

"All the Consent
That's Fit to Manufacture"

The New York ^{WAR} Crimes

The Land Day Edition

Return
Remain
Resist

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FREE

THE LAND OF THE PEOPLE **THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND!**



Palestinian mother embraces her son after his release from Zionist prison. Ramallah. *Dina Salem*

NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

الأرض بتتكلم عربي

In early 1976, the Zionist regime designated the farmlands of Arraba, Sakhnin, and Deir Hanna as "military zones," and banned their owners from entering. Shortly afterwards, the Israeli government seized 20,000 dunams of Palestinian land in the Galilee, declaring them "state-owned." The Initiative for the Defense of the Land — a newly formed committee of activists, intellectuals, lawyers, doctors, and journalists — called on the Palestinian people to hold a general strike on March 30.

The night before the strike, the Zionists imposed a curfew on various Palestinian villages and towns within 1948-territories. The next morning, the Israeli Occupation Forces raided with military vehicles and tanks, and Palestinians responded by burning tires and closing streets in an effort to block the army. Over 300 demonstrators were detained, 50 wounded, and six martyred. Their names: Raja Abu Raya, Khader Khalailah, Khadija Shawahna, Khair Yassin, Raafat Zuhairi, and Mohsen Taha. Since their martyrdom, March 30 is remembered across Palestine as Land Day.

Despite the occupation's violent repression, the strike prevailed. Workers in the West Bank, Gaza, and refugee camps in Lebanon, joined the masses in their collective refusal. The first Land Day of 1976 was an act of civil disobedience and violent confrontation with the occupation that marked a turning point in the Palestinian struggle, uniting the various colonial realities fragmented by Zionism into a single front against the Israeli ethnostate.

This issue of *The New York War Crimes* is published to memorialize the 49th anniversary of this strike: to honor the martyrs, the resistance, and the land that is inextricably linked to Palestinian freedom. The struggle against Zionism neither began nor ended on March 30, 1976, but 49 years later it still serves as a crucial reminder of the long lineage of resistance that our movement must carry forward.

The paper in your hands is not interested in a diasporic romanticization of Arab land (its seas and its mountains, the olive trees and orange groves). Instead, the pieces in this issue insist that the land and struggle are one — to free the land, we must free the people. True liberation means land back; it means redistributing Palestine's natural resources to its rightful owners; it means seizing the means of production from the Zionists and the comprador class.

By their very existence, Palestinians shatter the Zionist fantasy that the land belongs to those that own it, insisting instead that it belongs to those who steward it. Despite the 2,000-pound bombs and white phosphorus that Israel drops on the besieged Gaza Strip, or the Zionist tanks that invade Jenin, or the ethnic cleansing in Masafer Yatta, the people remain rooted to the earth, willing to die on their soil. It is precisely for this reason that when Palestinians flooded out of Gaza on October 7th, or were released this month after decades in Zionist captivity, they immediately dropped to their knees and kissed the earth.

"The Nakba is ongoing — we all know this refrain. But do we understand how the Nakba manifests today?" the *New York War Crimes* collective asks in a piece that traces the various methods of dispossession used by the occupation to ethnically cleanse Palestine. In their address to the movement, the Red Nation illuminates the historical connections between Indigenous resistance on Turtle Island and Palestine. Dina Salem's pictures and observations of the prisoner releases won by Al-Aqsa Flood reaffirm the long-held belief that Palestinian prisoners remain the compass of our struggle. The words of Leonard Peltier, written in 1982 while he was incarcerated at the Federal Correctional Institution in Lompoc, California, call on people across the world to join the just struggle against Zionism. Muin Beisei, in the aftermath of the siege of Beirut, wrote a piece that is so timeless, it could have been written today.

Earlier this year, on February 7, a young girl with the Palestinian flag adorned on her jacket, addressed the camera: "Oh occupier, the land is ours, history is ours, and the roots are ours. So who are you?" In the background, a procession of thousands, pulling carts carrying what little belongings they have left, children in tow with their legs swung over their parents' shoulders, hands clasped around their necks. They are marching north, returning home after seventeen months of Zionist genocide. "We are the people of Gaza," she declares, "we are the ones who have suffered and have been devastated. Today, the soul I thought I had lost returned to me. We are returning."

