go... I just wanted to tell you that... but I have to go," he stammers. And the line goes dead.

We have figured out a system. When the electricity is back on in Gaza – which has happened for house hour during the past 48 – my parents get on Skype immediately. If I am not around, they give me a quick call from their landline to let me know they are back online; they have two to

three hours of back-up generator time after this. They stocked up on fuel during the past few weeks.

Then, it is dark again.

When the bombs are dropped around them, they send me a quick note to inform me of what happened before running to safety. I am still not sure where "safety" is; neither, I think, do they. It is perhaps more a mental state and place than a physical one. In any other situation, people flee to what they perceive as safer locations. In Gaza, there is no "safe". And there is nowhere to flee to, with the borders closed and the sky and sea under siege.

This afternoon, I received these instant messages from them on Skype:

[1:56:04 PM] moussa.elhaddad says: F-16 and Apaches are in the sky of Gaza now.

[1:56:16 PM] moussa.elhaddad says: Five new explosions.

[1:57:58 PM] moussa.elhaddad says: One near Al-Nasr hospital, two behind our house. Money exchangers (Al-Bar'asy and Hirzallah); two other explosions a little bit far away.

Yesterday, my uncle's neighbour's home was levelled. Luckily, no one was hurt. But all 50 occupants were made homeless. They were out on the streets with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Each had to find shelter with a different relative.

This morning, my father and I appeared together on NPR-WUUBR's *Here and Now*. There was a surreal quality to it. And for a few moments, we were in that "safe" place together, on some distant, sterile airwaves. It is windy and cold today in Durham. I shiver when the shutters shake. And I think of Gaza. I think of home.

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Excerpts from Gaza Mom have been reproduced by permission from the author.

Tales from the beginning of the Israeli Occupation

By Omri Shafer Raviv

Haaretz 4 June 2017

"We went in search of asses and found a kingdom," [Samuel 9:1-10] declared Levi Eshkol, Israel's Prime Minister, on his opening address to the government's meeting, on 11 June 1967. Eshkol continued: "There was once talk, as though after the War of Independence some things were left in a way that is a shame for generations to come. Since then, generations have not yet come and gone... and that has all been repaired. All the flaws have been repaired." In saying this, Eshkol was referring to criticism from both Left and Right towards Mapai [forerunner of today's Labour Party] over David Ben-Gurion's decision to avoid occupying the West Bank during the War of Independence. Eshkol tried to prove, so it seems, that he had realised what others had only hoped for. After he spoke, Eshkol gave way to the Chief of Staff, Yitzhak Rabin, to go over the war's manoeuvres, but a moment before he managed to do so, National Religious Party Minister Zerach Warhaftig called out: "...who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion" [shehecheyanu...].

That war's victory and its numerous conquests led to a wave of excitement in Israel etched in the collective memory as "euphoria". Though these many territorial gains were possibly destined to create a deep political chasm in Israel between Left and Right, they received broad positive public consensus in the period immediately after the war. A June 1967 survey of Jewish public attitude to maintaining control of the territories indicated that 95

per cent felt that Israel should hold onto the [Jerusalem] Old City, 86 per cent felt the same about the West Bank and 77 per cent felt the same about the Gaza Strip. Another poll examining Israeli willingness to physically turn up to the Territories found that 95 per cent wished to visit the Old City, 88 per cent wanted to visit Bethlehem, 62 per cent wanted to visit Jenin and 49 per cent wanted to visit Gaza. Indeed, one of earliest post-war phenomena was thousands of Israeli tourists arriving at the Territories. Yedioth Ahronoth's Dvora Zamir explained three months after the war what was so attractive to these travellers: "Everyone wants to see and know the Liberated Territories. Everyone wants to see how our neighbours are doing. Everyone's travelling to grab a bargain and savour the flavours of the East." In other words, this initial wave of visitors was not yet seeking new land to settle as ancestral land, but rather it was drawn by the sights, tastes and smells of the Oriental land. Many wanted to touch Jewish, Muslim and Christian holy sites with their own hands.

The encounter between the Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs almost instantly transpired as a mercantile relationship between buyer and seller. The image of the Arab peddler became widespread in newspapers of the period as a sly but not particularly dangerous type. A cartoon in Davar from early October 1967 shows Arab peddlers selling utterly unnecessary items to Jews, including gold watches, brass dishes and IDF commemorative albums. "Has Gaza's business ever been more prosperous than it has been lately?" asked Uri Porat on 28 July, adding that "The people that dwell in Zion" had been "suffocated like a prisoner in solitary confinement" and has now been given the chance to break free. Both Jews and Arabs

benefitted from this reunion, according to Porat and many of his peers. Ironically, these moments were sometimes seen as the beginnings of peace. The Israeli idea that proper economic relations indicated imminent peace relied on remaining ignorant of the separate national aspirations of Israeli Arabs; this was not the first or last time this would happen.

Liberated Territory

But even then, the meeting was not entirely harmonious, even before residents of the territories organised a broad protest and a violent resistance. Interestingly it was Israeli women's clothing that was the first subject Israeli media dealt with intensively as an instance of friction between Jews and Arabs. Images of young women in short skirts working their way in between groups of Arab men in the markets of Jerusalem, Nablus and Gaza, became more prevalent after the war. This trend concerned the military leadership (being entirely male), who perceived female attire as a threat to public safety. In July, the press reported fistfights in a Gazan market between Jewish and Arab men, after the former claimed that the latter had been pinching Jewish women's bottoms. Arab eye-witnesses said the altercation began when a Jewish customer ran away a store without paying. The state's leaders concluded that women's clothing starts riots, and as one of them explained in an interview on 4 August, "If the daughters of Israel, without too much thought, display themselves in the Liberated Territories wearing such revealing mini-skirts, why shouldn't they be pinched?" It is possible that in addition to their concern for public safety, the leadership's men perceived their own masculine roles as protectors of Jewish women from Arab desire for their bodies. Either way, the military leadership announced it is considering "criminalising or

otherwise preventing excessively revealing attire to be worn by Israeli women and girls in the West Bank.”



