

10

Am I Not a Human?

Edited by

Dr. Mohsen M. Saleh
Rana Sa'adah

Translated by

Salma al-Houry

The Suffering of the
Palestinian Worker
under the Israeli Occupation



By

Amin Abu Wardeh

Mariam Itani

Waddah Eid



Al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations

Am I not a Human?
(10)

Book series discussing
the sufferance of the
Palestinian people
under the Israeli
occupation

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English Version

Translated by: Salma al-Houry

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Al-Zaytouna Centre
For Studies & Consultations



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First published 2014

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ISBN 978-9953-572-27-7

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Designed by:

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Printed by:

Chemaly & Chemaly Printing Press +961 1 510385

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Foreword

Al-Zaytouna Centre presents to its readers the tenth book in its series *Am I not a Human?* which sheds light on the various aspects of the Palestinian people's suffering.

This book reviews the history and struggle of the labor movement in Palestine, as well as the direct targeting of Palestinian workers, infrastructure and the agricultural sector. It also highlights the policies of the Israeli occupation aimed at strangling the Palestinian economy, the economic consequences of restricting workers' freedom of movement, and the suffering of Palestinian workers inside Israel and in Israeli settlements. Several factors contribute to the suffering of Palestinian workers; among them, the nature of their targeting and the hazards caused by the Israeli occupation, which has imposed on them conditions that make it impossible for them to establish real institutions to look after their welfare, organize their ranks, and claim their rights.

The Palestinian worker continues to fall victim to an inhumane reality, as he finds himself squeezed between a family that depends on him for their basic needs and an Israeli policy determined to subjugate him and keep him idle.

This book follows the approach of the other books in the series *Am I not a Human?* in terms of addressing both the mind and the heart in a scientific, systematic and documented manner. Stories and photographs help bring to life the suffering of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation.

Al-Zaytouna Centre would like to extend its deepest gratitude to Israa Institution in the UK, for its generous sponsorship of the publication of this book.





Al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations

Introduction

In the past, colonialism and occupation were associated with economic factors, such as exploiting workers and plundering natural resources. However, the twentieth century witnessed the end of this era and the beginnings of a new world order in which great powers maintained their economic hegemony in the world, but simultaneously lost many forms of direct control. The labor movement evolved; and in many countries, the era in which workers were easily exploited has passed, but this is not the case in Palestine.

For in Palestine, matters went exactly in the opposite direction. This is a country that had experienced economic prosperity at the beginning of the twentieth century, due to its strategic location and its sacred religious status. Its people excelled in trade and sciences;





while their institutions, hospitals, schools and factories were at the forefront in *Bilad al-Sham* countries. But unfortunately, the Palestinians fell victim to a British-Zionist conspiracy that plunged them into a life of suffering under occupation. This occupation persists to this day and affects every aspect of their lives, including the economy.

The suffering of Palestinian workers is one aspect of the occupation that rarely gets highlighted. For talk about the labor force is often associated with the science of economics or economic studies and indicators. It is kept separate in discussion from the humanitarian aspect of this large and important sector of society, which is linked, in one way or another, to the other social and factors. Another reason for ignoring workers' suffering is that the occupation continues to inflict suffering in other areas that are inherently more interesting, such as the suffering of women, children, patients and captives; massacres; house demolitions; land confiscation; violation of holy sites, etc. This is despite the fact that Israel continues to target the Palestinian economy and labor force through specific policies, because of the importance of this vital sector.

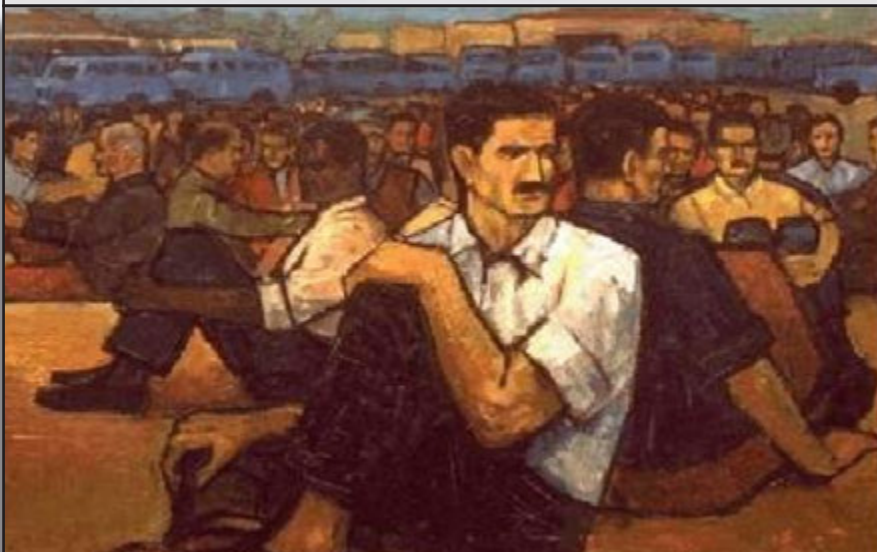
This book attempts to define the various aspects of Palestinian workers' suffering under the Israeli occupation and its practices that do not respect any norm, principle or law. And as in the other issues of this series, it stresses the importance of stopping this suffering.

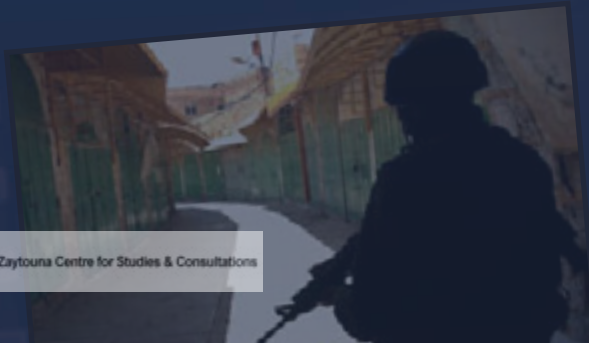


Palestinian workers have a painting of their own. They sit on the floor, and behind them on the horizon their cars and homes are seen. Supporting one another, not allowing an empty space between them, each resting on the back of his colleague, the workers' bilateral seating reflects the strength of the solidarity and harmony between them. This is in light of the worries reflected in the dark colors of the painting and their facial expressions, which, in spite of everything, are solid and straight.

The painting's horizon reflects blockage and obstruction in their lives.

- This painting is by the late and renowned Palestinian artist Isma'il Shammout who dedicated his works to the suffering of his people.





Chapter 1: Informational Preface

It is impossible to speak about the labor force in any society or environment without speaking first about the economy in its broader framework, defined as the sum of the economic systems in a certain region or country, including the labor force, capital, natural resources and economic factors; all of which, on a social level, contribute to the production, exchange, distribution and consumption of goods and services in that region.

The economy is a cumulative continuous process that combines the past and the present, as well as social, cultural, geographical and political realities. It is affected by them and it affects them. That is why the Israeli occupation, which violates all aspects of life, has a marked impact on the economy, including the labor force; especially as it has been coupled with a deliberate and comprehensive policy of targeting the Palestinian economy as a whole.





The economy is usually addressed in relation to main aspects or sectors, such as public and private sectors (governmental or non-governmental), or productive sectors. Economic aspects are dealt with through key indicators that are used in the science of economics. Best known among them are perhaps: Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Gross National Income (GNI), total exports and imports, public and consumer spending rates, unemployment and poverty indicators.

It should be noted that there are many criticisms leveled against these indicators and their real implications; especially when, most of the time, they are issued by official governmental sources. Consequently, countries may resort to hiding much negative information by giving false or altered numbers. They may do so unintentionally because of widespread flaccidity in government, an absence of efficiency, and a shortage of capabilities that affects the performance of many state institutions, especially in third world countries. Furthermore, most of the figures issued by The World Bank or international parties have a purely mathematical value. For it is hard to project them on the reality of the countries concerned, because of the differences in the standards of living, currency, and circumstances from one country to the other.

1. The Palestinian Economy

The term “Palestinian economy,” circulated in terms of demography and geography, covers the economy of 4.5 million Palestinians residing in the West Bank (WB) and the Gaza Strip (GS), according to the 2013 census. Hence, this economy excludes the 1948 Palestinians (those who reside in Israel) and those in the Palestinian Diaspora, whose numbers are estimated, at the end of the same year, to total 1.4 million and 5.865 million persons simultaneously, according to the Palestinian



Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS).¹ Therefore, the above figure represents the economy of only 38.1% of Palestinians and 22% of the Palestinian territories (Palestine's area under the British Mandate).

Hebron's commercial center is empty; goods and belongings scattered; following an attack by settlers in June 1995.



Two main characteristics dominate this economy:

First: It is under an occupation that violates its land, sea and air, and controls its imports and exports. It exhausts its natural resources, at their forefront, soil and water. The Israeli occupation has long been targeting and destroying the Palestinian infrastructure, such as the road, water and electricity networks. It tore the WB apart by establishing a thorny system of checkpoints, crossings and by-pass roads, in addition to the Separation Wall. Moreover, it controls all GS crossings up to the sea. All of the above have made Palestinians feel as if they were living in one big prison.





Furthermore to date, there is no Palestinian currency issued by the Palestinian National Authority (PA). Transactions are carried out in different currencies, notably the American dollar (\$), the Jordanian dinar and the Israeli shekel. Since its inception, Israel has sought to restrict the Palestinian economy in this way, in order to make it subordinate to its economy, providing it with cheap labor and being a market for its products. Israel was keen on denying the Palestinian economy any chance for independence and real development. And so two thirds of Palestinian imports come from Israeli sources, while nine tenths of Palestinian exports go to Israeli markets and establishments. Even Palestinian custom and tax revenues are collected by Israel; and it uses them as leverage to pressure the PA.² All of the above is enshrined in the peace settlement agreements and in the “self-rule” arrangements that resulted from them. Most notably among them on the economic side is the Paris Protocol and the Agreement on Movement and Access and Agreed Principles for Rafah.³

Subsequently, and in this context, it must be pointed out that the Palestinian economy does not reflect the real capabilities of the Palestinian people and the components of Palestinian resources. Rather, it reflects the suffering of this people and the oppression and harassment of the Israeli occupation.

Second: Palestinian demography is characterized by relative fertility when compared with other peoples, notably the Israeli people. However, from an economic perspective, this characteristic becomes a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it has a positive side that lies in providing the Palestinian economy with young human resources, currently one of the only resources available to the Palestinian economy; however, on its negative side, it raises the dependency rate.



The rates of dependency and unemployment vary between the WB and GS. They are higher in GS, especially since the start of the suffocating siege imposed by Israel on it ever since Hamas won the legislative elections of 2006. Dependency grew further in GS following the Israeli aggression at the end of 2008 and early 2009. The GS is considered one of the most densely populated regions in the world; as in its area of 363 km², 1.7 million people live, more than two thirds of them are refugees.⁴ Furthermore, with the exception of natural gas that was discovered few years ago in the sea off GS, which is controlled by Israel, the GS does not benefit from any other natural resources or water.

The Palestinian economy depends mainly on aid and grants that come from abroad. These are mostly conditional on following certain political directions that do not take into consideration Palestinian welfare and circumstances. These conditions engender policies that subjugate the Palestinian people through their subsistence. What makes things worse is rampant administrative and financial corruption in government institutions, with the result that many of these funds and much of this aid go to the wrong place.

2. The Palestinian Labor force

According to a statistic by the PCBS for the fourth quarter of 2013, the number of persons participating in the labor force in the WB and GS was about 1.194 million in the fourth quarter of 2013, i.e., almost 26.5% of the combined Palestinian population there.⁵ Therefore, talk about the suffering of the Palestinian worker is not mere talk about a small group of citizens but rather about that of a quarter of the Palestinian population living in the 1967 occupied territories. This suffering reflects directly on the rest of the population because of the close connection between work on the one hand and dependency, poverty, and education on the other.





Women represent 18.3% of the labor force; while unemployment (for males and females) is estimated at 25.2%. This percentage varies significantly between the WB (18.2%) and GS (38.5 %).⁶

First of May in GS, “the Holiday” of the Unemployed

... Abu Muhammad al-‘Akkah (48 years) lost his job more than three years ago. He was forced to put his kidney up for sale in GS hospitals; so that, upon payment, he could feed his nine children. Abu Muhammad summarized his thoughts about Labor Day by saying, “in Gaza, it is the holiday of the unemployed.” He considers speaking about a holiday there, especially on that day, unrealistic.

► *Al-Khaleej* newspaper, al-Sharjah, 2/5/2008.

According to the same statistic by PCBS for the fourth quarter of 2013, the distribution of the labor force across economic sectors was as follows: agriculture, fishing and forestry 11%; mining, quarrying and manufacturing 11.6%; construction 15.2%; commerce, restaurants and hotels 20.4%; transportation, storage and communication 6%; services and other branches 35.8%.⁷

Palestinian workers suffer the effects of Israeli measures, such as control of movement, the blockade, and violent attacks. This is compounded by the suffering caused by the current schism between the WB and GS, which exacerbates the economic crisis which was already affected by a drop in trade volume, deterioration of the standard of living, price rises, poverty, and rising unemployment.



Adib Abu Sneineh (20 years) an electrician. On 14/7/2005, Israeli soldiers and a settler beat him and his colleague while they were working on a street in Hebron. The two were detained for nine hours and taken to the police station for interrogation.

- ▶ Photo credit: Musa Abu-Hashhash, The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories (B'Tselem), 30/7/2005.

