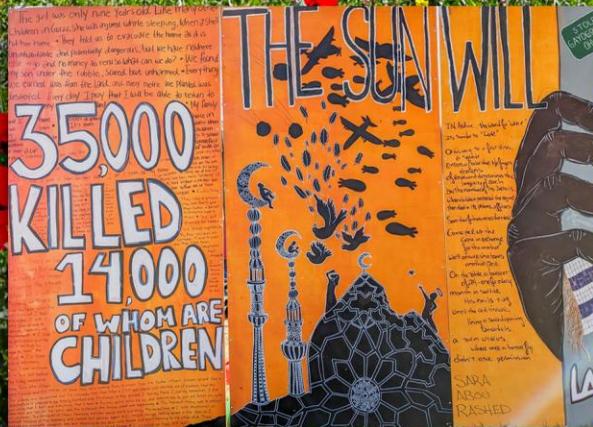


PALESTINE

PEOPLE, LAND, AND SOLIDARITY

WITH OUR OWN EYES
1977, 2009, TODAY



PALESTINE

PEOPLE, LAND, AND SOLIDARITY

WITH OUR OWN EYES: 1977, 2009, TODAY

BY

**BARBARA LOU TAAM
LIMIN TAAM**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
LIMIN TAAM

EDITED BY

SRIRAM PARASURAMA

COVER PHOTOS

Poppies of Palestine. On our hike through the hills and valleys of the West Bank, near Kufeir. April 2009.

Shatila Palestinian Refugee Camp, Beirut, Lebanon. We stop for a snack on our way to an interview. May 1977.

Palestine solidarity encampment murals on the Cornell University campus. April 2024.

Copyright © 2025 by Barbara Lou Taam and LiMin Taam
All rights reserved.

First Edition, Fourth Printing, December, 2025

Independently Published
Contact: Palestine.People.Land.Solidarity@gmail.com
www.freeppls.org

ISBN 9798881709273

CONTENTS

Introduction: How and why we created this book	5
Map: Places in Palestine which we visited and show in this book	7
CHAPTER 1 1977 WITH OUR OWN EYES IN PALESTINE and LEBANON	9
GAZA	10
NAZARETH	21
Resisting the Occupation of Palestine	21
ACROSS PALESTINE	26
Israelis Settling on Stolen Lands	26
JERUSALEM	27
Israeli Destruction of Palestinian Homes	27
WEST BANK	30
Palestinians Working Their Land Under Continuous Threat	30
Israeli Strategic Land and Water Theft: Settlements in the Jordan River Valley of the West Bank	32
Interview with Birzeit University Student Leaders	33
Israeli Repression: Military Occupation, Imprisonment	35
Resistance on Nakba Day, 1977	38
LEBANON	40
Refugees Determined to Return to Palestine	40
Interviews with Palestinian Leaders	46
Meeting People's Needs: PLO Clinics, Workshops, Schools	51
Southern Lebanon Flashpoint	56
"From Here I Can See Palestine!"	58

CHAPTER 2	2009 WITH OUR OWN EYES IN PALESTINE	63
JERUSALEM	64	
Resisting Israeli Settlers Moving into Palestinian Homes: Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan	64	
A Vast Stretch of the Apartheid Wall, Deep into the Palestinian Villages East of Jerusalem	68	
The Israeli Apartheid Wall Through Abu Dis: The Same Vast Wall, Seen From the Other Side	72	
<i>Meet Math</i> , For Palestinian Children, at Al Quds University in Abu Dis	75	
“The Wall Shall Fall”	78	
EASTWARD	80	
The Ma’ale Adumim Israeli Settlement: Strategic and Colossal	80	
WEST BANK	83	
Artistic Expressions at Ibdaa Cultural Center in Dheisheh Refugee Camp	83	
“Palestine is Our Country”	89	
Israeli Settlement, Apartheid Wall, Checkpoint	92	
Shat’ha in the Northern Hills: People, Land, Exploring Freedom	95	
Bounty of the Land and People, Interrupted	104	
Among the Olive Trees	108	
CHAPTER 3	SOLIDARITY 2024-25 and Onward	111
Photos of and words by participants in the Palestine solidarity movement on the Cornell campus and in Ithaca	111	
“We Resist For Siti’s Laugh”	139	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	141	
FURTHER READING AND EXPLORATION	142	

HOW AND WHY WE CREATED THIS BOOK

LiMin:

I recall, in 1967, I could not understand why a group of students at my D.C.-area high school were cheering the Israeli military's conquests in Palestine. I felt I was different from the group.

In the spring of 1969, I arrived at Cornell as a high school visitor, in the midst of the student takeover of Willard Straight Hall. The experience was unforgettable. I was struck by the power of the students and their sense of justice. A few months later, I began my studies as a 17-year-old engineering physics major.

The demographics of the student body looked very different then compared to now. Students of European ancestry dominated the campus, and I felt like a tiny minority as one of a very few Chinese Americans.

I joined protests against the U.S. war in Vietnam, and through them I came to understand the power of the student movement.

Yet, as inspiring as the antiwar struggle was, I clearly recall when Cornell President Dale Corson issued a statement of campus-wide sympathy for Israel in the wake of the 1972 Olympics. He said nothing of the ongoing trauma that Israel was inflicting on Palestinians. That silence — the dehumanization of the Palestinian people — resonated deeply with something personal in my own life.

Lou:

As a high school student in 1969, I joined friends who were knocking on doors and talking with people throughout Buffalo, NY. We were asking them to sign a petition against the war in Vietnam. And when my

father's Tuesday night poker buddies showed up at our house, I asked for their signatures, too — quite nervously, as I knew my father didn't agree with me.

At Cornell University, I sensed there was something fundamental about the way the world works that I didn't understand — and I was determined to figure it out. In and out of the classroom, I kept pressing to develop that understanding.

I was very active in the movement at Cornell against the U.S. war on Vietnam. In 1972, a couple hundred of us occupied Carpenter Hall, on the engineering quad, for five days. We demanded that Cornell abolish ROTC and end all Defense Department research on campus; convert its Cornell Aeronautical Laboratory from military to constructive, humane research; and sell its stock shares in Gulf, then extracting oil from Angola. We renamed the building Giap-Cabral Hall, in honor of two monumental revolutionary leaders, Võ Nguyên Giáp of Vietnam and Amílcar Cabral of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.

While a student, I joined LiMin at *The Rest of the News*, a weekly radio show that the antiwar movement pushed the Cornell radio station to air. Decades before I learned the term, it was like a podcast. Memorable shows included interviews with striking West Virginia coal miners and with Attica prisoners following their 1971 uprising.

One of our successes involved a song created to derail a Portuguese wine company's test-market campaign aimed at several U.S. college towns, including Ithaca. We mobilized as part of the global movement in solidarity with the struggle against Portuguese colonialism in Guinea-Bissau, Angola, and

Mozambique. Local musicians composed a spoof on the wine jingle. We aired it on our radio show; it went viral, by early 1970s standards, and the wine company pulled out from Cornell and Ithaca. Lighthearted as this may seem, it was key to my understanding of national liberation struggles beyond Vietnam. And a Rest of the News member central to this effort soon delved into researching all the corporations and government entities which were financially invested in the apartheid South African regime. He spent years developing what became the go-to resource for the global anti-apartheid boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement.

In February 1973, I traveled with a grad student friend to Wounded Knee to report on the occupation of the village by local indigenous people and the American Indian Movement (AIM). We stayed for the duration of the occupation, sending out radio reports of our interviews with participants. They shared stories of their long history and most recent experiences of federally backed violence, land theft and intentional impoverishment of the Oglala Sioux, and encouraged us to take part in the community of resistance they built around them. The interviews grew into a book I co-authored called *Voices from Wounded Knee, 1973: The People are Standing Up*.

Our focus on Palestine

The two of us moved to New York City in the fall of 1974 to form the *Rest of the News* NYC bureau, just as delegates from what we then called Third World countries began arriving to address the UN General Assembly. We interviewed them and aired the programs. A turning point came when we had the

opportunity to interview delegates of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which had just gained UN observer status, and learn more about Palestine.

We noticed that while everyone in our movement opposed the ongoing U.S. war on Vietnam, and supported other anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggles, not everyone in our movement agreed on solidarity with Palestine. This intensified our conviction to focus on Palestine solidarity and channel our efforts into the struggle that some intentionally ignored.

We joined the Palestine Solidarity Committee NYC as early members.

In 1975, we began work as a photographer and a writer for Liberation News Service, a media collective launched during the 1968 protests at Columbia University.

The Vietnamese and others had invited the global “movement” press to their countries, to share the stories and images of their struggles. And so did the Palestine Liberation Organization. The PLO invited us in 1977, as Liberation News Service journalists and Palestine Solidarity Committee activists, along with three other Americans.

As a group of five, we photographed, interviewed, reported from, and discussed our way throughout Palestine and Lebanon, traveling overland through Syria and Jordan. In Lebanon, PLO leaders, members, and associates guided us through a packed itinerary. In Palestine, contacts including the American Friends Service Committee and UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in

the Near East) assisted us in traveling throughout Palestine, including Jerusalem, Gaza, the West Bank, and the Galilee.

We returned to Palestine in 2009 and visited Penny Johnson, a member of the group on our earlier trip. She had moved to Palestine and become a prominent researcher and author at Birzeit University, where she was a founding member of its Institute of Women’s Studies. Her husband, Raja Shehadeh, co-founder of Al-Haq and a prolific writer, had just published *Palestinian Walks: Forays into a Vanishing Landscape*. The book was unlike anything we had read. In his walks through Palestine, Shehadeh chronicles Israeli settler-colonial practices with a level of detail surpassed only by his descriptions of the landscape of his “beloved country,” and his deep connection to it.

By then, I (LiMin) had worked for decades in independent software innovation and engineering and was part of the breakthroughs in personal computing. I was eager to take the latest photographic technology to Palestine. In my bag of digital tools I packed a new GigaPan – a robotic mount for a camera with software that stitches together incredibly high-resolution panoramic photographs. With the new equipment in hand, we aimed to photographically capture and share with others the intensity and scale of the Israeli apartheid wall and settlements, to help build resistance in the U.S. against our government’s support for this.

On walks and in conversation with people across Palestine (except Gaza, which the Israeli blockade had turned into an open-air prison) our appreciation

of Palestine, its people, their enduring connection to their land, and our role in solidarity deepened.

Solidarity here, today

Today in Ithaca, we are amidst a Palestine solidarity movement on the Cornell University campus and in the community that did not exist our first time here. Cornell’s student body has changed dramatically, with Palestinian students, many international students, and children of recent immigrants. For many, Israel is seen as an artifact of Western settler colonialism undeserving of automatic support. Efforts to end the horrific Israeli genocide of Palestinians, to end the role of our governments and institutions as enablers of this genocide, and to take a stand in solidarity with Palestine are the central focus of a worldwide movement, including here.

As we look through our photographs and writing from 1977 onward, the collection reveals to us something more relevant and pressing than ever. We would like to share it with you.

**Places in Palestine
which we visited and
show in this book**

- Qabatiye
- Kufeir
- Nablus
- Jiljilya
- Birzeit
- Ramallah
- Qalandia
- Qalandia Refugee Camp
- Jerusalem
- Old City
- Sheikh Jarrah
- Jabal al Mukabbir
- Bethlehem
- Dheisheh Refugee Camp
- Har Homa settlement
- Artas
- Beit Lahia
- Gaza City
- Al-Shati Refugee Camp
- Maghazi Refugee Camp
- Khan Younis
- Rafah Refugee Camp
- Rafah

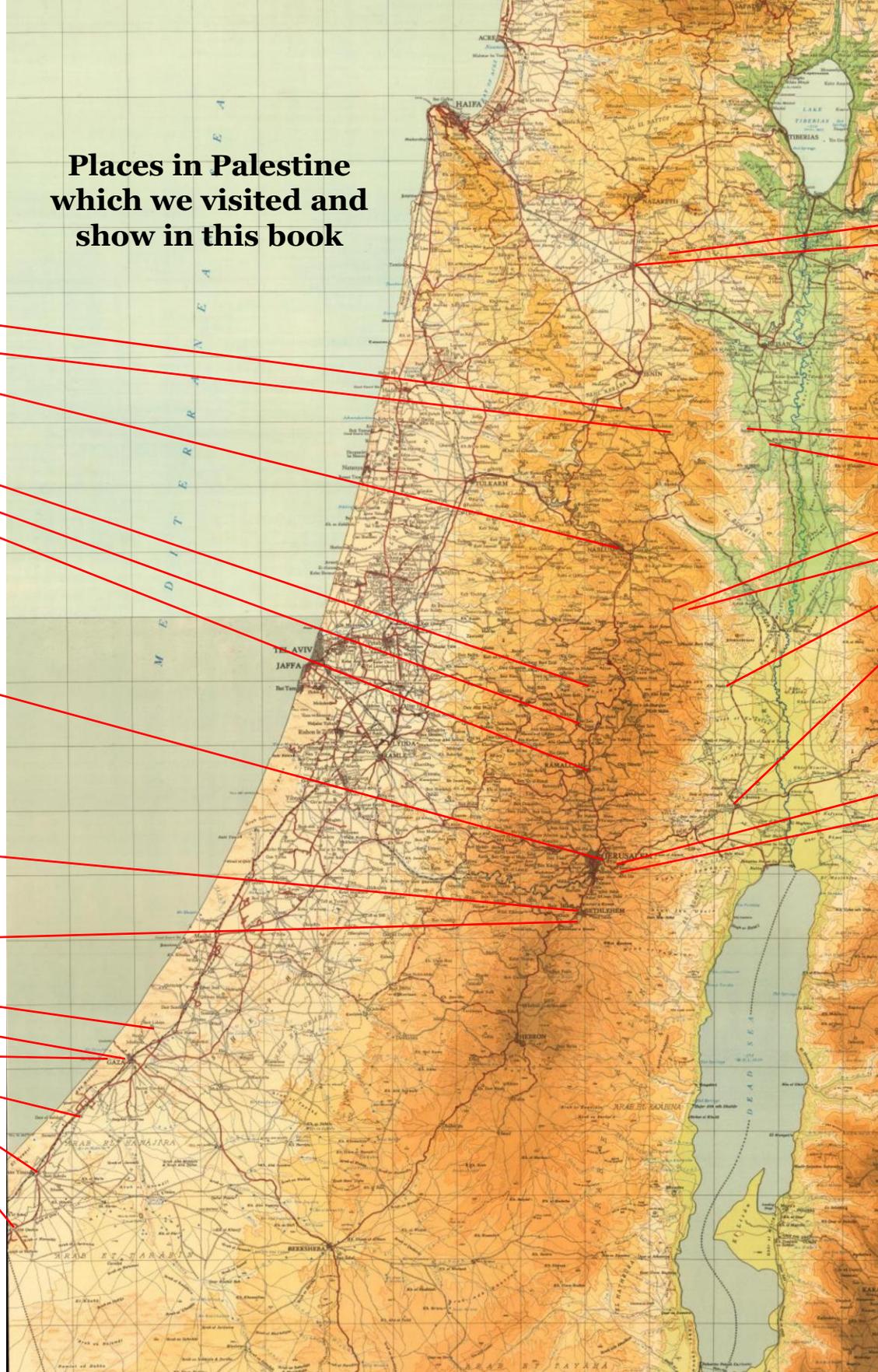
- Ein Mahel
- Nazareth

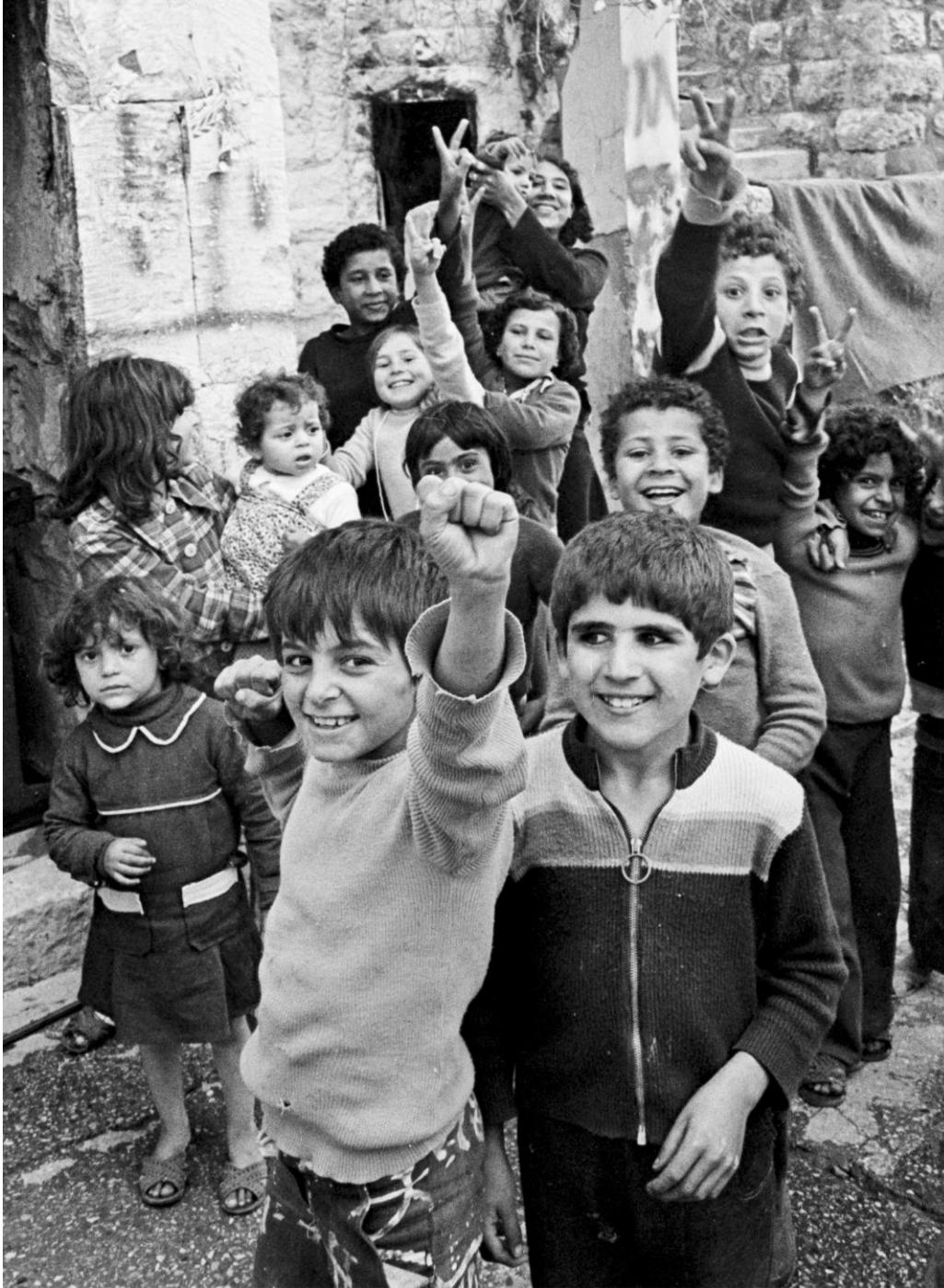
- Jordan River Valley**
- Bardala
 - Mehola Israeli settlement
 - Akraba
 - Gitit Israeli settlement
 - Tomer Israeli settlement
 - Jericho

- Nof Zion settlement
- Eizarieh
- Abu Dis
- “E1”
- Ma’ale Adumim settlement
- French Hill settlement

The base map is in the public domain, made accessible and searchable through a project of VisualizingPalestine.org; see credits at palopenmaps.org/about.

Labels and pointers are added by the book authors.





DAMOUR, near Beirut, May 1977 – Survivors of the massacre of Palestinians at the Tal al Za'atar refugee camp.

Chapter 1

1977

WITH OUR OWN EYES IN PALESTINE AND LEBANON

We meet with Palestinians living in their homeland under Israeli occupation, with PLO leaders, with refugee families in camps, activists in the workers' and women's unions and fighters on the front lines in southern Lebanon.

We see firsthand the determined resistance to intensified Israeli repression in Palestine, as well as the spirited reorganizing of the Palestinians who suffered during the long war in Lebanon.

A veteran who fought for Palestine in 1948, in Lebanon in 1973, and in defense of Tal al Za'atar refugee camp in 1976 tells us:

*"All Palestinians share one goal:
to liberate Palestine.*

*"And if a people has a just goal,
they will achieve it."*

GAZA

MAY, 1977

אזרח / מבקר / נוסע ברצועת עזה

1- עם הכנסת ברצועת עזה עליך להשמע להוראות כוחות הבטחון והשילוט ברצועה.
2- התנועה ברצועת עזה מותרת כרט למקומות הבאים:
א- מתקני ארם. ב- שטחי אימונים ושטחים סבורים.
3- הגבלות בטחון ברצועה
א- התנועה מותרת על הכבישים ראשיים בלבד.
ב- אין לרדת מהכבישים מחשש למיקוש.
ג- התנועה ברצועה בלילה אסורה.
ד- הכניסות והיציאות לרצועה מותרות רק דרך המחסומים.

דווח
על כל תקריח ארוע יש להודיע מיד לתחנת המשטרה או המחנה הצבאי הקרוב ביותר

אזרח / מבקר / נוסע
הקפד על בצוע ההוראות

ראה הוזהרת !!!
מפקדת רצועת עזה

CITIZEN, VISITOR, TRAVELLER, THROUGH OUT THE GAZA STRIP.
1- ENTERING THE GAZA STRIP YOU ARE OBLIGED TO OBEY THE ORDER OF THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES AND THE SIGNS PUT UP BY THEM. 2- MOVEMENT ABOUT THE GAZA STRIP IS PERMITTED EXCEPT:
A- U.N. INSTITUTIONS. B- CLOSED AND TRAINING AREAS.
3- SECURITY RESTRICTIONS IN THE GAZA STRIP. A- MOVEMENT IS PERMITTED ON THE MAIN ROADS ONLY. B- DO NOT LEAVE THE ROADS BECAUSE OF DANGER OF MINES. C- MOVEMENT AT NIGHT IS NOT PERMITTED. D- ENTERING AND LEAVING THE GAZA STRIP ONLY THROUGH THE OFFICIAL ENTRANCES.
4- **REPORTS**
PLEASE INFORM THE NEAREST POLICE STATION ON MILITARY CAMP IMMEDIATELY IN CASE OF INCIDENT.
CITIZEN VISITOR TRAVELLER !
KEEP STRICTLY TO THESE REGULATIONS.
YOU ARE DUELY WARNED.

THE MILITARY COMMAND
GAZA STRIP

Near BEIT LAHIA, Gaza, May 1977 – From the north, we drive into Gaza, which is under Israeli military occupation.



GAZA, May 1977 - Entering Gaza, the first person we encounter.

Near AL-SHATI Palestinian refugee camp, near GAZA CITY, May 1977 –



Palestinians fishing and maintaining their nets in the Mediterranean Sea.

We later enjoy a delicious fish dinner in a beachside restaurant.

Our guide tells us that the Israeli authorities have made all beach roads off-limits to Palestinians at night. People fishing can go out at night but not come in at night.

Behind us grapevines grow in the sand. Our guide explains that in this area, **“The water table is high, and people can get fresh water even very close to the sea. There is no water problem. Palestinians flood the land next to the sea to leach out salt, then plant a cover crop. The following year, farmers plant a food crop. This land has been very productive for thousands of years.”**

The road south from Gaza City is lined with olive, orange, date, and almond trees.



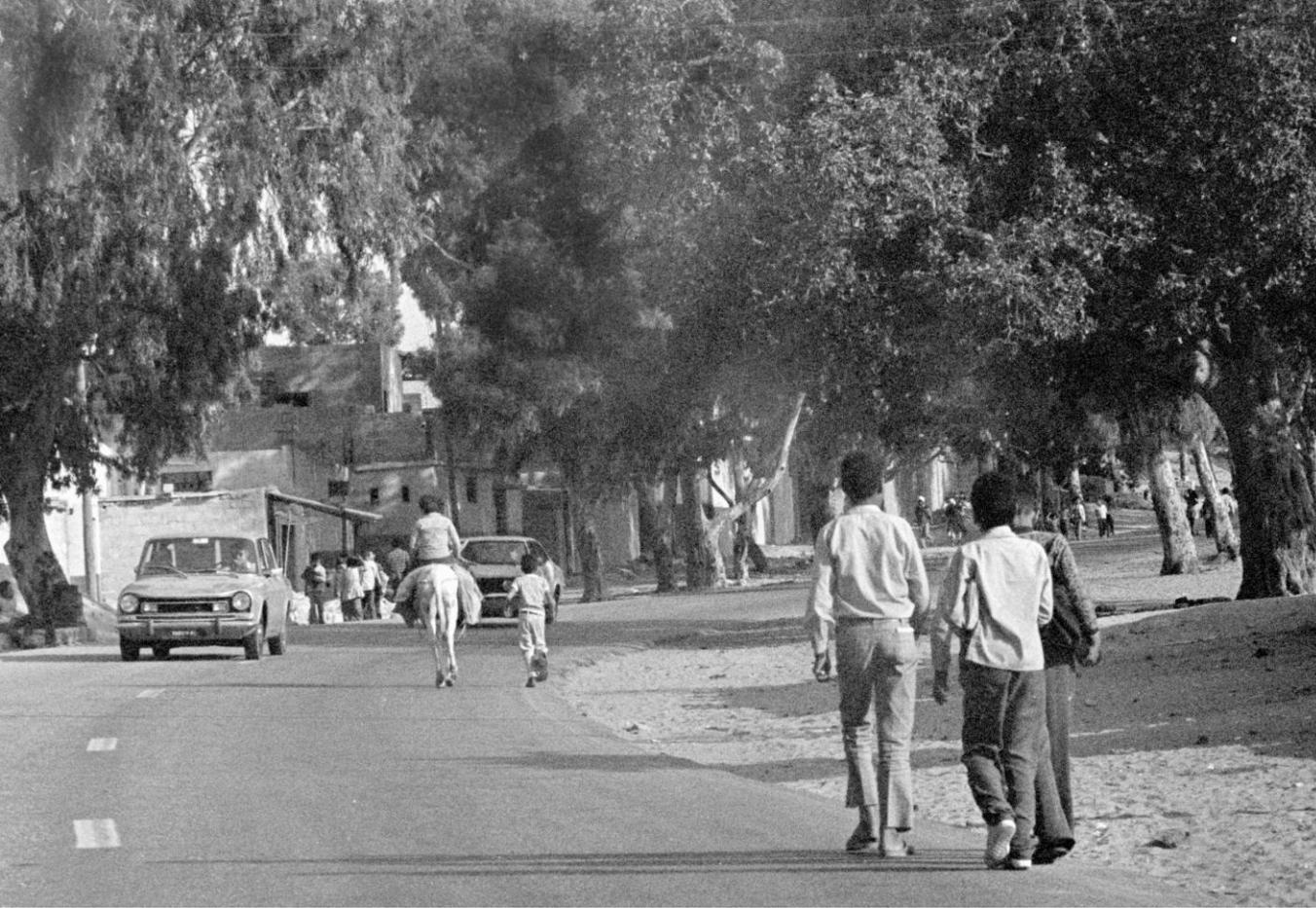
Palestinian children in a refugee camp near KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza, May 1977.

Near RAFAH, Gaza,
May 1977 - There is
only one school per
every four Palestinian
refugee camps. Children
walk long distances
to get to school.





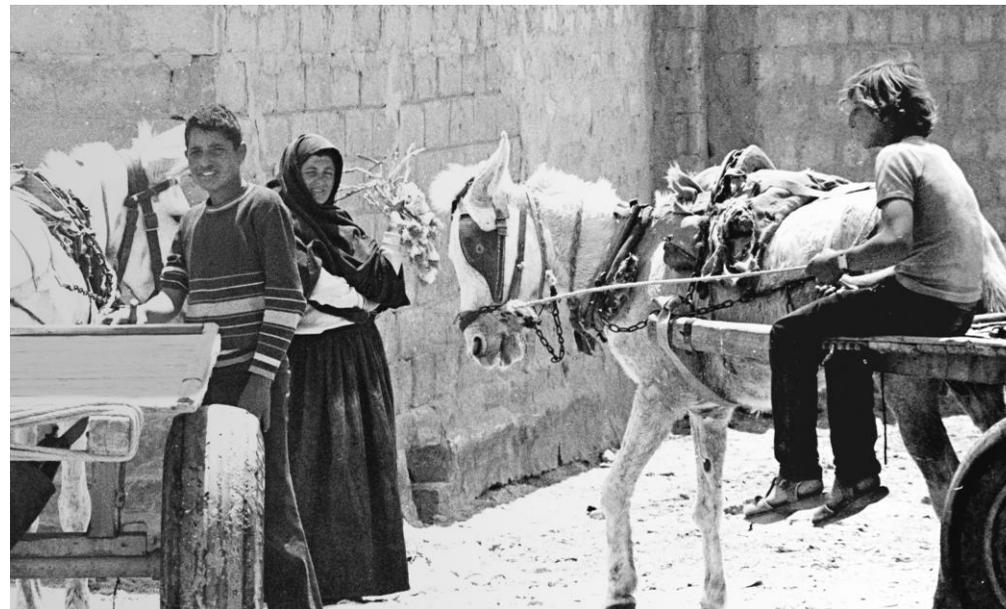
Palestinian refugee camp adjoining GAZA CITY, May 1977. School children.