Caricature from Ma'ariv, 1/9/67. Image found in the original article in Haaretz 4/6/17.

If mini-skirts were the cause for the initial friction between Jews and Arabs, then the second prize goes to the dirty shoes, lit cigarettes and camera flashes of Israeli tourists in such places as the Al-Aksa Mosque, the Cave of the Patriarchs and the Church of the Nativity. The safety of the holy sites was on the government's daily agenda as part of its willingness to guarantee the legitimacy of the new Israeli rule in the territories. Knesset members feared that international Christian and Muslim pressure would coerce Israel into retreating from the Territories, if it seemed holy sites were being desecrated. This fear became real panic when the reports began appearing. A document from the Foreign Ministry now in the state archives, describes an irate Armenian priest in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem telling the Ministry's rep that Israelis walk on the church's carpets with dirty shoes, and that couples walk around arm in arm taking photos by the altar. "Is that how they behave in the synagogue as well?" he asked. Other reports landed on the government's desk describing soldiers entering churches with helmets and wearing shoes in mosques. Moshe Dayan, who asserted to the newspapers after occupying the West Bank that "We haven't come to Jerusalem to occupy others' holy sites or to inconvenience people of other

faiths," announced to the government that Israeli travellers' "barbarity must be stopped". The attitude to Jewish holy sites wasn't any better. Minister Menachem Begin complained in a government meeting that he saw Jews smoking cigarettes and taking photos by the Western Wall. As a counter measure, Uzi Narkiss, GOC Central Command, issued a military decree that anyone who defiles a holy site would face seven years in prison.

Right of Return

While most Israelis saw travelling to the territories as an exotic trip, there were also those for whom this was a return to a lost home. In July 1967, Menashe Meni, born into a family that had immigrated from Iraq to Hebron in the 19th century, had travelled to his city of birth, Hebron. In that visit, he looked for the house in which he'd grown up and from which his family was forced to relocate after the 1929 Arab riots. A picture in Yedioth Ahronoth captured him standing in his old house together with the Palestinian family living there. Initially the family refused to let him in, but after a short explanation and a promise that he would not take their home, they allowed him in. From there he kept on going into town, to his grandparents' graves. Eventually he located a descendant of the family that saved his own family during the massacres. Menashe Meni was not alone; other Jews who'd lived across the Green Line before 1948, in the Old City and in Gush Etzion, hurried back to visit those places once more.

During those weeks, it was not only Israelis that crossed the lines, heading towards the Territories. Palestinians also crossed the other way, into Israel. Many looked for homes and lands from which they'd been uprooted in 1948, and even reunited with family members they had not seen for 19 years, having hitherto been

separated by the border. Early in September, concerned residents in Ashkelon, Yavneh and Beerseeba, complained of the increasing presence of Gazans in their cities, "illegally". Yedioth Aharonot reported: "Many refugees from the Gaza Strip have been seen lately walking around the towns in the south. According to them, they are looking for their homes and property, abandoned as they fled in 1948." One Haaretz reporter said he'd seen the members of a Palestinian family standing in a street in the Old City in Beer-Sheba, staring at their former home. Out of the house came a woman, "who had immigrated with her family from Romania," and offered them to come inside. The male head of the family replied that he preferred not to. A reporter for Yedioth Ahronoth had a "chance" encounter with several Palestinians who had come back to see their city, Jaffa. He said these Arabs know the alleyways "like their own backyard" and added, "From time to time they slow their pace and the leader points and says: here was Ahmed's fabric shop, and this is Ibrahim's furniture shop," while another told his son, "Here, Muhammad, was the bathhouse, and here's our mosque, still standing, thanks be to the prophet. But our house is no longer, it's gone." Many of these visitors were captured by police and sent back, since the government forbade their entry into Israel without a permit.

Since the War of Independence, Palestinian refugee camps have been a central issue in the Jewish Arab conflict, since on one hand Israel claimed that the Arab countries should absorb the refugees into their countries, while the Arab states demanded Israel take back the refugees. In 1967, many camps were occupied by Israel, and so the refugee question became one of the main subjects on the government agenda. Ministers were nearly unanimous

that this was a historically unique opportunity to resolve “the refugee problem” once and for all. They believed that Israel should dismantle the refugee camps and “resettle” the refugees elsewhere. “As they did with the transit camps [ma’abarot],” explained a team of experts with a plan prepared accordingly. It appears that there were as many propositions put forward to the governments as there were refugees: Levi Eshkol believed that Gaza’s refugees could be resettled in the West Bank, Ra’anan Weitz from the Jewish Agency proposed El Arish in the Sinai, some ministers naively thought refugees could be transferred to Arab states in exchange for a peace agreement, and the Foreign Ministry began examining the possibility of finding a new home for the refugees in Brazil and Canada. Over time, Israeli politicians discovered other countries were reluctant to absorb hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees, just as much as the refugees themselves were disinclined to forego their demand to return to their original homes and lands.

While government ministers debated the issue of the 1948 refugees, the 1967 refugee problem began emerging. Official reports from the time estimate around 200,000 people were uprooted from the West Bank during the war and in subsequent months. The reasons for this mass exodus were numerous. Among those that left were people who’d worked for the Jordanian government and feared for their wellbeing and livelihood under Israeli rule; some had family in the East Bank or in another Arab country and did not want contact severed; others had bank accounts in Amman and were now left without cash. Israel meanwhile did everything it could to assist those that wished to leave, whether by paying for a one-way bus ticket, or by offering departure cash per

head. State and military documents use the neutral term, “emigration encouragement”. Some of those that had left the West Bank during or immediately after the war later tried to return, but to no avail. Israel prohibited the vast majority from returning. Out of about 200,000 new refugees, return permits were given to a token 20,000 or so, and that was due to international pressure. And so, some Palestinians that sought to return to the West Bank attempted crossing the Jordan River without Israeli permission. Many of those attempts failed. On 6 August 6, 1967, Dayan reported at a government meeting that in order to prevent to return of refugees to the West Bank the military shoot “over the heads” of people during the day, and that at night “they face open fire as well”. An internal report found in the IDF archives reveals that in the first three months after the war, 146 people were killed in such gunfire, most of them “refugees attempting to return”. The fate of those that successfully crossed back was not particularly bright either. They were usually captured and returned to Jordan. “This is a shocking thing”, Dayan determined at that meeting, as though the direct responsibility for this did not fall squarely on him.