Moreover, tens of thousands of Palestinian laborers work illegally inside the Green Line, without work permits. Estimates by PCBS indicate that there are about 105 thousand Palestinians working inside the line.⁸ In most cases, their illegal status is exploited, and they become subjected to blackmail and evasion of payment of their rights and wages. Added to that, an overwhelming majority of them live under hard and inhumane conditions; as they live in abandoned buildings that lack basic services.

3. Workers' Rights

We connect our definition of “workers” to their being essentially a “vocational” class, whose social, economic and political nature and role vary from one society to another. Accordingly, most of the rights proclaimed by the labor movement fall under the basic principle “no exploitation”; starting with working hours and conditions, fair wages, benefits and incentives, and the formation of unions that defend workers’ welfare. The concepts of workers’ rights has expanded to include other items such as non-discrimination on the basis of color, race, religion or sex, protection against unemployment, and prohibiting child labor.





The International Labor Organization (ILO) was established in 1919 as an agency of the League of Nations, with the aim of protecting workers' rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued in 1948 includes two articles related to workers' rights. These are Articles 23 and 24. Article 23 stipulates the following:

(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection. (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

While Article 24 stipulates the following: “Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.”⁹

With the establishment of labor unions, many of the considerations in the above-mentioned rights were defined, such as establishing a minimum wage, determining maximum working hours, the days of holidays and vacations, overtime regulations, safety and protection requirements in the work environment, etc. Moreover, when the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was issued, all of the aforementioned rights were confirmed.

Even if the talk about Palestinian workers' rights and suffering covers most of the violations of these rights; in essence, this talk focuses on a deeper suffering that prejudices fundamental rights that are wider and greater than a mere demand for “no exploitation.” This deeper suffering goes as far as prejudicing their right to life on a daily basis.



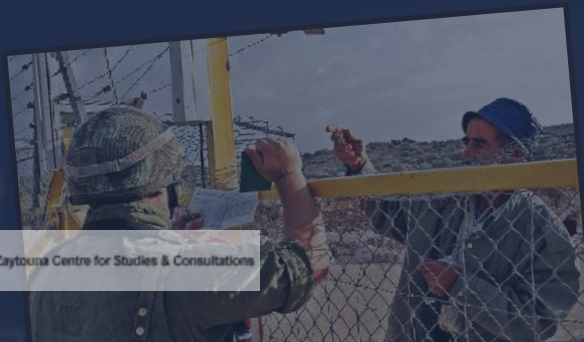
Palestinian workers awaiting their turn to pass through the Hawwara Crossing in the WB.

► B'Tselem, 30/10/2003.



In this respect, the suffering of Palestinian workers is similar to that of Palestinian women, in terms of the huge gap between what their human rights' advocates generally call for and their reality as Palestinians under the Israeli occupation. This occupation assaults them daily, confiscates their lands, demolishes their houses, controls their movements, and denies them access to centers of education, employment and medical care. It forces them to live in a daily whirl of poverty, siege and suffering. Just as Palestinian women do not give as much importance to concepts such as “gender,” “full equality” and “civil rights” as to needing a safe and fair life for themselves and their families, in their land and their homes; the same goes for the Palestinian worker. He endures hardships in order to earn a living for himself and his family. He suffers daily insults and long waits on checkpoints and crossings at the hands of the Israeli occupation forces. He is subjected at any moment to death, confiscation of his land, the undermining of his livelihood, or arrest. Such a worker will not be preoccupied so much with the “priorities” of other workers’ rights, such as equal pay, the right to rest, and to have a system for overtime. Of course, the above does not mean that Palestinian workers are to be excluded from these rights or are undeserving of them. The above serves to inform the reader of the big gap that separates the reality of workers in much of the world, and the reality of those in Palestine.





Chapter 2: The History and Struggle of the Labor Movement in Palestine

In spite of the difficulties it continues to face, the Palestinian labor movement had played a prominent historic and courageous role. The first Palestinian resistance movement against the Zionist occupation took place when the Arab peasants attacked al-Khudaira and Mlabbis (Petah Tikva) villages from which they had been forcibly expelled in 1886.¹⁰ The peasants in the Palestinian countryside were the ones who suffered most from oppression, impoverishment, and expulsion. They were driven out of their lands that were sold to the Zionists by the state or by the landlords. They were the people most ready to revolt and sacrifice themselves, as British intelligence reports also revealed. This working class of farmers and laborers was the pulse of Palestinian revolts that erupted in that period (The uprising of *al-Quds* or *Mawsim al-Nabi Musa* (Prophet Moses Season), 1920; Jaffa Uprising, 1921; the Buraq Uprising, 1929; the 1933 Uprising,





and the Palestinian Revolt 1936–1939). The spark that ignited the 1936 revolt was the protest by Palestinian workers against the British mandate government after it awarded a contract to build Arab schools in Jaffa to a Jewish contractor who refused to employ a single Arab laborer.¹¹

The struggle of Palestinian workers and peasants extended to include civil disobedience movements. This was manifested when, in protest, they refrained from paying taxes to the British government, and declared general and comprehensive strikes. These actions upset the British occupation government and its support of Zionism, and caused it to escalate its repressive practices against Palestinians with the aim of entrenching the Zionist presence of Palestine. We note here that many of Sheikh Ezzedeen al-Qassam followers were Haifa Port workers and quarry workers.¹² Because of their participation in the revolt, Palestinian workers suffered heavy economic losses, as tens of thousands of them became unemployed. In addition, Mandate authorities laid off a large number of Arab workers, among them, for example, Haifa Port workers. This led to a boom in the neighboring Jewish port of Tel Aviv. A report presented by the Arab Workers Association in Haifa to the Bureau of Statistics in Jerusalem estimated the number of unemployed during the second stage of revolt at 60% in some major cities, including Haifa. Added to that, the British colonial government committed hostile acts that included blowing up houses, arson, vandalism, imprisonment, and mass arrests.¹³ And as Britain became preoccupied with World War II (1939–1945), the period 1936–1947 witnessed the peak of economic empowerment of the Zionist presence in Palestine; this paved the way for the 1948 *al-Nakbah* (Catastrophe) and led to the expulsion of Palestinians from their lands and homes.



Regarding the labor union movement, early challenges that Palestinian workers faced prompted them to unite their efforts in organized unions and associations. Thus in 1925, the Palestinian Arab Workers Society (PAWS) was established in Haifa; it had its bylaws, headquarters and branches, in spite of the fact that its membership at that time did not exceed thirty, all were railway workers in Haifa.¹⁴ The establishment of this society, whose main aim was to defend the rights of Arab workers in Palestine, was the beginning of a bitter struggle against three parties, British colonialism, Zionist occupation, and Arab feudal lords and businessmen who were exploiting workers.¹⁵

Palestinians presenting their IDs to Israeli soldiers on one of the gates of the Separation Wall.

► Photo credit: Eyal Dor Ofer, 1/10/2003, <http://www.btselem.org/photos/51?page=3>



In 1930, the first Arab labor conference was convened in Palestine, in the presence of 61 delegates, representing 3,020 members from across Palestine. The conference elected a central committee and issued recommendations; the most important of which was a call for the formation of trade unions throughout Palestine. The conference





also called for enacting special laws and legislation related to the protection of workers; granting Palestine its independence, denouncing Jewish immigration, condemning the decision of the British mandate authorities to grant the right to invest in the Dead Sea Phosphate Project to a Jewish company. The conference evoked many reactions and raised union consciousness among Palestinian workers. The 1936 Palestinian Revolt contributed to the unification of the Palestinian labor movement and the emergence of independent unions of some professions, such as the union of the Post, Telegraph and Telephone workers, and that of Public Works departments. With the influx of peasants to the cities in search of work, the size of the working class grew, and the unions united in the PAWS, which was considered then the most prominent Palestinian labor body. Furthermore, Palestinian workers participated, along with Arab workers from neighboring countries, in the founding congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), held in Paris on 3–8/10/1945. They succeeded in electing Mustafa al-‘Ariss representative of the Middle and Near East in the Federation’s executive committee, to the detriment of the candidature of his challenger, a Zionist Histadrut delegate.¹⁶

Following *al-Nakbah* of 1948, and the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their homeland and their dispersion, Palestine became fragmented into three main parts, the territories occupied in 1948 (Israel); the WB, placed under Jordanian supervision; and the GS, placed under Egyptian administration. The circumstances and conditions of Palestinian workers differed depending on where they were living. It should be noted here that, in this book, we do not talk about the workers who took refuge outside Palestine, and who started life from scratch and suffered terribly in order to secure their living.



Obviously, *al-Nakbah* negatively affected the Palestinian labor movement, as workers scattered. Those Palestinian workers who remained in the occupied territories suffered from arbitrary laws that Israel enacted against them. They were forced either to join the General Federation of Laborers in the Land of Israel, known as the “Histadrut,” in order to obtain a work permit; or were forced to work in secret, under harsh exploitative conditions. The occupation’s strict military laws, which it imposed on the Palestinians, prevented the establishment or the formation of any labor organization, group or movement.

Barbed wire closes the entrance of al-Qasba Market in Hebron’s old city.

- ▶ Photo credit: Yael Handelsman, B’Tselem, 9/5/2004, <http://www.btselem.org/photos/51?page=1>



In the GS, the massive influx of refugees had a deep impact on the Strip with its small area and poor natural resources. The percentage of refugees to indigenous people reached 200%. Unemployment and dependence upon aid also rose. There is no indication that there were labor union activities in GS during that period, as such activities were not allowed during most of Gamal ‘Abdul Nasser’s rule of Egypt.





Extortion

In late June 2009, a laborer called Ishaq Zayed was arrested along with his son Salim. He described what he was subjected to during his detention...

The officer started to pressure and extort them by telling them that they were making 250 shekels (about \$60) daily from their job in Israel. They were actually making no more than 30 shekels (about \$7). He asked them to cooperate with the Israeli authorities and said that the latter would give them more than they were earning in Israel. The officer offered to marry off his son Salim, and allow him to fish anywhere, and at any distance. They offered him all the money he wanted. Ishaq refused and asked them when they would return his boat to him. The other officer responded by hitting him on the shoulder and telling him that if he worked with them, they would return his boat and give him another, bigger one.

The soldiers wondered why Ishaq Zayed would understand that what they were asking for was mere information.

► *Addustour* newspaper, Amman, 27/8/2009.

To the Gazan fisherman Nabil, earning a living has involved pursuit, deprivation and extortion; as Israeli naval officers arrested him, along with a group of fishermen, while they were on the deck of a boat in an area facing al-Waha, north of Gaza. Here the journey of interrogation and extortion began. An intelligence officer offered him money in exchange for his cooperation with them. When Nabil refused, and after hours of trying, he asked permission to use the bathroom; a while later, he was given permission. He was taken aback to find pornographic magazines and nude pictures in the bathroom, so he left in a hurry. Some fishermen mentioned that Israeli intelligence units hold hidden surveillance cameras to record an interview and ascertain the fisherman's mental state. The cameras are also placed in the bathroom to view his response to those pornographic pictures. In case he responded, the serial continues by exposing him to greater temptations by Israeli female soldiers. The aim is to obtain photographs of him in disgraceful positions to be used later to blackmail him.

► *Al-Mustaqbal* newspaper, Beirut, 18/1/2010.



...and He Refused!

A Palestinian Young Man Gets Fired Because He Refused to Serve Tzipi Livni at a Commercial Establishment

University student, Jubran ‘Abdul Fattah, (a 1948 Palestinian) lost his job after refusing to serve the Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni in protest at statements of hers in which she said that the “idea of creating a Palestinian state is to give a national answer to the Palestinians,” adding that the state will include the 1948 Palestinians.

‘Abdul Fattah (22 years old), who is the head of the Arab Students Committee at Tel Aviv University, works as a cashier in one of “Super Pharm” pharmacy chain in Tel Aviv, in order to finance his university expenses. Livni wanted to pay for some goods but ‘Abdul Fattah told her that he was there to serve everyone except her, in protest of her latest racist remarks.

Livni was stunned and embarrassed, while one of her guards quickly called the duty manager at the pharmacy to intervene. The manager immediately suspended ‘Abdul Fattah, and later fired him. ‘Abdul Fattah explained that he felt that he could not have made a different choice as he saw Livni approaching him; knowing that few days previously, she had made remarks that threatened his very existence and that of his people in that part of his homeland.

- ▶ *Al-Ghad* newspaper, Amman, 26/11/2007; and a joint press conference with FM Livni and French FM Kouchner, site of Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18/11/2007, <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2007/Pages/Joint%20Press%20conference%20with%20FM%20Livni%20and%20French%20FM%20Kouchner%2018-Nov-2007.aspx>



As for the WB, which was placed under Jordanian supervision, some branches of the PAWS continued to carry out some activities. However, their effectiveness also waned due to the difficult social and economic conditions that prevailed following *al-Nakbah*, the influx of refugees, and the collapse of the economy that used to be dependent on northern Palestine (the territories occupied in 1948). Furthermore, Jordanian laws used to forbid general union work. So in the early fifties, they shut down the society's offices, thus ending an era of struggle in Palestinian trade union history.¹⁷

It is worth noting here the existence of some labor blocs that refugees had founded in their places of refuge, such as the bloc of railway workers, Haifa refinery workers, and the employees of the British Mandate Authority demanding their financial rights.