On the main road, south of MAGHAZI Palestinian refugee camp,
Gaza, May 1977. Eucalyptus-lined street.



KHAN YOUNIS,
Gaza, May 1977.



Between KHAN YOUNIS and
RAFAH, Gaza, May 1977.



Between
KHAN YOUNIS
and
RAFAH,
Gaza,
May 1977.

RAFAH, Gaza, May 1977 – Friends introduced us to Mr. Eide, an administrator in the Rafah refugee camp who shows us around.

*“I was born in Jaffa.
In 1948 my whole family
became refugees.
Eighty percent of
Palestinians became
refugees in 1948.”*

– Mr. Eide

Mr. Eide looks about 50, so he was about 20 when he and his family were forced out of the city of Jaffa during the Nakba. He says, “In the town of Rafah there are 5,000 people; in the Rafah camp there are 50,000 Palestinian refugees.”

Mr. Eide describes the worsened conditions for Palestinians since 1967 when the Israeli military seized control of the Gaza Strip, and goes on to tell us:

“There was much protest from 1967 through 1971, when there was a massive Israeli military crackdown on guerrillas. Israeli authorities imprisoned many Palestinians. The military destroyed 500 houses in Rafah. About 90% of the evicted people moved in with relatives, making it very crowded. But since 1967 UNRWA [the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees] has not been allowed to build a single new refugee shelter. Israel wants to get rid of UNRWA.”



RAFAH Palestinian Refugee Camp, Gaza, May 1977 – Israeli authorities have very recently marked another 1,500 Palestinian homes for demolition and eviction.”

Mr. Eide tells us that several years ago, the Israeli government announced the annexation of Rafah Camp to Rafah Town. He emphasizes his point:

“The military authorities thought if they annex camps to towns, there wouldn’t be any refugees.”

“To fight this,” he says, “the municipalities helped get water and electricity to the camps.”

The Israeli government is forcibly evicting Palestinians and moving them into Israeli housing nearby, just into the Israeli-occupied Egyptian Sinai. Mr. Eide describes the Israeli efforts to remove Palestinian homes, people and refugee status:

“Any Palestinian who moves into the Israeli-built housing must destroy their home in the refugee camp and cannot pass it on to a relative. They were told they must demolish or be arrested, and other threats.” And the Palestinian response, says Mr. Eide:

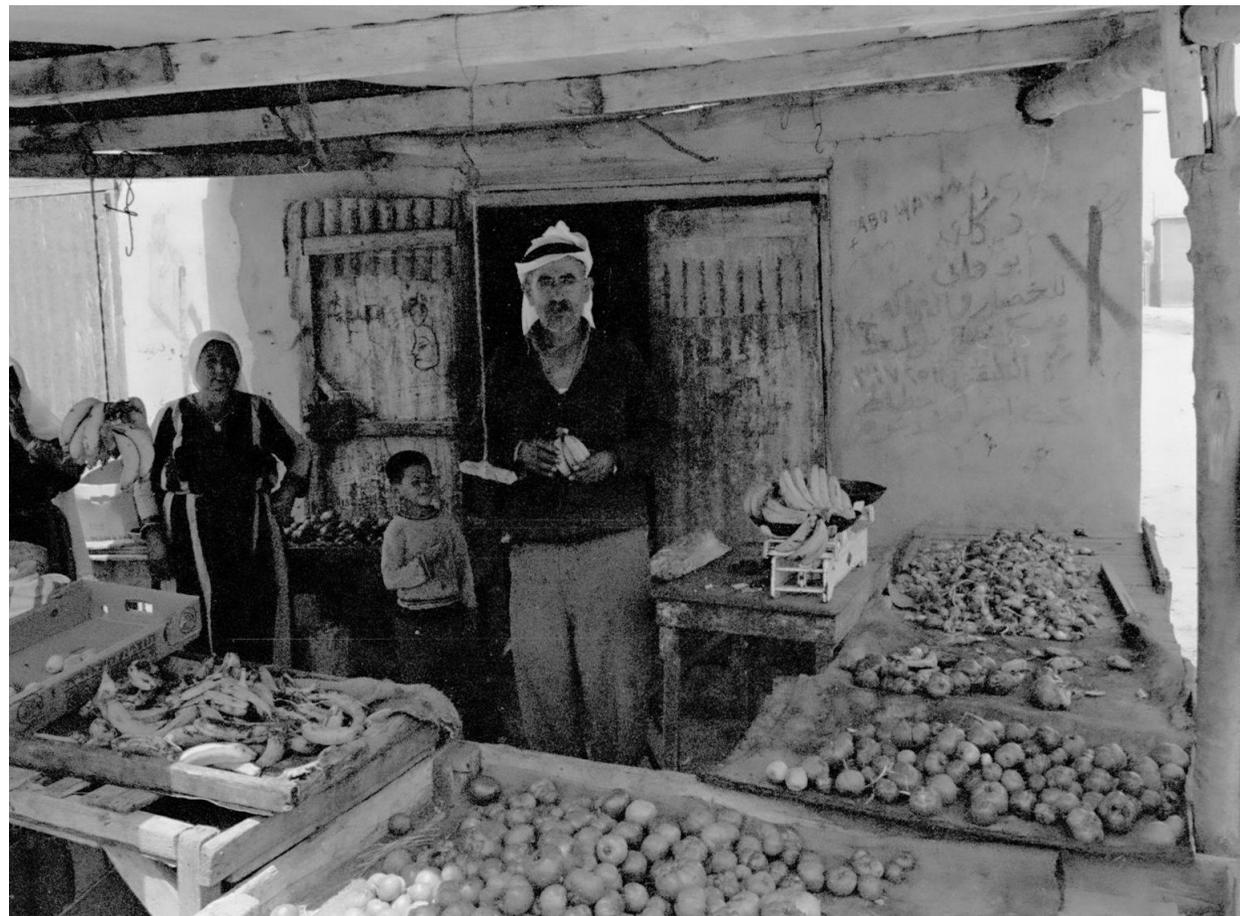
“The people are against this.”

“Next month they will begin forcing Khan Younis people into Israeli government housing,” Mr. Eide tells us. Israeli destruction of homes and dispersal of Palestinians has been the most intense in the southern part of the Gaza Strip, where Israeli settlement has been the most rapid.

RAFAH Refugee Camp,
Gaza, May 17, 1977 –
Open areas where Israeli
occupation forces have
already torn down 1,000
Palestinian homes. They
bulldozed and widened
streets in the camps in
1971, to enable Israeli
tanks to roll through.



RAFAH Refugee Camp,
Gaza, May 17, 1977 –
Some of the 1,500
Palestinian homes and
small businesses in
Rafah refugee camp in
the Gaza Strip recently
marked with a red “X”
by Israeli authorities
for demolition and
eviction. Demolition
will deprive this family
of their home and
market, where today
they are selling onions,
bananas, and tomatoes.





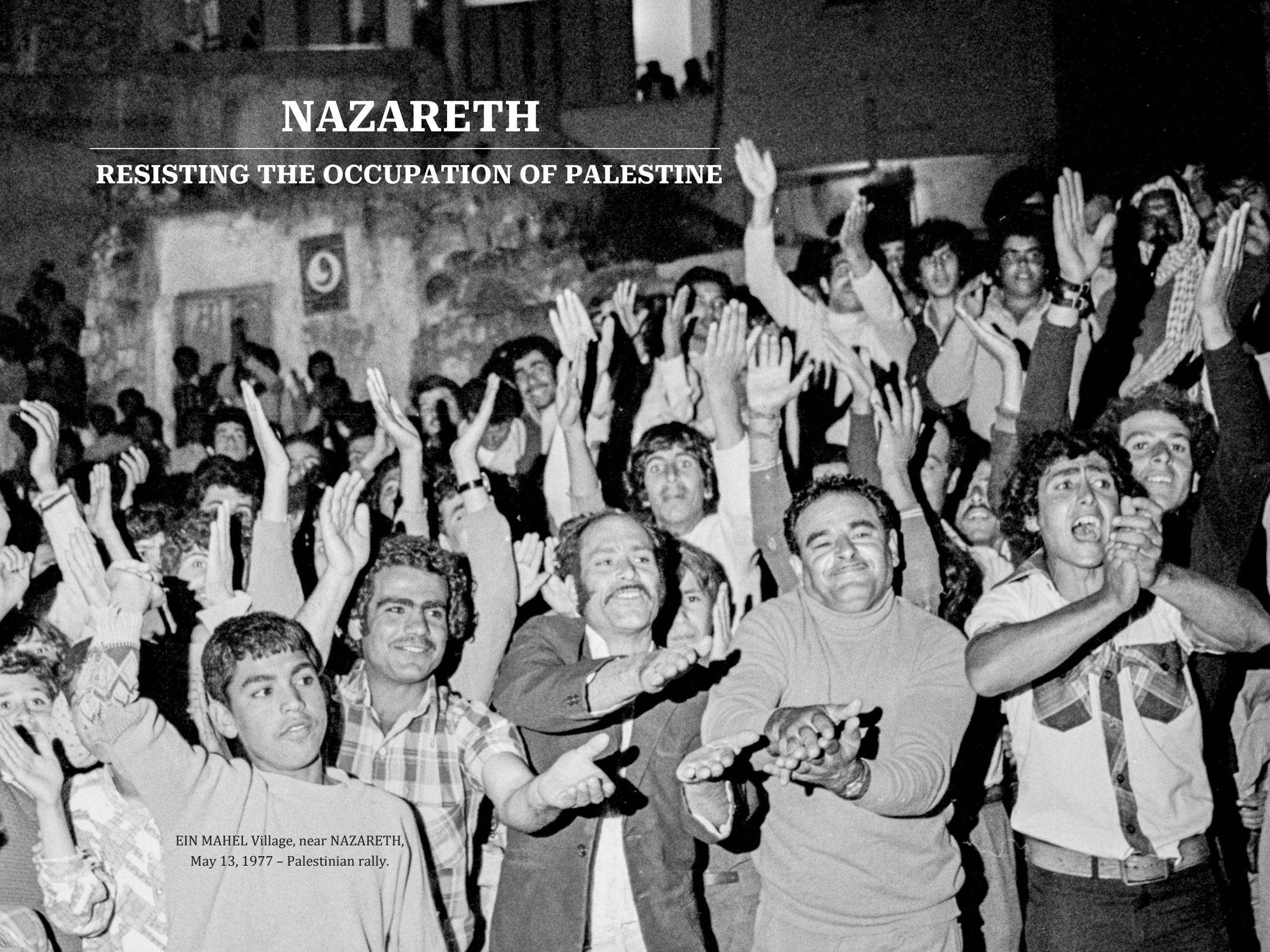
*"I'm a Palestinian
on Palestinian land.
Whenever anyone sees someone
occupying your country,
you have the right to use any
weapon to kick them out."*

*– Mr. Eide, Palestinian refugee
from Jaffa, living in Rafah*

Near RAFAH, Gaza, May 1977 –
Palestinians in agricultural fields.

NAZARETH

RESISTING THE OCCUPATION OF PALESTINE



EIN MAHEL Village, near NAZARETH,
May 13, 1977 - Palestinian rally.

NAZARETH, May 13, 1977 – As we approach the city, a gas station attendant tells us that Tawfiq Zayad’s house was shot at with 20–30 rounds of machine-gun fire at 1 am today. Mr. Zayad is the Palestinian mayor of this major city in the Galilee, representing the Rakah Party. We head towards City Hall, where we see Mr. Zayad on the street. He invites us to attend a short-notice town meeting to discuss the incident. A crowd numbering more than 400 attend (photo below).

The discussion continues at a rally in the nearby village of Ein Mahel (photo on the facing page). A villager elaborates on contention with the Israeli government: “The village raised money – many women gave their gold jewelry – to build a road from Nazareth to Ein Mahel and improve the school. Koenig closed it down.” (Yisrael Koenig was the Northern District Commissioner of the Israeli Ministry of the Interior, with authority over the area.) Tensions with Israeli authorities are high, with the upcoming legislative elections four days from now.



*“The village raised money – many women gave their gold jewelry – to build a road from Nazareth to Ein Mahel and improve the school. Koenig closed it down.”
– Ein Mahel villager and rally attendee*



Above: NAZARETH, May 13, 1977 –
More than 400 attend the town meeting, called to discuss nighttime shots fired at the mayor's home.

Left: EIN MAHEL, May 13, 1977 –
Hundreds participate in the rally, in the square and balconies.
Nazareth Mayor Zayad predicts the upcoming election will result in a more rightist Israeli legislature, confirmed a few days later.

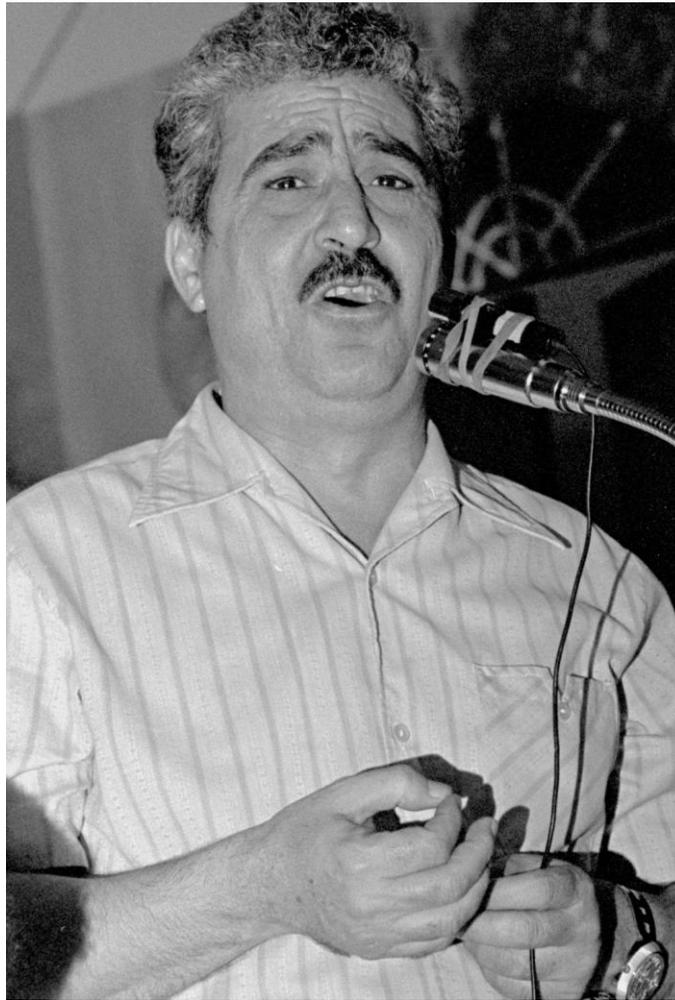
EIN MAHEL, near NAZARETH, May 13, 1977 – After the rally we are invited to dinner at the home of a council member of Ein Mahel village. What a feast of mousakhan, the national dish of Palestine!

We all are treated to beautiful renditions of Palestinian songs.

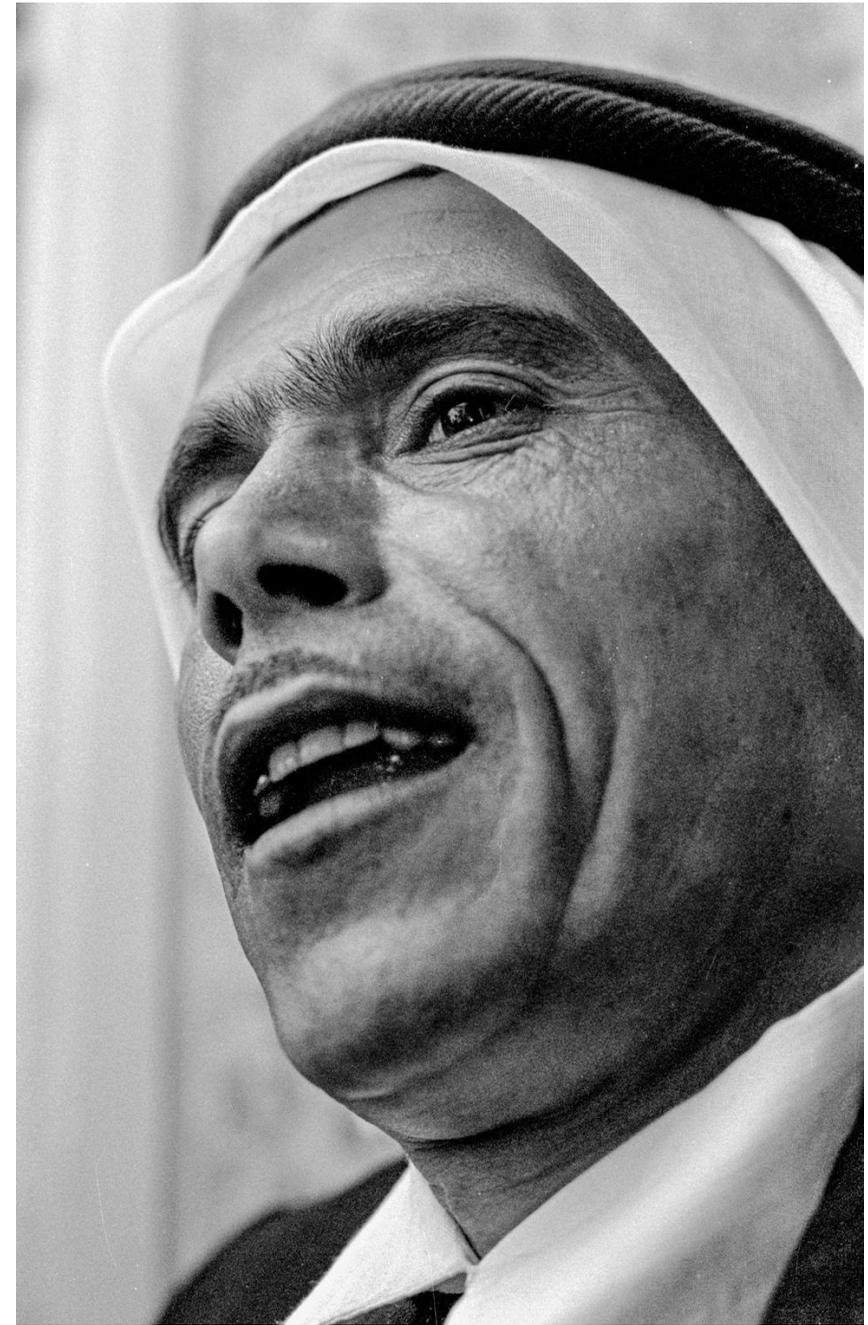
Following dinner, Mayor Zayad rises to speak. He refers to Yisrael Koenig, the Israeli Northern District Commissioner of the Ministry of the Interior, in charge of Israeli treatment of Palestinians living within 1948-Israel. The Koenig Memorandum, an internal Israeli document leaked recently, in September 1976, presented strategy for “diluting existing Arab population concentrations.”

*“I’ll read a telegram –
my wife’s idea – which
we sent to Koenig a
month ago, on the birth
of our third child:
‘We offer demographic
condolences –
raising a child with no
racism
and to live in
freedom.’”*

*– Tawfiq Zayad,
Palestinian mayor of
Nazareth*



Tawfiq Zayad



EIN MAHEL, May 13, 1977 – Singer at the dinner.



NAZARETH, May 1977 – Palestinian stone workers.

ACROSS PALESTINE

ISRAELIS SETTLING ON STOLEN LANDS

We are seeing that a central aspect of the process of Israeli colonization is the confiscation of Palestinian land. The land, the Palestinians' source of livelihood for thousands of years, is under constant threat. The Israeli state has expropriated 90% of the Palestinian-owned land in the region it conquered in 1948—and continues to confiscate land in this area, particularly near the Palestinian city of Nazareth. The Israeli government began the same practice as soon as it occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967.

When confiscating the land throughout the years, the Israelis have repeatedly asserted that most Palestinian land is an “uninhabited desert.” Travel through occupied Palestine belies this myth. We see acres upon acres of land being farmed by Palestinians, and more used for grazing. In the West Bank, the olive trees, planted centuries before the establishment of Israel in 1948, grow on terraces hand-built into the hillsides. Vegetables thrive on the smaller flat fields and wheat in the larger ones. In the Gaza Strip expansive orange groves and fields of almond trees and date palms reach up to the roadsides.

The Palestinians whose lands are expropriated are forced into the pool of cheap labor for Israeli construction and agribusiness. The Palestinian workers commute long distances often to be hired on a daily basis. Their wages are far less than those of Israeli workers.

Scores of Israeli settlements are being built on the expropriated Palestinian lands, with the aim of surrounding and controlling the Palestinian population, as well as expanding the Zionist presence in Palestine. Boasting of this latter aspect, the current Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan once asserted, “Borders are not set by markings on a map. Borders are determined by settlement.”

We toured the settlements of the West Bank, where newly built roads, expensively graded and paved, crisscross the hills and valleys, linking the settlements. Along with new water projects, telephone cables, and high-voltage electric power lines, it all adds up to an enormous infrastructure financed by the government to the tune of at least \$500 million.

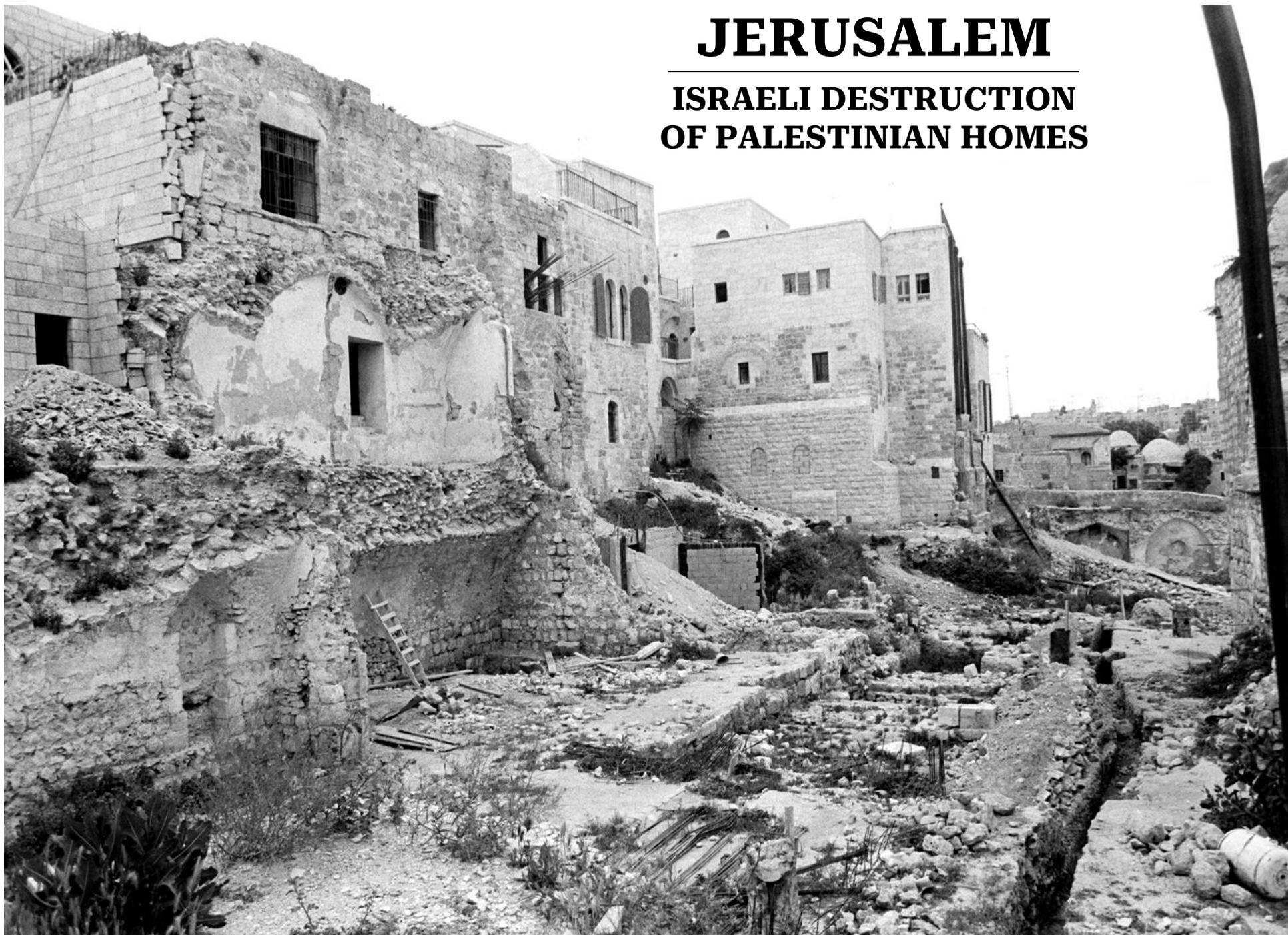
The Zionist strategy of building settlements to extend its territories was pursued vigorously beginning in the 1920's, leading up to the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948. And from 1967 through the present, one resident tells us, “They've been pulling it off for a second time” in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.



NAZARETH, May 1977 – Israeli settlement.

JERUSALEM

ISRAELI DESTRUCTION OF PALESTINIAN HOMES



JERUSALEM, OLD CITY, May 1977 – Israeli destruction of Palestinian homes. The entire foreground is the site of already-demolished homes.

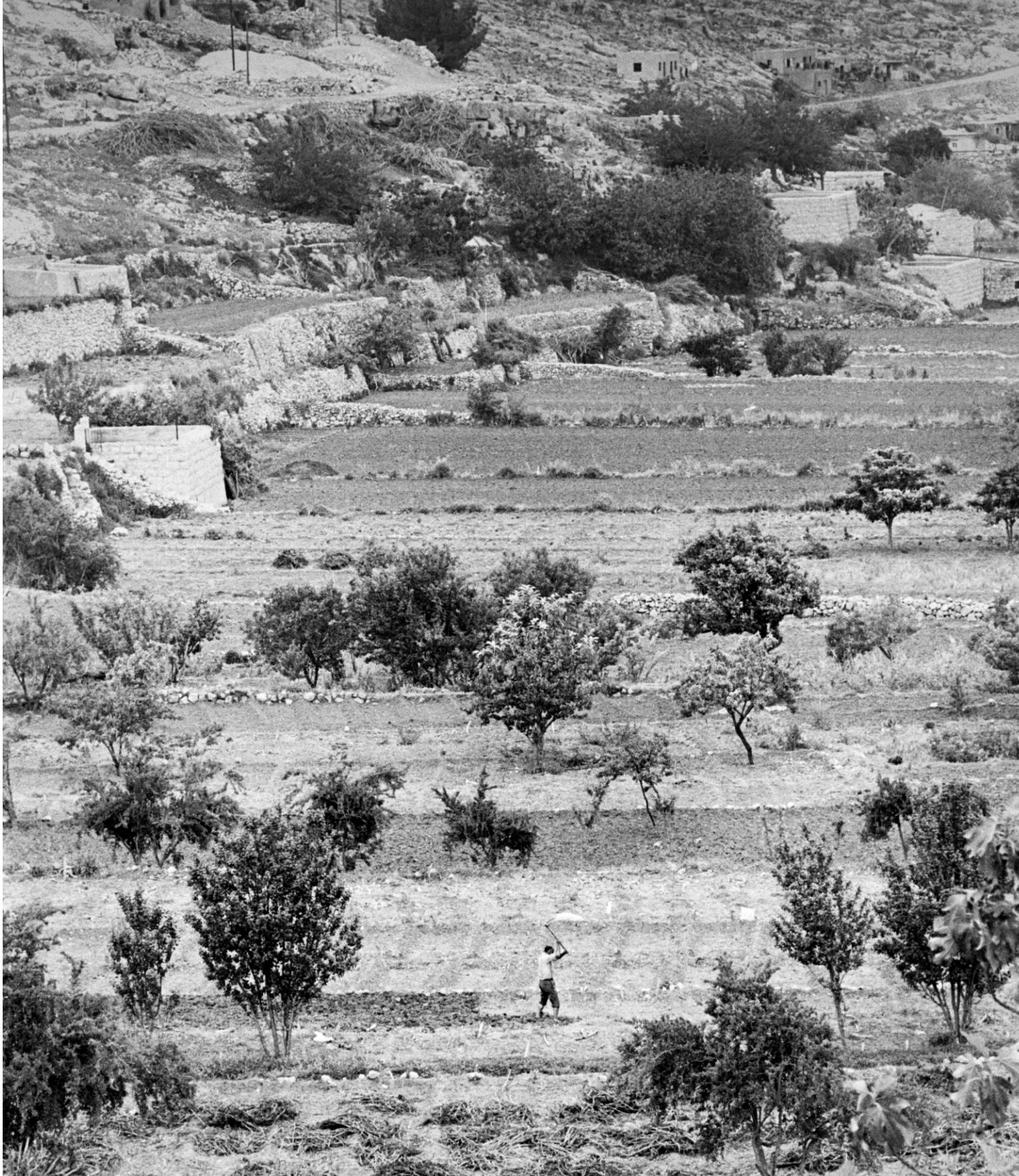


EAST JERUSALEM, May 1977 - Israeli French Hill settlement, which overlooks the Old City and is built on Palestinian land seized in 1967.