The rebellion and its suppression

Not all those headed west across the Jordan River were 1967 refugees seeking to return. There were also 1948 refugees that arrived with the aim of starting an armed struggle against Israel. These were members of the Fatah movement and their leader, Yasser Arafat, who’d entered the West Bank on August 1967. Guerrilla fighters in Vietnam, Algeria and Cuba were their role models, while Mao Zedong’s writings were used as a guideline. In the subsequent months, they placed bombs around Israel, starting with

Hotel Fast and the Zion Cinema in Jerusalem, all the way to small moshavim (townships) such as Ometz, Gil’am and Ma’oz Chaim. “What we’ve feared has happened,” wrote Major General Uzi Narkiss in his weekly “Commander’s Log”. But the military successfully and rapidly thwarted the attempt to start a guerrilla war, which soon enough turned out to be fairly amateur. People in the West Bank were not quick to collaborate with Fatah activists, whom they barely knew, while the latter failed the first test of any underground movement, that of unity among members. When the first Fatah members were caught by the General Security Services, they turned everyone else in. Members of the organisation that weren’t caught or killed, including Arafat, left the West Bank for Jordan where they continued paramilitary activity against Israel.

In contrast to the attempted armed rebellion led by Palestinians from the outside, the resistance of Palestinians living in Palestine against Israeli rule manifested in mainly non-violent ways, such as strikes and leafleting. The annexation of East Jerusalem, along with Israeli intervention in educational and religious content, were the first catalysts for a wave of Palestinian strikes and protests. One leaflet distributed around East Jerusalem and currently in the IDF archive reads: “You are called upon to prove to these invaders that you are a free people and not an obedient herd of slaves, we are inviting you on a general and all-inclusive strike.” Almost all the leaflets focused on human rights and international law as the basis for resisting the Israeli occupation. Over the subsequent months, people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip managed to organise far-reaching business strikes and strikes across the educational system. Although these were

quashed by Israeli authorities, just like the violent rebellion had been.

Dayan believed in a policy that was lenient on most of the population living under Israeli occupation. The Israeli authorities were especially proud of the work of appointed agricultural experts, who travelled to villages in the West Bank to assist Arab farmers increase output. In contrast, dissidents suffered heavy penalties, including home demolitions, mass imprisonment, confiscation of property, loss of permits and the exile of group leaders. One of those exiled was Sheikh 'Abd al Hamid al-Sa'ih, president of the Muslim Religious Court of Appeals in Jerusalem and a high ranking religious figure in the West Bank. On 30 July, al-Sa'ih sent the first petition of West Bank residents against the annexation of East Jerusalem and the Israeli Occupation to the Defence Minister, along with 19 other religious figures and political activists. The petition also declared the establishment of "a Committee of National Redirection," and the appointment of al-Sa'ih as its chairman. On 23 September, Israeli police officers knocked on al-Sa'ih's door in East Jerusalem and demanded he accompany them to the police station, where they presented him with a deportation order. Superintendent N. Bashami spoke with al-Sa'ih moments before his deportation, a conversation he later wrote his recollection of it, found in the IDF archive. According to his notes, al-Sa'ih said that the annexation of East Jerusalem was strongly objected to by West Bank Arabs, adding, "For hundreds of years the mosque has been in Jerusalem, and has been holy to 400 million Muslims and under their exclusive control – how can Rabbi Goren suddenly come here and declare that a synagogue shall be erected in the mosque's courtyard, pushing Muslims aside, without their objection?" Al-Sa'ih was referring

to the arrival of Rabbi Goren at the Al-Aksa Mosque's courtyard along with a number of other officers from the military rabbinate in full military garb on the night of 10 August 10. As was later reported by the Defence Minister, the Rabbi walked around the courtyard with a tape measure to find the exact location of the Holy Temple. Dayan and Rabin responded with severity, since these actions were seen to undermine the government and the international legitimacy of the occupation. The Rabbi was consequently forbidden from going up to Temple Mount, by military order. Rabbi Goren in turn wrote to some Knesset members complaining that his feelings had been hurt and his religious rights violated.

Another deportee was public figure and communist activist Ibrahim Bakr. Military forces arrived to arrest him at lam in his home in Ramallah. According to the military report composed after the action, Bakr protested to the soldiers, "Why are you waking me in the middle of the night, you could have deported me in the morning," while Ibrahim's wife protested, "When will we finally be rid of you?" The soldiers forced Bakr into their vehicle and drove him to the Governor's House in Jericho, where he was "treated to coffee and biscuits". He was later taken to the Allenby Bridge. A moment before he was transferred East, Bakr turned to the soldiers and told them in English, "I'm leaving my country by force and against my will. I would resist if I had the means. Tell your authorities, although I know they'll ignore it, that if you continue this policy, you will never gain peace, you will fight a fourth war, and a fifth and sixth, and you'll never obtain peace, I'm leaving against my will and I will return because I cannot leave my country." While Ibrahim Bakr protested deportation from his land, Israeli public figures objected to any

possibility of retreat from "our land". Peace, they believed, could be achieved without retreat.

On 19 June, a government discussion took place regarding the political future of the West Bank. The arguments voiced at this meeting might sound familiar to a contemporary Israeli reader. On one hand, annexation of the West Bank was perceived as a demographic threat to the Jewish majority in Israel, while on the other, a retreat from the West Bank was untenable to most government members. The debate was undecided, and the government decided "not to decide." In Contrast to the profound argument over the West Bank, broad consensus was held regarding the political fate of the Gaza Strip. At the same meeting, the government determined that the Gaza Strip shall be annexed after the dismantlement of its refugee camps is completed, and their inhabitants transferred elsewhere. Prime Minister Eshkol stated that "Gaza belongs to Israel since the days of Samson, not since 1919." For the Socialist Labour Zionist Eshkol, legitimacy for the Gaza Strip's annexation was drawn from before the Six Day War, the War of Independence and even the British occupation during WWI. The real title deed was to be found in the Book of Judges.