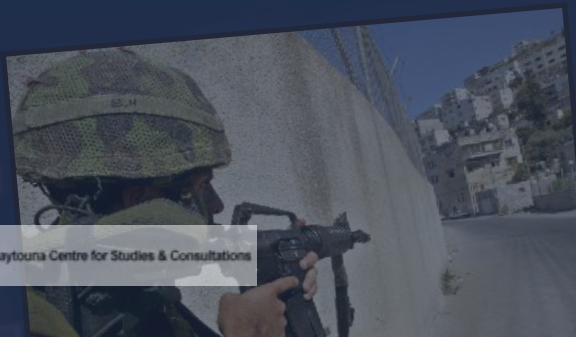
In the early 1960s, the Palestinian labor movement returned to the forefront of public life, paving the way for the start of a Palestinian national action, which brought under its roof Palestinian workers in WB, GS and refugee gatherings. Thus in 1964, the General Union of Palestine Workers WB was founded. It held a conference in GS attended by representatives of Palestinian workers in Egypt, GS, WB, Lebanon, Iraq, Kuwait and Jordan. During that same year, this union officially joined the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and opened branches in the countries and regions mentioned above, in addition to Syria.¹⁸ The union played a key role in national progression; led since then by the PLO. However, its activities gradually diminished, especially following the death of a number of its leaders, notably Husni Saleh al-Khafsh and Zaki al-Sheikh Yasin.



The union still exists to this day, although its activities are confined to purely practical union work.¹⁹ Following the Oslo Accords and the establishing of the self-rule authority, Palestinian union work receded to within the 1967 occupied territories, and suffered in its struggle from the arbitrary practices of the occupation. Of the current Palestinian worker blocs, we mention also the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU) in the Palestinian territories, founded in 1992. Up to 2010, it included 14 trade unions and about 350 thousand workers in WB and GS.²⁰

Finally, it should be stressed that the study of labor's role should not be confined strictly to labor concepts, such as "organization," "union" or "bloc." That is because the workers are a significant part of the Palestinian people, they influence all segments of society and they play a major role in the national struggle. Consideration should be given to the popular movement of workers. For example, during the first *Intifadah*, when 70% of Palestinians working inside Israel, of a total of 155 thousand, refrained from work, they gave an example of how advanced Palestinian social awareness is, as it moves toward imposing a new reality on the conflict. This movement was marked by its popularity and sincerity, and by being out of the control of the Palestinian political establishment. Hence, it proved stronger than the pressures and the dictates of international political preferences, and it truly reflected the will of the Palestinian people.²¹





Chapter 3: Israeli Policies Aimed at Stifling the Palestinian Economy: The Population, the Land & the Resources

Since its occupation of Palestine, Israel has endeavored to stifle any possibility of an independent Palestinian economy. It imposed numerous restrictions and implemented many policies to keep the Palestinians economically dependent; with the aim to see them suffer humiliation while trying to secure their livelihood.

These intentions were clearly revealed on the eve of the 1967 war and the occupation of the WB and GS. The occupation authorities formed an economic committee of the Bank of Israel and the Israeli Central Bureau of



Statistics (CBS), having the objective of linking the Palestinian economy to the Israeli one, forcing the Palestinian areas to be an exclusive market for Israeli goods, a source of labor, and a path to the Arab market.²²

This Israeli policy affected all the components of “economic life” in the WB and GS, as:

- It targeted Palestinian society with its “open door policy,” which aimed at raising the individual’s consumption needs; while at the same time, it diminishes society’s economic and productive capabilities. In 1968, Moshe Dayan was the first to apply this policy that allowed employment of Palestinian workers inside the 1948 territories (Israel). This policy was aimed also at controlling imports and exports and allowing Israeli goods to flow into WB and GS markets at subsidized prices. While Palestinian products were made to face various obstacles, notably exorbitant tax increases in case they attempted to bring them into Israeli markets. Furthermore, the policy prevented Israeli capital investment in Palestinian territories, in order to impose a de facto economic dependence on Palestinians; so that Israel would be their only source of employment and income, as well as the main market for trading.²³



An economy under occupation: Palestinian goods waiting for the Israeli permission to be exported via the Tarkomia Crossing.



Statistics show that in the period 1970–1993, the share of trade with Israel or through it constituted on average more than 85% (90% exports and 70% imports) of the total volume of Palestinian foreign trade. Furthermore, statistics for the same period indicate that more than 35% of the labor force in GS and 25–30% of that in WB were working inside Israel. Work inside Israel constituted about quarter of the Palestinian Gross National Product (GNP); noting here that the quality and conditions of employment were appalling in terms of exploiting the workers' difficult circumstances, as their salaries did not exceed 30–50% of the salaries of their Israeli counterparts. Furthermore, this employment was confined to purely the manual and menial sectors, in particular agricultural and construction work. This resulted in a negative return for most of the educated Palestinian workers, whose need for work forced them to accept such occupations.²⁴

This is better than not working at all, said Muhammad, 35 years old, about his job at a cardboard factory in an Israeli industrial park. He is the father of five children and works six days a week, nine hours a day, for less than the Israeli minimum wage. Nevertheless he feels lucky, as he is able to provide his family with food and send his children to school.

However, at times you find Muhammad silent and afraid; he knows that if he fell sick, was late to work, or asked for a raise, his boss would fire him. This has happened before. The workers who were late to work were punished; they were suspended for a week, or were not paid a week's wages. Rebellious, sick or weak workers are laid off immediately. Muhammad explained that in a minute, his employer can find tens of thousands of workers to fill his place. That is why he leaves his house every morning before five o'clock, does not ask for the minimum wage, works even while he is sick and during religious holidays, and has never had a vacation.

- The Grim Reality of Palestinian Workers in Israeli Industrial Parks, Without Regulations or Rights, site of Arabs 48, 14/4/2007, www.arabs48.com



• Israel has confiscated vast lands in WB and GS and declared them closed military areas. Infrastructure was developed for constructing a network of settlements that would cut the Palestinian territories apart, especially in the WB and around Jerusalem. Thus, the WB became more like a series of islands, isolated from each other by Israeli barriers, crossings, fences and a network of roads used exclusively by settlers; all of which hindered the geographical contiguity necessary for effective economic activity. Furthermore, Israeli authorities kept Palestinian farmers from reaching and utilizing their land.²⁵

An Israeli police patrol in Hebron during a curfew.

► Photo credit: Nati Shohat, site of Reuters News Agency, 24/6/2003.



• During 1967–1994, Israel plundered WB and GS resources: natural resources such as water, and material resources through the imposition of heavy taxes on Palestinians. The quantities of WB waters plundered by Israel were estimated at two thirds of the waters extracted during this period. Furthermore, Israeli WB settlers' per capita water consumption is five times that of Palestinians. As for taxes, they are estimated at 16–48% of the Palestinian per capita income, paid to the Israel Tax Authority. In addition, trade taxes in WB and GS (estimated



at 8% of the joint GDP of the WB and GS) also go to the Israeli treasury instead of the development of the Palestinian economy.

Following the signing of the Oslo Accords, it appeared, at first glance, that these accords would grant Palestinians some independence in the management of their affairs, and would open up new horizons for building their economy. This assumption was based on the economic agreement signed on 29/4/1994 in Paris between the PLO and Israel (known also as the Paris Protocol). Actually, this agreement changed nothing, and in fact increased Palestinian dependency. For until 2000, the authority of the government established in WB and GS to administer Palestinian affairs spread only to 18% of the WB territories (Area A); the rest was placed either under a joint administration with the occupation 21% (Area B) or under Israel's total control, almost 61% (Area C) with Israel having full control of all ports of entry, by land, sea and air. Regarding GS, things were no different; as the full administration given to the PA over 85% of the land was also restricted by the fact that the occupation authorities had full control of all GS ports of entry, by land, sea and air.

On the economic front, a sort of a customs union was established between Israel and the PA. However, the Israeli authorities remained the only ones authorized to collect customs duties then give them to the PA (later they began using them as a means of pressure as they constituted an important source of income for the PA). The latter was given the ability to conclude trade agreements with other countries. However, this ability was restricted to certain goods, identified in advance by Israel and representing no more than 7% of Palestinian trade. Furthermore, all imports and exports from self-rule areas must pass through Israeli checkpoints, and submit to Israeli fees and export import policies. Moreover, this agreement imposed restrictions on





Palestinian labor coming from the WB and GS to work in Israel; thus generating increased labor insecurity including threatening a third of the Palestinian labor force with unemployment.²⁶

Furthermore, the Oslo Accords did not include any clauses concerning Israel's expansionist practices in the WB, such as settlement building, land confiscation and checkpoints. In 1993, the number of settlements in the WB (including the east of Jerusalem) was estimated



A collection of traffic tickets accumulated by a Palestinian taxi driver. Discriminatory enforcement of traffic laws deters Palestinians from using roads that also serve settlers.

► Photo credit: Eliezer Moav, B'Tselem, 6/7/2004, <http://www.btselem.org/photo/5596>



at 159 settlements in which 280 thousand settlers live.²⁷ Following Oslo, settlement construction was expanded and Israel started building its Separation Wall. It continued its practices of land expropriation, plundering of natural resources, and breaking the contiguity of the WB territories, all of which hinder any possibility of building any real Palestinian economy or a sovereign Palestinian state. And according to the statistics of the Applied Research Institute Jerusalem (ARIJ) in 2012, the number of settlements in the WB (including the eastern part of Jerusalem) totaled 196, added to which are more than 232 “unlicensed” settlement outposts, in which more than 656 thousand settlers live. On the other hand, the statistics done by the PCBS in 2012, shows that the number of settlements in the WB (including the eastern part of Jerusalem) totaled 144, in which 563,546 settlers live.²⁸

An Israeli soldier subjects Palestinian workers to inspection at the Gilo Crossing in the West Bank.

► Photo credit: Magnus Johansson, Reuters.





Chapter 4: Direct Targeting of Palestinian Workers (Killing, Injury, Detention & Insult)

Every time Israeli massacres against the Palestinian people are mentioned, the 'Oyoun Qarra massacre is among them. In its facts and details, this massacre embodies the suffering of the Palestinian worker. It was committed by an Israeli settler (a reservist in the Israeli army), and received cover and protection from the Israeli army. Its perpetrator took advantage of the suffering of workers at checkpoints, and of the fact that their freedom of movement was blocked, to set off his racism and shoot them, after he ascertained that they must all be "Arab workers."

The massacre was committed on 20/5/1990, when the Israeli settler and reservist Ami Popper put on his military uniform and headed to a stop for Palestinian workers. He gathered a number of them and asked





them to kneel to be searched. When he was sure that they were all Arabs (all the victims were Gazans), he shot them at random, killing seven immediately and injuring dozens. What aggravated the situation and raised the number of casualties was the interference of the Israeli army to restrain the remaining workers, instead of arresting Popper, who managed to escape.²⁹ These events led to the intensification of the first *Intifadah* which spread throughout the WB and GS.

The Occupation Breaks the Legs of Three Palestinian Workers and Arrests a Fourth

The Israeli occupation forces assaulted and beat four Palestinian workers in the Bethlehem Governorate in the WB. Palestinian sources stated that Israeli forces chased the men when they were on their way to work. They broke the legs of three of them and arrested the fourth. This took place close to al-Walaja, west of Bethlehem. The sources pointed out that the injured were taken to Beit Jala Government Hospital in Bethlehem for treatment, while the fate of the fourth worker remains unknown.

► *Addustour*, 31/12/2009.

Targeting workers takes many forms, most notable among them that which takes place at barriers and checkpoints, commonly known among Palestinians as “the daily death trip.” Furthermore, we must also include incidents of arbitrary targeting perpetrated by Israeli soldiers and settlers (under the protection or cover of Israeli soldiers) of workers going to or returning from work.

In its nature, this targeting ranges from verbal harassment and humiliation to direct targeting with live ammunition, punching and killing.



Regarding the targeting pace, there are no specific figures for targeted workers. However, in the general statistics available since the beginning of *al-Aqsa Intifadah* (September 2000), there are figures that pertain to them, such as the numbers of those killed and injured within a specific profession, such as journalists, paramedics, doctors and fishermen. The same goes for direct targeting of workers' means of sustenance (lands, facilities and infrastructure), limiting their ability to move freely, or to transport essential goods and materials (traffic and closures at crossings, roadblocks and checkpoints).



Matar Khamayseh, a greengrocer and resident of Jenin. On 1/8/2006, soldiers of the Israeli army beat and tortured him near Ramin village in the Tulkarem Governorate.

► Photo credit: Atef Abu al-Rob, B'Tselem, 7/8/2006, <http://www.btselem.org/photos/51?page=1>

As for direct targeting statistics, we shall start with the most general among them, the one related to the overall targeting of the Palestinian people since the beginning of *al-Aqsa Intifadah*, 29/9/2000 and until 31/1/2011. Thus, the number of Palestinians killed by the Israelis totaled 7,406; while the number of the injured was estimated at 51,292. In addition, the number of those who became permanently disabled or mutilated as a result of their injury came to 3,643 individuals.³⁰





Regarding detention, the statistics indicate that, since 1967, the Israeli forces have detained more than 800 thousand Palestinian citizens; 78 thousand of them were arrested after the start of *al-Aqsa Intifadah*. Also, until the beginning of April 2013, there were approximately 4,900 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, living under inhumane conditions, and having their rights as prisoners routinely violated.³¹

As an example, we can cite the report issued by the information office of PGFTU between 1/7/2005 and 30/9/2005. The report indicates the killing of four, the injury of 15, and the detention of 1,084 workers during this period. What is striking is the rise in the number of specific incidents mentioned in the report and based on statements from workers and witnesses. For example, on 2/7/2005, Israeli soldiers tortured Fu'ad Ibrahim Rayyan, a taxi driver, and caused him serious bruises and contusions. The soldiers were not satisfied with harassing him, they deliberately urinated on him, forced him to undress completely, beat him with rifle butts and clubs, and they kicked him in the sensitive areas of his body. This attack continued for almost an hour, in the midst of the soldiers' laughter and mockery; they then released him while shouting death threats at him.³²

On 22/7/2005, the Israeli forces attacked a number of street vendors on the outskirts of al-Ram town north of Jerusalem, and subjected them to severe beatings and insults. They confiscated their carts and stole their merchandise; applying an Israeli policy that resulted in doubling the assaults and provocations against street vendors.³³



In December 2002, in Hebron, Israeli soldiers beat Wa'el Abu Rmeileh and forcibly cut his hair inside the barbershop in which he worked.