One prong of the Israeli settlement strategy is aimed at encircling and isolating the Palestinian population centers. New high rise apartment complexes in and near Jerusalem, Hebron, and Bethlehem are cities in themselves, with housing for 39,000 Israelis.



EAST JERUSALEM, May 11, 1977 – Potential settlers, with armed guard, near the Israeli “French Hill” settlement.



WEST BANK

PALESTINIANS WORKING THEIR LAND UNDER CONTINUOUS THREAT

QABATIYE, West Bank, May 13, 1977
– Palestinian opposition to the Israeli settlements is widespread.

Villagers in Qabatiye in the northern part of the West Bank are staging militant demonstrations, in response to seeing advertisements in the Hebrew press soliciting Israelis to help build new settlements on Qabatiye lands.

Israeli soldiers shot and killed a Palestinian woman, 55-year-old Fatima Hamadi, and a Palestinian youth, 15-year-old Dalai Hassan Halil Abu Roob, on May 3, during one of these protests.

ARTAS, West Bank, May 1977 –
Palestinian farmer.



ARTAS, West Bank, May 1977 – Palestinian farmer plowing under his plum and pear trees near the village of Artas. We're told that because the Israeli settlers often bring in mobile or modular homes, Palestinians in some areas literally wake up in the morning to find a new Israeli settlement on their land—land that the Israeli military had earlier seized for “security reasons.”

ISRAELI STRATEGIC LAND AND WATER THEFT: SETTLEMENTS IN THE JORDAN RIVER VALLEY OF THE WEST BANK

JORDAN RIVER VALLEY, West Bank, May 16, 1977 – In addition to encircling individual Palestinian cities, another focus of the Israeli settlement strategy is to encircle the entire West Bank. They are implementing this with a string of settlements in the Jordan River Valley, the eastern edge of the West Bank.

The Israeli settlements in the Jordan Valley form a ladder, with the Jordan River and the Allon Road as the tall north-to-south lengths and connecting roads as the rungs. This encompasses the length of the entire valley and a width up to 13 miles (more than one-fourth the width of the West Bank). One thousand Israeli settlers and 18,000 Palestinians now live in the area. The Israelis control 80% of the land, acquired through confiscations.

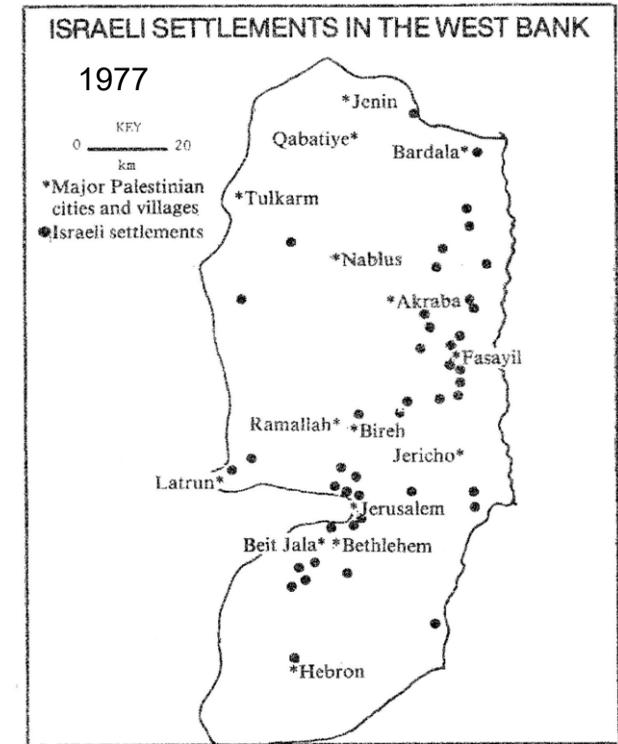
We drive along the Allon Road. Midway, we see the Israeli settlement of Gitit. Gitit is built on land farmed for generations by the Palestinian villagers of Akraba. When the villagers of Akraba were ordered to evacuate for “security reasons” in 1971, they refused to go. So in 1972 the Israelis sprayed the valley with defoliants—U.S. war surplus from Vietnam—which destroyed the crops and forced out the Palestinians. By 1975 the land was again arable and the Israeli military base there was converted into the settlement of Gitit. We pass a ditch for telephone cables they had just begun digging several weeks earlier. The Gitit settlers are digging in for good.

Later we come to the Israeli settlement at Mehola, at the northern tip of the Allon Road. Mehola dug a water well in 1968 between the Palestinian village of Bardala and the village’s water supply. The Bardala communal well, which supplied water for irrigation as well as to homes, began to dry up and the Palestinians had to lower their pump. Yet the Israeli settlement receives 1,000–1,500 cubic meters of water an hour, and Bardala receives only 200 cubic meters an hour. Now the well is drying up again.

The occupation authorities have “offered” to provide the Bardala villagers with water, but the villagers refuse to become dependent on the Israelis in this manner.

Most Israeli settlements in the Jordan Valley, where the soil is rich but the use of irrigation must be carefully planned, have built elaborate water pumping and storage systems—all entirely illegal according to the Geneva Conventions regarding occupied lands.

Meanwhile Palestinians have been prohibited from digging wells since the Israeli occupation of the area in 1967, and many have been forcibly shut down.



TOMER Settlement, May 1977 – The Israeli settlements are being built with an eye toward permanence. Date palms (above) at the Tomer settlement in the Jordan River Valley of the West Bank must grow for decades before they bear dates. High-voltage power lines for electricity (left) are used for the settlements in the Jordan Valley, whereas local generators would be used if temporary settlement was planned.

INTERVIEW WITH BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEADERS

BIRZEIT, West Bank, May 14, 1977 –

We sit down with two Palestinian students from Birzeit University, one of whom is the president of the student council.

Nightly, for the past 30 nights, Birzeit students led by the council are traveling back and forth to the nearby village of Deir Abu Mashel to help stand guard with the villagers. Under cover of darkness, a group of armed Israelis attacked villagers again and again, demanding that they evacuate so that an Israeli settlement can be built in its place. “Now there is a checkpoint in front of the village,” the students explain, “in which soldiers have a list of names and files. If we went today they would surely stop the busses and arrest 5 or so of us.” The leaders of the student movement at Hashemia School were arrested, prompting these concerns.

“Last year they stopped my car going to Ramallah – let 3 others go and kept me, the only student, from going.”

A year ago, the students report, Israeli soldiers would not have attacked militant students ready to face them head-on. Recently, 100 soldiers broke into a hostel and arrested non-active students in an aggressive show of force, but the other students bravely fought back.

Now, however, the soldiers have learned that the publicity has only benefited the students at Birzeit, and they instead ignore their movement entirely. The students decided to pivot to supporting Palestinian communities in other towns and villages.

It remains largely unsafe for the students to organize. “The planning is in secret,” a student explains, “but the soldiers often know about it.” Israeli soldiers limit the movement of known student organizers at checkpoints scattered throughout occupied Palestine.

The students we are speaking with note two critical issues this year - political prisoners and settlements. Two hundred workers at the Jerusalem

Red Cross went on strike in support of Palestinian prisoners but Israeli soldiers surrounded them and threatened to arrest the president of the Al Tira student council and a Birzeit teacher.

The Birzeit students seem unfazed by all this, however. Palestinians have been arrested for simply going about their days—when one’s safety isn’t guaranteed no matter what, why be afraid to resist, they explain. “When we see our people imprisoned or kicked out, the others see they have duties towards them,” they tell us.

Their parents, the students explain, seem more concerned for their children’s safety. While they are, of course, in opposition to the occupation, they worry for their sons’ safeties and, “families try to convince [their daughters] to get married, have children, that’s all. They try to keep them away from political or social activity.” Fines are also a common plague – many times students who are caught demonstrating or organizing are not arrested but instead fined, adding to the financial burdens on already poor families. The students feel their own family structures are under significant stress as they all deal with the weight of the occupation.

As students enter the workforce, they describe a sense of independence from their families’ expectations. Young men and women have more agency over their decisions – women in particular no longer feel tied to their parents when they work. One of the students tells us, “In Galilee after the demos, the youth for the first time are invited to family councils – since the youth are facing our national enemy – and invited to give opinions. They see students as doing something they couldn’t do.” At settlements, protestors include women and the elderly, not just students.

The student and worker alliance, Birzeit students explain, has been important to their demonstrations, but it’s not out in the open. They tell us, “[The] workers are not in high concentration in the West Bank as many work in Israel where it is harder to strike. It is Israel’s policy to reduce the number of jobs for West Bank workers in Israel, to get them to leave.” The students express the need for worker solidarity in facing oppression. They

tell us that Israeli policies lock Palestinians out of economies that produce essential goods such that they are reliant on Israel not just for trade, but for survival. Knowing that smaller farmers can't compete, the Israeli government seeks to drive Palestinian farmers and shepherds off their own land. The students elaborate:

*“They want to get Arabs off the land,
to work in Israeli factories.
Less pay, harder work, worse treatment.
And they reduce the number of jobs –
to get them to leave.”*



JERUSALEM, May 11, 1977 –
Palestinian construction workers carry heavy stone up a ladder.

“Ten to fifteen percent of Birzeit students come from refugee camps,” they share. Students demand from the University a syllabus that focuses more on the Palestinian struggle, for their education to directly alleviate the problems they face. The student council seeks to change the constitution, amend the syllabus, and “nationalize” the cafeteria. Internally, they explain, there is debate over the decision-making autonomy of the whole student body in comparison to the student council. Those appointed to the council argue that the council shouldn't politically represent the student body – only they can represent themselves. They also worry that council leadership appointments single out targets for Israel to repress.

News from the PLO reaches the West Bank and is a significant topic of discussion among students. One of them tells us, “At this stage we must seek leaders in the West Bank, while in Lebanon the Palestinians are more under the authority of the PLO.”

*“Since politics dominate our lives, it is always
discussed. Not just students, but people everywhere
in the West Bank, when they visit each other,
the main topic of conversations is the
Palestine issue, the activities of the PLO.”*

The students discuss the significance of the recent meeting of the Palestine National Council (PNC): “The position of Palestinians was shaky before the Palestine National Council. The PLO in Lebanon is under pressure from the Arab states. Many people here wait for decisions of the [PNC]. It was important because it determines the steps in the next period. If Arab countries had been able to enforce their decisions, people here would have reacted. So given the threat of Syria in Lebanon, the PNC decision is not bad, since it kept the position of the PLO good.”

As we prepare to part ways with the Birzeit students, they emphasize “the role of imperialist countries in aiding Israel.”

ISRAELI REPRESSION: MILITARY OCCUPATION, IMPRISONMENT

RAMALLAH, West Bank, May 14, 1977 – The signs of military occupation are ever present in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron, Gaza, and other Palestinian cities lie the concrete Israeli prisons built to contain the outbreaks of protests from the Palestinian population.

Crackles from the Ramallah prison loudspeaker, audible even on the other side of town, break the silence of the night and are a constant reminder of the occupation.

QALANDIA, West Bank, May 15, 1977 – Each morning Israeli troops in an armored personnel carrier station themselves in front of the Qalandia refugee camp school to make sure the students feel their presence.

In almost every municipality in the West Bank and Gaza, whose population of 1,200,000 have been under Israeli occupation for more than ten years now, stand the barbed wire-surrounded offices and barracks of the “military governor.” Palestinians in the rest of Palestine, where the Israeli state was established in 1948, also lived under military rule until 1966; this region’s half-million Palestinians now live under a more consolidated system of Israeli settler colonialism.

These are the stark realities of how Israel has “liberated” Palestine, as Israel’s new Prime Minister Menachem Begin likes to put it.

“Everyone feels the oppression here,” explains one Palestinian, “nothing is safe or guaranteed.” Protests against occupation have grown steadily over the years and have become increasingly militant. More than twelve Palestinians have been shot and killed by Israeli soldiers during demonstrations in the past year and a half and still the protests continue.



BETHLEHEM, May 1977 – Israeli military governor building.

NABLUS, West Bank, May 15, 1977 – We feel the harshness of the conflict in the air May 15, the anniversary of the founding of the Israeli state and a traditional day of protest among all Palestinians.

The Israeli soldiers in tanks and armored personnel carriers are out in force, in the city squares, along main roads, and on the outskirts of villages in the 1967-occupied areas. Roadblocks where Palestinians must show their identification, normally stationed on all main arteries, are increased in number.

Businesses in Ramallah, Nablus, Jerusalem and other Palestinian cities are closed for a general strike called by the mayors and other local Palestinian leaders. In Ramallah, the steel gates are pulled over all stores except Uncle Sam's Restaurant and the Israel National Bank.

In the afternoon, the streets of Nablus are deserted except for patrolling Israeli soldiers. One soldier, a former American, explains that the military governor ordered a day-long curfew after Palestinian youths set up a roadblock of burning tires earlier in the day and showered the soldiers with rocks. The citizens are not allowed outside their homes, soldiers patrol every street corner on foot, in jeeps and armored personnel carriers, and the rocks are still scattered in the main square.

Both before and after May 15, protests are weekly, and often daily occurrences.



NABLUS, Occupied Palestine, May 15, 1977 –

“Most families have had at least one member in jail. There is a large number of Palestinian political prisoners.”

– a young Palestinian

“I was held for two months in the Moscobiya prison in Jerusalem. Two weeks for ‘questioning’ and six weeks for ‘administrative detention.’ There were no charges.

“First they accused me of membership in one Palestinian commando organization and then another one. They beat me on the head with a rubber baton and they kicked me. They try to get ‘confessions’ with these beatings.”

– Palestinian school teacher

NABLUS, May 15, 1977 – Israeli soldiers patrol on Nakba Day in Nablus, a West Bank city of 45,000 Palestinians.



NABLUS, West Bank, May 15, 1977 – Palestinians visit family members held in the Nablus prison.
The Israeli government maintains large prisons in each Palestinian district.

RESISTANCE ON NAKBA DAY, 1977



RAMALLAH, West Bank, May 15, 1977 – Palestinian girls build a roadblock outside their school building during protests against the Israeli occupation on May 15, Nakba Day. We are told that when the school year began last fall, the Israeli army gave papers to school principals listing the names of students they would arrest if there were protests.

A moment later, we see Israeli soldiers on an armored personnel carrier approach from around the bend.

Throughout the city, we see burned tires and shuttered shops, a strike with 100% participation. Demonstrations include workers, students, and villagers, with young and old raising Palestinian flags and chanting slogans in support of the PLO. The Israeli authorities try to arrest whomever they can at these demonstrations and often pick up people at home or at their workplaces.

*“Palestinians here are
unanimously
against the occupation,”
we’re told time and again.*

RAMALLAH, West
Bank, May 15, 1977
– Israeli soldiers.



LEBANON

REFUGEES DETERMINED TO RETURN TO PALESTINE

DAMOUR, near Beirut, May 1977 – Palestinian refugees we speak with are united in their demand to return to their homeland and their assertion that the Palestine Liberation Organization is their sole legitimate representative. The refugees—numbering one and a half million people—were forced out of Palestine in 1948 and 1967.

In a classroom in Lebanon, we interview an eight-year-old boy who had lived through the 1976 bloody right-wing siege of the Tal al Za'atar refugee camp during the Lebanese war. When we asked him where he is from, he tells us:

“Palestine is my homeland. Even though I was born in Lebanon, Palestine is my homeland.”

When asked what he wants to be when he grows older, he tells us, “a teacher, and for sure I will be a fighter.”

Another survivor of Tal al Za'atar we speak with is a 21-year-old woman who is now caring for her own child as well as the six children of her sister killed in the siege of the camp. She tells us through a translator: “I support the PLO because it is my representative and it is doing something for our return to our homeland.”



Palestinian survivors of siege on Tal al Za'atar Palestinian refugee camp. In the market we see a banner hailing “The Courage of Karameh.”



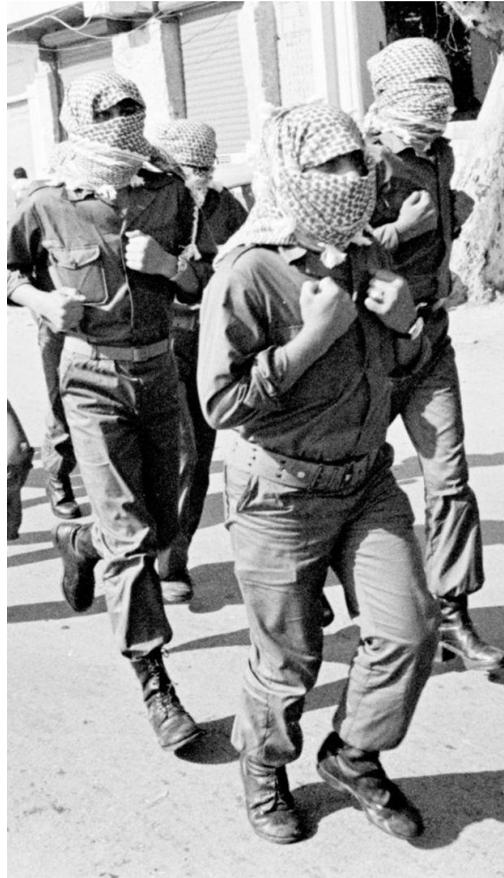
SHATILA Palestinian Refugee Camp, BEIRUT, May 1977 - We stop for a snack on our way to an interview.



TAL AL ZA'ATAR Palestinian Refugee Camp, at the edge of Beirut, May 1977 – After a 53-day resistance waged by the 20,000 inhabitants, young and old, men and women, the camp was captured last summer by the Lebanese right-wing and bulldozed so that the Palestinians would not return.



SHATILA Palestinian Refugee Camp, BEIRUT, May 1977 – Palestinian youths playing ball.



Center: Palestinian fighters.

Right: Funeral procession for a PLO fighter killed in a battle in Beirut in April 1977.

Left: PLO training program.

Facing page: Survivors of the siege on Palestinian refugee camp Tal al Za'atar sewing uniforms in PLO workshop in front of Palestinian flag.





INTERVIEWS WITH PALESTINIAN LEADERS

Abu Ammar - Yasser Arafat



BEIRUT, May 1, 1977

BEIRUT, May 1, 1977 – *On May Day, we meet with Abu Ammar (Yasser Arafat), the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Executive Committee. Abu Ammar sits in front of a map of Palestine in a Beirut office, behind a desk full of telephones which ring constantly. He answers them, sometimes with one phone to each ear.*

Abu Ammar stresses to us the Israeli dependence on the United States, the centrality of the Palestine issue in the Middle East, and the determination of the Palestinian people to build a democratic, secular state in their homeland:

“We need a just settlement, not at our expense. We have paid enough. For thirty years we have been refugees without identity cards. You see what we have suffered, in Jordan, in Lebanon. It is proof that we need our homeland, Palestine.

“In our Palestine National Council [the parliamentary body of the PLO in which all Palestinian organizations are represented] we have said we will establish an independent state on any part of Palestine where Israel would withdraw and that is liberated. In our last National Council [March, 1977] we reconfirmed this and said we’re ready to establish an independent state.

“We are hearing there are smoke efforts by the U.S. We appreciate too much that Carter mentioned the Palestinians must have a homeland. It is very important to know that he is the first president to mention that. Even though he didn’t mention where and how. We hope he will follow what he has mentioned. You can do it in America. I can’t imagine there is any Israeli ruler who says no to America. **Yigal Allon said in 1975, ‘We are obliged to go through with American policy because they supply us with everything.’** Let us remember how Eisenhower obliged them to withdraw - not only the Israelis, but the British, the French. And they now say they can’t push Israel to withdraw.

“Without the United States’ help, Israel couldn’t last one day. So I can’t believe America can’t push Israel.

“Two hundred tons of uranium were stolen. [Is Israel] trying to threaten us with atomic energy? Atomic energy did not scare the Vietnamese. We have information that they have a nuclear bomb – an old-fashioned type. But they also have very modern weapons. [The U.S.] is supporting them with everything from flour for food to Phantoms for fighting. ‘F to F’. In the Middle East, where petroleum is very important, there is something more important. That is the Palestine Problem. ‘P to P’.

“We’re doing our best. We have no other choice. We have no other choice but to struggle. Before we started our revolution we were only considered as numbers in UNRWA. But now we are the only fact in the Middle East. No one can overcome the Palestinian revolution. And without the Palestinian position, nothing can be done here, peace or war.

“In Jordan we had 25,000 casualties now in jail, according to official documents of the Israeli government. Nine thousand are in prison – this is in the records of the

Palestine Red Crescent Society. In addition, there are 14,000 under arrest without trial – administrative detention. Between these fellows we have 1,500 sisters – which is a lot. I'm giving you these figures because we are a people of less than four million.

"Twenty-seven hundred have been killed in Tal al Za'atar [Palestinian refugee camp]. Twenty-seven hundred killed is a very high percent. This is civilians. And you saw their spirit [in Damour]. Sometimes when I'm tired I go there and they give me a new push. A small boy in Tal al Za'atar said, 'We still carry on, we're still strong.'

"We are facing continuous conspiracies. But we are sure we will have our victory. We say, 'Revolution Until Victory.' When one child raises the flag, we are certain of victory.

"We are stronger than before. We have more experience, and more weapons; we didn't buy them, we captured them from the enemy. We didn't use them before, but we use them self-confidently and accurately. In any case, I'm taking it from you now –

you pay the taxes. For example, the TOW [U.S. missile system], we are using it now, we got it another way.

"[The U.S.] kicked out our [PLO] representative, Sabri Jiryis. We tried to do it legally through the Justice Department. But they closed it and threw out my representative.

"There will be no peace in this area without solving the Palestine problem. Perhaps they can take from us our guns, our cannons. But they can't take from us our matches. In this area where we have so much petroleum, we need only matches." In closing, Arafat told us:

*"You see, we have a very important slogan:
'If you have a door and you can't open it,
you go through the window.'"*

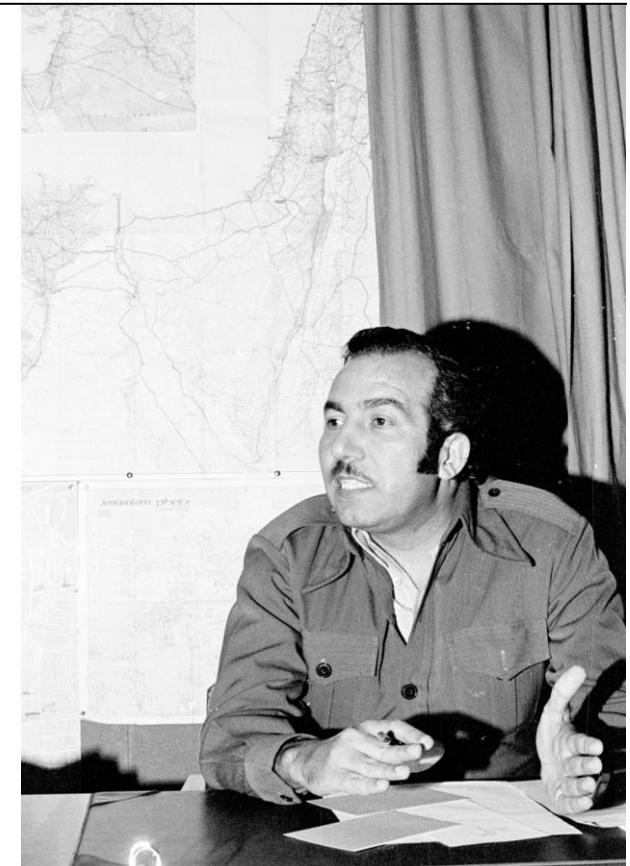
Abu Jihad - Khalil al-Wazir

BEIRUT, May 4, 1977 –*Abu Jihad (Khalil al-Wazir) is the military commander of Fatah. In our interview with him, he focuses on the situation of the PLO after the war in Lebanon, describes the Israeli military intervention in southern Lebanon, and stresses his expectation that the Israelis will launch another war. He pulls back a curtain behind his desk to illustrate his points on maps of Palestine and the surrounding area:*

"In Lebanon we were facing problems from the other side. We began here in Lebanon not by their agreement. We were struggling since 1965, 66. You have heard how we were living in the camps and were suffering in their camps, mainly from the Arab regimes. Palestinians were always prevented from going from one place to another. Like now, Palestinians are prevented from entering Lebanon. We were prevented as Palestinians. In the Arab world, it was known as a joke, they were writing 'Dogs and Palestinians' prevented. But it was written, it was a fact – we have suffered from that. I wasn't in Lebanon, we were secretly working here. When I or Abu Ammar tried to come in we stayed in Lebanon not less than 3 days – so we had to come in our private ways.

"I remember how Palestinians were treated in these camps. When Fatah began work in 1965, those officers of the Deuxieme Bureau came to the camps to divide them in sections. They prevented Palestinian women from going outside. Those officers came to them and made big speeches how they would be treated if they met the fedayeen. Under government authority here you can't have any contact with the fedayeen. They chose 20–25 youths and took them to army barracks and beat them with sticks. After torturing them for several days they took them to the camp to show the others.

"After the June war people here knew what we are. Some say, in the American and western press, that the PLO was



very weak after the battles in Lebanon. I can say to you that after those battles we are stronger in our forces, and more than that, in our experience. We began without heavy cannons or rockets. Now we are using them, like the TOW [a sophisticated U.S. anti-tank missile] and other rockets that were taken from those fighting us.

“Also, clashes with the authorities left us stronger in the hearts of the people. We have affected the people in Syria and Jordan. And in the occupied land, whenever they heard we had problems, they held demonstrations against the authorities. I think it has strengthened the feeling of the Palestinians.

“Our voices are stronger after the meeting in March of the Palestine National Council. It showed the world that the PLO leadership has a wide base of trust. Before the meeting there were many declarations signed from people in the occupied land, and by mayors of [the Palestinian cities of] Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron, Gaza, saying they give their trust to the National Council.

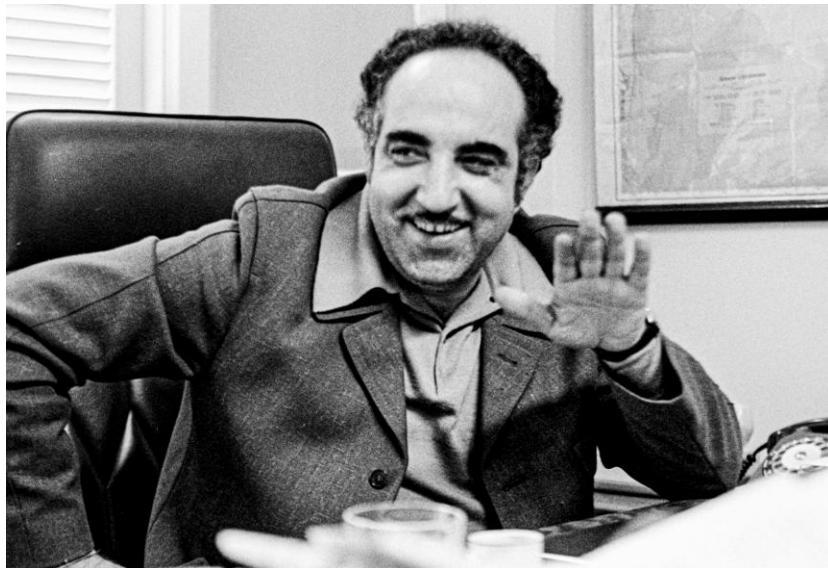
“At Taibe [a southern village] several weeks ago, the Israelis with the forces of [right-wing Lebanese leader Camille] Chamoun tried to build a ‘security’ belt all

along the border [inside Lebanon] to cut us off from the occupied territory. They directly occupied seven villages.

“We are looking only to face our enemies. To face the occupying authorities in our land. This is our main task. We are always pushing our efforts in that field. And battles outside of our main task - we don’t desire it at all. We are looking for the chance to struggle with Zionism and imperialism. Putting efforts directly on that line. When facing battles outside that, we consider it a big loss - our strength isn’t going to the right channel.

“We are always expecting Israeli army attacks and aggressions. Day or night we must be cautious. In Beirut the Israeli air force and Israeli infantry have attacked. And in all our refugee camps, we were directly attacked. There have been hundreds of attacks by Israel. More and more loudly they are discussing a ‘preventative strike.’ We are expecting the Israelis to begin a war.”

Abu lyad - Salah Khalaf



BEIRUT, May 6, 1977 – *We also interview Abu lyad (Salah Khalaf), second to Abu Ammar in command of Fatah. As we are served Arabic coffee in a Beirut office, its walls covered with maps of Palestine, the Middle East and Africa, a map of PLO offices throughout the world, and a plaque reading, “Action Speaks Louder.” Abu lyad comments on Middle East peace talks and the role of the U. S. government:*

“It is in the U.S. interest to create problems for us. In the Middle East a fair settlement [according to the U.S.] is taking care of its interests.

“The majority of the local leaders in the Middle East are kneeling before America: If

the U.S. pleases them, they have to please it. [Egyptian President Anwar] Sadat depends on America for everything. If there is no settlement within two years, Sadat will either lose his position or he will have to change his position.

“All Arab regimes are scared of us, not as persons, but as a cause. From the start of our revolution the Arab rulers wanted tutelage over it. What happened in Jordan [Black September, 1970], in Lebanon, and now with the mystery of the Syrian stand here in Lebanon, it shows their wish to have tutelage over the Palestinians.

“We sometimes force ourselves to go on thorny roads, do things we don’t like, but we will never hand them over tutelage, never hand the resistance over to them.”