What and how Gazans themselves thought about all this, or the hundreds of thousands of refugees forced to call Gaza home since 1948, never came up. Of all people, it was Dayan who explained in one of the government's subsequent meetings that the attitude of the Gaza Strip's Arab population to the Israeli occupation "is hostile and wild," even more so than that in the West Bank. Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip encountered violent opposition from the outset. A Foreign Ministry report in the state archives documents the first incident in which force was used

against IDF soldiers in the Gaza Strip after the war's conclusion. On 12 June, a landmine exploded near Israeli forces. The tracks led to several houses in one of the refugee camps in the Gaza Strip (the camp was unnamed). The soldiers asked locals to point them to those responsible for placing the mine. A short while later, 110 men appeared before them, declaring they were all responsible. The soldiers, unable to arrest all of them, gave them three hours to return with the specific men that carried out the operation. Three hours later, all 110 men reappeared. The soldiers had reached the end of their tether, and they decided to banish the entire group to the Sinai, where "they were left for dead". The report does not mention whether the men later returned to the Gaza Strip or died of thirst in the desert. Either way, the IDF also blew up eight houses in the area to which the tracks led.

The government was entirely serious in thinking it could deal with Palestinian hostility in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip using a system of Hasbara, headed by minister and former Haganah Chief of Staff, Yisrael Galili. The idea was to use Hasbara to present Palestinians with the benefits of being under Israeli rule. And so it was, that while the leader of one militia tried to recruit the Palestinian population to the rebellion against Israeli occupation, another retired militia leader tried to convince the same population of the Occupation's benefits. They both operated in fairly improvised ways. Among the ideas presented by Galili to the government were broadcasting on the Voice of Israel in Arabic for people in the Territories, issuing a government newspaper in Arabic and Arabic television broadcasts. Israeli television, emerging before the war, suddenly took on a new role: broadcasting pro-Israeli propaganda to the Palestinian

population. Since television sets were not common among Palestinians at the time, as was the case among their Israeli counterparts, Galili's program included installing televisions in Arab cafes and schools in order to increase its exposure. In this way, Galili believed, Palestinian public opinion could be influenced to favour Israeli interests. In a meeting Galili held with military personnel and media experts in the matter, Shlomo Gazit, coordinator of activities in the territories, claimed that it would have been good if it was just a Hasbara policy, but since the population's hostility was so severe one should be call it "psychological warfare." One of the tactics the military attempted was broadcasting recordings from the interrogation of Fatah members to weaken their support. It seems there were Palestinians who saw right through this tactic, as a leaflet disseminated in East Jerusalem and now found in the IDF archives reads: "The enemy is conducting... a propaganda campaign that distorts the truth and aims to sow embarrassment, confusion and suspicion among Palestinians... If we don't resist we will be surrounded by Jews... And the Arab will become a servant in the enemy's café."

These events and stories are only a small part of all that took place in the first months of the Occupation. Looking back, after fifty years of Occupation and mutual violence, it is possible to identify the seeds of future developments: Jewish shoppers meeting Arab sellers, Jewish men worrying about Jewish women meeting Arab men, Jews and Arabs yearning for the other side of the Green Line, violent and non-violent resistance to the occupation and one religious figure banished from Palestine as another is banished from Temple Mount. Even if many of the actions of that time led to dead ends, fading in history's wake – such as Israeli

government interest in annexing the Gaza Strip and plans for dismantling refugee camps, and a minister whose role it is to explain the occupiers' position to those they've occupied – it still seems that pivotal motives in the way Israel coped with the issue of the territories had already appeared in the first weeks and months after the Six Day War: the absence of an agreed upon vision for the political future of the West Bank, a yearning for annexing land without its Palestinian population, an aggressive policy towards any attempt at rebellion, and an infinite preoccupation with managing the Territories.

The author is a doctoral student at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

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“Azaria’s legal defence team changes its strategy and contends selective enforcement worked against him”

By John Brown

Haaretz 4 May 2017

Last week, Sgt Elor Azaria's defence team, headed by Attorney Yoram Sheftel, submitted an application to present new evidence in their appeal against Azaria's manslaughter conviction. The application details 14 incidents in which IDF soldiers shot and killed innocent people and did not stand trial. The application is part of a new defence strategy based on a contention of a denial of natural justice, due to selective enforcement. The aim of the defence team is to show that in actual fact, others were not charged for the same offence, and therefore there was no reason to charge Azaria.

According to Sheftel, the new incidents are “at least as severe as in Azaria’s case, if not more so. In a significant number of cases there was no investigation, while in others an investigation was opened only years later, and in no cases, were charges pressed.” Most of the cases he mentions are based on the series “Licence to kill” that I had published previously with @Noam Rotem on Local Call [published 7 January 17 in 972mag.com].

During Azaria’s trial his defence team, then headed by lawyers Ilan Katz and Eyal Beserglick, had already made a failed attempt to argue that there was a denial of natural justice, but it was only based on Colonel Yisrael Shomer’s shooting incident, and while they lacked the necessary evidence (which we’ve meanwhile acquired). Colonel Maya Heller, the presiding judge in the trial, rejected the motion, claiming that the defence had failed its burden of proof, and mentioned that as opposed to Azaria, Shomer had carried out IDF protocol for arresting a suspect (a contention put in doubt given the evidence in the investigation’s files).

The focus on a single incident was one of the many hurdles for the defence team in Azaria’s trial, since when one discusses a sole case it is easy to dismiss the claim of selective enforcement. The force of such a legal claim increases the more you demonstrate that most of the cases involve Palestinians being killed and those responsible not being put on trial. Examining the list of cases now presented by the defence, some of which I’ll detail below, shows that this time a far more serious job has been done.