► Photo credit: Musa Abu Hashhash, B'Tselem, 23/12/2002.

The next day, Israeli occupation forces, backed by a group of settlers, attacked agriculture relief workers while doing reclamation work in al-Khader village on lands belonging to the farmer 'Imad Isma'il Sabih. They confiscated his agricultural machinery and moved it to an area about 500 meters away where they tampered with it. The transgressions were not confined to that, as a settler named Hanania seized more than eight agricultural donums, and established on them a motor home. These acts consolidate the policy of settlement building and seizing villagers' lands by force and then denying them access to them.³⁴

On 26/8/2005, a number of Jewish extremists attacked stores in the Chain Gate Street, which leads to *al-Aqsa* Mosque in the Old City. They acted under the protection of Israeli soldiers and police, and committed criminal and provocative acts.³⁵





This evidential narrative reflects the diversity of these violations, and the fact that their perpetrators are not always Israeli soldiers; they are sometimes settlers protected by the soldiers; they are equally guilty.

The following is a detailed account of the suffering of certain working sectors that are a direct target of the occupation:

1. Paramedics and Medical Personnel: The health sector is considered the backbone of society's health and safety. Under the occupation and repeated Israeli attacks on the Palestinian people, there is an increased responsibility on those working in this sector; given the aforementioned huge numbers of dead and injured. Added to that, there are abusive practices such as curfews, restriction of movement, even that of imports and exports, including medical supplies and materials, preventing the arrival of paramedics and ambulances or even targeting them. All of these are deemed serious violations of the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions; in this case, Protocol I, Article 85. There is also Article 12, pertaining to the protection of medical units, which says in its first paragraph that "medical units shall be respected and protected at all times and shall not be the object of attack." Then there is Article 15 that stipulates that "civilian medical personnel shall be respected and protected," and that the "occupying Power shall afford civilian medical personnel in occupied territories every assistance to enable them to perform, to the best of their ability, their humanitarian functions." It also stipulates that "civilian medical personnel shall have access to any place where their services are essential, subject to such supervisory and safety measures as the relevant Party to the conflict may deem necessary."³⁶





This is the ambulance in which paramedic Mahmud Zaqt was killed. On 1/3/2008, he was evacuating the wounded in the area of al-Kashef Mountain, east of Jabalia. He was killed when an Israeli army helicopter fired a missile at him.

► Photo credit: Khaled 'Azayzeh, B'Tselem, 6/3/2008, <http://www.btselem.org/photos/59>

In contrast, the Israeli authorities hinder the work of Palestinian medical crews on flimsy security grounds; rather in many cases, they target them directly. Thus, since the beginning of *al-Aqsa Intifadah* and until the end of April 2007, the number of medical crew members and paramedics killed totaled 25 individuals, according to estimates by the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR). We add to them at least seven individuals killed during the period 27/12/2008–13/1/2009, according to the same center; raising the total killed to at least 32 individuals. As for the injured, their number from the end of September 2000 and until April 2007 was estimated at 510 persons. The following reports do not mention specific numbers of the wounded among medical crews, the number of ambulances that were targeted, since the beginning of *al-Aqsa Intifadah* and until 2011, or the targeted hospitals and health care centers. Yet in its report on the period 1/1/2005–30/4/2007, it mentions for example that more than 13 ambulances and medical conveyances were heavily damaged after being





exposed to gunfire and the shrapnel of rocket-propelled grenades from Israeli forces. Moreover, during the same period, more than 20 field and fixed hospitals, clinics, dispensaries and health centers were subjected to raids, destruction, sabotage and serious damage.

The center's reports draw attention to the fact that these figures of the killed and injured focus only on medical crew members who were killed while carrying out their humanitarian duties, such as evacuating victims, transporting the wounded and administering first aid to them. The reports did not mention, for example, Dr. Thabit Thabit who fell victim to political assassination on 31/12/2000; Mahmud Zahaykeh, a radiologist who was killed in cold blood at the hands of Israeli forces on 18/5/2002; or the nurse, Ahmad 'Innab, who was killed by Israeli soldiers while he was on his way home from Rafidia Hospital where he worked. It should be noted here that all health institutions in WB and GS display their identity clearly and distinctly, via banners in Arabic and English and flags raised on top of their highest buildings.³⁷

Reports by the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) show more clearly the magnitude of direct Israeli targeting of paramedics and medical crews. These reports indicate that, during the period 28/9/2000–30/9/2009, 17 PRCS crew members were killed, while 2,424 were wounded, and 87 were detained. Direct attacks on the Society's crews and ambulances during the same period were estimated at 476 attacks, the number of damaged ambulances 191; added to them 34 ambulances completely destroyed. Cases of hindrance and obstruction of passage were estimated at 3,368 cases; which brings the total number of violations during this period to 4,415.



The Society's annual report for 2010 monitored 161 new violations; most were cases of hindrance and obstruction of passage, which raises the total violations, since the beginning of *al-Aqsa Intifadah* and up to the end of 2010, to at least 4,576 incidents.³⁸

Some probes into the killing and wounding operations against members of medical crews and teams at the hands of Israeli forces indicate that, most of the time, they were not only due to the excessive use of indiscriminate force or to the fact that these soldiers do not differentiate between military personnel on the one hand and civilians and medical missions personnel on the other. These operations had rather the clear aim of intimidating medical mission personnel and preventing them from providing any kind of health services and treatment for the sick and wounded.³⁹ These violations are not merely attacks on the right of paramedics and medical crews to practice their profession; they also affect the right of many Palestinians to receive medical care; thus causing deterioration in the conditions of many of the sick and wounded, some of whom bleed to death. The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories (B'Tselem) estimates the number of Palestinians killed during the period 29/9/2000–31/5/2011, as a result of being denied medical care, at about 80 individuals.⁴⁰

Reports by international organizations, associations, and agencies concerned with Palestinian health issues contain accounts of dozens of violations against health workers. For instance, Khalid Abu Sa'dah (43 years old), an ambulance driver, recounted how an Israeli tank fired a shell directly at his car while he was administering first aid to the wounded in Beit Lahia on 4/1/2009. The outcome was ten people





killed and a number of others injured, among them the two paramedics accompanying him; one of whom died later of his wounds.⁴¹ As for the paramedic Ahmad ‘Abdul Bari Abu Foul (25 years old), he lived for a long time with the shock of the horror he experienced on 12/1/2009. Israeli forces targeted ambulance crews as they were evacuating victims from a building in GS. His colleague, Dr. ‘Issa Saleh, was hit and his head was severed from his body; with the detached head slamming into Ahmad.⁴²

2. Targeting Journalists: Journalistic duties entail revealing Israel’s ugly practices and multiple crimes; so Israel has resorted to widening the scope of these practices to include targeting journalists. This is in spite of the fact that Article 79 of Protocol I additional to the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, stipulates that “Journalists engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered as civilians...” and that “They shall be protected as such under the Conventions and this Protocol, provided that they take no action adversely affecting their status as civilians.”⁴³



The wrecked Jeep of journalist Fadel Shana‘ah, killed by the Israeli army in GS on 16/4/2008.

► Photo credit: Muhammad Sabah, B’Tselem, 12/5/2008.



...The arrogant officer leading the military squad deployed in the area was inciting violence against press crews. While journalist Hazem Bader was taking photographs, the officer forced him to stop filming. He hit him directly on the nose with a wooden stick, causing a superficial wound there. Then the same officer, accompanied by some of his soldiers, kicked Hazem on his left foot, causing another superficial wound, afterwards the officer threw a stun grenade between Hazem's legs. He fell to the ground due to the beatings and the grenade's fragments. Despite the fact that he asked for an ambulance and his colleagues tried to assist him, the officer told Hazem that he was a doctor and that he refused to allow him to receive treatment. In fact, Hazem remained lying on the ground for about 30 minutes before the officer and his soldiers left the scene and allowed the ambulance crew to take him and his injured colleague 'Abdul Rahim Qusini to al-Ahli Hospital in Hebron.

This is the testimony of journalist Hazem Bader (Agence France Presse (AFP)). Injured with him in this same incident were 'Abdul Rahim Qusini (photographer, Reuters News Agency), 'Abdul Hafeez al-Hashlamoun (photographer, European News Agency) and Muhammad 'Ayyad 'Awad (photographer, B'Tselem); detained with him also was the journalist Iyad Hamad (photographer, Associated Press (AP)).

- The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), *Silencing the Press: 13th Report on Israeli Attacks Against Media Workers in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) During the Period 1/9/2009–31/10/2010*, PCHR, 16/12/2010, http://www.pchrgaza.org/files/REPORTS/arabic/pdf_jour/report13journalist.pdf (in Arabic)





Israeli forces do not refrain from targeting journalists directly. This targeting takes many forms that can be summarized as follows: crimes that violate journalists' right to life and personal security; exposing journalists to beating and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment; arresting and detaining journalists; denying access to journalists to certain areas or covering certain events; confiscating equipment and press materials, bombing or raiding press headquarters and tampering with their contents; preventing journalists from traveling abroad; and raiding homes of journalists.⁴⁴

Since the outbreak of *al-Aqsa Intifadah* on 28/9/2000 and until 31/10/2010, PCHR has documented 1,251 cases of assault on the press, most prominent among them 11 murders; 366 other incidents of opening fire, causing various injuries to 270 journalists; 253 cases of journalists being exposed to beating, insult and inhuman and degrading treatment; 298 cases of arresting and detaining journalists; 120 cases of keeping journalists from doing their job and covering events; 81 cases of confiscating press cards, equipment and materials; 94 cases of bombing or raiding press headquarters and tampering with their contents or shutting them down; 12 cases of preventing journalists from traveling abroad; and 16 cases of raiding homes of journalists.⁴⁵

Because these violations are so numerous that we cannot mention all their horrific details, we cite the following testimony of Ja'far Shtayyeh, a Palestinian photojournalist with Agence France-Presse (AFP) about the killing of Nazih 'Adel Darwazah (46, married with four children), a cameraman working for Palestine TV and Associated Press (AP):



About 7 a.m. on 19/4/2003, a group of us journalists were in downtown Nablus covering confrontations between Israeli forces and Palestinian students. We took cover from the soldiers' flying bullets in the entrance of a house. When the area was clear of stone-throwers, Darwazah went up the stairs leading to Nablus municipal public library, trying to reach a Palestinian child lying wounded on the ground. He found himself face to face with an Israeli tank at the top of the stairs; he was only a meter away from it. He started filming the wounded when one of the soldiers came out of the tank and pointed his gun towards him. Darwazah shouted "Press," his voice clearly audible to the soldier, and started retreating. The soldier deliberately fired a shot, hitting him in the head near his left eye. His skull was torn apart and what was in it fell to the ground; he died instantly. It is worth mentioning that Darwazah was wearing a jacket clearly inscribed with the word "**PRESS.**"⁴⁶

It should be noted that all the cases mentioned above (1,251) involved journalists who were targeted while on the job. They do not include the overall cases of journalists killed, injured or detained. These statistics are based on testimonies by victims, witnesses and field investigators, and confirm beyond any doubt that these violent incidents were intentionally committed, and were accompanied by excessive and unjustified force; there are tens if not hundreds of other undocumented attacks.⁴⁷

3. Targeting Farmers: It seems at first glance that personal and direct targeting of farmers is less important than targeting journalists and paramedics for example, especially in the absence of accurate





statistics and of follow-up information on targeting instances concerning them. The targeting of farmers is mostly focused on preventing them from reaching their lands and harvesting them, and destroying their crops in one way or another, even by burning (wheat fields and olive trees). This does not mean that they are excluded from direct personal targeting, the same as other labor groups. As for example, on 28/8/2005, the farmer Lutfi Ibrahim Shtayyeh (32 years old), from the village of Salem, received contusions and bruises on different parts of his body at the hands of Israeli soldiers making their rounds nearby. He was heading to his village when four Israeli soldiers stopped him; they threw him to the ground and beat him up. One of them drew a knife and placed it on his neck, threatening to kill him. This was not the first attack against Shtayyeh; as four years earlier, he was subjected to attack, and 140 heads of sheep were stolen from him.⁴⁸

The importance of talking about targeting farmers lies in the fact that many of the measures mentioned above are used to target them specifically, in order to discourage or prevent them from working their lands. Israel recognizes that working and cultivating the land heightens the farmer's attachment to it and his resolve to never abandon it. Thus, the Palestinian farmer could be at the forefront of the struggle with the occupation, the struggle over the land; consequently, he suffers substantial losses that threaten his livelihood.⁴⁹

A report by PGFTU indicates that the agricultural sector suffers the largest share of Israeli violations and abuses, ranging from burning



and bulldozing agricultural lands, confiscating them and seizing them by force, to demolition of prefabricated shelters or concrete block shelters with zinc roofs, killing cattle and sheep, uprooting trees and poisoning the land. This is a policy that aims at destroying the agricultural sector and entrenching Israel's settlement policy and confiscation of lands.⁵⁰

Statistics estimated the total area of confiscated lands during the period 29/9/2000–31/1/2011 at more than 274,400 donums; the total bulldozed areas during the same period at 83,279 donums; while the number of uprooted trees was 1,193,220 trees.⁵¹

4. Targeting Fishermen in GS: The fishing sector is historically an important one in GS. Its importance increased with the tightening of the Israeli siege, which caused a rise in unemployment and poverty rates, and forced many Gazans to resort to fishing. In August 2009, the total number of workers in the fishing sector in GS came to about 8,200, providing for about 50 thousand people. Fishermen in GS are subjected to Israeli violations that range from shootings, arrests, confiscation of boats or fishing gear, or their destruction. The Israeli army controls GS waters and prevents its fishermen from sailing further than three miles from its shores; this adds to its people's misery. This area, which is poor in fish resources due to its proximity to the shore, has exhausted its wealth because of the tremendous demand. It should be pointed out that the Oslo Accords give GS fishermen a distance of 20 miles from the shore in which to operate.⁵²





The boat of Abu Lu'ay Shahateh (in his forties) was hit by shrapnel from an Israeli shell. Repairing it would cost him a huge sum that he cannot afford. Shahateh miraculously escaped from certain death, as firing on fishermen is incessant. After the incident his family insisted that he quit fishing and he complied... describing himself as a sailor who cannot go to sea, a fisherman who has not tasted fish since. He added that he feels frustrated when he sees schools of sardines swimming in front of his eyes, but he is unable to throw the net to catch them. He is now afraid of throwing the net lest a missile or a bullet be thrown at him.