Abu Hussein, General Union of Palestinian Workers

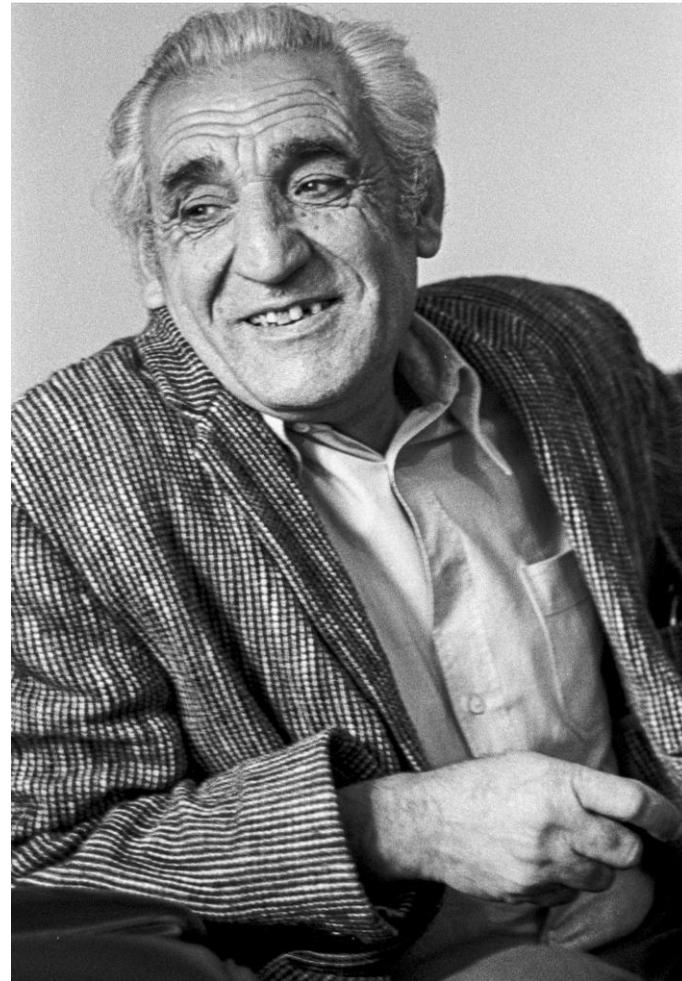
BEIRUT, May 3, 1977 – *We sit down with Abu Hussein, a long-time leader in the General Union of Palestinian Workers and currently its General Secretary for Beirut. The union is a member organization of the Palestine National Council. Abu Hussein, perhaps in his fifties, projects a long view, both back and forward in time. He begins:*

“I am an old member of the workers movement in Palestine, so I know all the history. As you know, Palestine in the time of the Ottomans was agricultural, and peasants. The movement of workers came since the occupation of the English. Colonists came and occupied Palestine and called it Mandate Palestine. It is obvious that when colonialism occupies a country, handwork, especially railways, roads, harbors, things like that, for their advantage, create a new stage of laborers. In that case, many of the peasants and agricultural workers came from the country to the cities, especially at Haifa. It needed a great majority of workers. The first syndicate was founded by the railway workers and was headed by Abd al-Hamid Haimour. It was founded in 1925. In this time was established the Jewish Histadrut. We found ourselves face to face with the Jewish Histadrut; we knew that this organization doesn’t represent workers as well as it represents political affairs for immigration and occupation of Palestine and was guided by the Zionism international movement.

“In 1936, our Society became so great that it had about 100,000 laborers all organized and distributed in branches all over the country in Palestine. We put forth our mottos; the first mottos that we raised were to stop Jewish immigration to Palestine and for independence from Britain. In that year, 1936, we made the famous strike – six month strike. We faced great difficulties to feed the workers and to bring them anything they need for their houses. So we made a group and went all over the country, to the mountains and to the villages gathering food and other things. The delegations of women and children came from the cities to our villages in the north, asking for help for the striking workers.

“You see Palestine is not a large country. People know everything that is happening in the cities. It was a revolution rather than a strike in 1936. All the peasants supported this revolution because they knew the Jews would push them away from their lands. The political question was very important. We felt the danger, not for our work, but for our lives.

“We know that we are part of the liberation struggle and we cooperate with all worker movements in the world. For independence and liberation.”



BEIRUT, May 3, 1977 – Abu Hussein,
leader in the General Union of Palestinian Workers.

Mai Sayegh, General Union of Palestinian Women

BEIRUT, May 5, 1977 – We interview Mai Sayegh, the vice-president of the General Union of Palestinian Women, which is a member organization of the Palestine National Council.

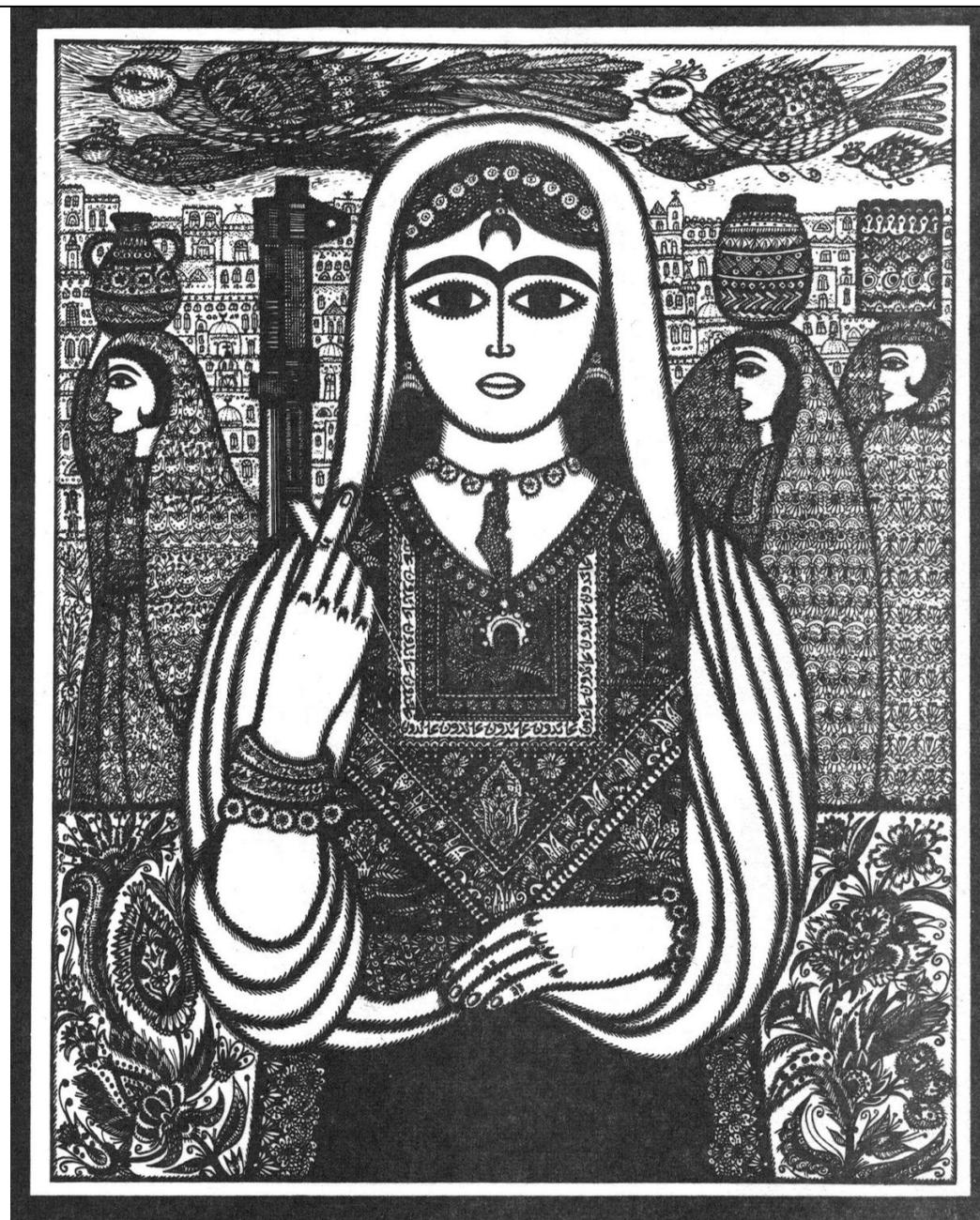
“We have relations with all our women in the Arab world. We organize them and at the same time we struggle with them, to teach them how to work, how to earn their living, how to change their role from being spenders to be producers. We have a commission for the information, a commission on foreign relations, a commission for economy, another commission for literature, we have a commission for kindergarten and social work. And for those who don’t know how to read and write we fight against illiteracy. Now we are going to open a big training center for women here in Beirut, and it’s going to be enough for 300 women.

“Now we opened a house for the children of Tal al Za’atar who lost both their mother and father. We have now around 120 children. There are many girls who have no homes, they don’t have any families. So we are going to take these girls and we are going to start the training center with these girls.

“The Palestinian women started to organize ourselves early. It started in 1921. And it used to struggle on the political program too. In 1936, the Palestinian women started struggling, joined the armed struggle, and we had many martyrs in the mountains at that time. When the PLO started, the women started thinking about reorganizing themselves. So they held their congress in Jerusalem in 1965 and this is how our union started.

“Some of [the women], who feel that they want to struggle among women and they want to struggle in the revolution, they come and ask to be members of the union. In 1969, one of the western journalists said, ‘Everyone who visits the West Bank can see that the struggle is led by the women.’ Many women are in prison in the West Bank, being tortured in prison.

“Of course, you know that Palestinian women, like all the Arab women, have the problem of tradition. In spite of all the struggle that she gives and in spite of what she did for the revolution, still she is secondary in the family. Why we are struggling in this union, and fighting to make it a popular organization – we want to finish from this.”



We are given this poster published by the General Women of Palestinian Women for International Women’s Day, 1977.

MEETING PEOPLE'S NEEDS: PLO Clinics, Workshops, Schools

BEIRUT, May 1977 – The refugee camps and Palestinian neighborhoods of Lebanon are honeycombed with economic and social institutions administered by the PLO and its member organizations. Through these institutions, Palestinians are reorganizing after severe losses suffered during the 18-month Lebanese war, while at the same time building on the foundation of the mass mobilization during the war.

A number of organizations provide healthcare to the Palestinians through clinics in the camps, maternity centers, public health campaigns, and hospitals. In new clinics in the refugee camps, people who learned first aid and the basics of healthcare during the Lebanese war are receiving further training as nurses. As a precaution in the event of a new outbreak of war, the Palestine Red Crescent (analogous to the Red Cross) has built a number of new underground hospitals.

A tremendous amount of effort is devoted to the care of Palestinian children. Clinics place special emphasis on pediatric care. Kindergartens gather the children of the refugee camps into safe and welcoming environments for play and early education; many organizations run such centers, including the Palestinian Aid Society, whose projects we visited. School-age children are organized into the political-military programs such as the Ashbal (lion cubs) and Zahrat (flowers). For children orphaned by the war the PLO has established special boarding schools.

Women who participated in the struggle for the first time during the Lebanese war – making stretchers, distributing food, transporting supplies, and carrying arms – are now working in PLO workshops, clinics, schools, and the armed organizations. They are mobilized by a number of women's organizations, notably the General Union of Palestinian Women.

Workshops in the camps provide employment for people. Samed, the Sons of Palestinian Martyrs, whose efforts began with the sale of handicrafts from occupied Palestine seven years ago, has grown into a full-scale economic agency with 23 workshops and factories and 2,000 workers, producing goods ranging from clothing and furniture to children's map puzzles of Palestine. Other enterprises, often cooperatives, have been established by the Women's Union and the PLO resistance groups.



SABRA Palestinian Refugee Camp, BEIRUT, Lebanon, May 1977 – Palestinian child of 8 years with chronic tonsillitis is brought by his grandmother to this PLO clinic in the Sabra refugee camp in Lebanon. It is one of the many clinics begun by the PLO during the Lebanese war. It is staffed by an experienced nurse who is a member of the General Union of Palestinian Women, along with four others trained at the clinic.



BEIRUT, May 1977 – Palestinian workers in this Samed clothing factory produce shirts, pants, jackets and uniforms. It is called “Three Martyrs Workshop” in honor of three high-level Palestinian leaders who were killed by Israelis in Beirut in 1973. During our visit, revolutionary committees elected in each of the Samed workshops are discussing the results of the March meeting of the Palestine National Council. They are also leading meetings to hammer out a set of codes to govern working conditions and internal organization in all Samed workplaces and to prepare for May Day activities. “We’re not just working here. We’re working for the revolution,” a woman declares to us.



Palestinian orphans of the war in Lebanon in a PLO boarding school.



SABRA Palestinian Refugee Camp, BEIRUT, May 1, 1977 – Outdoor mass meeting on May Day in the Sabra refugee camp in Beirut, Lebanon organized by the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Posters lining the wall behind the speakers, published by the General Union of Palestinian Workers, depict Palestinian farmers and workers and bear the slogan: “Glory to the Workers and the First of May. Long Live the Workers’ Armed Struggle.”

One speaker representing the Palestinian port workers discusses their joint struggle with Lebanese workers, another representing medical workers describes their accomplishments during the war in Lebanon, a representative of the Workers Union outlines the group’s history, and another speaker tells of how May Day began with workers’ protests in Haymarket Square in Chicago in 1886.



Palestinian culture is expressed even by those too young to have seen their homeland. Here a youth organization in a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon performs the dabke, a folkdance of Palestine.

SOUTHERN LEBANON FLASHPOINT

TAIBE, Southern Lebanon, May 1977 -

Throughout our visit we are repeatedly reminded that the conflict in Lebanon, and more so, in the Middle East, is far from settled. The demands of the Lebanese left and the masses of Lebanese poor have not been met by the state; the Lebanese right-wing has grown even more vitriolic in its opposition to the Palestinian presence in Lebanon; Zionist aggression in Palestine has intensified; the Palestinian rights to return to Palestine, to self-determination and to a state have not been realized.

The forces arrayed against the Palestinian people pose a serious threat of imminent war—a new civil war in Lebanon or a war throughout the Middle East. Southern Lebanon continues to be a flashpoint for Arab-Israeli conflict and is the sort of tinderbox which could explode at any point into regional warfare.

We visit southern Lebanon shortly after the Joint Forces of the PLO and the progressive Lebanese repulsed a major offensive by Israeli/Lebanese right-wing allies. Just several days after the rightists occupied seven southern villages, five hundred soldiers of the Joint Forces made a lightning move to retake the key town of Taibe. They had approached the town from six different directions on a full-moonlit night, and recaptured Taibe in a battle that lasted only fifteen minutes. Now Taibe is under PLO protection.



Lebanese woman in PLO-protected village of Taibe in southern Lebanon.
When asked her name, she replies: "I am called 'Mother of Fighters'."

We meet a Lebanese family of sixteen people who fled their home here in Taibe the night it was occupied by the right-wing and now have been able to return. In the course of a discussion with the family, we ask the father what he sees in the future for the people of

southern Lebanon. He tells us through a translator: "The right wing in the south is only a few leaders. The Lebanese people must unite among ourselves and with the Palestinian people against the Israelis."



NABATIYE Palestinian Refugee Camp, Southern Lebanon, May 1977 – Roofless homes in this Palestinian refugee camp close to the Israeli border. Bombed in 1972 and '74, it was also shelled in Israeli offensives this year. Most of the refugees have fled to other camps.



Sixteen-year-old Palestinian, a member of the militia for three years and a PLO fighter in recent battles in southern Lebanon. She has never seen her home in Safad, Palestine, from which her family was expelled in 1948.

“FROM HERE I CAN SEE PALESTINE!”

BEAUFORT CASTLE, Southern Lebanon, May 1977 – We visit the Palestinian position at the strategic Beaufort Castle. From the medieval fortifications atop the rocky cliffs we look down to the road below where the Israelis attempt to truck supplies to their allies of the Lebanese right. From Beaufort we can see in the distance the hilltop village of Khiam, held by the Palestinian forces.

The conviction is widespread that an Israeli offensive could be renewed at almost any point.

Most of the Palestinians we meet during our visit speak of the likelihood of Israel launching a major war in the near future. Dr. Mahjoub of the PLO Planning Center, a “think tank” serving the Palestinian leadership, remarks to us: “I expect the coming fifth Arab-Israeli war to be started by Israel. They will begin this war when they are forced to withdraw even one kilometer inside occupied Palestine. They can’t afford to withdraw.

“Of course they prefer to have this fifth war outside their areas: The Zionist strategy of transferring the war to the land of their enemy. Practically they have transferred the war here to Lebanon for two years.

“Wars will continue between the Israelis and the Arabs,” concludes Dr. Mahjoub, “until the Palestinians go back to our homeland and establish an independent democratic secular state.”

[September 1977 update – A few months after our visit, Khiam was the focal target of a general offensive by the Israelis and Lebanese right from September 16 to 26, during which they struck nearly every Palestinian position in the south. In this dramatic intervention the Israelis dropped their rather transparent pretenses and revealed clearly that Israel is the backbone of the Lebanese reactionary forces in the south. Israeli armored and infantry troops poured across the border and took up positions inside Lebanon, supported by full-scale artillery and air bombardment. Israeli gunboats positioned themselves off the Lebanese coast at the port of Tyre.

Most of the Israeli forces pulled out at the end of ten days, with little territorial changes in the course of battle. In fact, one Palestinian officer noted to a western journalist: “What we learned from the battle of Khiam is that on the ground, we’re equal with the Israelis, but we lack aircraft and anti-aircraft artillery.”]



SOUTHERN LEBANON, near the border, May 1977 –
Palestinian fighters outside their bunker on the front lines
in southern Lebanon. From a hilltop position one of them
points in the distance:

“From here I can see Palestine!”

Abu Harb, second from left,
whose poems are popular in the battalion, recites:

***“We are the liberation army;
we don’t kill by the identity card,”***

referring to the Lebanese right-wing’s practice of killing
people who possess either a Palestinian identity card or
one identifying a Lebanese as a Muslim.

The youngest of the group, Amid, 13, lost his entire family
in the siege of the Tal al Za’atar refugee camp.

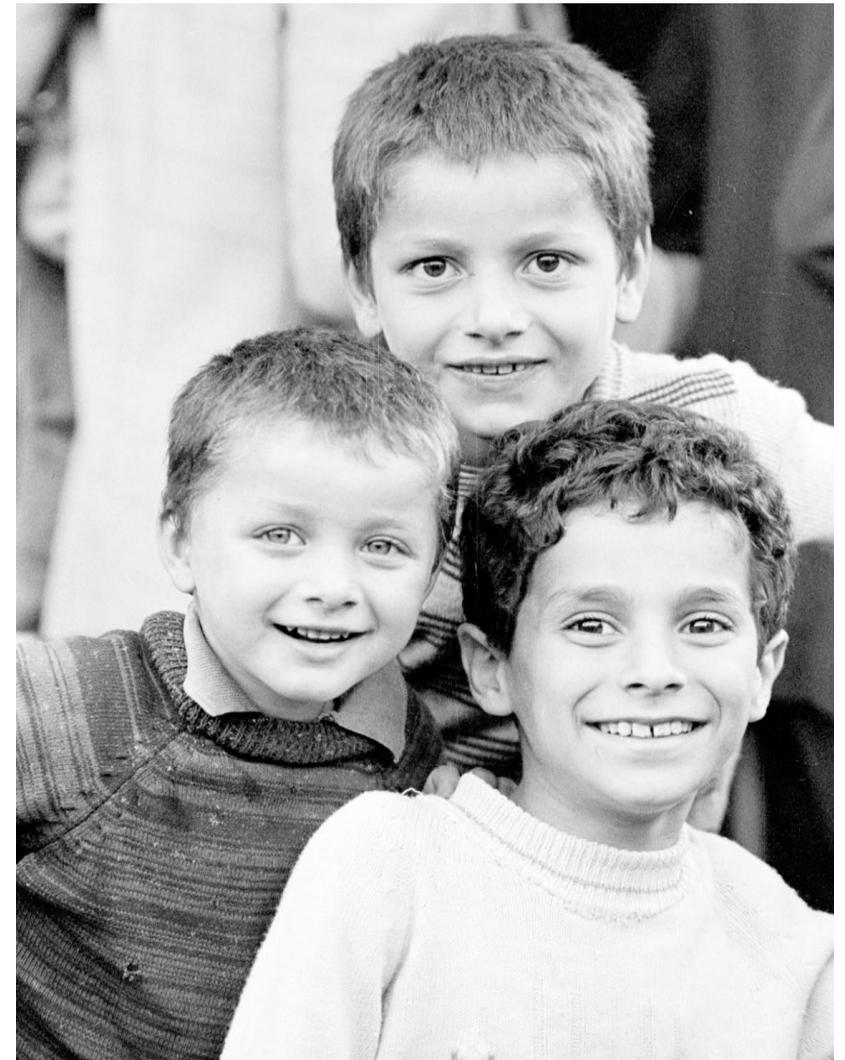


SHATILA Palestinian Refugee Camp,
BEIRUT, May 1977 – Young members of the
Zahrat girl's organization sewing handicrafts.

“It is a long way for us to liberate Palestine. I’m fighting now, but I can’t see Palestine.
The new generation will continue our struggle. The lesson of Tal al Za’atar
was the enemy can’t destroy us as long as there are the children.”
– 17-year-old in Tal al Za’atar now heading a children’s training program near Beirut.



Palestinian refugee children in Lebanon.





Near BEIRUT, May 1977 – Palestinian family displaced again, this time from Tal al Za'atar refugee camp.

Chapter 2

2009

WITH OUR OWN EYES
IN PALESTINE



SHEIKH JARRAH, Jerusalem, April 11, 2009 – We return to Palestine to visit a friend from our previous trip. With new equipment in hand, we aim to photographically capture and share with others the intensity and scale of the Israeli apartheid wall and settlements, to help build resistance in the U.S. against our government’s support for this.

JERUSALEM

RESISTING ISRAELI SETTLERS MOVING INTO PALESTINIAN HOMES

SHEIKH JARRAH, Jerusalem, April 11, 2009 – We head to the office of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD), and join a tour for people who are interested their work. Our ICAHD leader takes us to visit Um Kamel Al Kurd in her tent outside her home in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, which Israeli settlers occupied.

We're struck that the details specific to her case follow such a common pattern.

The Israeli military forcefully evicted the Al Kurd family from their home five months ago. The Sheikh Jarrah Neighborhood Committee explains why they erected the tent, and provides us with background:

“The Israeli Supreme Court on July 16, 2008 issued an order to evict from their home where they lived since 1956, the Al Kurd family: the father Mohammad Al Kurd who is partially paralyzed and suffers from heart problems, the mother Fawzieh Al Kurd [Um Kamel] and their five children. The ruling
(continued)





SHEIKH JARRAH, Jerusalem, April 11, 2009 – Um Kamel Al Kurd in her tent (also shown on the previous two pages) outside her home in Sheikh Jarrah. Israeli settlers occupied the home; the Israeli military forcefully evicted the family.

is the result of a long legal battle the Al Kurd family fought, together with another 27 Palestinian families, against groups of settler organizations who falsely claim property of the land.

“Al Kurd’s house is part of a housing project the Jordanian government built with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to house 28 Palestinian refugee families who fled their homes in 1948. It was agreed then that ownership of the houses will be transferred to the families within three years....

“Shortly after the six days war in 1967 two groups of Jewish settlers known as the Oriental Jews Association and the Knesseth Yisrael Association were successful in falsely claiming property of the land. In 1972 they managed to register the land – 28 dunams – in their name with the Israeli Land registrar....

“Upon further investigations and legal proceedings that continued until 2006, it became clear that the settlers’ associations did not own the land....

“In 2001 a group of settlers broke into a part of Al Kurd’s family house. On February 25, 2008 the Israeli Supreme Court issued an order to evict the settlers. The eviction order has not been implemented until the present day....

“On November 9, 2008 at four o’clock in the morning, the Israeli military forces forcefully evicted the Al Kurd family from their home.

“On November 10 a tent in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood was erected to protest the eviction of the Al Kurd family from their home and Israel’s ethnic cleansing policies in the occupied Palestinian territories. On November 11, 12, and 13, Um Kamel Al Kurd received three orders from the Israeli municipality to remove the tent and pay fines.

“On November 19, 2008 the Israeli armed forces encircled the area and demolished the tent. The tent was re-erected on the same day. “On November 20, 2008 the Israeli armed forces demolished the tent for the second time. The tent was re-erected on the same day for the second time.

“On November 22, 2008 Mr. Mohammed Al Kurd (Abu Kamel) died due to a massive heart attack he suffered two weeks after he was forcefully evicted from his home.

“The Sheikh Jarrah Neighborhood Committee formed to collectively work against the settlers’ schemes and protect their rights to their homes...

“We, the Sheikh Jarrah Neighborhood Committee emphasize and reiterate our right to stay in our homes in Jerusalem, our Palestinian capitol, and declare our opposition to and rejection of this order. We call on our people and our political factions to rise and support us in our struggle against this injustice. We are aware that this is part of the wider scheme to settle in East Jerusalem and to enhance the small settlements scattered all over Jerusalem especially in and around the Old City, Wadi Al Joz, the Mount of Olives, Ras Almoud, thus encircling Jerusalem. The ultimate [Israeli] goal is to evict the Palestinians from Jerusalem and annex our land.”

[For updated context, see the #SaveSheikhJarrah movement, Mohammed El-Kurd, and Muna El-Kurd (not related to Um Kamel Al Kurd).]

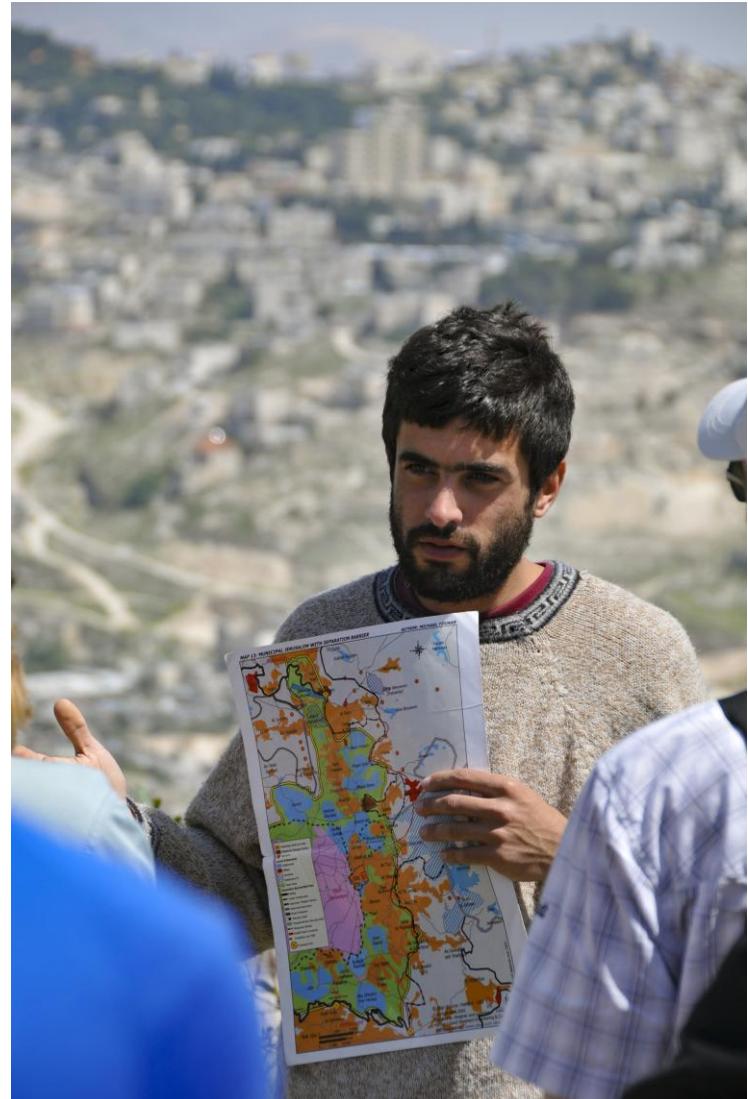
SILWAN, Jerusalem, April 11, 2009 – We visit Silwan, the neighborhood in Jerusalem of 45,000 Palestinians, just outside the Old City wall, just downhill from Al-Aqsa Mosque. We learn from the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions that wealthy Americans are leading a concerted effort to encircle Al-Aqsa Mosque with Israeli settlements:

“Israeli settlers are acquiring individual houses in Silwan in a ring around Al-Aqsa to build settlements. They are the local arm of El’ad, an American real estate company.”

The Israeli Ministry of Religion began large-scale excavations very close to Al-Aqsa Mosque in 1967, immediately following their military conquests. This highly questionable archeology and its political motivations have demolished Palestinian homes and culminated in the building of the Israeli “City of David” theme park.

Just two months ago, in February, Israeli excavations caused an entire classroom at the United Nations elementary school for Palestinian girls in Silwan to fall into the cellar, injuring 17 children.