An officer killed two boys, forged documents, and didn’t stand trial

The defence team is correct in claiming that the various cases presented indicate the general

rule, according to which when Palestinians are shot, investigations are closed without charges being pressed. That is how 97per cent of the IDF’s internal investigations end up on average. To this day no IDF soldier has ever stood trial for killing a Palestinian. Since September 2000, about 9,250 Palestinians have been killed by the IDF, and in total 262 cases have been investigated by the Military Criminal Investigation Division (CID) and prior to Azaria’s verdict only one soldier had ever been convicted of manslaughter: a Bedouin soldier convicted of killing a British citizen in the Gaza Strip in 2004.

One of the most severe cases mentioned by the defence took place in the Palestinian village of Irak Burin in 2014, when a major in the Kfir Brigade, in which Azaria also served, shot and killed two innocent boys. The following description is based entirely on the CID’s investigation file:

At midday on Saturday, 20h March 2010, the Kfir Brigade’s forces were located at the village of Irak Burin on the outskirts of Nablus. According to the brigade’s operational log, at 3:54pm forces began retreating. At the same time, Muhammed and Usaid Qadus, 15 and 17 years old, were returning home.

Major R, the deputy battalion commander, testified to the CID that during the soldiers’ retreat, he shot two rubber bullets at demonstrators standing at a distance of 70 metres, and he noticed one of them was injured in his hand. In fact, the first shot hit Usaid’s head and the bullet pierced his skull. The second shot hit Muhammed’s chest as he rushed towards Usaid, since they were not demonstrating but walking home, as already mentioned. About one and a half years after that day, and in contrast with the immediate investigation Azaria was subjected to, Major (today

Lieutenant Colonel) R was in the interrogation room asked the following question: “The investigation report’s findings reveal many details that circumstantially attest that you were at fault in the deaths of the two Palestinians. Contradictions surrounding the time of entry and forging of documents, a polygraph test in which you were found to be lying, and plenty more repeating evidence against you in everything relating to your testimony at the CID. How do you respond?”

R. denied the claims, but the claim of firing a rubber bullet was immediately disproven by an x-ray of a live bullet in Usaid Qadus’ skull. R only admitted to forging armoury documents, which he did in order to replace his weapon with one that could fire rubber bullets which he claimed to have shot, that is, after the shooting incident. A border patrol police officer testified that a soldier present with R at the time of the incident had told him that there had been “a celebration” in Irak Burin – military slang for emptying rounds of live ammunition.

After a five-year-long investigation the case was closed due to There was insufficient evidence to conclude, with the level [of certainty] required in criminal law that live shots were fired during the incident, or that the shooting carried out by the officer had led to the death of the deceased.” Indeed, there wasn’t footage like B’Tselem’s film of Azaria’s shooting, but it is clear that if the case had involved Jewish fatalities rather than a double homicide of Palestinians, R would have been charged. In effect the case was closed, R was promoted, and today he is a Lieutenant Colonel in the IDF.

Another case examined by the defence’s appeal is the killing of the Qawarik cousins, which took place a day after the double homicide in Irak Burin, again by a soldier in the

Kfir Brigade. At first the IDF claimed that the two had attempted a pitchfork attack, therefore one of the soldiers shot 10 bullets at one of them. Later, as he claimed, the other tried to injure him using a syringe, so he shot 19 bullets at him. No pitchfork was recovered from the scene, and the discarded syringe had no fingerprints on it. Three friends of the soldier that had opened fire, who stood within a 10 metre radius of him, claimed they'd seen none of the 29 shots. The case was closed for lack of evidence.

Out of the 14 cases of homicide presented by the defence team, the only case to have made it to court was the shooting of Sameer Awad in the village Budrus, who was injured and later died from shots to the back of his neck. In this case, the prosecution accused the soldiers of reckless opening of fire, and after the defence also threatened to claim selective enforcement, the prosecutor offered a compromise of six months of community service. The case is currently being referred to mediation.

The gambit of the occupation

All the cases are as least as severe as Azaria. In a few of the incidents that were investigated, the inquiries took many years, as opposed to one month in Azaria's case. In none of the cases was there evidence collected at the scene, and in all of them the operational inquiry was hidden from the CID and the shooters took part in it while given the chance to become familiar with the various versions. In Azaria's case the inquiry was leaked to the media, and Azaria himself was arrested before he could take part in it, so he was forced to change his version after the initial inquiry.

It's clear that Azaria is guilty of homicide and more. But that does not invalidate his lawyers' contention, that his actions are not

unusual compared with dozens of others that are not documented as some which we have outlined. One could perceive of Leftist support for this contention as the gambit of the Occupation – sacrificing one indictment in exchange for a meaningful statement about the overall system, but even more so one must admit that it is simply unjust to accuse a single soldier in this situation. Any reasonable person would see that Azaria differs from the others only by the fact he was put on trial.

But it is actually because of the fact that selective enforcement in this case almost goes without saying, that is reasonable to assume that the defence's appeal will be rejected outright. As the Azaria trial showed so well, the military regime in the West Bank can barely cope with a single soldier being put on trial for his actions. It is hard to imagine another such case, and even more so the public response to hundreds of such trials. The future of the military regime depends on the IDF's ability to present a façade of due process on one hand, while on the other continuing to grant impunity in such acts of murder.

Hebrew original:

<http://www.haaretz.co.il/blogs/johnbr own/1.4002447>

Translated by Keren Rubinstein for the Middle East News Service edited by Sol Salbe, Melbourne, Australia.

Naser Shakhtour talks about the Palestinian Film Festival

I had the pleasure of speaking with Naser Shakhtour, founder and director of the Palestinian Film Festival (PFF), about his life and work. Naser described in subtle and illuminating terms the way in which his personal experience as a Palestinian in Australia compelled him to start collating movies from Palestine to screen around Australia in this multi-city festival, the first of its kind.

Born in Palestine, Naser grew up between Kuwait and Palestine. As a teenager, these events shaped his awareness of what it meant to be a Palestinian, and the importance of the land to his parents and wider family. Years later, living in Sydney and settled here as many others in the diaspora, the importance of Palestine has not waned in his life and work; on the contrary. 'There is so little representation of Palestine in Australia,' he told me over Skype, 'and I really wanted to address that.'