► *Assabeel* newspaper, Amman, 2/4/2009.

The Israeli occupation targets GS fishermen almost daily, on the pretext that they “had exceeded the permissible limits.” Moreover, fishermen are subjected to prosecutions and harassment in various ways including arrests and interrogations. Many of them are pressured into working for Israeli intelligence, seeking to obtain from them information about the resistance.⁵³ While accurate and comprehensive statistics of these practices are absent, the head of the fishermen’s union says that Gazan fishermen are Israel’s most targeted group. They are subjected to arrest, beating and humiliating interrogation; then they get released, but their fishing boats are confiscated.⁵⁴ Arrests are accompanied by degrading practices such as stripping them naked, verbal abuse and insults in various forms.⁵⁵ Many Gazan fishermen describe their profession as that of death, especially following the war on GS as,



according to one of them, “Rarely a night passes without them shelling and firing rocket-propelled grenades toward our boats.” Fishermen are often subjected to prosecution, arrest and detention for hours; and most of them, if not all, had their fishing gear confiscated or destroyed.⁵⁶



On 16/8/2008, Israeli navy soldiers kidnapped the fisherman ‘Abdul Karim al-Nahhal from his boat in Gaza and took him to the Port of Ashdod for interrogation. They then returned him to the Erez Crossing, wearing an Israeli army uniform. His boat remained at sea and was lost.

► Photo credit: Muhammad Sabah, B’Tselem, 21/8/2008.

A fisherman describes one of these practices as follows:

Some boats draw near and circle around the moored boats, ripping apart the fishing nets. At the same time, Israeli soldiers shine bright lights on fishermen’s faces and launch a great number of flash bombs, dispersing schools of sardines, clustered around the lights that the fishermen turn on the water.

Another fisherman adds that sometimes Israeli boats move away several miles to the west, in order to lure the fishermen working to earn





their living. No sooner do the fishermen start moving than the boats, the Israelis stun them by firing bullets and missiles at them.⁵⁷

The many painful experiences related by fishermen prove that these practices are not the exception but the rule. As on 28/8/2009, the media reported the killing of Palestinian fisherman Muhammad al-‘Attar (25 years old) after a shell was fired at him, severing his head from his body. This incident took place when he was sailing in a small boat, to go fishing north of GS. His companion on the boat was moderately injured.⁵⁸ A few days later, Palestinian fisherman ‘Umar al-Hubail survived a similar incident when the artillery of Israeli boats targeted him, hitting his boat and burning it. He narrowly escaped death by jumping from his boat and swimming toward land.⁵⁹

As for the fisherman Hassan Abu Sultan (37 years old), he said:

On 28/8/2008, I went fishing with a group of fishermen. After we threw our nets in the water, Israeli boats headed toward us... they ordered us to row north until we reached the area off limits for fishing. There, the officer told us “you are fishing in the prohibited zone.” Thus they find a pretext to arrest us. They fired close to us, forced us to strip and swim to an Israeli naval boat. We went up to the boat; they tied us up, blindfolded us and took us to the Port of Ashdod... they brought me into the interrogation room where two officers and a female conscript were present. They offered me money and offered to buy me a new boat in exchange for my cooperation with them and providing them with information about Hamas and the resistance. I told them I am a millionaire and will not cooperate with them no matter what!



Abu Sultan, who is the father of four, ended his story by saying that the Israeli Mossad blackmail the fishermen of GS by threatening their livelihood; because the Israelis know that they have no other means of subsistence.⁶⁰

In a similar story, the fisherman Abu Rashad recounted how he was arrested at sea along with a group of fishermen. They were subjected to beatings, insults and torture. The Israelis bargained with them over allowing them to go to sea in exchange for information about the resistance. And although he ended his narration with a sigh, he stressed that the Israelis want them to become Israeli agents, selling their compatriots in exchange for the livelihood of their children. However, he added that the Israelis' attempt has failed; for none of them will yield to Israel's blackmail and cheap tactics.⁶¹





Chapter 5: Direct Targeting of Infrastructure and the Agricultural Sector

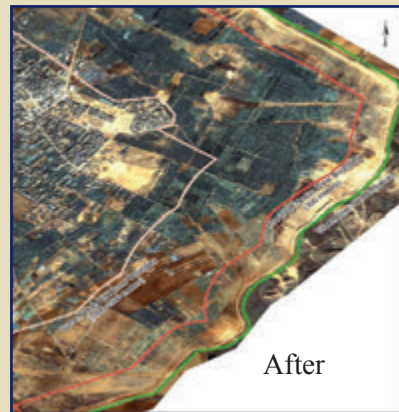
This subject represents another key aspect of our research into the suffering of Palestinian workers. Targeting the infrastructure and the agricultural sector directly is another facet of a deeper targeting that has the objective of paralyzing their economic activity. Thus, the Israeli authorities intentionally target, for example, means of transportation, communications, and electricity and water facilities. Their aim is to cripple the Palestinians' ability to endure and resist; especially during Israeli attacks, invasions and incursions. Israel makes no distinction in its targeting of civil and industrial installations, and has no qualms about it, despite the fact that, according to the Fourth Geneva Convention, targeting them is a war crime.⁶²





We must recall here perhaps the most striking example in this context, that of the kinds of targets in the war on Gaza, which started on 27/12/2008. The total value of the direct losses in infrastructure and buildings due to the war was estimated at more than \$1,224 million. In addition, the occupation forces destroyed 1,500 factories, shops, and facilities; ten power plants; fifty kilometers of roads, ten water and sewer lines; four petrol stations, two bridges, in addition to tens of schools, universities, mosques, municipal headquarters, local bodies, security and police headquarters, and tens of thousands of residences.⁶³

*Land in the Area of Beit Hanoun in GS in 2003 and 2008
(Areas Subjected to Widespread Israeli Burning and
Razing Operations)*



- Source: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – occupied Palestinian territory (OCHA-oPt), 19/10/2010, http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_gaza_beit_hanoun_agricultural_land_2003_2008.pdf



In GS, the total area of agricultural lands leveled by Israeli forces since the beginning of *al-Aqsa Intifadah* and until 9/4/2011 was 48,052 donums, according to estimates by PCHR.⁶⁴ The Israeli war on GS beginning on 27/12/2008 included large-scale land leveling operations, destruction of greenhouses, rooms and warehouses of farm tools and equipment, irrigation systems and wells. This caused losses to the agricultural sector in GS estimated at \$170 million. This is the sector in GS that provides jobs for more than 40 thousand citizens, and food and subsistence needs to approximately one quarter of its population.



A Palestinian farmer stands sadly surveying his land after Israeli settlers cut down his olive trees.





In May 2010, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs-occupied Palestinian territory (OCHA-oPt), with technical support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), issued a report on how the GS agriculture sector struggles to survive. It stated that, as of June 2009, a total of 46% of agricultural lands in GS was assessed to be “inaccessible or out of production,” either owing to destruction of lands during “Cast Lead” or because they lie within the “security buffer zone” determined by the occupation and to which access is denied. About one third of GS arable lands (29%) are situated inside the Buffer Zone, in which most of the GS animal production is concentrated. The residents of these areas are considered among the poorest and most victimized citizens in GS.⁶⁵

According to the same source, Israel’s war on GS on 27/12/2008, “Operation Cast Lead,” caused major damage to 17% of cultivated lands, due to bulldozing and chemical contamination. Environmental experts predict a subsequent change in agricultural biodiversity. Another OCHA-oPt report, published on August 2010, reported that since 2005, the occupation has demolished 305 water wells, 197 chicken farms, and 377 sheep farms, having an estimated value of \$15.644 million. Added to them is the destruction of cultivated areas of 24,413 donums of agricultural crops, with an estimated value of \$260.012 million in GS alone.⁶⁶ Most crop losses are in flowers, berries and strawberries, famous exports of GS to Europe. Farmers have become forced to see them wasted because of the blockade and the restrictions on exports.



After Preventing Them from Harvesting Their Crops, Occupation Forces Burned Those Crops!

Witnesses have said that Israeli forces, along with a number of bulldozers, entered the northern areas of the town of Beit Hanoun, in the far north of GS. They immediately set fire to more than 150 donums of farmers' lands, planted with wheat and barley. According to witnesses, the military vehicles withdrew immediately, after burning the agricultural crops that the farmers were preparing to harvest.

Witnesses said that the dryness of these crops helped the fire spread quickly. Palestinian sources said that the farmers made contact a while ago to get permission for harvesting these crops; but they failed, because Israel refused to let them enter these agricultural lands that are adjacent to its borders.

The farmers had made requests to OCHA and to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to be allowed to reach their crops. But their hopes evaporated after Israeli soldiers burned their entire crops.

► *Al-Quds al-Arabi* newspaper, London, 18/7/2009.

As for the WB, a report by PCHR states that, in 2009, Israel confiscated or leveled about 6,540 donums of its lands. These statistics do not include closed areas, in particular that of the Jordan Rift Valley, considered the most important land reserve in the WB. During the





same year, 14 thousand olive trees in WB were attacked; which varied between uprooting, cutting, burning and leveling. Thousands of farmers in the WB were harmed by the Separation Wall. They were prevented from reaching their lands and crops on the other side of the Wall, unless they obtained special, extremely complex Israeli permits. Furthermore, the Wall was built on one of the most fertile agricultural areas in the WB.⁶⁷ The Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture estimates the losses in the agricultural sector in WB due to the Separation Wall at more than \$36.9 million, which vary from direct losses due to the destruction of economic resources, to indirect losses, such as those of agriculture production in isolated areas, to damage or destruction of farm roads, lost job opportunities, and losses in water lines and tanks.



‘Abdul Latif ‘Awdah from al-Dab‘ah village stands close to his land located behind the Separation Wall. Since this Wall was built, he has become obliged to travel 22 km to reach his land, located near his house, and is subjected to the abuse of soldiers at the Wall’s gate.

► Photo credit: Kareem Jubran, B’Tselem, 20/7/2005, <http://www.btselem.org/photos/10>



The on-going Israeli practices, restrictions and attacks on farmers led to a decrease in the value of agricultural activity in Palestine, and to a drop in its contribution to the economy from 52% in the sixties to 25% in the nineties of the last century, to about 9% at the beginning of the third millennium.⁶⁸ Moreover, Israel's aggressive practices, such as leveling trees and vandalizing greenhouses, led farmers to turn to planting "rain-fed crops, which demand less care but have better chances of survival. However, the ability of farmers to harvest these crops is limited and the income is only a fraction of the income of the original crops."⁶⁹



Farmers from GS destroying their tomato crop planted for export, in protest against the closure of the Karni Crossing by Israel.

- Photo credit: Ibrahim Abu Mustafa, Reuters, 2/2/2006.





Chapter 6: Economic Consequences and Workers' Suffering Arising from Restricting Their Freedom of Movement

Israel controls Palestinians' daily life by controlling their ability to move about, both in WB and GS; thus adding to their suffering as human beings and hurting them economically. In many of its reports, the World Bank has mentioned that the system of closures in the WB and the checkpoints and blockage of GS are some of the main reasons behind the weak and paralyzed economic performance in WB and GS. In this study, we will focus on the economic consequences and workers' suffering arising from Israel restricting their freedom of movement; first: in GS (crossings and siege), and second: in WB (barriers, the Separation Wall and bypass roads).





Palestinian workers sleeping at dawn on the sidewalk, close to the Bethlehem Crossing, awaiting its opening to enable them to pass through, on 21/6/2009.

- **GS Crossings:** The Israeli authorities control all the crossings leading to and from GS, with the exception of the Rafah Crossing (with Egypt), which is supposed to be under European supervision and joint Egyptian management. However, in its opening and closing policy, the Rafah Crossing follows the whims of international powers, and hence Israel. Thus, GS is effectively under siege; not after Hamas came to power, but long before that. In fact, what changed when Hamas rose to power and its subsequent military triumph is that the siege became much more suffocating. This siege affects the movement of people and goods, including essential goods, such as food, medicine, fuel and industrial materials; effectively causing economic paralysis in GS.