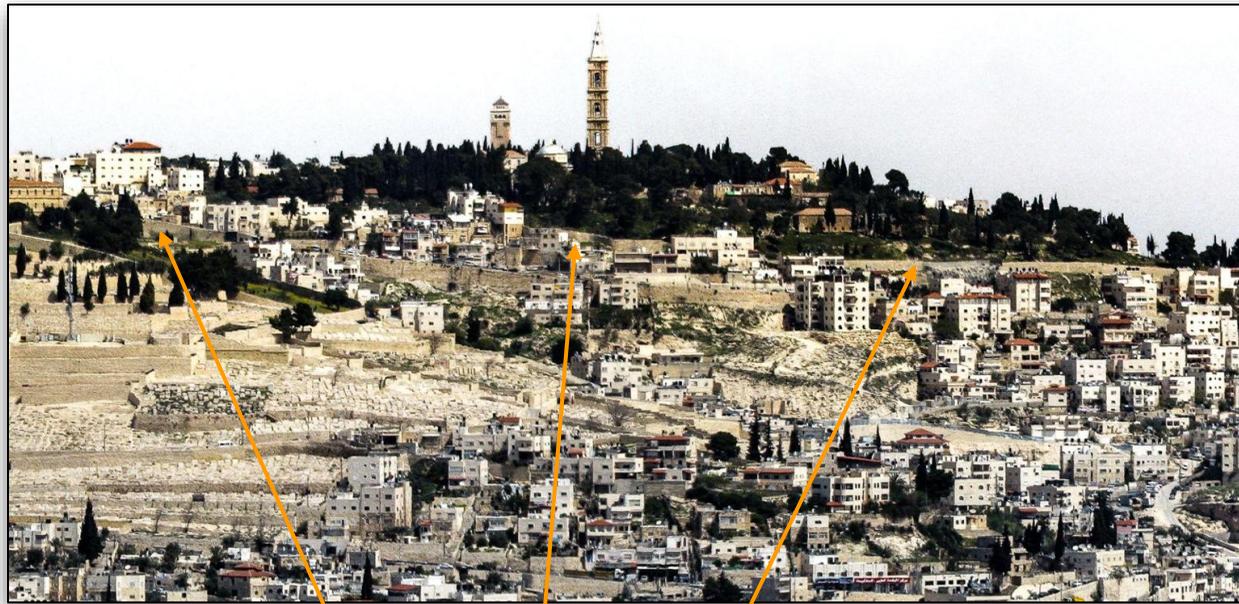
Palestinians are forming the Wadi Hilweh Information Center to publicize and resist the Israeli attempts to destroy their Silwan neighborhood.



ALA'R STREET, JERUSALEM, 31°45'09.9"N 35°14'25.6"E, April 11, 2009 – This is where we are standing to take the photos on the next two pages. We are with a group led by the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions.

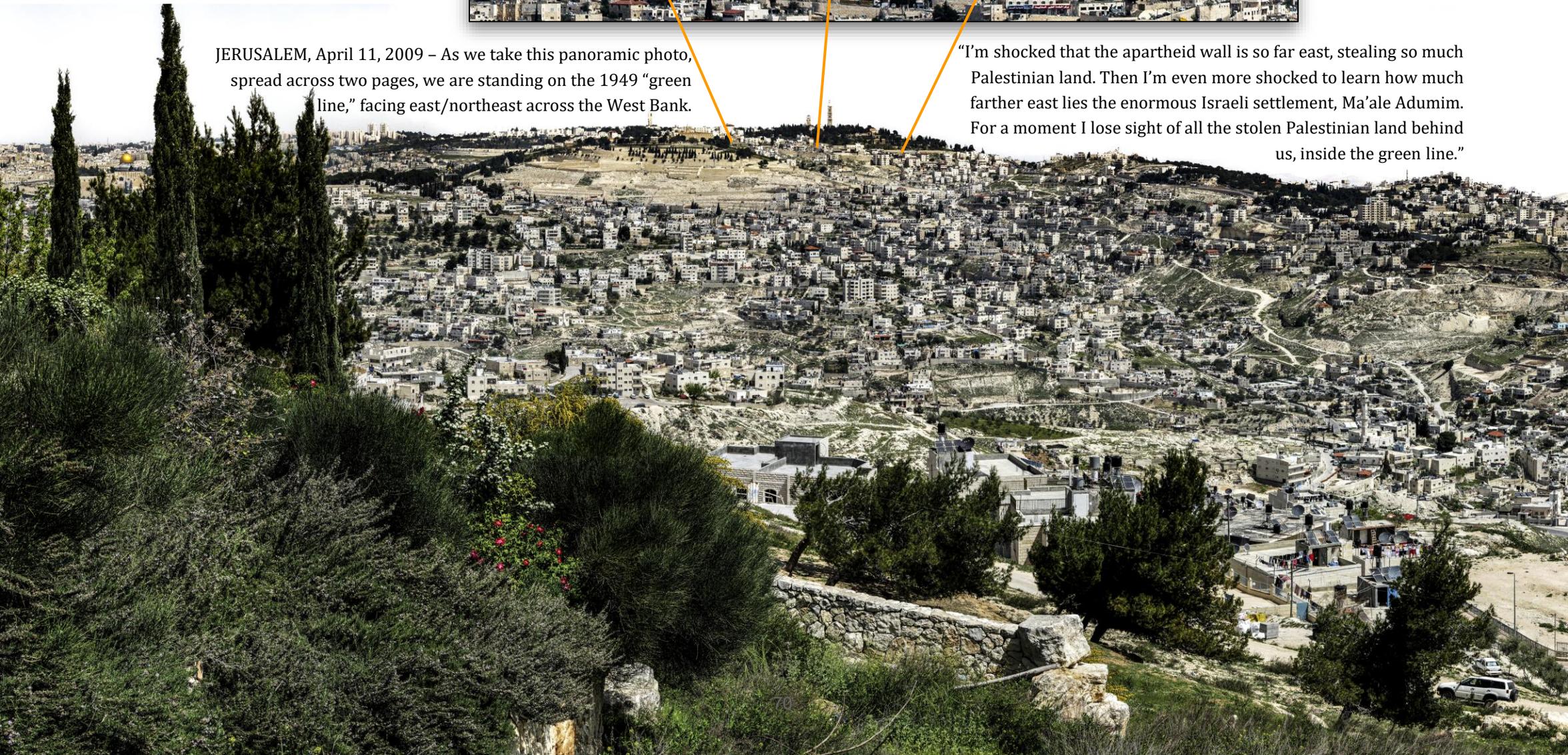
The billboard advertises housing sales in the Israeli settlement Nof Zion, a mere 225 meters downhill from us, in the Palestinian neighborhood of Jabal al Mukabbir.

**A VAST STRETCH
OF THE
APARTHEID
WALL
deep into the
Palestinian
villages east of
Jerusalem**



JERUSALEM, April 11, 2009 – As we take this panoramic photo, spread across two pages, we are standing on the 1949 “green line,” facing east/northeast across the West Bank.

“I’m shocked that the apartheid wall is so far east, stealing so much Palestinian land. Then I’m even more shocked to learn how much farther east lies the enormous Israeli settlement, Ma’ale Adumim. For a moment I lose sight of all the stolen Palestinian land behind us, inside the green line.”





Arrows highlight some sections of the Apartheid Wall.

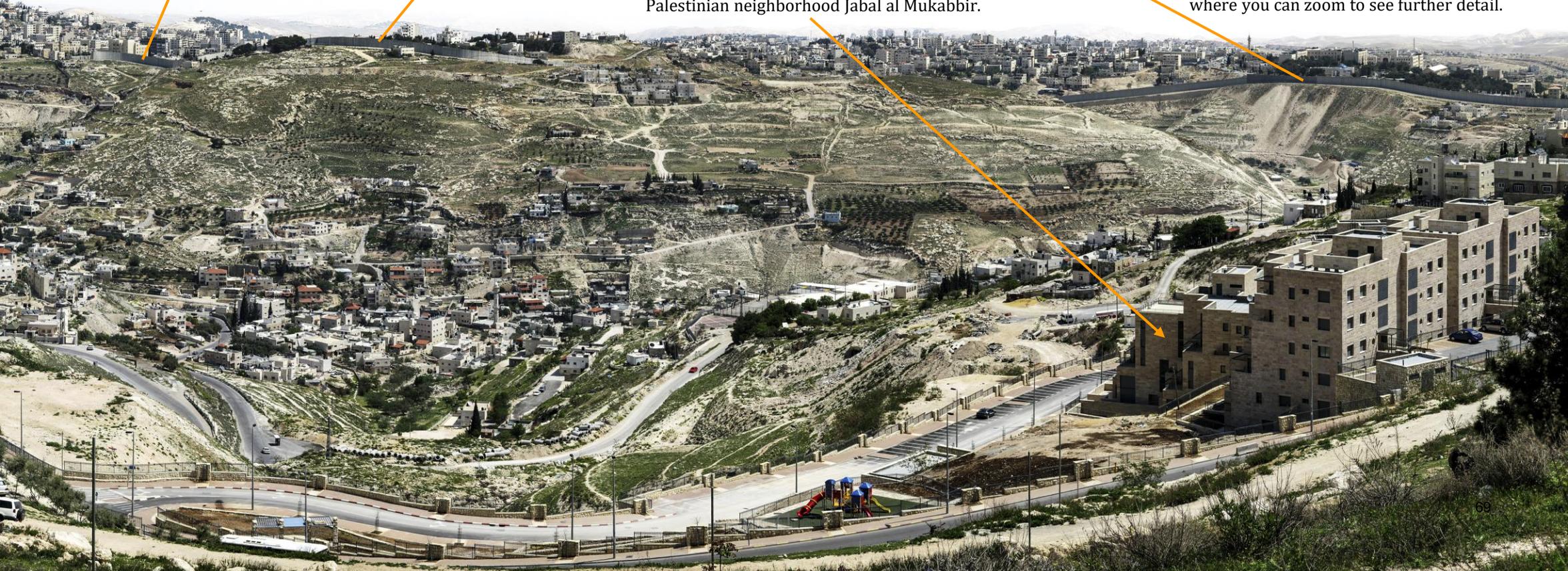
The International Court of Justice (ICJ) 2004 Advisory Opinion stated that Israel should cease construction and dismantle the wall built in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Instead, Israeli authorities expanded it.



The Israeli "Nof Zion" settlement in the Palestinian neighborhood Jabal al Mukabbir.

<https://www.gigapan.com/gigapans/22136> presents this photo interactively, where you can zoom to see further detail.





JERUSALEM, April 11, 2009 – Palestinians at Israeli checkpoint.

JERUSALEM, April 11, 2009 – Shepherd leads goats around Israeli walls and barriers, under an Israeli soldier in a tower, slightly to our right. We face east, looking across the Palestinian lands which the Israeli state calls “E1” and wants to annex. Near the horizon is the enormous Ma’ale Adumim Israeli settlement.



THE ISRAELI APARTHEID WALL THROUGH ABU DIS: The same vast wall, seen from the other side

ABU DIS, Jerusalem, April 13, 2009 – We take the panoramic photo spanning these two pages while standing in Abu Dis, a Palestinian village and town at the edge of Jerusalem.

The Israeli apartheid wall cuts through Abu Dis, zigzags to separate Abu Dis residents from their agricultural lands, and cuts off Abu Dis from Jerusalem. The agricultural lands, now emptied of crops, are west of the wall (left of the zigzag below). This confiscated agricultural area is 6,000 dunams (about 6 square kilometers), costing many Palestinian farmers of Abu Dis the source of their income.

Israel has confiscated an additional 18,000 dunams (~18 square kilometers) from Abu Dis for the construction of the wall, for Israeli settler-only roads, and for the vast Ma'ale Adumim Israeli settlement. Abu Dis retains only 4,000 dunams of its original 28,000-dunam land base.

Following is the personal testimony of Imm Amin, a Palestinian woman from Abu Dis, describing how the Israeli military confiscated her land when Israel began constructing the wall through Abu Dis, as recorded February 4th, 2004 by stopthewall.org:

“When the military came, my two sons, the sons of my brother-in-law, and Abu Nabil, who later died, went down to the land where they were working. It was only us... there is nothing left of my land—only this minimal piece between us and the Wall. The first day, the military kept coming and going to our house. I told them this is my land.

In the evening, the Occupation Forces came and tried to take my son and his cousin; but we managed to pull them from the hands of the soldiers. The second day, I tried with my two sons to go to the land; on that day they tried to handcuff my son and stop us from reaching the land, but my son managed to escape. Yet the soldiers hit many of the boys.

“I tried to argue with the soldiers and told them, ‘This is my land—what you are doing is illegal. There are 40 people living in this house and on this land.’ The Occupation Forces then came and began bulldozing, here they work every day. I had land in the middle of this hill... it was destroyed by the bulldozer. We sat on the land for three days, morning to evening, until the soldiers surrounded the whole neighborhood and we were no longer able to reach the lands.”



The Augusta Victoria Hospital (facing page, with tall pointed roof) is one of six major medical facilities which in the past served Palestinians. Augusta Victoria Hospital provides the only pediatric oncological (child cancer) care in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Now it is inaccessible to most Palestinians because it is on the “other side” of a section of the Israeli apartheid wall (behind buildings and not visible in this photo) which cuts sharply eastward more than 10km deeper into the West Bank, to encompass Ma’ale Adumim, one of Israel’s largest settlements.

All six major hospitals are located in East Jerusalem, cut off from the rest of the West Bank by Israel’s wall. Palestinians, even emergency cases in ambulances, cannot pass through the wall checkpoints to go to these

hospitals without Israeli-issued permits. This has resulted in an up to 50% drop in the number of patients visiting these hospitals, according to a United Nations report. Palestinian staff at the hospitals must obtain Israeli permits to commute to work from the West Bank. Permits are valid only for a period of three months, and some are limited to daily access until 7pm. These restrictions make it increasingly difficult for hospitals to provide 24-hour care for their patients.

Israel issues an ID card to every Palestinian in the West Bank and Gaza Strip over the age of 16, designating their place of residence. Palestinians who are not designated by Israel as “Jerusalem Palestinian” cannot live there. Jerusalem residents who left the city temporarily during the 1967 war missed Israel’s

census, and cannot return to live in Jerusalem. Those without Jerusalem IDs or a special Israeli-authorized permit cannot enter East Jerusalem at the wall checkpoints.

If a Palestinian in Abu Dis (having an Israeli-issued West Bank ID card) marries a Palestinian in East Jerusalem (having an Israeli-issued Jerusalem ID card) they in most cases cannot obtain Israeli permission to live with their spouse in East Jerusalem. The Israeli Interior Ministry does not register Palestinian children as Jerusalem residents if the child’s father does not hold a Jerusalem ID card, even if the mother is a Jerusalem ID card holder.

Al-Quds University, Abu Dis campus

<https://www.gigapan.com/gigapans/22001> presents this photo interactively, where you can zoom to see further detail.

One-third of the campus is underneath or on the western side of the apartheid wall and is no longer accessible.



ABU DIS, Jerusalem, April 13, 2009 – The Dome of the Rock, in the Old City of Jerusalem, is visible from the Palestinian side of the apartheid wall at Abu Dis. The Dome of the Rock is outside the land where Israel proclaimed a state in 1948, but inside the land Israel seized when building the wall, beginning 2005. Israel’s apartheid wall blocks access to the Dome of the Rock (shown in these photos), in the Old City of Jerusalem, just a few kilometers away from Abu Dis. Palestinian Muslims and Christians of Abu Dis and the entire West Bank can not freely visit important religious and historic cultural sites in Jerusalem.

ABU DIS, Jerusalem, April 13, 2009 – The Dome of the Rock. These photos are enlargements of a section of the photo from the previous two pages.



**MEET MATH,
FOR PALESTINIAN CHILDREN,
at AL-QUDS UNIVERSITY IN ABU DIS**



ABU DIS, Jerusalem, April 13, 2009 – “Meet Math” is a hands-on science museum for Palestinian children on the campus of Al-Quds University in Abu Dis.

Due to the Israeli wall cutting through Abu Dis, Palestinian Al-Quds University students cannot attend their classes on the main campus in Jerusalem, as they had before Israeli construction of the wall.

The Israeli wall zigzags through Abu Dis to seize maximum land.



ABU DIS, Jerusalem, April 13, 2009 – Palestinian university students at Al-Quds in Abu Dis, including those working at Meet Math, face additional challenges on their daily commute to and from school. They must stop at checkpoints between their homes and campus, where the Israeli military often delays them for hours or turns them back.



ABU DIS, Jerusalem, April 13, 2009 – Teaching the next generation at Meet Math, at Al-Quds University, Abu Dis campus.

“THE WALL SHALL FALL”



ABU DIS, Jerusalem, April 13, 2009 – On University Street at the edge of the Al-Quds University, Abu Dis campus.
The apartheid wall cuts through the Palestinian city of Abu Dis, near Jerusalem.



رابطة شباب آل ابو زياد

يهنئون أهالي بلدتهم العيزرية خاصة والمسلمين عامة
بمناسبة حلول شهر رمضان المبارك

**WE SHALL NEVER KNEEL
OR SURRENDER**

THE WALL SHALL FALL
EIZARIEH LOCAL COUNCIL

EIZARIEH, April 13, 2009 – On our drive through the Palestinian city neighboring Abu Dis.

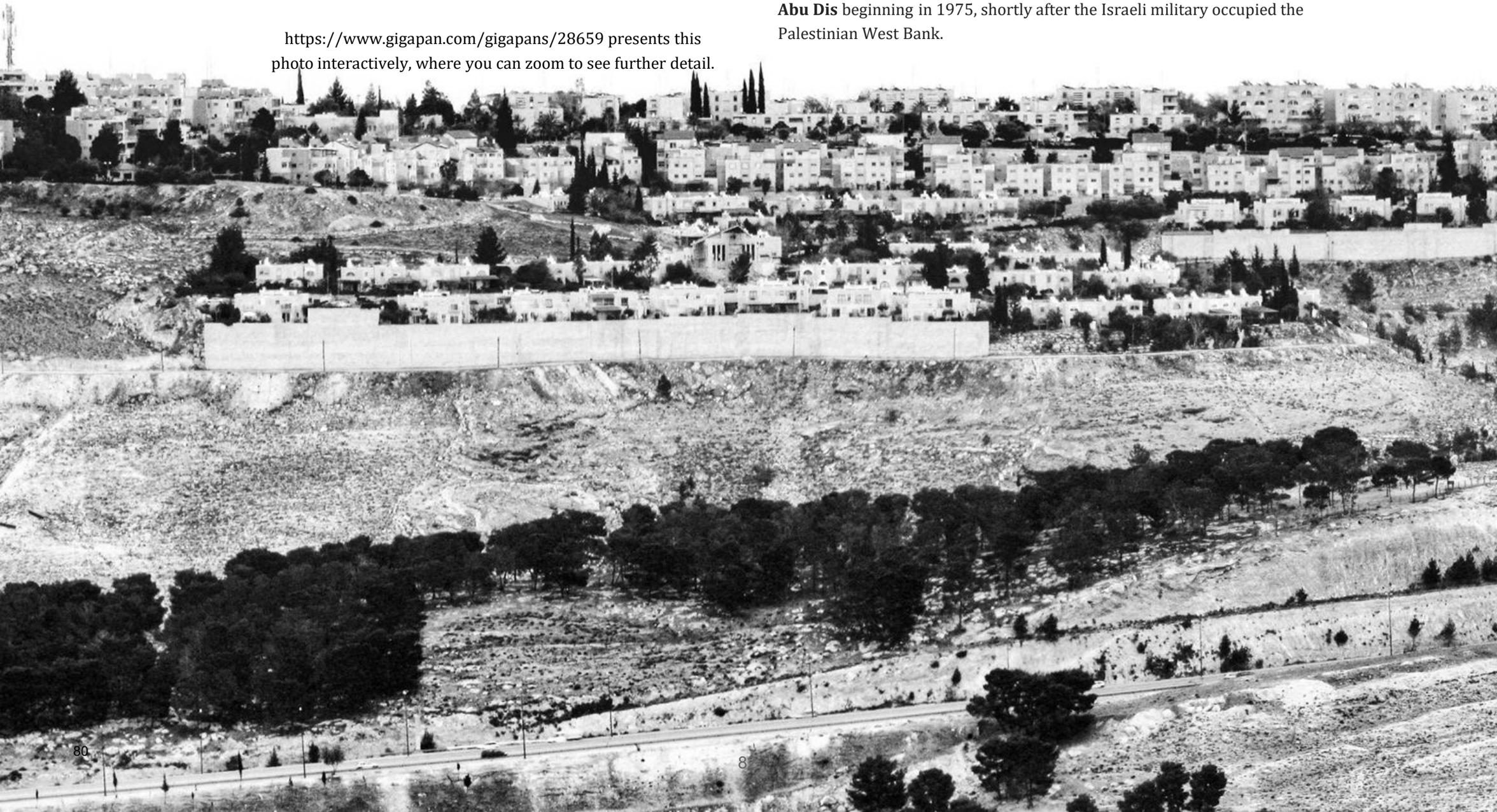
EASTWARD

THE MA'ALE ADUMIM ISRAELI SETTLEMENT: STRATEGIC AND COLLOSAL

MA'ALE ADUMIM, April 11, 2009 – A Palestinian taxi driver takes us to this location. We had explained that we want to photographically convey the sheer scale of the Ma'ale Adumim Israeli settlement.

<https://www.gigapan.com/gigapans/28659> presents this photo interactively, where you can zoom to see further detail.

Spread across these two pages is only half of the enormous Ma'ale Adumim settlement. It includes housing for more than 40,000 Israelis, shopping centers, utility and sports facilities. It was **built on the land of the Palestinian village of Abu Dis** beginning in 1975, shortly after the Israeli military occupied the Palestinian West Bank.



In March 2005, a report by John Dugard for the United Nations Commission on Human Rights stated that the **"three major settlement blocs – Gush Etzion, Ma'ale Adumim and Ariel – will effectively divide Palestinian territory into cantons or Bantustans."**

To understand the UN statement, look at a map; you will see how **Ma'ale Adumim's strategic location cuts off Palestinian east-west access to and from Jerusalem, and north-south access throughout the West Bank.** And you will see how far east Ma'ale Adumim is located from Jerusalem.

All Israeli settlements, including Ma'ale Adumim, are illegal under international law. Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states: "The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies."

Illegal Israeli construction in Ma'ale Adumim continues at the time of this photograph, including to the east of the settlement, in an area known as 07, where apartment blocks are being built to accommodate an additional 3,500 people, despite international pressure on Israel.

To the west of Ma'ale Adumim (between Ma'ale Adumim and Jerusalem), in an area called E1, Israel is proceeding with its plans for one of the most contentious building projects in the West Bank.

Israeli governments have promoted settlement by various means, including helping to fund construction and providing financial incentives such as tax breaks and preferential loan terms to settlers.

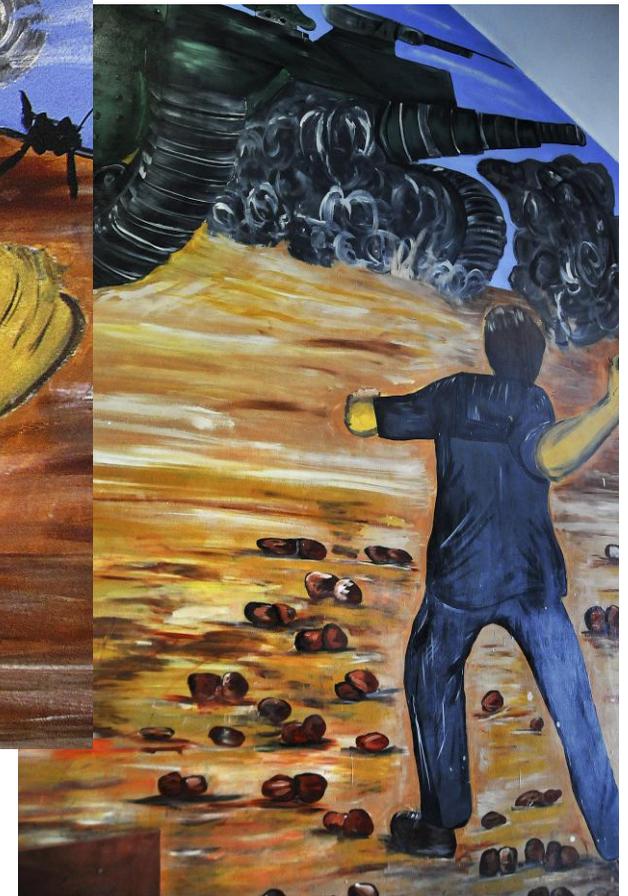




BETHLEHEM, April 16, 2009 – Keys represent the desire to return home.
We're told that many Palestinian families have the keys to their homes that Israelis forced them out of in the 1948 Nakba.

WEST BANK

ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS AT IBDAА CULTURAL CENTER IN DHEISHEH REFUGEE CAMP

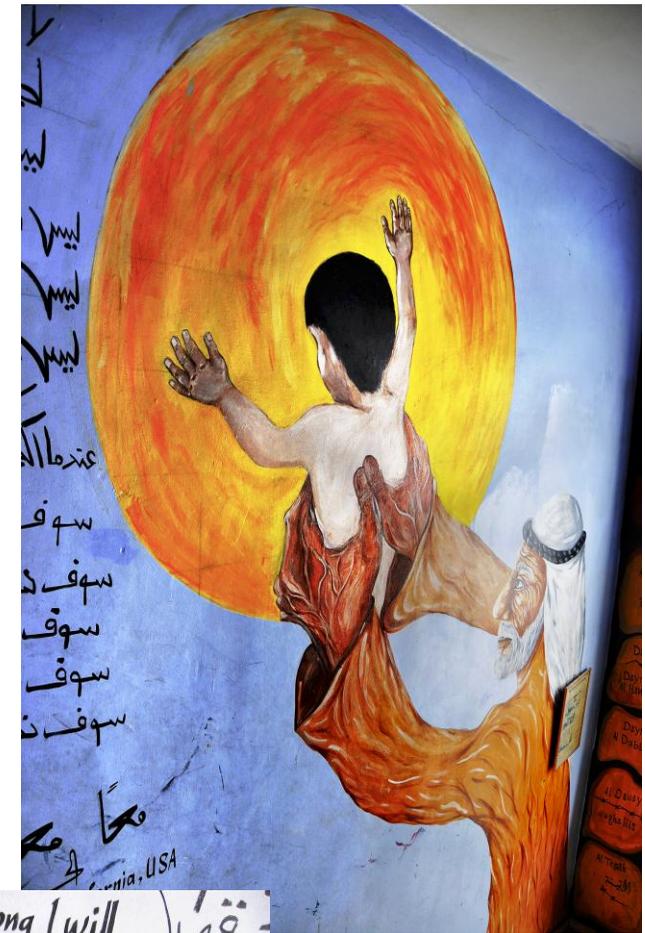


DHEISHEH Palestinian refugee camp, near BETHLEHEM, April 16, 2009 –

Murals in the IBDAА Cultural Center. “Ibdaа provides an environment for young people to develop their creativity and leadership skills through activities not readily available in a refugee camp environment.”

Peace
 If I Could Change All the World
 I'd dismantle all the bombs
 I'd feed all the hungry
 I'd shelter all the homeless
 I'd make all people free
 I can't dismantle all the bombs
 I can't feed all the hungry
 I can't shelter all the homeless
 I can't make all the people free
 I can't because there is only one of me

لو كان بإمكاننا تغيير العالم
 لأبطلت كل القنابل
 لأطعمت كل الجياع
 لأؤوي كل المشردين
 لجعلت كل الناس أحرار
 ليس بإمكاننا ابطل القنابل
 ليس بإمكاننا اطعم الجياع
 ليس بإمكاننا مأوأة المشردين
 ليس بإمكاننا منح العالم الحرية
 لأنني لوحدري



I can't feed all the hungry
 I can't shelter all the homeless
 I can't make all the people free
 I can't because there is only one of me
 When I have grown and I am strong I will
 find many more of me
 We will dismantle all the bombs
 We will feed the hungry
 We will shelter all the homeless
 We will make all the people free. We

ليس بإمكاننا اطعم الجياع
 ليس بإمكاننا مأوأة المشردين
 ليس بإمكاننا منح العالم الحرية
 لأنني لوحدري
 عندما أكون أصبح قويا
 سوف أجد أنا أيضا كثيرين مثلي
 سوف نبطل كل القنابل
 سوف نطعم كل الجياع
 سوف نؤوي كل المشردين
 سوف نحرر كل العالم

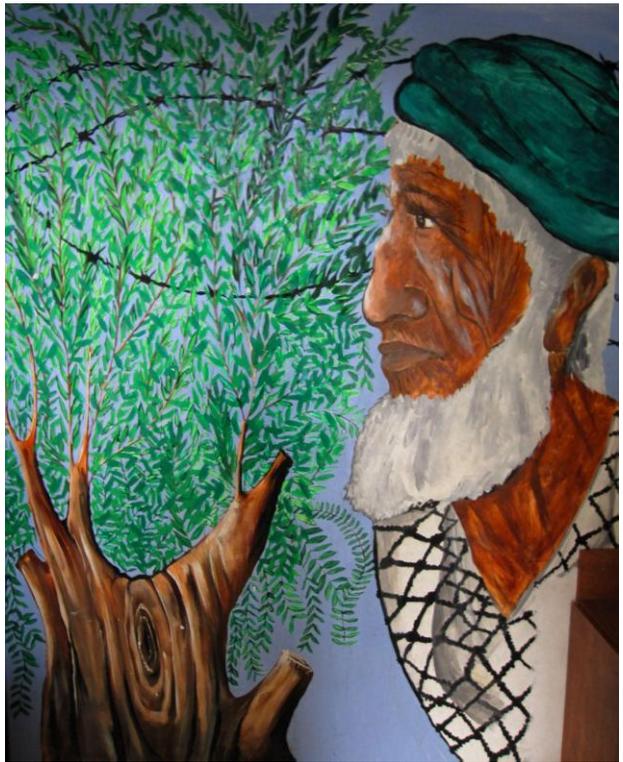
When I have grown and I am strong I will
 find many more of me
 We will dismantle all the bombs
 We will feed the hungry
 We will shelter all the homeless
 We will make all the people free, We
 Will change the world
 Me and my friends together, together at last.
 Jojo, age 11 - Killed in cold blood at age 23
 in San Francisco - Califo

عندما أكون أصبح قويا
 وأنا أيضا كثيرين مثلي
 نأبطل كل القنابل
 نطعم كل الجياع
 نؤوي كل المشردين
 نحرر كل العالم
 أنا وكل أصدقائي
 معا معا
 معا معا
 معا معا

DHEISHEH Palestinian
 refugee camp, near
 BETHLEHEM,
 April 16, 2009.