The PFF has been increasingly successful each year that it has been put on, since it was first launched in 2007, when there was still relatively little interest in Palestinian cinema. It has been a very positive experience, Naser explains, gaining much community support and positive reviews, despite any issues that might arise, as one might expect, when establishing a national event of this magnitude. Naser is focused on letting the art speak for itself. Some parties might see the PFF as an opportunity to promote an agenda, but not its director, whose main message is to work in solidarity with those that inspire and empower each other to better represent Palestinian life and reach out more widely.



Junction 48 (2016) by Udi Aloni, featuring Tamer Nafar, Samar Qupty and Salwa Nakkara.

Film, theatre and the arts remain excellent avenues to do just that. Last year we were glad to see Samah Sabawi's play about Gaza, *Tales of a City by the Sea*, join a list of works to be studied for the Victorian Certificate of Education, only to lead the Anti-Defamation League's chairperson to appeal to the State and attempt to have it removed from the curriculum, because, as he saw it, the play incited people against Israel. Around the same time, Israeli Culture Minister, Miri Regev, protested what she perceived as an anti-Semitic performance by Palestinian Tamer Nafar and Mizrahi Jew Yosi Tsabari, who recited a Mahmoud Darwish poem together at an Israeli film awards ceremony. These artists' non-violent, honest expressions touched people worldwide, and the positive responses to them have far outweighed those who've spoken against them, deeming them hate-filled. You'll be able to watch Tamer Nafar and others in *Junction 48*, directed by Udi Aloni, at the PFF later this year, along with many more new films to move and inspire you.

As conditions have worsened for Palestinians, Palestinian cinema has become more critically engaged with the national struggle, conveying life under occupation and reality in perpetual statelessness while inhabiting a disputed homeland. Contemporary Palestinian cinema continues to be produced under highly prohibitive circumstances. And so, the role of the Palestinian filmmaker remains double: to continue making films, and to gain support from hostile or at best indifferent institutions. It is encouraging to hear that in Australia, promoting Palestinian cinema is increasingly embraced and recognised as a great investment.

Visit palestinianfilmfestival.com.au.

“Why Do South Africans Hate Israel?” By Matan Rosenstrauch

Haaretz 18 May 2017

On Sunday 14 May, 12 South African ministers and deputy ministers started a 24-hour hunger strike as an act of solidarity with the striking Palestinian prisoners, in an attempt to increase economic and political pressure on Israel. This was initiated successfully by the Kathrada Foundation, named after late Apartheid fighter Ahmed Kathrada and aimed at “supporting projects that promote non-violence and a more just society.”

“This is the first time in South Africa's history that such a significant number of ministers are taking part in a hunger strike of this kind,” said several leaders from the BDS movement. And although the BDS movement is not the primary instigator, when such an act is undertaken by government ministers, support for the boycott Israel movement is boosted by gaining the most political show of solidarity there is.

“What Palestinian prisoners are undergoing reminds us of our own struggle against Apartheid, when we used hunger strikes as a tool to fight the system,” said South African Minister of Health, Aaron Motsoaledi. Among the strikers was also Rob Davis, Minister for Industry and Commerce, who in 2012 announced SA's decision to label products from the settlements, and Vice President Cyril Ramaphosa, one of Mandela's confidants and potential successor to President Jacob Zuma. Nelson Mandela's former wife, Winnie Mandela, known as The Mother of the Nation, pointed out in SA's media that “We sit and think of those mothers on hunger strike with their sons [incarcerated] in Israeli prisons, who have fought so long for the liberation of Palestine.”

It seems that beyond the argument about details – how many Palestinians are held in Israeli administrative detention, how many of those are children, and so forth – the greatest struggle between the boycotters and the Hasbaraists is over Israel's image: is it indeed a democracy that grants Palestinian security prisoners their rights, or is it an Apartheid state that arrests innocent children and political activists? That is why the ministers on strike repeatedly refer to the current hunger strike of the Palestinian prisoners with the ones that they, the South Africans, had used in the past, with the Zionist Hasbara on the other side.

The BDS movement presents the motives for support for the act as follows. Beyond the numeric facts of Israeli detention of Palestinians (including about 300 Palestinian children, and over 400 Palestinians arrested for posts on social media in the last year), it points at those Israelis whose actions undermine – to put it mildly – any Hasbara: “In response to the hunger strike, Israeli civilians lit up their BBQs outside one of the prisons, so that the hunger strikers would ‘enjoy the smell of the smoke and suffer from the smell of the meat, [we] will show them that we will not surrender to their demands!”

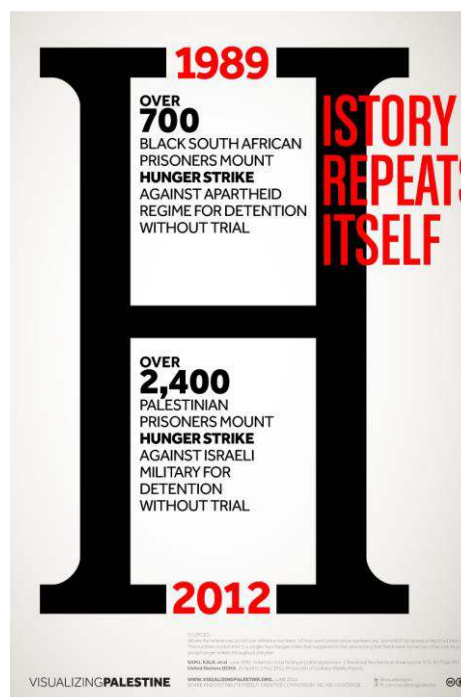


Image found on [Visualizing Palestine](http://VisualizingPalestine).

However, while one group of Israelis could always be dismissed as radical and non-representative, Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman exacerbated the government's Hasbara challenge by saying that, "Regarding anything concerning terrorists on hunger strike in Israeli prisons, I suggest adopting Margaret Thatcher's approach," which allowed Irish hunger strikes to die in English prisons.