Before the military triumph of Hamas over Fatah in June 2007, the average number of trucks entering GS was approximately 10,400 trucks a month. The number dropped later, as Israel allowed only 2,500 trucks a month to enter, which caters for only 25% of the GS population's needs.

Images: When the Siege “Kills” the Factories

Between Israel’s strangling siege of GS and its direct targeting during the Israeli war that began on 27/12/2008, hundreds of factories and workshops in GS have stopped working. The rate of unemployment among workers rose to a frightening level.

Image (1) shows the Middle East Pharmaceutical Co. factory after it stopped working because Israel banned the entry of raw materials to GS, even essentials, such as food and medicine. It should be noted that this is the only medicine factory in GS.



Image (1)



Image (2) shows Dalloul cheese and dairy factory in GS after it was the target of an Israeli raid that destroyed it completely.

Image (2)

Image (3) shows the opening of The Main Cemetery of Gaza Strip Factories in GS. A symbolic step carried out by the Popular Committee Against the Siege. The cemetery contains a large number of symbolic graves of Palestinian factories that were forced to close, estimated according to the committee at four thousand factories, plants and workshops.



Image (3)



The types of goods that enter GS dropped from four thousand varieties before June 2007 to only about forty types in January 2011. These are the goods that Israel has classified as “indispensable items,” such as food, medicines and basic medical needs.⁷⁰

The blockade did not exclude fuel, which is a basic need for running sole power plant in GS, industrial and domestic use, and heating. The power plant alone needs about 3.5 million liters of industrial diesel per week. The occupation forces allow the entry of only 2.5 million liters for all the needs of GS. This is the limit approved by the Israeli Supreme Court following a humanitarian plea submitted by several human rights associations; however, according to statistics, Israel does not always adhere to this limit. Due to insufficient fuel, there is a daily power outage of between four and eight hours. In addition, GS has been through periods in which there was absolutely no fuel, hindering the work of many occupations and professions, in particular hospitals caring for patients in critical conditions.⁷¹

This blockade had catastrophic consequences for the economy, especially with the cancellation of the Gaza customs code by Israeli authorities on 21/6/2007; which meant putting an end to business dealings and to all the commercial agencies and trademarks of GS importers and exporters. Dr. Maher al-Tabba⁶, Director of Public Relations in the Palestinian Chamber of Commerce, summarizes the consequences of Israel’s siege in that GS has sustained economic losses estimated at \$500 million, closure of 95% of its industrial plants, or about 3,700 plants out of 3,900; while the rest were working at no more than 20% of their production capacity. Furthermore, there was suspension of construction and infrastructure projects worth \$370 million, due to lack of building materials and crazy rises in prices, ranging

from 30% to 1000%. There was deterioration in the health sector due to acute shortages of medicines, medical supplies and equipment. More than 75 thousand workers in the private sector were laid off. Agricultural exports stopped completely, threatening the livelihood of more than 40 thousand workers in this sector; and there were heavy losses to growers of strawberries and flowers, estimated at about \$16 million. About 90% of the commercial transport sector was disabled. There was destruction of the fishing sector due to the acute shortage in fuel that left the fishing boats idle. The animal resources sector has been affected by the lack of feed, vaccines and medicines; while the education sector suffered from a lack of books, stationery and printed materials.⁷²

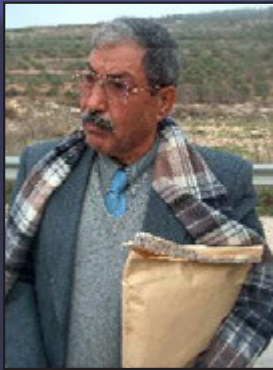
Following the war on GS at the end of 2008, these effects were exacerbated as the blockade continued and reconstruction efforts were hindered. Many international organizations have estimated that the accumulated losses in GS, considered a small sector, exceeded \$4 billion, almost equivalent to the Palestinian GDP (these estimates are those of 2009).⁷³

• **The Barriers, the Separation Wall and Bypass Roads:** Israel imposes on the WB Palestinians a strict system of restrictions that hinders their freedom of movement, through various barriers and bypass roads, built for the protection of settlers. The construction of the Separation Wall in WB added to their hardship; while in its 2004 advisory opinion, the International Court of Justice in The Hague confirmed that the construction of the Wall is contrary to international law, and that Israel is under an obligation to dismantle it and to make reparation for all damage caused by its construction.⁷⁴

According to the September 2013 statistics, there were 273 checkpoints in WB; 99 of them fixed checkpoints; and at the close of 2012,



OCHA-oPt counted approximately 532 physical obstructions a month, such as dirt embankments, concrete blocks, iron gates and trenches. It should be noted that these obstructions prevent the crossing of vehicles even in emergencies; while checkpoints prevent males 16–35 years old from crossing; of these, laborers and trade workers comprise the largest proportion.⁷⁵



'Abdullah Jal'ud, 59 years old, Qalqilya, a lecturer at An-Najah National University. Because of the checkpoints, he needs two and a half hours to reach his job at the university, instead of a mere half hour.

► Photo credit: Eliezer Moav, B'Tselem, 24/12/2003.

In addition to the above-mentioned checkpoints, there are surprise flying ones as well as mobile ones. OCHA-oPt counted in September 2013, 174 flying checkpoints; compared to 288 in August 2013.⁷⁶

There is a new term coined by the racist Israeli occupation, “Forbidden Roads.” These roads are in the WB, but designated for the sole use of Israelis, primarily of settlers; while Palestinians are denied the right to even cross them in vehicles to reach nearby roads. This situation forces them sometimes to get out of their vehicles, cross the



road on foot, and find another means of transport on the other side. It is difficult to monitor these roads because they are determined by “verbal orders.” However, in September 2013, there were 67 km of Forbidden Road in the WB and the most famous of them is perhaps Route 443.⁷⁷

Because of these restrictions, tens of thousands of Palestinians have lost their jobs. Workers’ free movement has suffered severely, and so has cargo shipping. Transport prices rose in a way that limits the possibility of profit, especially on plants and simple artifacts. Many Palestinian employees have to wake up and depart in the early morning to reach their work on time, because of the extra hours consumed at Israeli barriers and physical obstructions.

‘Ali Yusuf Jabr (43 years old) from the town of al-Khadir, south of Bethlehem in WB, said that he is now forced to leave his house at 4 a.m. so he can pass through the Gilo Checkpoint on the northern entrance to Bethlehem, crowded with workers at the gate. The delay there is caused by Israel’s extremely detailed inspection procedures, which have the aim of humiliating workers and delaying them for hours from their attending their jobs. The time normally needed to reach Jerusalem from Bethlehem is no more than 20 minutes; but due to the checkpoint hold ups, the short journey takes two or more hours.⁷⁸

Many workers resort to taking detours or sneaking around unnoticed, in order to avoid Israeli checkpoints and escape the occupation soldiers’ abusive treatment; which sometimes compel them, for example, to climb the Separation Wall or go through sewers and rainwater drainage systems. Muhammad (23 years old) recounts that, after he made his trip



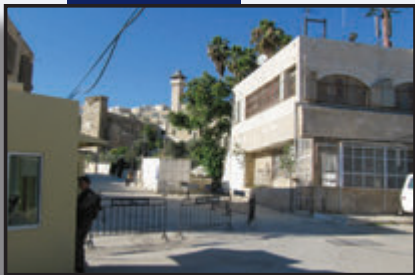


from Bethlehem to Ram to reach his job, by passing through a manhole of a rainwater drainage system, he found tens of young men waiting for their turn to go through that manhole to the other side of the Wall. Muhammad's trip on that day did not end well; for on the other side of the Wall, a military patrol was waiting, capturing all those coming out of the drainage system; beating them up and detaining them for five hours in the heat of the sun.⁷⁹

Some workers bring ladders and ropes to climb over the Wall. They place the ladders against the Wall; they tie the rope to an opening at the top of the eight-meter high Wall's cement blocks; and then they lower the rope on the other side of the Wall. The workers climb the Wall, and then with the aid of the rope they throw themselves to the other side. They cause themselves severe pain in the arms and feet as they descend the Wall in a great hurry. Usually, such a trip starts very early, so workers are forced to leave their homes at two or three in the morning; as described by workers who arrive at their places of work in that way. Many of them stated that, on their way to work, they are forced to walk long distances in the mountains at night, a perilous journey that takes about two hours.⁸⁰

A report issued by the World Bank warns of the potential collapse of the Palestinian labor market due to restrictions on movement. The report points out that the restrictions not only bring a shrinking of the economy, but they also generate forms of hidden and visible community violence.⁸¹

No Passage





Chapter 7: The Suffering of Palestinian Workers Inside Israel and in the Settlements (Black Labor)

The influx of Palestinian labor to Israel started in 1968, when Israel decided to open its doors to them through an official employment program. Since then, the influx of Palestinian labor has grown significantly, from 20 thousand in 1970 to 66 thousand in 1975. By 1979, growth began to slow down, only to surge again and reach its peak in 1987, with a total 116 thousand workers.⁸² This fluctuation differed in the WB compared to GS, as work has greater significance for the inhabitants of GS, which is full of refugees and is lacking in natural resources.⁸³





Despite all of the above, a note should be made that Palestinian workers did not head for the Israeli labor market through choice but because they were compelled or forced to do so. Many who head for Israel do it “secretly,” because they do not wish to have any link to the occupation; while many others prefer poverty and unemployment to working for Israelis. A survey conducted in 1984 of about 1,100 Palestinian workers in Israel showed that 48% of them were of rural origin and 23% live in refugee camps, and that most of them belong to lower income classes or are not well educated. Moreover, most of them were non-skilled workers predominantly in the agriculture and construction sectors.⁸⁴

With the outbreak of the first *Intifadah* in 1987, the number of Palestinian workers inside Israel dropped dramatically, only to come back and rise slightly at its end in 1993. This was certainly affected by Israeli policies and security measures used as an excuse for arbitrary control of the lives of Palestinians in WB and GS. For example, Palestinian employment in Israel dropped, in 1996 following the outbreak of *al-Aqsa Intifadah*, with the building of the Separation Wall in WB, after Hamas won the parliamentary elections, and then with the GS blockade. Merely reaching the Green Line became difficult and often impossible for many Palestinians, involving many hardships that threaten their lives daily. Some are forced to climb the Separation Wall; some sneak through the tunnels or walk tens of kilometers in the mountains and in the cold weather. Some others pay astronomical sums to taxi drivers who smuggle them in trucks or smuggle them in vans.⁸⁵



Nasser Sabatin, who was shot and severely wounded by Israeli soldiers while trying to cross the Separation Wall to work inside Israel, lying in the intensive care unit of Beilinson Hospital.

► Photo credit: Sarit Michaeli, B'Tselem, 8/4/2006, <http://www.btselem.org/photos/10>

In Q3 2013, and according to PCBS, the number of Palestinian workers in both Israel and the settlements number approximately 103 thousand workers. Of these only 51,100 had a permit, 34,600 worked without a permit and 17,600 have an Israeli identity card or foreign passport.⁸⁶ Those without permits are always subjected to prosecution and detention by Israeli police. According to Moshe Ben Shi, a spokesman for the Israeli Border Police, 15 thousand illegal Palestinian workers are arrested annually.⁸⁷ However, this number varies from time to time; as for example, in September 2009, Israeli television said that, during the last two months, the Israeli police arrested 17,620 Palestinian workers and deported them to the WB.⁸⁸

The word “arrest” cannot sum up the suffering of these workers when they are found out. A report by B’Tselem has revealed the extent of the suffering they endure; noting that during the last few years



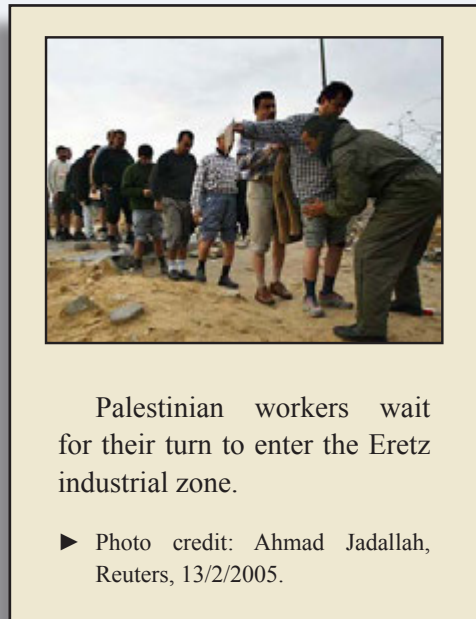


Israeli forces killed about one hundred workers from among them. The worker Khaled Ghaneimat (37 years old, and a father of eight) recounts:

The policeman spat at my face and began to swear at me... He slammed me in the back with his rifle. I fell and he kicked me. After about five minutes [of that], he stomped on my neck, saying, "I'll stomp on your neck like you're a dog." He pressed his foot down on my neck, and I started to choke. At that moment, I felt so humiliated that I hoped I would die, especially because my son was watching from only a few meters away. He was crying, and was very upset.

The variety of ways in which soldiers humiliate and otherwise make a misery of the lives of Palestinians caught in Israel without a permit are as diverse as the perverse imagination of the perpetrators allows. "In some cases Palestinians were forced to run several kilometers, to beat one another, to sing songs praising the Border Police and to swear at themselves, their loved ones, and the Prophet Muhammad."⁸⁹

The testimony of Ghaneimat to the organization was corroborated by the testimony of a soldier to the same source. He said:



Palestinian workers wait for their turn to enter the Eretz industrial zone.

► Photo credit: Ahmad Jadallah, Reuters, 13/2/2005.