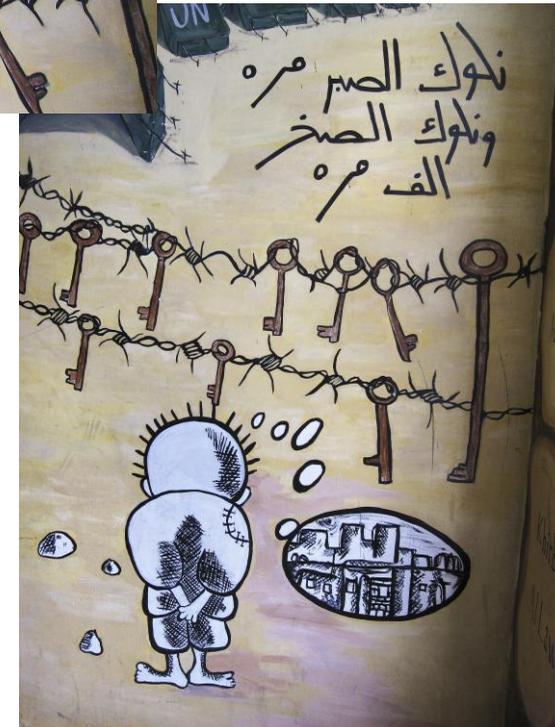
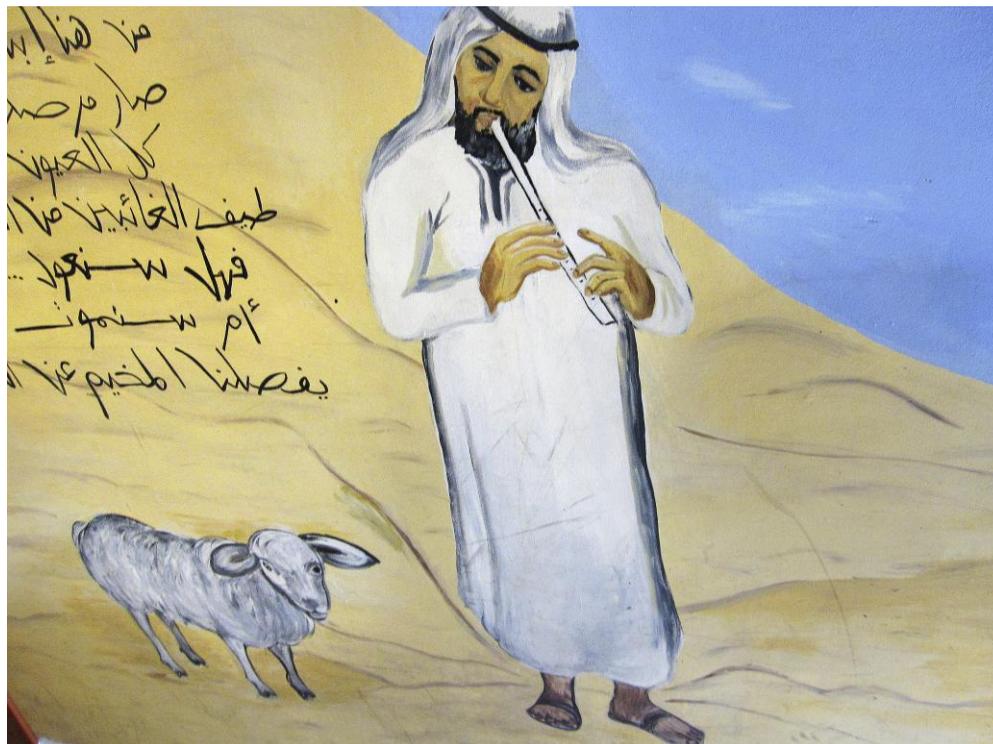


DHEISHEH Palestinian refugee camp, near BETHLEHEM, April 16, 2009.



IBDAA Cultural Center in DHEISHEH Palestinian refugee camp, near BETHLEHEM, April 16, 2009.

Ibdaa encompasses a dance troupe, music program, computer center, oral history project, media training project, children's and women's mental health services, children's library, international cultural exchange, women's tatriz collective, kindergarten and nursery, sports teams, the Ibdaa Women's Committee, and the Ibdaa Health Committee.



Remembering the names of
some of the Palestinian villages
which Israelis destroyed
in the 1948 Nakba.



IBDAA Center, DHEISHEH Refugee Camp,
near BETHLEHEM, April 16, 2009 -
Mural surrounding a window.



IBDAA Center, DHEISHEH
Refugee Camp, near BETHLEHEM,
April 2009.

“PALESTINE IS OUR COUNTRY”

BETHLEHEM, April 16, 2009 – Street murals.

Translation for the mural below:

“From our blood to our blood, the borders of our land.”

*“Palestine is our country Palestine is our country Palestine is our country
Palestine is our country Palestine is our country”*





Qusay Suleiman Muhammad al-Afandi

16 years old,

of Dheisheh refugee camp.

Killed by Israeli IDF gunfire to his abdomen while walking to his father's store during an incursion on January 28, 2008

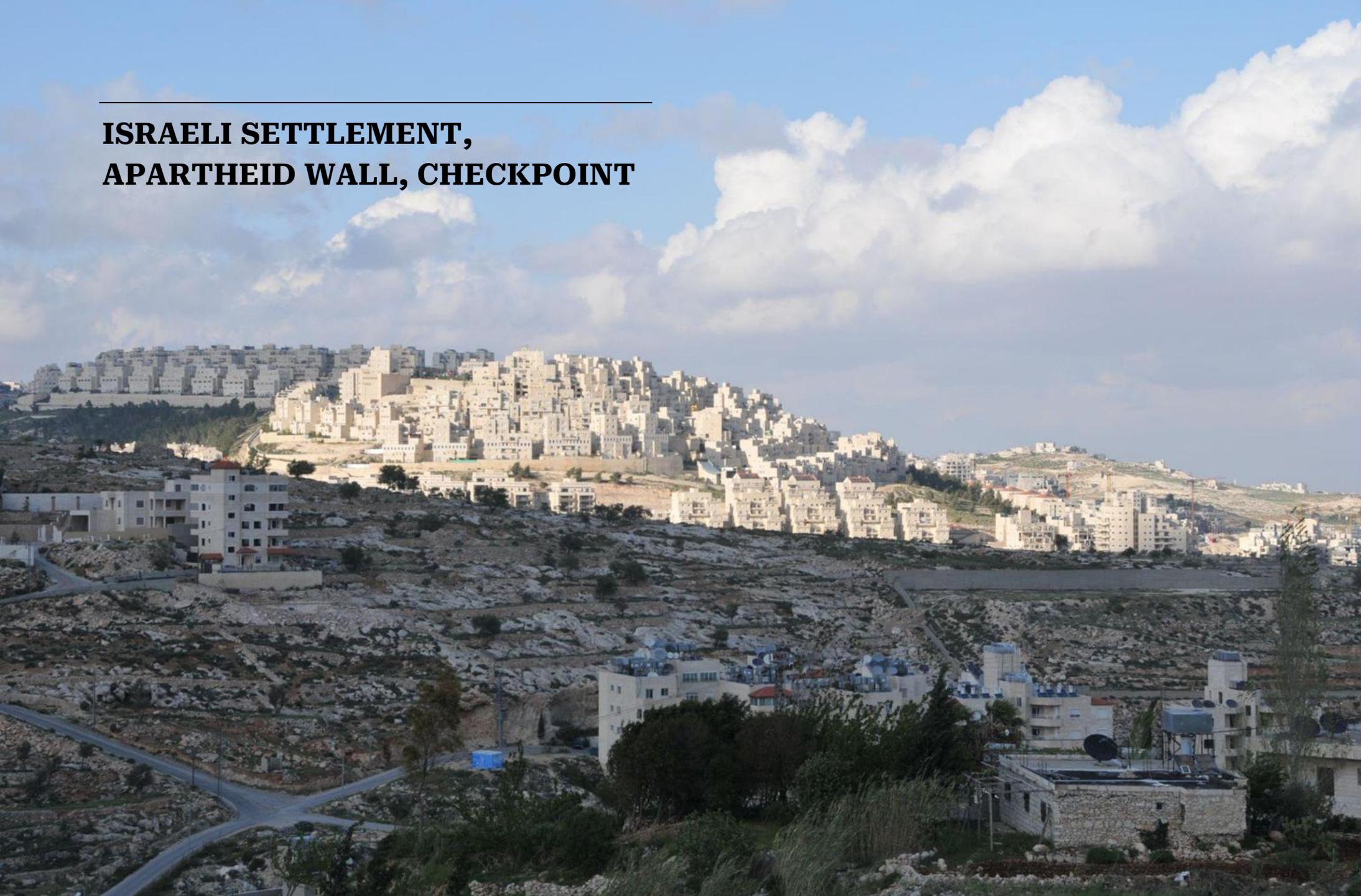


BETHLEHEM, April 16, 2009.

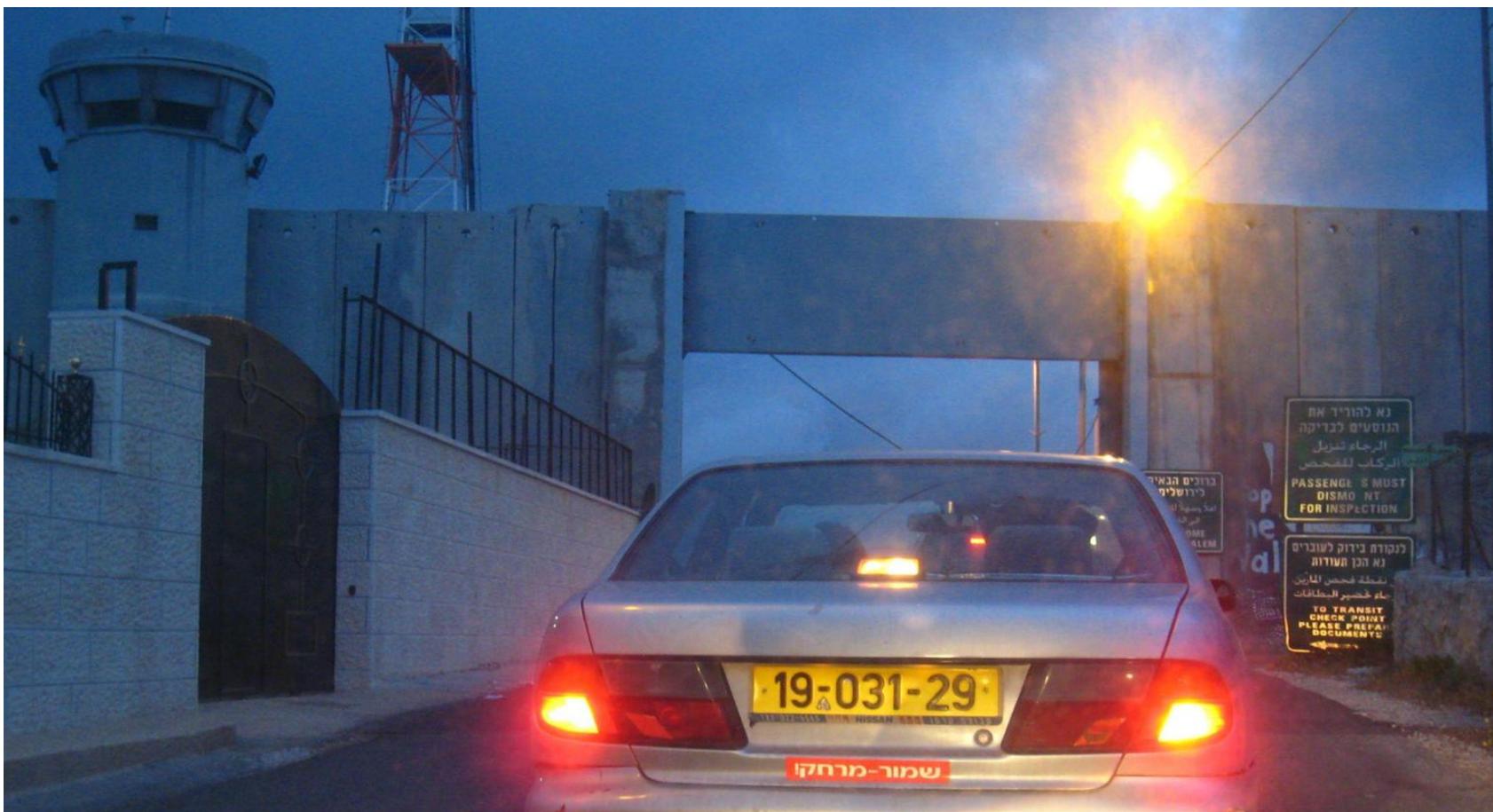


Walls and armies do not bring security
Justice will bring security and peace.

ISRAELI SETTLEMENT, APARTHEID WALL, CHECKPOINT



HAR HOMA from DHEISHEH, Bethlehem, April 16, 2009 – View of Har Homa Israeli settlement and apartheid wall cutting off Bethlehem.
Seen from a rooftop in Dheisheh Palestinian refugee camp.



We approach an Israeli checkpoint in Bethlehem.



BETHLEHEM, April 16, 2009

SHAT'HA IN THE NORTHERN HILLS: PEOPLE, LAND, EXPLORING FREEDOM



Near KUFER, West Bank, April 11, 2009 – We join old friends on a shat'ha, a Friday hike to enjoy nature, picnic, share with friends, and explore the West Bank in an expression of freedom from the Israeli occupation checkpoints, walls, soldiers, and constraints.



West Bank, April 10, 2009 – The hike was to begin at a home between Tubas and Jenin.
On the drive there, we are stopped at a checkpoint and told, “No entry on Friday. Only on Saturday.”
We find a more circuitous route.



KUFEIR, West Bank, April 11, 2009 – At the start of our hike, the poppies of Palestine!

April 10, 2009 — On the shat'ha,
Raja Shehadeh, author of
Palestinian Walks, with a friend.

The publication of Shehadeh's *Palestinian Walks* last year was part of our motivation to make this journey. I remember reading his words:

"The other day I had to plead with a soldier to be allowed to return home.... I had to implore the Israeli soldier. I told him that I really did not know a curfew had been imposed on Ramallah. I was away all day and hadn't listened to the news. 'I'm tired,' I said, 'please let me through. Oh, the humiliation of pleading with a stranger for something so basic.

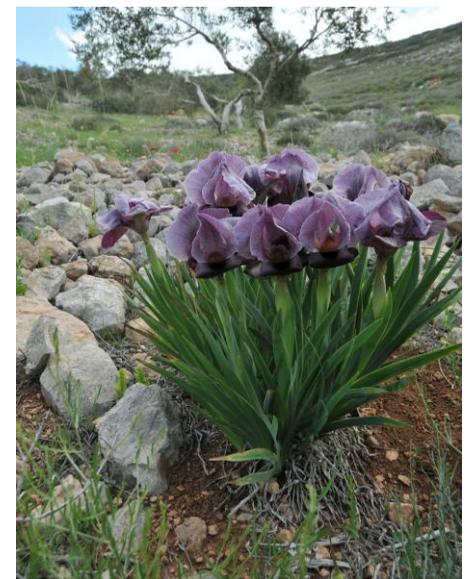
Why should I endure all these hardships? Why should I spend so much of my time thinking about the dismal future? Living as a hunted, haunted human with a terrible sense of doom pervading my life? Why could I not live in the moment, be at ease?

But I knew why. If I and people like me were to leave rather than stay and resist the occupation, we would wake up in a few years to a new reality, with our land taken from under our feet. We had no alternative but to struggle against our predicament.

"As long as there were no Israeli settlements nearby I could pretend that I had the whole of the hills to myself...."

Facing page: On the shat'ha between Jenin and Tubas in the West Bank. April 2009.









Encountering spontaneous hospitality on our shat'ha.
As we hike near their home, a gracious family invites us to visit, and serves us all coffee.

Facing page: Near RABA, West Bank, April 10, 2009. On our shat'ha, we stop for a picnic lunch on a hill overlooking Raba. We take in the view, appreciating the cultivated fields lying in the flats, the olive groves and homes nestled into the slopes, and the way all of it hugs the contours of the land.





Above: The Palestinian village Kufeir, at the end of our hike.

Facing page: From the balcony of our hosts' home. They treat all of us to amazing anise tea, cardamom coffee, chocolate muffins, and orange marmalade homemade from the fruit of their tree.



BOUNTY OF THE LAND AND PEOPLE, INTERRUPTED



QALANDIA, West Bank, April 2009 – Traders and consumers from across the West Bank can no longer access East Jerusalem markets, traditionally their hub. Palestinian shops in East Jerusalem must pay a steep municipal tax to Israel, and hundreds have had to close in recent years. Palestinian traders who want to take agricultural produce into East Jerusalem face often-prohibitive obstacles and costs. They can transport only through specified commercial checkpoints in the apartheid wall. Further, they must obtain trade permits from Israel through a complex and expensive process. They must also pay municipality tax to Israel. At the wall they must offload the produce from a Palestinian truck onto an Israeli truck. Produce often spoils on the trucks while awaiting numerous Israeli approvals.



JERICHO, West Bank, April 12, 2009 – We purchase delicious local strawberries from this vendor.

RAMALLAH,
West Bank,
April 2009.





RAMALLAH, West Bank, April 2009.

AMONG THE OLIVE TREES



Near JILJILYYA, West Bank, April 17, 2009 – Shat'ha along olive grove terraces.



The same day, a Palestinian man in the nearby town of Bi'lin was killed by an Israeli soldier who fired a tear gas canister directly at his chest.

Near JILJILYYA, West Bank, April 17, 2009 – We stop along the hike to appreciate the cherished olive trees, a treasure of the land, and admire the work of Palestinians who carefully built and tend these terraces.

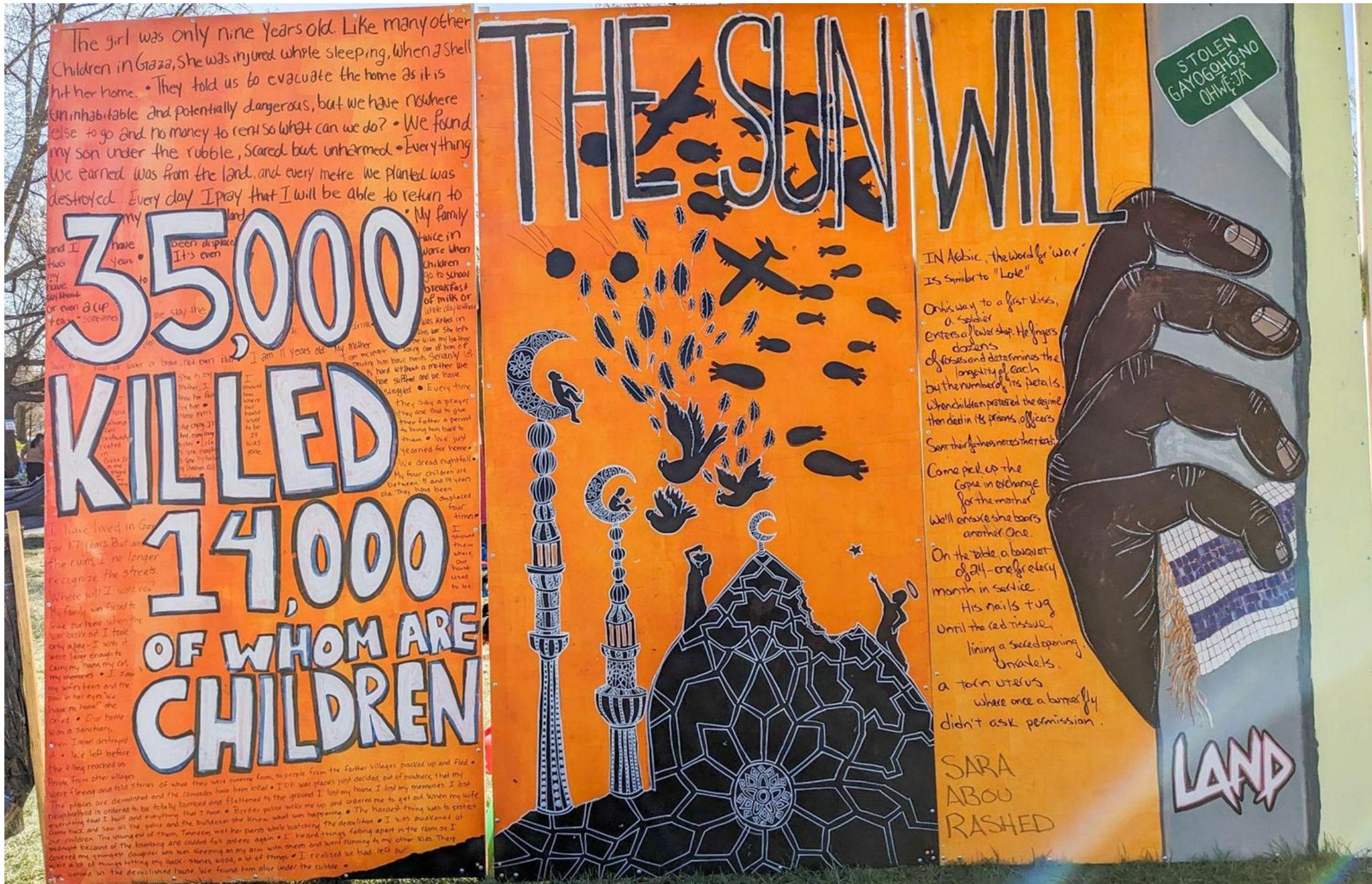


We picnic on locally-grown pistachios, almonds, cashews; homemade jams, dips, breads, and desserts. The crowning glory is the olive oil – the latest harvest of a Palestinian American who had returned to live in Palestine.



Chapter 3
Solidarity
2024-25 and onward





PALESTINE SOLIDARITY ENCAMPMENT AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY, Ithaca, NY, April, 2024 – The encampment wall mural, painted by students as an artistic expression in protest of the apartheid wall in occupied Palestine.



SOLIDARITY ENCAMPMENT AT CORNELL, April, 2024 – The wall faces outwards towards a busy walkway for passersby to see.

ITHACA, NY – Today

We find ourselves in unprecedented times. The scale of oppression, violence, and injustice has exceeded what we could have predicted just ten years ago. Yet, the movement for resistance only grows – we must ask why? Why resist? In 1977, the leaders of the PLO argued the resistance was for the people. In 2009, we witnessed the countless efforts across the West Bank defending their land. Now, the global movement for Palestine resists in solidarity. The following pages present speeches, statements, and writings from many activists and students in the broader Ithaca, NY community during the last two years.



SOLIDARITY ENCAMPMENT AT CORNELL, May 3, 2024 – Students and community members gather at an encampment rally as both the Palestinian flag and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy flag flutter in the breeze.

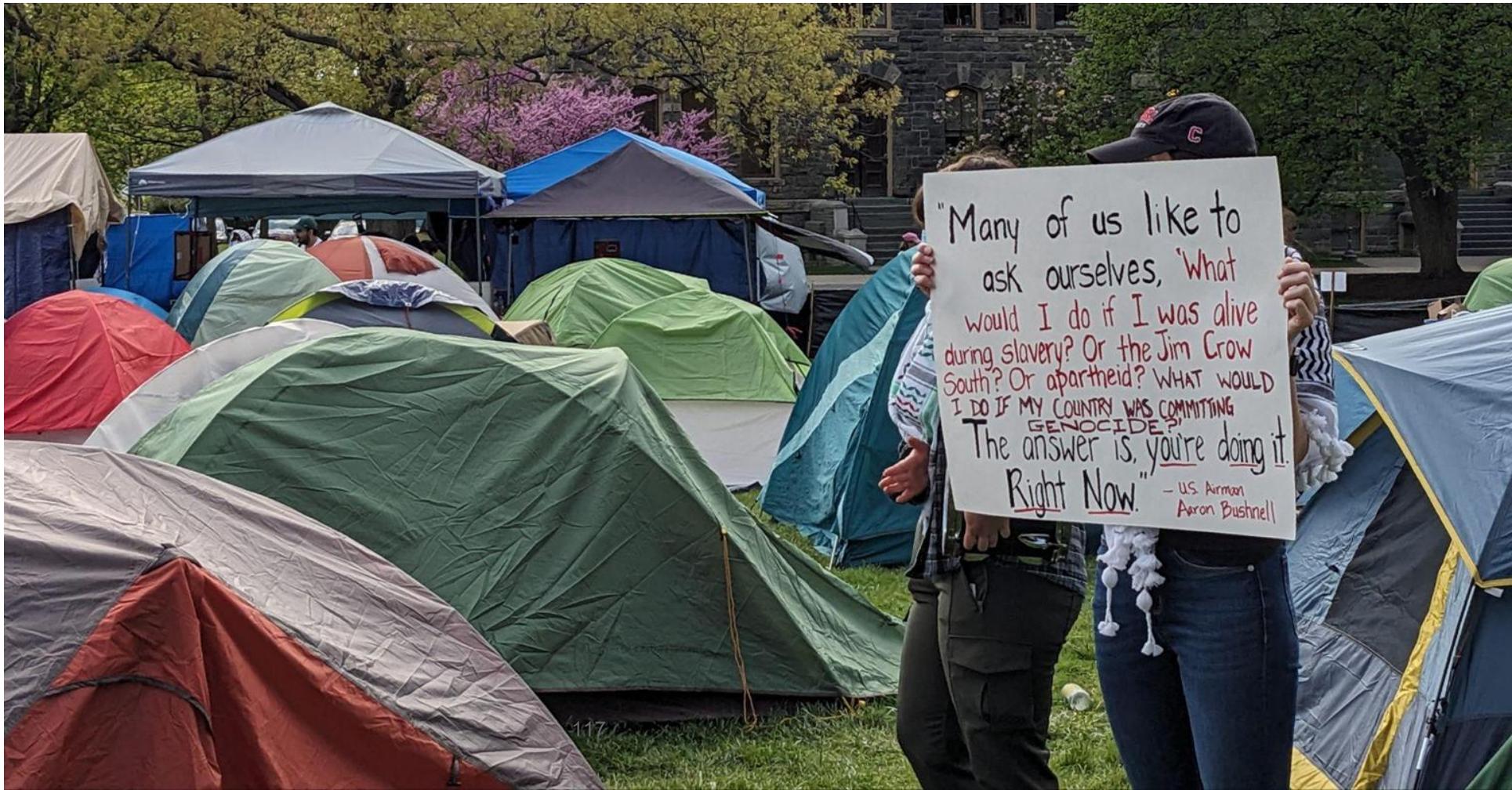
As the Palestine solidarity movement rapidly gained momentum, Cornell University student activists launched an encampment. They joined the surge of

university encampments across the globe, sparked initially by Columbia University students.

Now, rallies outside the encampment are a common occurrence. Every night, students gather for daily general assemblies to discuss next steps and how to best achieve their demands.

The students gather to fight for divestment from

weapons companies in a step towards the liberation of Palestine. They also demand police abolition, Indigenous land sovereignty, and restitution for Cornell's role in the genocide of the Haudenosaunee peoples.