A response condemning the BDS movement came from the South African Friends of Israel, a coalition of Jewish Zionist and pro-Israel Christian organisations that form a Hasbara platform for Israel in SA and which rejects BDS. The Zionist Federation of SA, at the coalition's helm, requested members of the Jewish community to post 'the true facts' in their name on social media, as published by the NGO Monitor.

The central message of Zionist Federation's statement was based on the principle difference between hunger strikes during the Apartheid regime and that of Marwan Barghouti, convicted of killing 5 civilians. "This comparative attempt, adopted by the BDS [movement], is inappropriate and cheapens the struggle of Apartheid fighters and our history. We encourage a constructive discussion, but sadly the call for solidarity with the hunger strike is not a positive engagement, but one aimed at further entrenching the conflict." This response, incidentally, appears as the first result on a Google search on "South African ministers hunger strike", as a paid advertisement. Someone paid for it to be seen first.

A senior leader in the Jewish community in SA remains unmoved by the fact that ministers in his

government are on hunger strike as a show of solidarity with the Palestinian prisoners. In his view, they've fallen into the BDS trap, which managed to recruit them to a doomed fight. "Just like the academic boycott, the economic and cultural boycotts haven't worked, and acts of solidarity won't either."

To him, attempts to compare Israel to Apartheid are "one big lie," since, "while in SA few of the hunger strikers had blood on their hands, in Israel many of them do." When I asked why this act of solidarity creates a greater distance between the two sides, he replied: "whoever says killing Jews is legitimate makes Israel stop talking to them. How do you expect SA to be a relevant partner of people in the conflict when it supports murderers?" What is clear is that nobody in SA is trying to be relevant to the State of Israel, in order to promote what it thinks will help end the conflict. But the Israeli ambassador sits in Pretoria and the diplomatic relationships continue undisturbed.

We talked about the federation's response, we talked about Barghouti, but when I asked whether Lieberman's comments will help Israel's image, I was given a moot answer: "That's irrelevant. It's arbitrary." There are some sentences you can agree with, others you cannot, and some you simply cannot respond to. And good luck to the foreign ministers and the Zionist federations.

The head of the Zionist Federation isn't calling Palestinian prisoners 'terrorists', he calls them 'murderers' and points out this distinction. Perhaps because he knows that Jews during the Yishuv period also used terrorism to gain political rights. But

does he remember that many Jews also sat in jail as political prisoners?

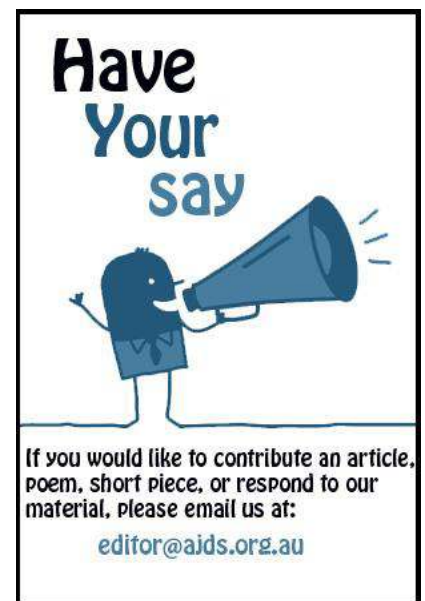
"I wake up in the morning dreading the long hours of the day, alone, endless time with the terror in my head. I go to sleep at night in fear of hours of sleeplessness... All I have left are my skin, my bones and my moral energy" (From letters written by Alfred Dreyfus to his wife from solitary confinement on Devil's Island).

I understand that South African Jews must not compare Israel to Apartheid. I wonder: may we compare Dreyfus to Barghouti?

The author is an activist in the SISO movement (Save Israel Stop the Occupation), AIDS researcher, and writer for Ha'aretz.

Hebrew
original: <http://www.haaretz.co.il/blogs/matanstr/1.4103696>

Translated by Keren Rubinstein for the Middle East News Service edited by Sol Salbe, Melbourne, Australia.



Jewish community statement of solidarity with Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike

On April 17, Palestinian prisoners in Israel launched a hunger strike in protest of the conditions under which they were held. The strike was ended after 40 days, when the Israeli government offered a partial agreement to their terms. The following statement was issued in solidarity with what came to be known as the Dignity Strike, and circulated social networks from 4 May 2017 onward, gathering more signatories:

We, Sivan Barak Bialobroda, Jordy Silverstein, Larry Stillman, Richard Flantz, Alexjo Sandra Nissen, Michael Brull, Melanie Lazarow, Carolyn Whitzman, Yael Winikoff, Nicole Erlich, Guy Gillor, Keren Rubinstein, David Fonteyn, Janey Stone, Peter Esdaile, Hayim Prometheus Dar, Sandra Padova, Joan Nestle, Sue Leigh, Miriam Faine, Kim Asher, Yaakov Aharon, Ann Fink, Deborah Zion, Yentl Nissenbaum Tammy Ben-Shaul Vivienne Porzsolt, Esme Tyson, Michelle Berkon, Alice Beauchamp, David Glanz, Peter Slezak, Dennis Martin, John Ebel, [and other] Australian Jews, are calling out for justice for the Palestinian prisoners.

Tonight, on the 34th day of the hunger strike we stand in solidarity with the approximately 1500 Palestinian prisoners who launched a hunger strike on April 17, and who remain on hunger strike, protesting their treatment by Israel within Israeli prisons.

The prisoners are striking in order to support their demands, which are basic human rights: the ability to have family visits, phone calls, photographs with family, and proper medical care, the end to torture – whether from being beaten, facing sleep deprivation, extended periods in solitary confinement, or any other measure – the end to administrative detention and the routine jailing of Palestinians without charge, trial, or proper access to lawyers.

According to Addameer, there are currently 6300 Palestinian political prisoners, which includes 500 administrative detainees, 300 child prisoners and 56 female prisoners. Palestinians around Gaza, the West Bank and elsewhere have rallied in support.