Whoever sneaks in without a permit gets slapped. The minimum [punishment] he gets for the impudence is standing for an hour, some also are made to sit and wait. They are not allowed to talk on their cell phone or smoke. We shout at them. If the Palestinian responds, he gets slapped. The quiet ones don't get hit... Actually, it depends on the people at the checkpoint. The police never come for Shabachim [Palestinians in Israel without a permit]... They are caught by the patrol, which takes their ID cards and makes them walk to the checkpoint... Sometimes, they have to walk five kilometers to get to the checkpoint.

The organization confirmed that these cases “are not exceptions at all. In fact, they are the tip of the iceberg, under which is concealed a harsh routine of violence and abuse, including the use of illegal force, illegal damage of property, use of illegal force to extract information and recruit collaborators and unlawful use of firearms.”

The report adds that in the end many of these workers get exploited by their employers due to their illegal status. They work long hours without getting adequate pay, and sometimes they get no pay at all. The matter becomes worse when they are exposed to work accidents or to illness, as most of them lose their job without receiving any compensation or guarantees.⁹⁰

Jamal, one of the workers in Israeli settlements, relates:

I have been working for the last ten years in an Israeli wood factory. The company has no name. I work nine hours a day and get paid 100 shekels [about \$29]. There are 30 workers in the factory; and we almost have no protection from the sun or the rain. In winter, we stand all day in the mud. There are no toilets, and





we are not allowed to go out, because the iron gate opens only at four. Two years ago, I gathered the courage to complain. Do you know what happened? I was immediately expelled from work, and without pay. Two weeks later, the phone rang; my employer was on the line. He said that he will give me a last chance, provided I keep silent. And I did.⁹¹

As for “legal” workers, they fare no better. What they have to do is: first, “they must obtain security clearance in order to work” inside Israel. Second, “they must have a magnetic identity card containing the full personal details of the employee.” Third, “they must pay a fee of up to \$500 per month, whether they are working or not.”⁹² They have to queue for hours, every day, “to cross and then find the means of transport to their workplace.” Security measures include physical inspection and screening, where the frequent exposure to radiation has a serious medical consequence; high rates of cancer among Palestinians.⁹³

“One of the workers said, ‘We leave our families for months. Sometimes you forget the facial features of your children who grow up while you are away... we are humiliated and face prosecution... we work from sunrise until sunset for very low wages.’... ‘Imagine,’ added another, ‘going through this day in, day out, or working for someone for several days only for him to refuse to pay you and threaten to report you to the police.’”

This is the testimony of two “illegal” Palestinians working in Israel.

- ▶ Site of Middle East Monitor (MEMO), The Predicament of Palestinian Workers in Israel, MEMO, 24/2/2010, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/downloads/factsheets/the-predicament-of-palestinian-workers-in-israel.pdf>

Hence, many Palestinian workers choose to stay overnight in their workplace in Israel “to avoid having to pass through security daily.



This, of course, means that they are apart from their families for long periods, even though in terms of distance they are very close.”⁹⁴ Moreover, the conditions they live under are utterly inhumane, as there lack ventilation, hygiene or personal comfort.⁹⁵

As most Palestinian workers inside Israel lack legal papers, it becomes difficult or almost impossible for them to find a place to stay overnight. So the majority of them stay in their workplaces, whether workshops, warehouses or factories.

Muhammad has been lucky enough to find someone who will rent him accommodation: a converted box room in an apartment block. The bed lies under the communal stairs. Inside it is cramped and spartan: one bed, one toilet, one shower, one sink, one TV, one DVD player, one microwave (the latter three found on the street and salvaged), one fridge, one bed, two mattresses propped up against a wall. It is shared by three workers.

Nevertheless, Muhammad lives in constant fear. Several months ago, two men banged on the door of his room. Fearing capture again, he and his roommate jumped out of the window to escape. In the process, Muhammad broke his leg, but was only able to receive treatment once he had crossed the border to the WB, since going to a hospital inside Israel would have meant arrest and possible imprisonment.

Muhammad is obliged to work inside Israel; but he regrets that, as he lives a life of constant fear and anxiety. “If I could go back 6 years I wouldn’t have come here,” he said.

► Wrong Side of the Wall, site of Palestine Monitor, 11/5/2010.



A photo of Muhammad’s apartment





In spite of the fact that Israel's Supreme Court had passed a law guaranteeing the right of the Palestinian workers in Israel to receive "all pension rights as long as they have made the necessary contributions, the Israeli authorities have not implemented the Court's directive. Even so, it has been revealed that the average Palestinian worker pays 17.5% of his salary towards such benefits, without receiving them."⁹⁶

This reflects the extent of the discrimination suffered by Palestinians working for Israelis and practiced by their employers, the state and the police alike.

The worker Muhammad Abu Hamra is no longer alive to tell his story. Five years earlier, he was asked to build a wall around the factory where he worked in Nitzanei Shalom. His son said that they used plastic containers filled with chemical waste to support the wall. One of these containers exploded and wounded his father in the head. Four days later he died of his wounds, leaving his wife and eight children. They received no retirement pension or compensation.

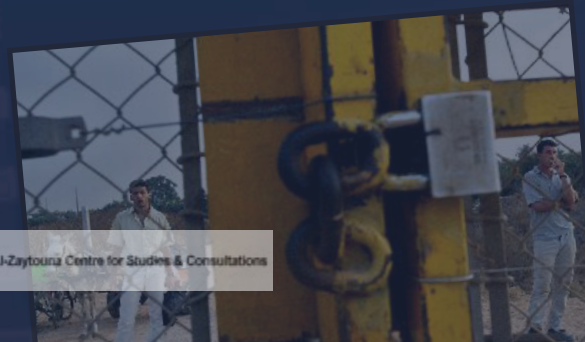
Muhammad's son Majed was forced to stop his studies in order to find a job and support his family. Three years after the accident, they lodged a complaint against his father's boss, but so far the judges have made no decision in the case.

- ▶ The Grim Reality of Palestinian Workers in Israeli Industrial Zones; Without Laws or Rights, Arabs 48, 14/4/2007.



The young man ‘Abdul Latif Abu Rayya tells that few months earlier he had cut his hand while working on a cutting machine in a cardboard factory. His employer dismissed him, sending him home, and suspending his salary. In the wake of this accident, he became partially paralyzed. Doctors in Tulkarm Hospital could not perform the complex operation that could have saved the movement of his hand. He was also prohibited from reaching Israeli hospitals that could offer him assistance. He added that his employer did not pay him any compensation; and because of his injury, he cannot find work anywhere else. His magnetic ID card (work permit in Israel) was cancelled. He consulted a lawyer and began judicial proceedings in Israel; but he could not even meet him, because he was not allowed to pass through the checkpoint.⁹⁷





Chapter 8: Social Implications of the Suffering of Palestinian Workers

Perhaps the most prominent implication of the Israeli occupation practices on the Palestinian economy and workers is the high rate of poverty, unemployment and dependence on aid.

For in spite of the fact that the PCBS estimates the rate of unemployment at about 16.9% in WB and 37.4% in GS, it is actually bigger than that. It is estimated to be about 31% in WB and 75% in GS. This is especially so since the Israeli aggression at the end of 2008, when the rate of poverty rose to about 90% and when 85% of the population became dependent on humanitarian aid.⁹⁸ Furthermore, the 2011 official rate mentioned in PCBS statistics (24.8%) is considered





among the highest rates of unemployment in the Arab world as well as worldwide. And because this rate of unemployment has been continuing over years, it can be classified as chronic unemployment; that is not seasonal or temporary, but continuous for as long as the occupation continues.⁹⁹

Polluted Water

“I don’t tell my children that I think they are sick from the contaminated water. I cannot afford to buy tankered water and if I tell them that the water is making them sick, they will refuse to drink at all.”

‘Adnan Najib is a refugee living in the northern WB village of Burin with his wife and five children. He takes his children for testing for intestinal amoebas every three months and they always test positive for the parasite, which causes diarrhea.

The village water has been contaminated mainly from effluent from village cesspits, but also from Har Bracha which sits on the hilltop above the village. To avoid this 60% of villagers buy tankered water at a very high cost, while the other 40% cannot afford it.

► United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Refugee Stories, Drinking the Water in the West Bank village of Burin, site of the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), 28/6/2008, <http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/60DDE2EF85B74ED285257478004979B8>

In 2010, the number of unemployed workers in WB and GS was estimated at about 234 thousand individuals. The highest unemployment rates are concentrated among young people (15–24 years old); as their rate was estimated at 38.8%;¹⁰⁰ despite the fact that the majority



of them are likely to be university graduates. Perhaps this in itself points to one of the most prominent social implications of their difficult economic conditions; The pressure on young people to secure an income which prevents, or at least hinders, their focus on their specializations and studies. It thus becomes a stumbling block to their realizing a better future for themselves as individuals and for their society.



A Palestinian woman in GS receiving her share of aid. Due to the high rate of unemployment, Israel's destruction of the Palestinian economy, and the suffocating siege, 85% of GS population is dependent on aid.

The presence of hundreds of thousands of unemployed workers undoubtedly causes social and psychological crises to these individuals and their families. In Palestinian societies, the crises go much deeper when we add the psychological pressures and physical and material





abuses to which these workers are subjected. These include the destruction of their livelihoods, whether lands, shops or factories. People with specialties who have no place to practice them become compelled to either emigrate or hold menial jobs to earn a living. All of the above has its impact on students and teenagers who might lose interest in completing their education, as they face life's pressures and poverty, as well as the difficulty of finding a decent job.

Add to all of the above the lure of working for the Israelis, and the pain and suffering that accompanies this work; as described earlier. Furthermore, these workers often face Israeli pressures, blackmailing them into working for Israeli intelligence.

Stories documenting the suffering of Palestinian young people and workers abound; and they do not stop at violations, injuries and death. These are stories shaped by the day-to-day chronology of striving for a better life, and insistence on persevering no matter how difficult the circumstances are. Thus, Muhsen, who holds a Masters Degree in Economics, had no choice but to rent a handcart and sell strawberries and fruits in front of the university from which he graduated! He said that it is true that he feels very sad about his work that does not require diplomas. But he cannot continue to be a burden on his family and extend his hand to his father to get few shekels. Two years ago, he started working as a peddler. Today, he is getting ready to travel to a Gulf state, after he had succeeded in getting a work contract with an economic consulting firm.¹⁰¹

As for Muhammad (45 years old), he considers himself lucky for getting the chance to work for a month in street cleaning projects,



financed by international donor parties and institutions. He got that job despite there being thousands of applicants, when the institution picked 300 as its first batch of workers, adding a new batch every month to bring their numbers to more than 20 thousand workers who had registered their names. He noted that he was congratulated by his relatives and acquaintances who wished for themselves a similar work opportunity. He added that not for a moment did he feel shame to be seen by anyone near or far carrying a broom or pushing the garbage-filled handcart. What is important to him is to secure his family's minimum economic needs, under the suffocating Israeli blockade.¹⁰²

Specialists warn of the negative effects of unemployment on the individual and society, as they engender in the individual feelings of inferiority, and encourage the spread of many social ills, such as theft, fraud, prostitution and crime. This is in addition to the fact that an unemployed individual suffers from a feeling of emptiness and lack of appreciation from his society, which create in him reactions characterized by either aggressiveness or frustration. In addition, unemployment deprives society of the benefits of the energy of its members and creates a negative reflection on family relationships.¹⁰³

Furthermore, unemployment encourages young people to emigrate. In this regard, Dr. Lu'ay Shabaneh, PCBS President, pointed to the findings of a statistical study that showed that one third of Palestinian youth think of immigrating, at a ratio of 45% for males and 18% for females. The main reason given was economic hardship (96% for males and 66% for females). Next come lack of safety and security in WB and GS (80% for males and 73% for females).¹⁰⁴





Difficult living conditions drive children and women to join the work force, for a large number of them support their families. These two groups suffer additional pressures in the labor market, as they are more vulnerable to exploitation and discrimination.¹⁰⁵

As for those who work in Israeli settlements or inside Israel, in most cases, they suffer from severe mental distress, as they become outcasts on both sides: in the work place they face racism and insults; and in their social environment they are marginalized and may be accused of treason.

Moreover, poor economic conditions and the rise in unemployment rates force many Palestinians to work in hazardous occupations, such as digging tunnels in GS, or handling toxic chemicals and waste; this is often their only choice and such jobs bring relatively higher wages.

A young man, Maysara (19 years old) explains that he resorted to digging tunnels in order to save money for marriage, instead of working in his original profession of auto electrician. He explains that garage owners like to hire boys as their helpers; they do not want skilled workers. He worked for more than two years in a garage, without any improvement in his position where he was exploited. He added that he worked “like a donkey” from morning till late at night. And at the end of the week, he receives at most 50 shekels [under \$10]. While for working in the tunnels, he earns this amount daily.¹⁰⁶

Work in the tunnels involves a constant danger; whether it is the possibility of the clay soil collapsing over their heads and burying them alive, being subjected to direct bombing by Israeli aircrafts or death by poison gas spread by Egyptian security forces on the tunnel’s openings that they find in Egyptian Rafah; this is according to the testimonies



of those working there. There is also the prospect of some smuggled materials, such as fuel, exploding during transportation. Seeing that many of the workers in this area are young boys and school students, many of them are compelled to lie to their parents about the location and type of job they hold.

The Suffering of Tunnel Workers

‘Amer, the tunnel supervisor, said that three of his workers died recently; two of them due to suffocation when dirt fell on them, and the third died from the shrapnel of an Israeli missile that landed near the tunnel.