SOLIDARITY
ENCAMPMENT
AT CORNELL,
April 2024



CORNELL UNIVERSITY, April 18, 2024 – The undergraduate student body votes 2:1 in favor on a ceasefire and divestment resolution:

“Whereas, in 2016, the Board of Trustees approved a ‘Standard and Process for Review of Divestment Requests’ in which the university must consider divesting from companies that, through their ‘action or inaction’ partake in ‘morally reprehensible activities’ such as ‘apartheid, genocide, human trafficking, slavery, and systemic cruelty to children’ and perpetuate ‘harm so grave that it would be inconsistent with the goals and principles of the University,’

“Whereas, the University Policy 4.6: Standards of Ethical Conduct states that ‘[a]ll executive officers, trustees, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the university have a responsibility to ensure that all funds received are used prudently [and] ethically,’

“Whereas, at the time of writing, the UNRWA reports that the state of Israel’s invasion of Gaza during the war has killed more than 23,700 people since October 7, 2023, with 61,000 people having been injured and over 1.9 million of Gaza’s 2.3-million-person population having been displaced,

“Whereas, according to the International Court of Justice, ‘At least some of the acts and omissions alleged by South Africa to have been committed by the state of Israel in Gaza appear

to be capable of falling within the provisions of the [Genocide] Convention,’ amounting to the court finding the accusation of genocide to be plausible,

“Whereas, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the United Nations have all described the Israeli occupation as an apartheid state,

“Whereas, in the course of its occupation of Palestinian land, Save the Children reports that the state of Israel has systematically prosecuted hundreds of Palestinian children per year in military courts, holding them without trial where they are frequently subjected to sexual, psychological, and physical violence in Israeli prisons,

“Whereas, Cornell in its 2019 core values claims a commitment to ‘learning, teaching, scholarship, and innovation’ that is directly contradicted by its partnerships with and investments in the companies complicit in the destruction of all seven of Gaza’s universities, the murder of ninety-four university professors, and the interruption of the education of 625,000 school-age Palestinian children,

“Whereas, Cornell’s theme of ‘Freedom of Expression’ for the 2023-24 academic year directly contradicts its partnerships with and

investments in companies complicit in the murders of over one hundred journalists,

“Whereas, the inconsistencies between the harm that the following companies perpetuate and Cornell’s stated core values constitute grounds for the consideration of divestment,

“Whereas, there is precedent for socially responsible divestment from companies complicit in morally reprehensible acts, such as Cornell University’s moratorium on fossil fuel investments in May 2022 and the liquidation of Cornell’s holdings in Sudan (including government bonds and oil company stocks) in light of the Sudanese government’s involvement in genocide in 2006,

“Whereas, Cornell University holds portfolio and direct investments in corporations that profit from Israel’s military occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, thereby making Cornell complicit in human rights abuses and violations of international law,

“Whereas, Cornell University has partnerships with weapons manufacturers including BAE Systems, Boeing, and Lockheed Martin, each of which produces weapons used by the state of Israel’s military that have caused unprecedented harm to the civilians in Gaza,

“Whereas, The Nation detailed Cornell University’s partnership with the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology (which contributes directly to the research and development of geospatial, intelligence, and weapons technologies used by the Israeli military) at the Cornell Tech Campus in New York City,

“Whereas, Cornell University, as a result of these institutional and financial ties, does not currently take a neutral position on the

occupation of the Palestinian Territories, which as a result, has harmed affected students, staff, and faculty,

“Whereas, the following illustrative and non-exhaustive list of corporations—which Cornell invests in and profits from—participate actively in the abuses and violations that constitute the aforementioned claims of plausible genocide, apartheid, and systemic cruelty toward children,

“Whereas, BAE Systems provides munitions, missile launching kits, combat aircraft and armored vehicles used by the Israeli military in the mass destruction of homes and civilian infrastructure,

“Whereas, Boeing manufactures attack helicopters, combat aircraft, missiles, bombs and battlefield laser systems for the Israeli army, as well as intelligence and surveillance systems that are used to surveil Palestinian civilians in Occupied Palestine,

“Whereas, General Dynamics supplies weapon systems and components for Israeli armored combat and personnel vehicles, as well as bombs that are used indiscriminately in crowded residential areas,

“Whereas, L3Harris Technologies components are integrated into multiple weapon systems used by the Israeli military, including Israel’s air-to-ground bombs as well as its main warplanes, battle tanks, and warships,

“Whereas, Leonardo SpA provides the 72mm and 76mm guns which are installed on Israeli warships that maintain the naval blockade on Gaza, which has been ongoing since 2007 and constitutes collective punishment,

“Whereas, Lockheed Martin supplies the Israeli government with fighter jets, attack helicopters, and Hellfire missiles,

“Whereas, Northrop Grumman provides missiles that are integrated into Israeli warships, attack helicopters, and fighter jets, among other weapons,

“Whereas, RTX supplies the state of Israel with missiles and bombs that are used against crowded residential areas, as well as weapon systems, components, and maintenance services to the Israeli Air Force,

“Whereas, ThyssenKrupp makes a multitude of weapons and vehicles for the Israeli military, including but not limited to submarines, warships, naval electronics, towers for battle tanks and artillery guns, and machine gun mountings

“Whereas, Cornell’s failure to begin the process for divestment from the aforementioned companies is a breach of the Board of Trustees’ Standard and Process for Review of Divestment Requests,

“Whereas, peer institutions across the United States, such as Brown University, Stanford University, the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Michigan, Northwestern University, and the University of Chicago have passed resolutions to divest from companies that profit from the plausible genocide, apartheid, and systematic cruelty to children in Occupied Palestine,

“Be it therefore resolved, that Cornell University must execute its 2016 ‘Standard and Process for Review of Divestment Requests’ in which the university must consider divesting from companies that, through their ‘action or inaction,’ partake in ‘morally reprehensible activities’ such as ‘apartheid, genocide, human trafficking, slavery, and systemic cruelty to children’ to perpetuate ‘harm so grave that it would be inconsistent with the goals and principles of the University,’

SOLIDARITY ENCAMPMENT AT CORNELL, April 2024

“Be it further resolved, that Cornell University will examine its assets for investments in the aforementioned companies,

“Be it further resolved, that Cornell University will make information about all of its assets public, pertaining especially to its investment managers and the funds that they operate, as well as a list of institutional holdings,

“Be it further resolved, that Cornell University will end any corporate partnerships with the aforementioned companies,

“Be it finally resolved, Cornell University will establish a comprehensive ban on any research and development of technologies used by the Israeli armed forces at the Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute at Cornell Tech.”





CORNELL UNIVERSITY CAMPUS, April 22, 2024 –
Cornell Jewish Voice for Peace hosts the Freedom Seder. Photo contributed.

ITHACA, NY, April 2024 – **Eliza Salamon**, Cornell class of 2024, sets down in writing some of her thoughts since childhood and her organizing of an event which immediately precedes the Palestine solidarity encampment:

“Growing up, one of my favorite parts of the Passover Seder was the singing of ‘Dayenu’ – it would have been enough. At each moment of exodus, when God frees the Jewish people from slavery, we repeat this: it would have been enough to bring us out of Egypt, to part the Red Sea, to give us the Torah. I’ve always appreciated this reminder to be grateful for the small triumphs, for the process, and not the end result. But still, I wonder—where would we be if left at these intermediaries?”

“Rabbi Arthur Waskow appears to ask a similar question in his 1969 Freedom Haggadah. This Haggadah was written

following the assassination of Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.; Waskow felt Passover needed to commemorate not only the Jews’ ancient liberation but also speak to the modern liberation struggles of the civil rights movement and against the Vietnam War. That first Freedom Seder was held in the basement of a Black church in D.C. The next year, 1970, Waskow led the second Freedom Seder at Cornell University.

“Last winter, in my senior year at Cornell, I heard about the Freedom Seder for the first time. It was *beshert*—meant to be—as my mom would say. It was a complicated and fraught time to be an anti-Zionist Jewish student actively organizing with Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) in protest of Israel’s ongoing occupation and genocide of Palestinians. Discovering the Freedom Seder’s history, particularly at my very school, felt to me the

perfect way to orient an observance of Passover to the Palestinian liberation struggle.

“The 1970 Freedom Seder at Cornell was held in Barton Hall, the indoor track house. By some accounts, up to 10,000 students squeezed inside, sitting on the ground with cups of wine and listening to Waskow and student organizers lead the Seder.

“It was the height of campus protests against the Vietnam War and the university-military connections running deep through Cornell—and the Freedom Seder was the kickoff to a weekend of countercultural, anti-war events titled ‘America is Hard to Find.’ The weekend honored Father Daniel Berrigan, who was on the run from the FBI for burning draft cards as one of the Catonsville Nine; he had served for a few years prior as assistant director of Cornell United Religious Works. In the middle of the seder, Berrigan pulled up to Barton Hall on a motorcycle and surprised the ecstatic crowd.

“Later, he disappeared inside a giant costume belonging to the Bread and Puppet Theater with reports of undercover agents positioned all around the room. It was a few more months before he was finally found and arrested.

“Over the years, the Freedom Seder has been adapted to address contemporary issues of oppression and liberation. Reading through Waskow’s original Haggadah, though, I was surprised by how applicable it felt to the current moment. I decided that Cornell JVP must host its own Freedom Seder.

“For years prior, I had tended to avoid established organized Jewish life at Cornell, out

of discomfort with their hard line on Zionism and utter unwillingness to engage with anti-Zionist students. I had resorted to hosting Jewish holidays in the living room of my off-campus apartment—friends, Jewish and otherwise, squeezed onto the floor with bowls of matzo ball soup on their laps.

“I saw what I, what we, had been trying to do and say for months reflected in the Freedom Haggadah. In the condemnation of the corporate greed and tyranny of the Dow Chemical Company, and the undergraduate referendum on divestment from weapons manufacturers. I saw how Waskow’s words (‘...a Freedom Seder should be not only a ritual remembrance, not only a shared promise for the future, but itself a political act’) reflected our desire to use Jewish values and teachings to be in solidarity with Palestine. And later, in the words, ‘The freedom we seek is a freedom from blood as well as a freedom from tyrants,’ I saw our attempts to prefigure a radical world of mutual liberation.

“The 2024 Freedom Seder was organized by a small group of students over a few months in between protests, sit-ins, and arrests. We found a space on campus, a terrace overlooking Cayuga Lake, to set up our seder. We invited the whole community, and I was afraid nobody would show up. As the day grew closer, we hit 150 RSVPs. The weekend before the first night of Passover, we spent hours chopping apples for charoset, shredding onions and potatoes for kugel, and making literally hundreds of matzo balls.

“The night arrived, and I sat with the rest of

JVP at the head of a huge semicircle of people. I looked out at the sun setting behind the lake, at friends, comrades, professors, and total strangers. Many of the people there I would have never met if not for our common goal and struggle; and for many, it was their first seder.

“I thought about my childhood love for singing Dayenu and then I read Waskow’s version—one more difficult, but vastly more hopeful, liberatory, and expansive:

“For if we were to end a single genocide but not to stop the other wars that are killing men and women as we sit here, it would not be sufficient;

“If we were to end those bloody wars but not disarm the nations of the weapons that could destroy all mankind, it would not be sufficient;

“If we were to disarm the nations but not to end the pollution and poisoning of our planet, it would not be sufficient;

“If we were to end the poisoning of our planet but not prevent some people from wallowing in luxury while others starved, it would not be Sufficient;

“If we were to make sure that no one starved but were not to end police brutality, it would not be sufficient;

“If we were to end outright police brutality but not to free the daring poets from their jails, it would not be sufficient;

“If we were to free the poets from their jails but to cramp the minds of people so that they could not understand the poets, it would not be Sufficient;

“If we liberated all men and women to understand the free creative poets but forbade them to explore their own inner ecstasies, it would not be Sufficient;

“If we allowed men and women to explore their inner ecstasies but would not allow them to love one another and share in the human fraternity, it would not be sufficient.

“How much then are we in duty bound to struggle, work, share, give, think, plan, feel, organize, sit-in, speak out, hope, and be on behalf of Mankind! For we must end the genocide, stop the bloody wars that are killing men and women as we sit here, disarm the nations of the deadly weapons that threaten to destroy us all, end the poisoning of our planet, make sure that no one starves, stop police brutality, free the poets from their jails, educate us all to understand their poetry, allow us all to explore our inner ecstasies, and encourage and aid us to love one another and share in the human fraternity. All these!

“All these! I am bound to this struggle, this future, and this community, and that duty commands me to stand, speak, and act. I do this, I am able to do this, because there is so much history to build upon and build anew.

“A few days following the Freedom Seder, in the middle of the night, a few tents appeared on the main campus quad.”

CORNELL UNIVERSITY, September 18, 2024 – Students rally outside Day Hall, the campus administrative building, to march to the Statler Hall where a career fair had invited weapons manufacturers Boeing and L3Harris. Both are on a list of companies the undergraduate student body voted to divest from in Spring 2024, with no response from the university. Wanting their voices to be heard, the students enter past a police line and chant inside the career fair until the recruiters leave. In the following weeks, 19 students are partially or fully suspended and 3 among them are arrested. Notably, international PhD student Momodou Taal is suspended on September 25 and is forced to flee the country 6 months later, along with two others.



ITHACA, NY, September 18, 2024 – Students protesting on Cornell’s campus, where Momodou Taal gives a speech.



CORNELL UNIVERSITY, March 10, 2025 – Cornell University President Michael Kotlikoff unleashes Cornell University Police to arrest 17 people during an event he stages in Bailey Hall:

The event is a panel discussion featuring war criminal Tzipi Livni, the former vice prime minister and former foreign minister of Israel, Daniel Shapiro, the former U.S. ambassador to Israel, Salam Fayyad, the former prime minister of the Palestinian Authority, and moderating by Ryan Crocker, the former U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, Kuwait and Lebanon.

President Kotlikoff did not involve students in the planning of the event, or on stage.

Event staff remove the literature set out on seats in advance by *Students for Justice in Palestine* and *Alumni for a Fair and Just Cornell*.

The event requires that questions be submitted 5 days in advance. The microphone is cut off each time the first 3 questioners go off-script to call out Israel's genocide, to call on Cornell to divest from weapons manufacturers, and call for true peace. Instead of the promised 45-minute Q & A, no questions are taken after these three.

With no "sanctioned" avenue for participation, audience members bring attention to the panelists' crimes by calling out messages such as "Tzipi Livni, you murdered 500 Palestinian children during Israel's 2014 Operation Cast Lead. You're a Butcher" and "End military aid to Israel."

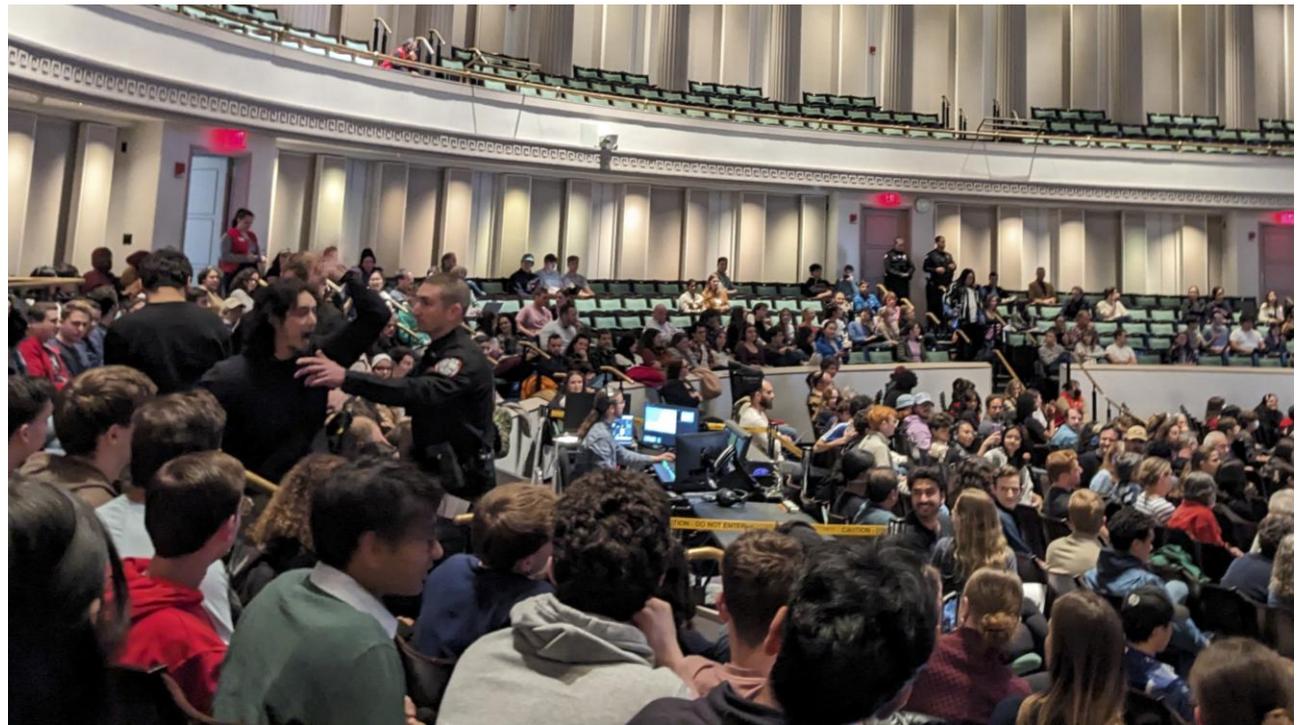
During the event, Cornell police detain 17 people, some who spoke out for Palestine, and some who simply walked out of the sham event. One is dragged out in handcuffs and at least 13 are charged with disorderly conduct. Protesting war criminals and genocide is not disorderly conduct, and we cannot allow Cornell to pretend it is an arrest-able offense.

In addition to criminal charges, Cornell also initiates university disciplinary procedures against 10 students. These proceedings have

no due process and have upended education for Cornell students charged with other recent pro-Palestine, anti-genocide protests.

A man throws a backpack at a student who walked out and was wearing a keffiyeh. No charges are brought against the man.

Kotlikoff has since written about this event in a farcical *NY Times* op ed titled "Universities like the One I Run Aren't Afraid to Let People Argue." For Michael Kotlikoff, "free speech" is only for himself and those he chooses.



CORNELL UNIVERSITY, March 10, 2025 – Police detain a student decrying Israeli genocide of Palestinians.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY, March 10, 2025 – In response to Interim President Kotlikoff's "Pathways to Peace" forum featuring Israeli war criminal Tzipi Livni, which presents a panel including no Cornell students or faculty, and at which those who speak out for Palestine are arrested, *Alumni for a Fair and Just Cornell* hand out a leaflet proposing:

“A Better Pathway to Peace”

“We envision a path to peace based on these concepts and initiatives:

“**1.** Support and empower students. At Cornell and around the world, students and youth have been at the heart of the movements for peace and justice. Students helped lead the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, the civil rights movement, the climate justice movement, and the opposition to the United States’ involvement in the war on Vietnam.

Unfortunately, Interim President Kotlikoff has belittled students, attempted to intimidate them, suspended them without due process and threatened them with deportation.

“**2.** End U.S. military aid to Israel. The U.S. has given more than \$300 billion in military aid to Israel since 1948. Israel has used recent funding to drop more than 70,000 tons of bombs on Gaza, more than three times the Hiroshima nuclear equivalent tonnage.

“**3.** End the U.S. veto in the United Nations Security Council, which undermines international law, and blocks a path for peace. For decades, the U.S. has abused its veto power in the Security Council to shield Israel from accountability. It has single-handedly blocked resolutions calling for peace, ceasefires, humanitarian aid and investigations into war crimes.

“**4.** Redirect Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute from sanitizing and enabling Israeli apartheid to helping rebuild Gaza at the forefront of environmental sustainability, powered year-round by clean, renewable energy. Cornell should divest from weapons manufacturers and invest in life.

“**5.** Oppose the Kotlikoff, Trump and Zionist attacks on academic freedom and free speech. Adopt the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism. Zionism is settler-colonialism and racism and not a path to peace. Stating this should not be criminalized.

“**6.** Support the rights of Palestinians as a people to determine their future, including the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their pre-1948 homes, as recognized by international law.

“**7.** Oppose war-mongering U.S. politicians. End U.S. military meddling in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Build peace and prosperity at home, for people and the planet.”

[Note: For sources of underlined text, see: www.cornellsun.com/article/2025/03/letter-to-the-editor-a-better-pathway-to-peace]



ITHACA, NY, Spring 2025 – Student and community protest.

ITHACA, NY, April 9, 2025 – Outside the Ithaca City Court, Palestine solidarity activists arrested by Cornell University police address the crowd of supporters. **DL** says:

“For the last 18 months, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have been murdered, today, Palestinians have been murdered, and we will fight constantly so that tomorrow no more Palestinians will be bombed, murdered, and cut off from medical aid and food using the money from our tuition and tax dollars.

“The reason the current administration tries to crack down so hard on us is because WE KNOW that we have a history, we KNOW that Palestinian strength has a history, and we KNOW that solidarity with Palestine has a history too. And what does that history teach us?

“It teaches us the only real division, which is the division between those that humanize others and those that DEHUMANIZE others. And what really is that division? It's the capitalist, the Zionist, the imperialist and the colonialist system versus those things that are real, those things that are made with hope, and community care, and those people

who show up for each other and will not stop until all of Palestine is free.

“And when we learn this history we learn, we practice, and we remember that: They can bar us from campus or throw us in the courtrooms and they can try their very hardest to make us afraid but as it's been for the last 18 months, for every moment of the Israeli occupation, it will NEVER WORK because you can never strip away the strength and will of those who stand in solidarity with Palestine, who fight for Palestine.

***“You can never strip the strength
and will away from
the Palestinian people.***

“And you certainly can NEVER STRIP AWAY the will and strength of the Palestinian movement which will bring capitalist, colonialist, and imperialist violence, exploitation, and genocide to ITS BREAKING POINT.

“Free Palestine.”

CORNELL UNIVERSITY, April 10, 2025 – Cornell President Kotlikoff cancels music artist Kehlani’s performance at Slope Day, the annual end-of-year celebration, for her public support of Palestine. This is met with an immediate reaction from student organizers.

Kotlikoff’s Slope Day Farce as a Microcosm of Global Political Violence

by Dissident de Finger Lakes

“I am an international PhD student of color at Cornell University. I have written the attached commentary regarding Cornell President Kotlikoff’s recent decision to cancel Kehlani’s performance at Slope Day.

“Given the current political climate and the inherent risks associated with publicly criticizing university policies as an international student, I request that this piece be published under the pseudonym “Dissident de Finger Lakes.” Originally, I intended to submit this op-ed to The Cornell Daily Sun, but their editorial team required my real identity and refused to accept anonymous or pseudonymous submissions, leaving me feeling uncomfortable and unsafe.

“What left the deepest impression on me during last year’s Slope Day wasn’t the wild partying in a sea of people, but what happened

just before that. Before heading to the crowded festivities, hundreds of graduate workers and undergraduate students at Cornell gathered outside a building on East Campus in solidarity with CGSU [Cornell Graduate Students United - UE local 300] during its negotiations with the administration. One of the key issues at stake? The university had suspended at least two international graduate workers involved in organizing and bargaining during the encampment—without due process.

“One year later, one of those two international grad workers, Momodou Taal, has become a symbol of Cornell’s collusion with the Trump administration’s fascist crackdown on the pro-Palestine student movement. After months of being banned from campus and living under the looming threat of ICE arrest, he was forced to leave the United States at the end of March 2025. In this grim climate, Slope Day once again returns to us—not as a carefree celebration, but as an event marked by political violence.

“On April 10, Cornell announced that Kehlani would headline this year’s Slope Day. Then, just eight days later, on April 18, President Kotlikoff issued a statement condemning Kehlani’s pro-Palestine stance and promising to subject the performance to political scrutiny and censorship. Although he claimed it was ‘too late to secure another performer,’ on April 23, he went ahead and canceled Kehlani’s invitation altogether.

“Kotlikoff justified this behind-the-scenes decision by claiming he held a meeting with 70 students, who unanimously supported the cancellation. But how were these 70 students selected? No one knows. What we do know—based on logic and publicly available data—is that these students couldn’t possibly represent the broader Cornell student body. In April 2024, undergraduates voted by a 2-to-1 margin in a campus-wide referendum to support ceasefire and divestment. So only two plausible explanations remain: either

Kotlikoff deliberately selected students who opposed Kehlani to manufacture consensus, or the students at the meeting were subjected to pressure and intimidation that prevented them from speaking freely.

“Either way, the so-called ‘meeting’ and the president’s claim to have ‘listened to students’ was nothing more than a political performance to justify a decision already made.

“Tragically, by canceling Kehlani’s performance, Kotlikoff has turned Slope Day into yet another battleground—this time, one where the Cornell administration has chosen to shamefully collaborate with a fascist federal government. Ever since retaking the White House, Trump has waged a full-scale war on higher education. Suppressing pro-Palestinian movements, international students, and immigrant communities has become the front line of this unjust war. From ICE’s abduction of Mahmoud Khalil at Columbia to the cancellation of over 1,300 international student visas, a new wave of white terror is sweeping across the country.

“Cornell is not immune. On April 15, the federal government froze over \$1 billion in university funds. Previous freezes on NSF and NIH funding have already impacted numerous

research projects on campus. But Cornell is not just a passive victim in this war—it is also an active perpetrator. Legal filings related to Momodou Taal’s case show that the university’s disciplinary decisions—made without due process—provided the federal government with justification to revoke his visa. At least 17 international students at Cornell have had their visas terminated, and yet the university has issued no public statement of concern, no expression of solidarity.

“Let’s be honest: the fear and uncertainty created by the unexplained visa revocation of 17 community members in the dead of night far outweighs any ‘threat’ posed by Kehlani performing at Slope Day. And yet, Kotlikoff’s actions have made one thing clear—he doesn’t care about the former, but will go to great lengths to weaponize the latter.

“Just as the Zionist entity monopolizes the right to define ‘terrorism’ in order to justify the mass killing and panoptic surveillance of Palestinians—even when such acts are called state terrorism—Kotlikoff and former president Martha Pollack’s administration have monopolized the meaning of ‘safe space’ and ‘inclusivity.’ Under the guise of ‘any person, any study’ and ‘diversity,’ they have consistently cracked down on student protests, de-recognized student groups like Climate Justice Cornell and SJP [Students for Justice in Palestine] Cornell, assisted the federal government in deporting students with no

criminal records, and censored faculty teaching—such as Professor Eric Cheyfitz’s course on Gaza, Indigeneity, and Resistance.

“Canceling Kehlani’s performance through a fake “student feedback process” is just the latest move in a broader agenda: using the rhetoric of inclusion to enact exclusion, using the language of safety to create a McCarthyist atmosphere of fear and repression on campus.

“If there’s anything we can take away from all this grief and rage, it’s this: everyday discursive violence—violence rooted in who controls the narrative and the terms of debate—lays the foundation for more visible, material violence. And Cornell’s conduct around Palestine is a chilling preview of the broader system of state violence, surveillance, and repression that’s tightening its grip across the nation.

“This is exactly why, when we talk about this year’s Slope Day, we must center Palestine in the conversation—not simply frame Kotlikoff’s decision as a violation of campus free speech. Palestine has always been a mirror that reflects the structures of global oppression.

“FREE PALESTINE.”

CORNELL UNIVERSITY, May 9, 2025 – A collection of students, faculty, and community members organize a funeral procession in which protestors carry coffins and body bags draped in Palestinian flags. Following months of repression and control from both university administrators and the U.S. government, organizers felt the need to refocus on the true center of the struggle – Palestine.

**Remarks to rally/funeral procession
in honor of Palestinian Martyrs**

By Russell Rickford

Cornell University, May 9, 2025

“In 1960, at the independence ceremony for the newly liberated Congo, the great African patriot Patrice Lumumba vowed that his people would never forget the wounds that Belgian colonialism had inflicted.

“We have seen our lands seized, Lumumba said.

“We have suffered. We have endured exile. We have lost many brothers and sisters.

“Today, like Lumumba, we pledge to never forget.

“We are the children and grandchildren of the colonial experience. That agony, that torment, is inscribed in our DNA. Our families hail from India, the Dominican Republic, Ireland, Lebanon, Quebec, Ukraine, Colombia, Zimbabwe, and Palestine itself.

“When they ordered us to stop marching and chanting, when they tied themselves into knots trying to justify repression and intimidation, how did they think we would respond?



CORNELL UNIVERSITY, May 9, 2025 – Rallygoers at the symbolic funeral procession honoring Palestinian martyrs.

“I am starting to suspect that no one in Day Hall reads anticolonial literature.

***“In the end, the real horror
is that Palestinians
are merely people.***

“They are neither noble savages nor pure martyrs. Nor are they tragic victims, mindless terrorists, inscrutable exotics, or curious holdovers from a premodern era.

“As the whole world beyond the imperial core knows, they are inexorably, heroically human.

“Today we salute and mourn.

“If we muster any pity, it is for the Western ruling classes and their proxies!

“You have devoted so much energy, over so many years, to convince us that Palestinians do not exist, and that if they DO exist, that they are no more than administrative nuisances to be managed with the cold efficiency of apartheid or the untidy techniques of extermination.

“How spectacularly you have failed!

“You have made us love the Palestinian people even more.

“For Palestinians are no more or less than the Congolese in the 1890s or the Cherokee and

Seminole in the 1830s and 40s or the Kikuyu in the 1950s or the Herero of Namibia in the early 1900s.

“They are dispossessed, displaced, colonized, tortured, slaughtered. They encounter empire in its naked violence. In other words, they are *US*, the exiled, the captive half of the planet, in the moment of our most profound suffering.

“They are the essential human subject, not because they are unique or mystical, but because your technologies of starvation and death have made them so.

“Their names are engraved in our hearts.

“And we will continue to utter those names, even when the colonialists and their apologists remind us, in mass emails or casual hallway conversations, that things would go much easier for us if we did not.

“We choose discomfort over slimy indifference.

“You are on the wrong side of history. You are on the wrong side of history. If this you do not currently understand, you soon will.

“In the final analysis, no nation that rests on the misery and destruction of other nations can prosper. That is why we must replace settler projects and racial mythologies with true Democracy, here in North America and in every other occupied land.