RETURNING TO THE NORTH

By
NOUR ABDUL LATIF

A Pending Deal

The days felt unbearably heavy, as if mountains were laying across my chest. Every passing moment, I found myself restlessly sifting through conflicting news about an impending ceasefire deal, which seemed to hold the key to ending the torment of life in the tents. Would this cycle of displacement finally come to an end? Would the dark cloud of fear and forced expulsion truly dissipate? As January 2025 stretched before me endlessly, I was torn between despair and fleeting dreams of hope.

Finally, a solution began to emerge. In the evening of Wednesday, January 15, a long-awaited ceasefire agreement was announced. We all rushed out of our tents, crying out in joy, as if we had finally reclaimed a fragment of our dignity — lost amidst the chaos of death and destruction. But soon, a lump formed in my throat. The happiness was incomplete. A flood of painful memories and loss overwhelmed me, and I found myself sobbing uncontrollably. I cried for the pain of losing my sister, for the endless misery of displacement, and for the long nights of terror. In that moment, my tears were a mix of deep sorrow and longing — a yearning for my land, for Gaza, for the life that had become nothing but memories, and for the loved ones stolen from us by this genocide. Each day this nostalgia grew stronger until it seemed to stretch through every moment of my existence.

Genocide Until the Last Breath

Yet things did not unfold smoothly, as is the occupation's vile habit to taint every aspect of our lives with misery wherever we are. The ceasefire delays were nothing but an extension of the ongoing genocide, one that did not stop at the destruction of homes but continued to claim more martyrs until the moment the truce took effect. On the Saturday night before the ceasefire, my fear was indescribable. I clung to my children, drowning in terrifying thoughts, desperate to keep them safe, afraid I might lose them in that final night of horror. Sounds of relentless bombardment filled the air, demolishing buildings around our place of refuge. Our eyes were fixed on the clock, anxiously awaiting 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, but the occupation had other plans. They insisted on robbing us of our joy, delaying the truce for several more hours, leaving us with the bitter taste of postponed hope, even in the war's last moments.

In those days, the details of the deal consumed my thoughts the most — especially the timeline and logistics of the displaced returning home. The information we heard was contradictory and unclear, and the uncertainty gnawed at my nerves. After much back-and-forth, it was finally confirmed: The return would begin on Sunday, January 26, exactly one week after the ceasefire.

Shortly Before Return

That week felt unbearably long, and my emotions were a tangled mess of confusion and anticipation. During that time, I helped out at a shelter near our place of displacement. The work helped the days pass faster. After my shifts, I would sit by the sea, trying to escape the haunting thoughts — What if something happened to cancel the agreement? Would I spend the rest of my life in a tent? Would the day of return ever truly come? Would I ever walk Gaza's streets again? Would this nightmare of displacement finally end? Would our anxiety truly subside, or would we remain prisoners of longing, just like our grandparents after the Nakba of 1948? These questions swirled inside me, unanswered.

My tent was in the closest possible location to Gaza — on the shore of Al-Nuseirat refugee camp near Nuweiri Hill. As the ceasefire date approached, displaced people flocked to the area, setting up temporary tents to be as close as possible to their former homes. Despite the bitter cold and the lack of basic necessities, everyone was willing to endure the hardships of waiting, holding onto the hope that return was near. At night, many lit fires for warmth while the young men sang nationalistic songs to try to uplift spirits and fill the endless hours.

We had many belongings, and I worried that the journey home would exhaust my children, so my small family decided to return by car. The decision saddened me because people in vehicles would have to take a longer route than those returning on foot. The pedestrians were to take Al-Rashid Street along the western coast, while vehicles were allowed to return via a parallel road eastward along Salah al-Din Street. I wished I could return via Al-Rashid Street — it was the fastest way to my home in Gaza.

Finally, Saturday night arrived — the night that was supposed to mark the end of our displacement. But the occupation's obstinacy forced yet another delay, pushing the return back by an entire day. More than a million displaced people spent the night in fear and uncertainty, wondering if we would truly be allowed to go back. But this torment lasted only a day. It was announced that the return would begin on Monday, January 27. I spent the last day packing whatever we could carry. Then we sat by the sea. We were displaced for the last time, filled with hope and anxiety.