‘Amer explained that they aim to make a living, not to become rich. They aspire to help people and provide them with the goods and commodities that they lack, and which Israel refuses to let be imported to GS. They do not look for death; but they are forced to risk it so that their families can survive.

► Gaza’s Tunnels: A Daily Death Journey, site of Aljazeera.net, 25/6/2009.

According to al-Mezan Center for Human Rights, the number of Palestinians killed inside the tunnels during the period 2007–2009 totaled 53 persons.¹⁰⁷ However, according to the Director General of Ambulance and Emergency in GS, their number exceeded one hundred, while he estimated the number of suffocation cases to be more than two hundred.¹⁰⁸ ‘Ali (24 years old), who had finished his university education and could not find a job, said that he received an offer from his friends to work in one of the tunnels for \$25 a day; the relatively high wage indicating that this work was both frightening and





dangerous. He explains that it was the only way for him to help his father in raising his brothers, and that every minute during his work, he repeats the testimony “I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.” He added that when he is underground, he constantly thinks of his family. Despite the fact that he knows it is a hard occupation, he says that his circumstances forced this reality upon him. He said that had he other options, he certainly would have not agreed to do this dreadful job.¹⁰⁹

There is also a testimony by Sa‘id (34 years old) who works in collecting iron bars from among the ruins of the Kfar Darom settlement, situated in the center of GS and abandoned by the occupation. He stresses that, despite the swelling in his hands caused by the wounds he incurred while striking the concrete hard, he did not lose the resolve to continue in this line of work, because it has become his only source of livelihood. He adds that he finds this work better for him than looking for solid waste amid piles of garbage.

His colleague in this “profession,” ‘Atif Musa (12 years old) adds in childish innocence, that the strenuous nature of his work has failed to diminish, that he cannot hit the concrete columns like his big brother; but that he accompanies him to collect some small aluminum or copper pieces. Every year he then sells these pieces in order to raise money for buying school clothes.¹¹⁰

Israeli occupation authorities do not refrain from exploiting Palestinian workers’ difficult living conditions by forcing them to cooperate with Israeli intelligence. Israeli TV Channel Two quoted an unnamed (Israel Security Agency—ISA (*Shabak*)) officer as saying that the importance of collaborators to Israeli security increased dramatically after the Israeli withdrawal from the GS in 2005.



“They are simply our eyes and ears. We lure them with small sums of money or by taking advantage of their bad need for medical treatment or travel permits.”¹¹¹

Many reports and testimonies indicate that the Israelis blackmail Palestinian workers and pressure them into cooperating with Israeli intelligence, especially in GS; focusing mainly on unskilled workers. Among these, as mentioned in the reports, fishermen, farmers and porters, caught at the land crossings between Israel and GS. There, they get kidnapped and taken for interrogation; then they try to lure them into working for Israel by promising them attractive salaries and better living conditions. However, most Palestinians reject this kind of work; they consider it dishonorable, unethical and a betrayal of their country and their steadfastness.¹¹²

The Suffering of a Palestinian Worker in Israel

The Palestinian Muhammad ‘Isa expresses the feeling that comes over him when they finish constructing a building for Israelis; He says that he hopes it gets torn down; He feels that this building does not belong there, and imagines that its inhabitants are the Palestinians themselves. He makes sure he never sees the building again because it will not be inhabited by Palestinians but by Israelis.

Muhammad ‘Isa reluctantly accepts work in Israel, as it is easy to convince himself that this is a land that will never return to the Palestinians. However, He has never tried to work in settlements; not because the conditions are bad there, but because Palestinian land would be confiscated daily before his eyes. He adds that it is not easy to build a house for his enemy on a land in which the roots of the olives are still green.

► Site of Islamic Federation of Trade Unions of Workers, <http://www.alnaqaba.org>





*From the Womb of their Suffering
... They Create Their Distinctiveness*

An International Award for a Palestinian Nurse

The organization of Americans for United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) awarded the 2010 Award for the Health and Dignity of Women to Fayzah Shraim, the head of nursing at Al-Shifa Hospital in GS. She was nominated for that prize by UNFPA under the supervision of a specialized committee.

Shraim dedicated her award to the Palestinian people and to the nurses among them. The Palestinian Minister of Health in GS, Bassem Naim, expressed his pleasure and pride in Shraim for receiving this award. He considered it a culmination of the great effort that she exerted during her work in the field of midwifery, as well as of her ability to overcome the obstacles that she faced during the repeated Israeli invasions of GS. Furthermore, he considered her award a source of pride and a testimony to the effort of the health cadres working in the Ministry of Health, who seek, in spite of the blockade and other challenges, to prove themselves through repeated successes at local and international levels.

► *Al-Hayat* newspaper, London, 23/5/2010.



Winning picture by
Nasser al-Shiyoukhi



Winning picture by
Khalil Abu Hamra.



The Photojournalists Nasser al-Shiyoukhi and Khalil Abu Hamra Win Two Prestigious International Awards

The charity project Photographers Giving Back (PGB) has announced that a number of photojournalists have won awards across various categories. Among them are two Palestinian photojournalists, Nasser al-Shiyoukhi from Hebron in the WB, and Khalil Abu Hamra from GS, for work done during 2009.

The picture of al-Shiyoukhi, who had already won a number of Arab and international awards, shows a moving scene of a young Palestinian man from Hebron lying and looking quiet and peaceful in his coffin, in spite of the scars on his face from his wounds. The coffin is surrounded by a group of hands, each carrying a cell phone. The owners of these phones are filming the sad scene, their faces not shown. For its part, the lens of Khalil Abu Hamra depicted the image of a Palestinian girl in anguish, crying bitterly for the death of her relatives who were killed by a shell fired by the Israeli army on the town of Beit Lahia during the last war.

Al-Shiyoukhi had already twice won the Golden Prize in the Baghdad International Festival of Photographs. He also won several prizes and ranked among the winners in the Atlanta Celebrates Photography Festival. The renowned world-class photographer Jill Price described him as one of the best photographers in the world. As for Abu Hamra, he also won a number of prizes in international competitions in the US and Japan.

Commenting on his winning the award, Nasser al-Shiyoukhi said that he had conflicting feelings about it; on the one hand, scenes of the occupation's cruelty continue to be present in his mind, although the camera documents only a fraction of it; and on the other hand, he is proud of the success of Palestinian journalists, in documenting the suffering of the Palestinian people and conveying it to the world. He added that he feels proud because a colleague of his in GS shared his award; this had a symbolic significance of the unity of the Palestinian people, their fate and their suffering.

► Ma'an News Agency, 10/3/2010.





Epilogue

In short, Palestinian workers are a class of society controlled by Israel that continues to dictate the conditions surrounding the formation and function of this class. They are essentially more like an individualist labor movement than a working class, a working sector, or an economic sector. Their suffering takes common and intersecting forms, caused by Israel's tyranny and control of their livelihood, with the aim to humiliate and subjugate them. The specialists among them are unable to practice their specialty and Israel controls exports and imports and continues targeting Palestinian infrastructure. It would be understandable if this matter concerned only advanced specialties, such as technology, atomic research, aviation, and mechanical sciences. But in fact it concerns basic and essential services needed in any society, such as medicine, engineering and industry; or journalism, information media, commerce and services. The latter are careers impeded by Israel's permanent





barriers and its deliberate targeting of some of these categories, notably journalists. As for non-specialists, notably workers in the agricultural and fishing sectors, they are also targeted by Israel; which hinders their freedom of movement and access to their land or to the sea. Their lands and tools are confiscated; or at best, they suffer limits to the spaces in which they are allowed to work.

How can there be agriculture when Israel confiscates water, the basis of life, and keeps peasants from reaching their lands? How can there be commerce when Israel controls road networks, transportation, crossings, exports and imports? What factories can work and survive while Israel, in addition to controlling all of the above, also controls the human element with oppression and arrogance, imposing curfews arbitrarily, breaking in wherever it wants, and destroying whatever it wants, all under false pretenses?

It is the policy of an occupation that does not hesitate to exploit economic factors, using them as a tool to subjugate the Palestinian people. Stopping the suffering of Palestinian workers cannot be achieved only through increasing international grants and assistance, by providing decent employment opportunities, or through support programs. It can be achieved by ending the occupation that hinders the advancement of the Palestinian economy; knowing that this land has ample natural resources that are being depleted by the occupation. Added to that, there are in Palestinian human resources with experience, and industrial, commercial and cultural skills, which the world had attested to before the occupation. Thanks to this, there remains hope that the future will bring to the Palestinian labor force a return to its former prosperity.



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- ¹⁰³ *Al-Hayat*, 21/4/2008.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Al-Hayat*, 21/4/2008.
- ¹⁰⁵ The suffering of the Palestinian woman was discussed in this series, see Hasan Ibhaïs, Mariam Itani and Dr. Sami al-Salahat, *The Suffering of the Palestinian Woman under the Israeli Occupation*, Am I Not a Human? (2) series (Beirut, al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies and Consultations, 2010) p. 67; Also in this series, child labor and the suffering of the Palestinian Child were discussed, see Ahmad el-Helah and Mariam Itani, *The Suffering of the Palestinian Child under the Israeli Occupation*, Am I Not a Human? (3) series (Beirut, al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations, 2010) p. 73.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Al-Hayat*, 23/3/2009.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁸ AlJazeera.net, 25/6/2009.
- ¹⁰⁹ AlJazeera.net, 25/6/2009.
- ¹¹⁰ AlJazeera.net, 29/6/2007.
- ¹¹¹ *Asharq Alawsat*, 9/4/2009; and Saleh Al-Naami, Shabak's Dark World: Israel's Eyes in Gaza, Recruitment Tactics, Role, and Human Value, 7/3/2009, <http://www.belkacem.net/spip.php?article2043>
- ¹¹² *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, 24/6/2009; and *Asharq Alawsat*, 9/4/2009; and *Assabeel*, 16/4/2009; and *Addustour*, 27/8/2009.





List of English Publications of al-Zaytouna Centre

1. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh and Basheer M. Nafi, editors, *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2005*, 2007.
2. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh, editor, *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2006*, 2010.
3. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh, editor, *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2007*, 2010.
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8. Muhammad Arif Zakaullah, *Religion and Politics in America: The Rise of Christian Evangelists and Their Impact*, 2007.
9. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh and Ziad al-Hasan, *The Political Views of the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon as Reflected in May 2006*, 2009.



10. Ishtiaq Hossain and Mohsen Moh'd Saleh, *American Foreign Policy & the Muslim World*, 2009.
11. Karim El-Gendy, *The Process of Israeli Decision Making: Mechanisms, Forces and Influences*, 2010. (electronic book)
12. Ibrahim Ghushesh, *The Red Minaret: Memoirs of Ibrahim Ghushesh (Ex-Spokesman of Hamas)*, 2013.
13. Mohsen M. Saleh, *The Palestinian Issue: Historical Background & Contemporary Developments*, 2014.
14. Abbas Ismail, *The Israeli Racism: Palestinians in Israel: A Case Study*, Book Series: Am I Not a Human? (1), translated by Aladdin Assaiqeli, 2009.
15. Hasan Ibhais, Mariam Itani and Sami al-Salahat, *The Suffering of the Palestinian Woman Under the Israeli Occupation*, Book Series: Am I Not a Human? (2), translated by Iman Itani, 2010.
16. Ahmed el-Helah and Mariam Itani, *The Suffering of the Palestinian Child Under the Israeli Occupation*, Book Series: Am I Not a Human? (3), translated by Iman Itani, 2010.
17. Firas Abu Hilal, *The Suffering of the Palestinian Prisoners & Detainees Under the Israeli Occupation*, Book Series: Am I Not a Human? (4), translated by Baraah Darazi, 2011.
18. Mariam Itani and Mo' in Manna', *The Suffering of the Palestinian Refugee*, Book Series: Am I Not a Human? (6), translated by Salma al-Houry, 2010.

19. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh, *The Suffering of Jerusalem and the Holy Sites Under the Israeli Occupation*, Book Series: Am I Not a Human? (7), translated by Salma al-Houry, 2012.
20. Hasan Ibhais and Kahled 'Ayed, *The Separation Wall in the West Bank*, Book Series: Am I Not a Human? (8), translated by Baraah Darazi, 2013.
21. Mariam Itani, Amin Abu Wardeh and Waddah Eid, *The Suffering of the Palestinian Worker Under the Israeli Occupation*, Book Series: Am I Not a Human? (10), translated by Salma al-Houry, 2014.
22. Fatima Itani and Atef Daghlas, *The Suffering of the Palestinian Patient Under the Israeli Occupation*, Book Series: Am I Not a Human? (11), translated by Mohammed Ibrahim El-Jadili and Saja Abed Rabo El-Shami, 2012.

For complete list:





The Suffering of the Palestinian Worker under the Israeli Occupation

معاناة العامل الفلسطيني
تحت الاحتلال الإسرائيلي



This Book

The Palestinian worker endures exceptional suffering, both in terms of the nature of his targeting by Israel and the perils he faces working under occupation. He is the victim of an inhumane reality; and he is boxed in between a family demanding its basic needs and an Israeli policy that subjugates and forces him into unemployment.

Many Palestinian workers are forced to work “illegally” in Israel, in an effort to provide their families with food and medicine, and in light of the meltdown of the Palestinian economy. They do so in spite of the hell of living away from their families and the continual fear of arrest.

This book is the tenth in the series Am I not a Human? through which al-Zaytouna Centre seeks to provide a comprehensive picture of the suffering of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation. This is done in a style that addresses the mind and the heart, within a scientific, systematic and documented framework. This book provides a profile of the various aspects of the Palestinian worker’s suffering under Israeli occupation.



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Am I Not a Human?