“As Lumumba stated back in 1960, let us commence a new struggle that will lead to justice. Let us end violations of free thought and human rights. Let us institute a peace resting not on guns and bayonets but on equality and brotherhood.

“So peace to Gaza.

“Peace to the Rohingya and the Uyghurs. Peace to Bosnia and Rwanda. Peace to the victims of the Holocaust. Peace to the Philippines. Peace to the Taino and the Arawak. Peace to all the indigenous people of the Americas, Australia, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

“Peace to my enslaved and indentured ancestors in Guyana, South America.

“Peace to the antiracists and anticolonialists of all lands.

“We will never forget your names. We will never forget our wounds. We will not stop until Palestine is free!

“Thank you.”



ITHACA, NY, May 25, 2025 – To commemorate and honor the work that Cornell students put into the last few years of divestment organizing and to distance themselves from the university’s complicity in genocide, the students organize an alternative graduation commencement. Following are excerpts of speeches from the event.

Dr. Juno Salazar Parreñas

"Welcome to all who are marking the achievement of arriving here at this convocation, at this place and time.

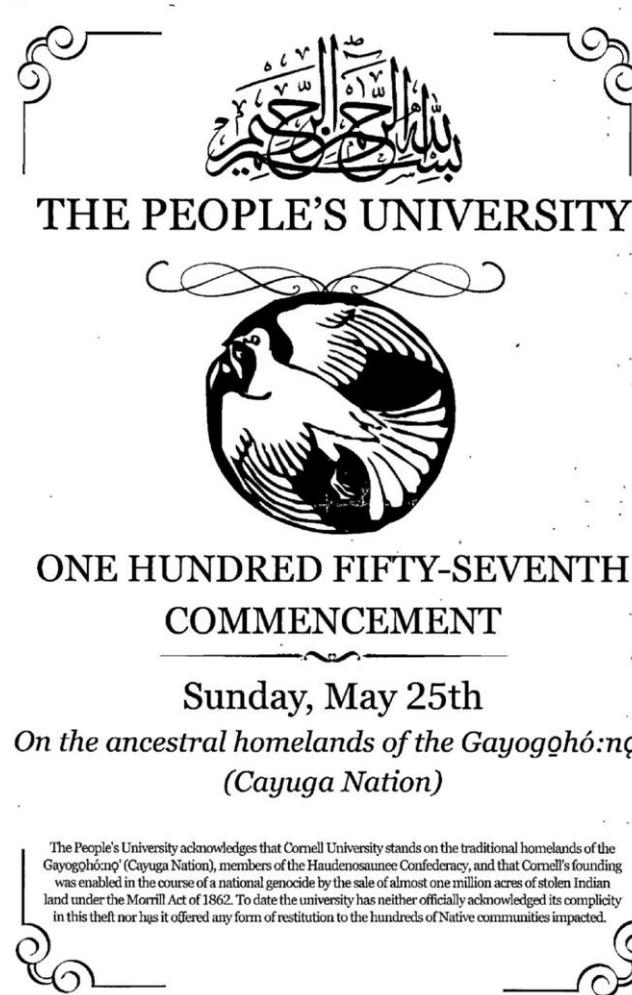
"And welcome to those who are family, friends, and supporters, both quiet and loud supporters, who make all this work possible.

"And welcome to those unable to be here at this moment and yet remain on our minds.

"My own research is about how people care for others when living in systems designed to exploit and destroy lives different from their own and where most people are desensitized to the suffering of those who they think of as different from them.

"Thus I am genuinely honored and humbled to be with you today, when so many of you have taken risks and continue to take risks, simply because you care about Palestinian life amid utterly callous genocide and colonial violence.

"I honor you and stand with you and with my whole heart congratulate you for the work you have done and the aspirations for which you fight."



ITHACA, NY, May 25, 2025 – Program for the People's University commencement.

Samantha De Leon Sautu

"There are men who struggle for a day and they are good.

'There are men who struggle for a year and they are better.

'There are men who struggle many years, and they are better still.

'But there are those who struggle all their lives: These are the indispensable ones.'

"This is a quote by Bertolt Brecht, a German playwright, who like some current students at Cornell, had to flee, in his case, from Nazi Germany in 1933. He ended up in South California, where during the second red scare, also like some current students at Cornell, was subpoenaed by the United States Government. Later, in 1974, Silvio Rodriguez, poet of the Cuban Revolution, used this quote to open one of his songs. In his surrealist song called 'I dream of snakes,' Silvio describes snakes that carry in their bellies whatever can be taken away from love. He kills them, just for a bigger one to appear, with '*much more hell in its digestion*'. Silvio in the song is swallowed by a

snake, when he makes it to its belly, he *'poses, with a verse, a truth'* and the snake is destroyed.

"Every now and then we come across people who continue to face the snakes, not because they know they can win, not because the fight will be over, not because it would earn them a living or avoid them shame or trouble; but simply because of who they are, simply because we must face the snakes, if we are to stay human, simply because they can't continue to be themselves if they watch the snake devour an innocent and standby.

"As an international student, I arrived in the U.S. to several cultural shocks. Perhaps the strongest one was the absence of a popular reaction after mass and school shootings. No streets were flooded with angry people, no strikes were started, no direct action was taken to contain gun sales. Instead, life went on as normal.

"This indifference seemed to be everywhere. Along with the convenient belief that we can't do enough so we might as well not do anything. Along with the acceptance of current injustices in the name of accumulating power or prestige that will in the future allow us to reverse the same injustices *'with the same tools they were built with'*. Everyone seemed to have a reason for letting others be the ones to do what was needed, or to put it off for a future where they'd hold more power.

"Fortunately, that wasn't true, not everyone

was indifferent, not everyone put the risks off. I was fortunate enough to come across the graduates of today. For them, business could not go on as usual; no power strategically accumulated today to save lives in the future was worth more than a life today. For them, the price to be paid to resist was worth it. Their hearts offered them no choice but to pose the truth in the belly of this snake.

"I watched these hearts rise to the occasion. I watched you assume the risks of a principled life. I watched you be the dignity that this institution lacks. And I couldn't feel more gratitude for having witnessed you and having stood by you.

"There is no scientific excellence, no academic rigor that can replace your principles. There is no education worth pursuing if it doesn't lead to love for all human life.

"You were the teachers and the examples to your university. The liberated zone you created amongst yourselves, and in your minds and hearts, is your true diploma, and your true strength. It's the courage, the coherence, the righteousness, the ethical clarity you have shown.

"You are the indispensable ones. And your liberated hearts will beam from here to a Free Palestine. Congratulations."

Professor Russell Rickford

"I have a critique of nationalism, but if I'm honest, I've always coveted a sense of national belonging. Truth is, I have no nation. Born in Guyana, South America, I moved to Northern California with my family when I was five. Like many immigrants, I grew up suspended between two worlds. No longer Guyanese, I was not truly American. At least, it never felt that way.

"I did not share the reverence for the new society that my parents displayed. They were awestruck. Highway overpasses? Are you kidding? In Guyana we barely had paved roads. Add to the equation McDonald's and regular elections, and my parents were hooked. True believers. They were both professors, and my siblings and I enjoyed solidly middle-class childhoods.

"At the same time, the deep racism of the United States disgusted and infuriated me. Once I discovered Marx and class struggle, my oppositional consciousness deepened. My estrangement intensified when I started teaching at elite, largely apolitical campuses. I could not understand my liberal colleagues. Many of them researched and taught progressive social movements but casually accepted—and even upheld—empire and global capitalism in every other aspect of their lives.

"Still, I remained collegial, even affable, at department meetings. I navigated the

polite white supremacy of the academy. Got pretty good at it, actually. I might have continued to lead an anodyne existence as an amiable Ivy League leftist. Then the genocide began.

“For me, like many of you, the social contract shattered. I could no longer function in a grotesque culture of indifference and denial. Gaza had smashed the illusion that, despite everything, the West still had a semblance of a conscience. I experienced the most profound alienation I had ever known. I grew cynical and fatalistic and bitter. Nihilism—the death of meaning, the absence of grace—seemed inescapable.

“Then you built the encampment. In a sense, you saved me. The People’s University embodied our dissent. It signaled the creative possibilities of a crushingly anti-human moment. Late one night, I spent a few, frigid hours at the liberated zone observing a popular assembly. I can’t say I experienced a pure sense of belonging. To be honest, I felt like a middle-aged guy who had stayed up past his bedtime. But those few hours in a folding chair surrounded by the bustle of obstinate youth were totally rejuvenating. I remembered why I began teaching. I fell in love with students again.

“Life after the encampment has been exhausting. Incomprehensible. The system devised new protocols to criminalize dissent. Its bureaucrats conspired to shame and punish independent thought while mouthing pieties.

“Next to your courage, their petty machinations were utterly revolting.

“You regrouped. You endured. But you never quit. You continued to honor the sacred principle that the entire Western establishment proscribed: solidarity.

“In the process, you began to free yourselves. You shed the ethic of endless accumulation and the ossified, mercenary values of technocracy. You rebuilt a radical counterpublic. You became what I have yearned to become my whole life: truly internationalist.

“On the cusp of the dismantling of the encampment, I said that the liberated zone lives in our hearts. The new society that we have already begun to make together survives in our collective dreams. Perhaps we are more powerful than we know.

“As Fanon reminds us, each generation, out of relative obscurity, must discover its purpose and fulfill or betray it. What I am trying to say, clumsily, is that you have accepted a mission far greater than you realize.

“You have been shaped by BLM, the pandemic, and genocide. You have confronted repression and despair while preserving your souls and maintaining a vision of human redemption. You have created prototypes of new, just communities. You have sought new ways of thinking and being. I am grateful for your example, and I am proud to have occasionally labored beside you.

“Struggle, after all, is the highest form of education. By that measure, the class of 2025 stands unmatched. More than any generation in recent memory, you have faced the contradictions of the 21st century. You know, far more than I, that nationalism is an ugly anachronism. You know that the nation-state is a formula for chauvinism and militarism. You know that ALL people are connected. You have cast off the shibboleths of capitalist individualism. You have glimpsed marvelous alternatives. You have walked gracefully amid perversity and gloom. You are ready to embark on a new life. You are prepared to construct the society that our children’s children will inhabit together.

“So go forth. Revive human dignity. It is an honor to call you comrade. We await the bold, just future that we will fashion together. Thank you, God bless you, and good luck.”

Fatou Diaw

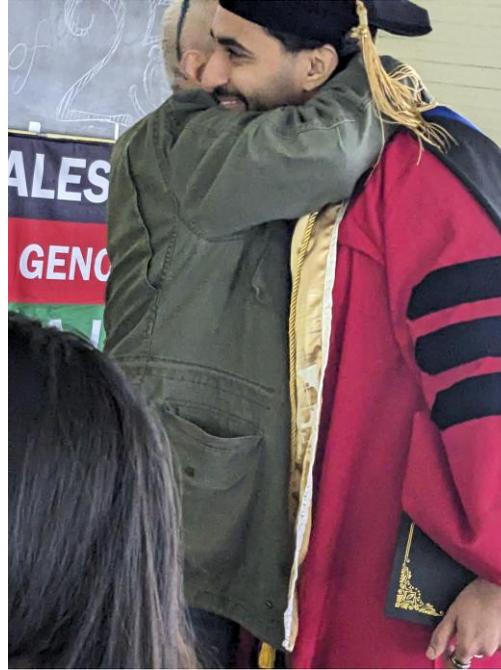
Cornell '25

“When I first arrived at Cornell, I carried more than just suitcases and dreams. I carried the weight of every headline that made my name sound like a warning. I carried the inheritance of struggle—not just my own, but that of my ancestors, my community, my faith. I didn’t know then that this weight would become my strength, that carrying it would teach me the

difference between surviving and truly living.

“To be Muslim in America is to practice resistance in your very breath. Every morning prayer becomes an act of defiance against a world that would rather you disappear. Every hijab worn is a flag planted in hostile ground, declaring: I am here, I belong, I will not be erased. But resistance, I learned, is not always loud. Sometimes it whispers. Sometimes it looks like finding your people in spaces not built for you. Sometimes it sounds like ‘Salaam’ echoing through Anabel Taylor Hall.

“In PAMSA [Pan-African Muslim Student Association], I found my first lesson in collective courage. We didn't just host events—we carved sanctuaries from stone. We made room for the conversations this campus wasn't ready to have. About being Black in mosques that couldn't see past our skin. About being Muslim in classrooms that couldn't



ITHACA, NY, May 25, 2025 – At the People’s University Commencement, facing banners demanding “Ceasefire” and “Free Palestine, End the Genocide, Let Gaza Live.”



separate our faith from their fears. About carrying the weight of Palestine in our hearts, feeling every bomb dropped on Gaza as if it landed in our chests.

“We spoke about it all. The stares. The headlines. The weariness. The grief we carry from lands we might’ve never stepped foot in but feel bound to: Palestine, Sudan, Kashmir, and so many others. We held vigils that this university would rather forget, raised voices for the voiceless while others turned away. Our solidarity became our prayer, our protest became our worship. Because to love Palestine is not political—it is human. To grieve for Gaza is not radical—it is necessary.

“The struggle taught me that courage is not the absence of fear—it’s the presence of love stronger than that fear. It’s continuing to exist, fully and unapologetically, when the world demands your silence. It’s finding beauty in the margins, growing gardens in concrete, building community from scattered seeds.

“This community became my proving ground for this truth. We began fractured, scattered by loss and pandemic, existing as separate islands in an ocean of indifference. But we chose connection over comfort, vulnerability over safety. We built bridges with our stories, constructed homes with our prayers, painted

belonging with our presence. We broke the lie that we don’t belong here. Shattered the myth that our faith makes us dangerous, that our love for Palestine makes us extreme, that our very existence is somehow up for debate.

“The world tried to teach us that we were contradictions: faithful and free, Palestinian in our hearts and American in our reality. But we learned we are not contradictions—we are complications. Beautiful, necessary complications that refuse simple categories. We are the questions this world isn’t brave enough to ask, the answers it isn’t ready to hear.

“To my fellow seniors walking across that stage: remember that your diploma is not just paper—it’s proof. Proof that we can bloom in soil that was never meant to nourish us. Proof that resistance can be tender, that struggle can be sacred, that courage can be quiet. You are walking testimonies that love wins, that community conquers, that we belong everywhere we choose to root ourselves.

“To those still learning how to carry this weight: your struggle is not your weakness — it’s your superpower. Every time you choose authenticity over acceptance, you resist. Every time you make space for your full self, you fight. Every time you love your people loudly, you win.

“Keep Palestine in your prayers and your protests. Keep your ancestors in your ambitions. Keep your community in your acts of courage. We are the echo of every prayer whispered in secret, every tear shed for distant homelands, every hand extended in solidarity. We are the answer to our grandparents’ supplications, the embodiment of their wildest dreams. We are resistance made flesh, courage given voice, struggle transformed into strength.

“And in a world that profits from our division, our unity is revolution. In a system that feeds on our silence, our stories are weapons. In a reality that demands our disappearance, our very presence is victory.

“So let us continue to tend to our truths, to nurture our communities, to resist with the radical act of simply being. Let us carry forward the lessons learned in late-night conversations and early morning prayers, in protests and poetry, in the sacred space we carved from nothing and called home.

*“The struggle continues,
but so do we.
And that, in itself, is triumph.”*



WASHINGTON, D.C., June 8, 2024 – Protesting U.S. aid to Israel



WASHINGTON, D.C., June 8, 2024 – In front of the White House, protesting U.S. aid to Israel.



WASHINGTON, D.C., June 8, 2024 – Protest at the White House.

ITHACA, NY, June 23, 2025 – Sriram Parasurama, a PhD student at Cornell University, was arrested and suspended in October, 2024, for leading the divestment protestors into the career fair. The university stripped him of his access to campus, paycheck, healthcare, and funding. Protestors gather to support Sriram on the day of his university hearing, nine months after his suspension.

**Speech to rallygoers for
Sriram's university hearing**

by Sriram Parasurama

June 23, 2025

"I would like to preface this statement by saying that I, Sriram Parasurama, am in full clarity of mind, emotion, and conscience while I write the following words. Likewise, every act of protest, resistance, and rebellion that I have ever engaged in has been through pure moral impetus.

"Thank you for being present today. The hearing will begin at 11am and the next few days will decide my fate with this university. No matter what decision is made, this pales in comparison to horrors being unleashed by Israel upon Palestine. I do not need to remind you of the atrocities being committed.

"In this dire hour, we must dare to think critically and question the lies we have been told. The promise of a good education and good future are all just a front for this university to line the pockets of their trustees with blood money. Do you truly believe this institution has our best interests at heart? When it is responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of Palestinian children?

"There is not a waking moment that I do not think about Hind Rajab, or about the girl whose body, with her legs blown off, was hanging from a wall, or the little boy shaking from PTSD, unable to speak, or Reem, 'the soul of my soul'. A part of me is broken beyond repair as I bear witness to the most horrendous crimes against humanity committed upon this heartbreakingly beautiful planet.

"As James Baldwin said, 'The children are always ours, every single one of them, all over the globe; and I am beginning to suspect that whoever is incapable of recognizing this may be incapable of morality.'

"So, I beg you to question this university's intentions and incentives and help fight against this immoral institution. This institution that refuses to acknowledge its role in the genocide in Palestine and would much rather punish its own students, than relinquish its profits in death.

“But while this campus may act as our battleground, this is not where the true fight lies. Cornell is but one imperial domino that must be toppled. We must forgo our academic illusions for academia is where activism goes to die. Your research means nothing without action. Our true duty, our only duty, is to fight to our dying breaths to put an end to this genocide and the empires that carry it out. Let this struggle, this rage, this fire, this fight, this fury consume you, as it has consumed me. Become the enemy of the state this university believes us to be, for we have nothing else left to lose. We exist at the imperial core and have the collective power to strike at the head of the snake. As Che Guevara expressed, we North Americans are ‘... lucky. [We] are fighting the most important fight of all. [We] live in the belly of the beast.’ Rage against the collapse of empathy, destroy the pillars of oppression, rip the empire apart with your bare hands. No more petitioning, no more chanting, no more marching. The time for true, direct action is now, withhold your labor, disrupt career fairs, do what must be done. We have to escalate.

“There are Lockheed Martin manufacturing plants in Owego. There is a massive, central drone base in Syracuse. An ICE detention center is two hours away in Batavia. Border Patrol polices the Kanien'kehá:ka people of Akwesasne. Maersk trucks dominate our freeways. The toppling of this empire, the liberation of Palestine, is the key to the liberation of all, and it can start with us, here in upstate New York.

“I have been thinking about fate and destiny a lot recently. What fate will Cornell deliver upon me? What is the fate of this movement? What is my destiny? As clouded and confusing as things have been for me, I have never had so much clarity of mind on one thing. It is not my destiny to remain trapped under the grasp of Cornell. It is not my destiny to be repressed by the state. Whether in this lifetime or the next, my destiny is to heal from my traumas. It is my destiny to see the wildflowers of Tahoma bloom every spring. It is my destiny to see the millions of salmon return to the rivers. It is my destiny to see the bear tracks on the forest floor again. It is my destiny to laugh, cry, sing, and dance with the people I love. This destiny – OUR destiny – is liberation. Just as it is the Palestinians' destiny to free themselves, it is our destiny to be comrades, co-conspirators of the global Intifada.

“Our destiny is to rebuild our connection to the land and become again the stewards of our Mother Earth we were meant to be. Our destiny is to love ourselves and one another, powerfully, radically, and unflinchingly, in the face of great injustice. Our destiny is to nurture a new, just, and beautiful world from the ashes of this empire. Let us carry the names of every Palestinian martyred in our hearts as we forge forward into this new world. And may we be forever inspired by Palestine and the resilience her people have demonstrated through unfathomable hardship.

“Heed my words when I say that I, Sriram Parasurama, make a promise between myself and this Mother Earth, with all that is divine, that I will not rest until this university relinquishes every single share it holds with the merchants of death. And until that day I wish all these immoral, heartless administrators never again experience a moment of joy and peace in their lives, for the students will never cease to fight. I come from a proud and honorable tradition of resistance, and for all the downtrodden, the oppressed, the wretched of the earth, I disrupted the ILR Career Fair at the Statler Hall on September 18, 2024, to put an end to our complicity in genocide. Long live the children. Long live the martyrs. Long live the fighters. Long live the Intifada. Long live Palestine and may we soon topple the American Empire.”

WE RESIST FOR SITI'S LAUGH

by Sharif Muhammed Ewais-Orozco

September 2025

I first learned about resistance at a checkpoint when I was seventeen.

I was holding Siti, my grandmother, upright because an IOF soldier with a rifle thought her wheelchair might hide a weapon.

Her hands were locked around my neck, her new knee could not support her, and she whispered, 'Don't be angry, we will be home soon.'

For four hours after that, they asked me about my family tree.

They let us go but told my grandmother she was forbidden from her own homeland.

She laughed. A laugh that held generations of pain and defiance. A laugh that shook the soldiers but gave me strength.

We resist for that laugh.

We resist because no grandmother should be considered a threat for wanting to go home.

We resist because no teenager should have to become a pillar for their family's dignity in the face of a soldier's boot.

We resist because Zionism is the system that made that moment not an anomaly, but a routine calculation of control.

We resist nihilism because our world needs us to fight, we cannot numb ourselves from the pain, but we also cannot let that pain define us.

We resist not to destroy, but to build a world where everyone's grandmother can go home in peace. Where every teenager can live a normal life.

We resist all forms of oppression.

Join us and resist.

Sharif Muhammed Ewais-Orozco is a Palestinian-Dominican American and was a leader in the Palestine solidarity movement at Cornell University. He was fired from his job at Cornell in 2024 for Palestine solidarity activism. He composed this for you, readers of this book.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank every person in Palestine and Lebanon who appears in this book. You have moved us deeply. We thank each of you who shared your thoughts, time, and experience. We thank each of you who introduced us to others, showed us your work and welcomed us with generous hospitality.

We thank the people in our home community who appear in this book. You inspire us and so many others.

We thank the many Palestinian authors, journalists, organizations, and individuals we've learned from.

We thank the founding members of the 1970s Palestine Solidarity Committee in New York City.

We thank each of you who gave insightful suggestions for this book.

FURTHER READING AND EXPLORATION

Books – some of many

Abu Toha, Mosab	<i>Forest of Noise: Poems; Things You May Find Hidden in My Ear: Poems from Gaza</i>
Abulhawa, Susan	<i>Mornings in Jenin; Against the Loveless World; Every Moment is a Life</i>
Abunimah, Ali	<i>One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse</i>
Abusalim, Jihad; Bing, Jennifer; Merryman-Lotze Mike	<i>Light in Gaza: Writings Born of Fire</i>
Alaqad, Plestia	<i>The Eyes of Gaza: A Diary of Resilience</i>
Alareer, Refaat	<i>Gaza Writes Back: Short Stories from Young Writers in Gaza, Palestine; If I Must Die</i>
Alnaouq, Ahmed and Bailey, Pam	<i>We Are Not Numbers: The Voices of Gaza's Youth</i>
Aranguren, Teresa; Barrilaro, Sandra	<i>Against Erasure: A Photographic Memory of Palestine before the Nakba</i>
Baroud, Ramzy	<i>My Father Was a Freedom Fighter: Gaza's Untold Story</i>
Bhutto, Fatima and Faleiro, Sonia	<i>Gaza: The Story of a Genocide</i>
Darwish, Mahmoud	<i>Unfortunately, It Was Paradise</i>
El Akkad, Omar	<i>One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This</i>
El-Kurd, Mohammed	<i>Rifqa; Perfect Victims - And the Politics of Appeal</i>
Erakat, Noura	<i>Justice for Some: Law and the Question of Palestine</i>
Finkelstein, Norman	<i>Gaza</i>
Johnson, Penny	<i>Companions in Conflict: Animals in Occupied Palestine</i>
Johnson, Penny and Shehadeh, Raja	<i>Seeking Palestine: New Palestinian Writing on Exile and Home; Forgotten</i>
Kanafani, Ghassan	<i>Ghassan Kanafani: Selected Political Writings; The Revolution of 1936-1939 in Palestine; Men in the Sun</i>
Khalidi, Rashid	<i>The Hundred Years' War on Palestine; The Iron Cage; Brokers of Deceit: How the U.S. Has Undermined Peace in the Middle East; Resurrecting Empire</i>
Matari, Jenan and Ghanameh, Aya	<i>Everything Grows in Jiddo's Garden</i>
Mearsheimer, John and Walt, Stephen	<i>The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy</i>
Moushabeck, Hannah and Madooh, Reem	<i>Homeland: My Father Dreams of Palestine</i>
Odeh, Maysa and Betawi, Aliaa	<i>A Map for Falasteen: A Palestinian Child's Search for Home</i>
Pappe, Ilan	<i>The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine; Israel on the Brink</i>
Sabaaneh, Mohammad	<i>Power Born of Dreams: My Story is Palestine; Seconds from Gaza</i>
Said, Edward	<i>The Question of Palestine; After the Last Sky - Palestinian Lives; Culture and Imperialism; Out of Place - A Memoir; Blaming the Victims; Orientalism.</i>
Sayegh, Fayeze	<i>Zionist Colonialism in Palestine</i>
Sayigh, Rosemary	<i>Becoming Pro-Palestinian: Testimonies from the Global Solidarity Movement; Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries</i>
Shehadeh, Raja	<i>Palestinian Walks: Forays into a Vanishing Landscape; A Rift in Time; We Could Have Been Friends, My Father and I; Where the Line is Drawn; What Does Israel Fear From Palestine?</i>
Sokolower, Jody; Introduction by Estes, Nick	<i>Determined to Stay: Palestinian Youth Fight for their Village</i>
Wind, Maya	<i>Towers of Ivory and Steel: How Israeli Universities Deny Palestinian Freedom</i>

To suggest additions to these resources, contact:

Palestine.People.Land.Solidarity@gmail.com

Organizations, news sites, journalists, social media voices – some of many

Abubaker Abed	@AbubakerAbedW	Mohammed El-Kurd	mohammedelkurd.com
Adalah Justice Project	adalahjusticeproject.org	Mosab Abu Toha	@mosababutohapoet (IG); @MosabAbuToha (X)
ADC	adc.org	Muhammad Smiry	@MuhammadSmiry
Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association	addameer.ps @addameer (X)	Muna El-Kurd	@muna.elkurd15 (IG)
Al-Haq Organization	@al_haq_organization	Municipality of Gaza	@munigaza (X)
Al Jazeera	aljazeera.com	Noura Erakat	@nouraerakat (IG); @4noura (X)
Al Quds University	alquds.edu	OCHA oPt	ochaopt.org
Al-Shabaka, The Palestinian Policy Network	al-shabaka.org	October 7 Factcheck	oct7factcheck.com
Asem Alnabih	@AsemAlnabeh	Palestine Festival of Literature	palfest.org
BDS Movement	bdsmovement.net	Palestine in Context Project	palestineincontext.org
Birzeit University	www.birzeit.edu	Palestine Institute for Public Diplomacy	thepipd.com
Bisan Owda	@wizard_bisan1 (IG); @wizardbisan (X)	Palestine Legal	palestinelegal.org
Block the Bombs	blockthebombs.org	Palestine Love	palestinelove.org
CAIR	cair.com	Palestine Museum (Birzeit)	palarchive.org
Code Pink	codepink.org	Palestine Museum (US)	palestinemuseum.us
Diana Buttu	@dianabuttu	Palestine Pixel	@palestine.pixel (IG)
Drop Site News	dropsitenews.com	Palcast (podcast)	@plestia.alaqad (IG); @byPlestia (X)
Electronic Intifada	electronicintifada.net	Plestia Alaqad	tlaib.house.gov
Eyewitness Palestine	eyewitnesspalestine.org	Rashida Tlaib	stand-with-palestine.org
Freedom Flotilla	freedomflotilla.org	Stand With Palestine	stopthewall.org
Hind Khoudary	@hindkhoudary (IG); @Hind_Gaza (X)	Stop the Wall	nationalsjp.org
Hind Rajab Foundation	hindrajabfoundation.org	Students for Justice in Palestine	thedigradio.com
I Witness Silwan	iwitnesssilwan.org	<i>Thawra</i> : 16-part series on 20th century Arab politics	
Ibdaa Cultural Center	ibdaacenter.org	Tech for Palestine	techforpalestine.org
Institute for Palestine Studies	palestine-studies.org	The Mapping Project	mapliberation.org
Institute for the Critical Study of Zionism	criticalzionismstudies.org	The Sameer Project	@thesameerproject (IG); @sameerproject (X)
Interlink Books	interlinkbooks.com	U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights	uscpr.org
International Solidarity Movement (ISM) Palestine	palsolidarity.org	UNRWA	unrwa.org
Jadaliyya	jadaliyya.org	Virtual Return Journey to Palestine (before Nakba)	vrjpalestine.com
Jewish Voice for Peace	jewishvoiceforpeace.org	Wael al-Dahdouh	@wael_eldahdouh (IG); @WaelDahdouh (X)
Makdisi Street podcast	linktr.ee/makdisistreet	Watermelon Pictures	watermelonpictures.com
Medical Aid for Palestinians	map.org.uk	We Are Not Numbers	wearenotnumbers.org
Middle East Children's Alliance	mecaforpeace.org	Writers Against the War on Gaza	writersagainstthewarongaza.com
Mondoweiss	mondoweiss.net		