The imprisonment of Palestinians is being used as a tool by Israel in order to attempt to quash resistance, and criminalise Palestinian life. Indeed, Marwan Barghouti – a leader of the strike – has been placed in solitary confinement as a result of his leadership. In an op-ed in the New York Times Barghouti wrote “Decades of experience have proved that Israel’s inhumane system of colonial and military occupation aims to break the spirit of prisoners and the nation to which they belong, by inflicting suffering on their bodies, separating them from their families and communities, using humiliating measures to compel subjugation. In spite of such treatment, we will not surrender to it.”

As Palestinians repeatedly make clear, there can be no peace without justice for all. This hunger strike is a vital act of nonviolent resistance, which reminds us all of what is at stake. We stand alongside Palestinians in calling for their fundamental human rights to be embraced by the Israeli government. In this year which marks 100 years since the Balfour Declaration, 70 years since the Nakba and 50 years since the Naksa, we encourage everyone to find ways to support Palestinian claims for justice and self-determination.

In solidarity.

Statement initiated 4/5/17

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**Consider a donation. Your
support counts!**



Source: Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association.



- In 2011 the World Bank projected that the Palestinian GDP could have increased by \$3.4 billion a year if it weren't for restrictions Israel imposes in area C of the West Bank.

- In 50 years of occupation Israel has killed more than 10,000 Palestinians, and jailed about 800,000.

- Settlements, including their infrastructure and surrounding land jurisdiction accounts for 36% of the West Bank

- Israel controls who can travel in and out of the occupied territories, as well as controlling travel within the West Bank through checkpoints.

- Israel controls all transport of goods into Gaza and bans almost all export out of Gaza

- 95% of water is non-potable and residents receive electricity for a few hours each day.

- A 2015 UN Conference on Trade and Development reported that at current trends Gaza may be unliveable by 2020.



END THE OCCUPATION

Sylvie Leber travelled to Palestine in April 2017, keeping a visual diary. Full gallery online:



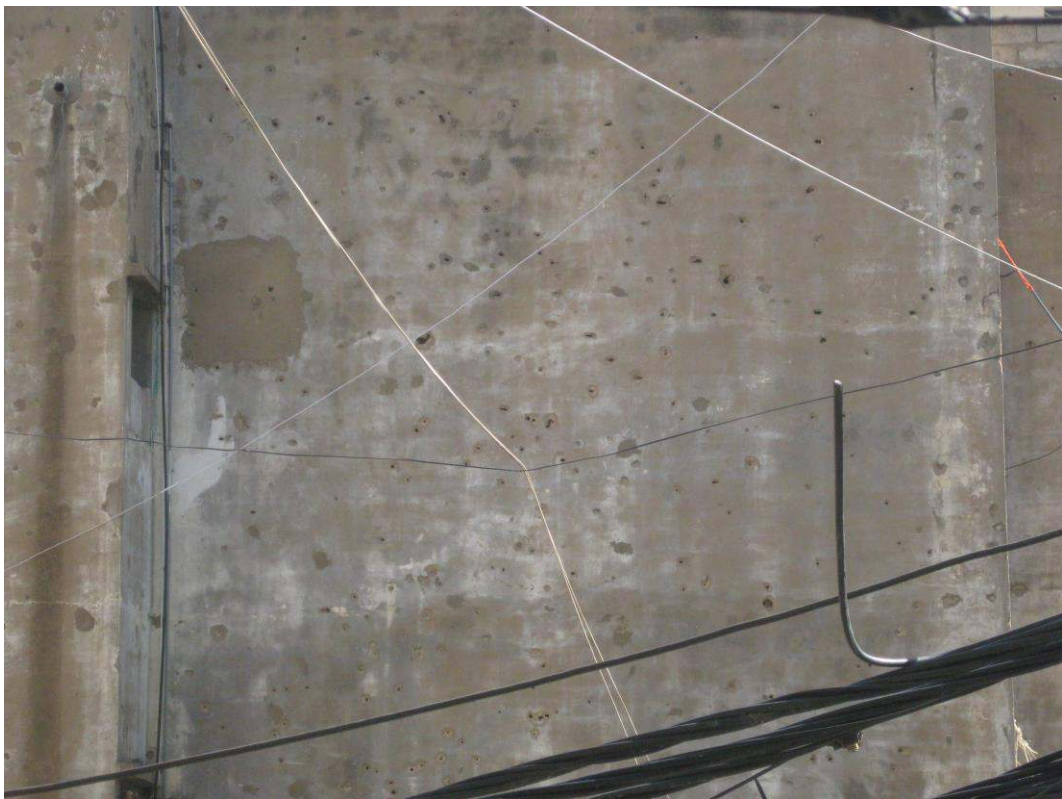
A long standing secret graffiti artist, Sylvie Leber in Bethlehem. Always a Banksy fan, Sylvie calls her Banksy book her 'Bible'.



The daily route of one young man.



A community centre in the Jordan Valley. These structures are often destroyed by Israeli authorities, but people have adapted to building quickly with mud brick and old fashioned methods.



Look closely to see countless bullet holes in the wall.

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 28 6:30pm at Melbourne's Multicultural Hub

JERUSALEM: 50 YEARS OF DE-ARABIZATION OF THE HOLY CITY

Hosted by Sivan Barak and Yousef Alreemawi

June 30 6pm at St Heliers Street Store and Gallery

AWAKENING: MELBOURNE ARTISTS FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS ART EXHIBITION

Hosted by Melbourne Artists for Asylum Seekers

July 1 1pm at 5/311 Alma Rd. Caulfield Nth

DISCUSSION: RESISTANCE TO THE OCCUPATION IN THE WEST BANK

Organised by the Australian Jewish Democratic Society (AJDS)

Visit ajds.org.au/events/ or find us on Facebook for more details

AJDS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND STAFF

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JUST VOICES #13, JUNE 2017 – ISRAEL/PALESTINE

AUSTRALIAN JEWISH DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY (AJDS)

A Progressive Voice among Jews
and a Jewish Voice among Progressives



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