The Scene of Return

At last, the sun rose on Monday, January 27 — our long-awaited day of return. The displaced did not wake up that morning, for they had not slept at all, overwhelmed with longing and anticipation. Everyone was ready to leave. Some carried their tents on their backs,



VIOLENCE MEANS TEARING OUR HEARTS and feeding them to the swans. It means firing to hear the fig trees snooze at dusk. We've mastered the art of loss and love, taught each other the different shades of white: White like flour on our grandmothers' counters, white like flowers in their backyards. White flour falling from the sky, red flowers around our beds — We've got poetry for life and death all the same. Dahye, Beirut. January 2025. *Rabab Chamseddine*



TO LOOK AT THE LAND LONG ENOUGH, to grasp it all within the firm tentacles of one's heart: the trees (roots to branches), the odor of cattle, the flickering sun behind the leaves, the color of green, the smell of pine that lives on solely pining for our reach. To immerse oneself in this sight, dearer than the sight of lovers who leave, and equal to the sight of a god who does not. Sojod, South Lebanon. September 2024. *Rabab Chamseddine*

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A Nakba in Every Corner of the Map

The Nakba is ongoing — we all know this refrain. But do we understand how the Nakba manifests today?

The Zionist regime's architecture of displacement utilizes different methods and justifications, but the goal remains the same: to steal the land and replace the native with the settler, be it through manufacturing "real-estate disputes," demolishing homes built "without authorization," stealing lands by declaring them to be "military zones," "archaeological sites," "environmentally protected," or "state-owned," or simply by stunting the growth of Palestinian communities by severing their social and economic ties with neighboring towns. The Zionist project has always manufactured narratives to legalize and justify replacing the native with the settler. From fabricated "property disputes" to residency revocation, here are four Palestinian locales that confront their own respective Nakbas.

MASAFER YATTA

In the early 1980s, the Israeli army designated Masafer Yatta — 22 villages on 30,000 dunams of Palestinian land — as "Firing Zone 918," declaring it off-limits to anyone but the Israeli military. Then, in 1999, the occupation authorities committed the war crime of expelling the residents of 14 of those villages from the lands they had inhabited for generations, on the grounds that they had been "illegally living in a firing zone." That wasn't the only incident of forced displacement. Since 2006, the Zionists have destroyed hundreds of homes in these communities. A 40-year-old official document found in the Israel State Archives confirmed that **the Israeli regime declared military zones in Masafer Yatta solely to expel the native residents.** This discovery raised no eyebrows among Palestinians, however, who arrived at this conclusion decades ago. Declaring Palestinian lands as putative military zones is one of the many methods of land-grabbing at the regime's disposal. Today, 18 percent of the lands in the occupied West Bank are considered "firing zones." The Palestinians in the Hills — who not only predate said "military zones" but the Zionist state itself — are fighting for the remaining eight villages, often in the face of extreme harassment and danger.

AL-NAQAB

The push to forcibly expel Palestinians from Al-Naqab is being led by the Jewish National Fund (JNF), a pararepublic organization, and is the latest chapter in the decades-old colonial effort to "make the desert bloom." One Israeli lawmaker vowed that the Israelis would "exert [their] sovereignty in the Negev." While Palestinian Bedouins have cultivated and inhabited their privately owned lands since before the Nakba, successive Israeli governments have maneuvered to expel and "transfer" them, revoking their land rights in the process. To this day, **Israeli authorities refuse to recognize Bedouin deeds, instead claiming that the forestation efforts are taking place on "state-owned" land — in this case, held by the JNF, effectively greenwashing colonialism.** The agency's website describes it as "the caretaker of the land of Israel, on behalf of its owners — Jewish people everywhere," a role that has led it to plant forests atop the ruins of 89 Palestinian villages destroyed by Zionists. Palestinians in Al-Naqab carry Israeli citizenship, and their plight debunks the myth that citizenship could somehow shield them from the Zionist regime's colonial violence.

SHEIKH JARRAH

In 1956, the U.N. and Jordan built a housing project in Sheikh Jarrah for 28 refugee families who had been dispossessed during the 1948 Nakba, promising that they would receive legal title within three years. That promise was never fulfilled. In 1967, Zionist forces occupied the eastern part of Jerusalem and, by the early 1970s, settler organizations — many registered in the United States as tax-exempt charities — began claiming these Palestinian homes as their own by divine decree. Exploiting a judiciary built by settlers for settlers and backed by the military and government, they worked systematically to expel the Palestinians. Israeli courts have repeatedly accepted fabricated documents presented by settlers at face value, refusing to investigate or authenticate them. **Still, the battle over Sheikh Jarrah is not a legal dispute, as the media often frames it, but a political project of forced displacement.** Billionaire-backed settler organizations — including Nahalat Shimon, Ateret Cohanim, and El-Ad — openly boast of their mission to "Judaize the city." Their influence reaches far beyond the courtroom: in September 2020, a BBC investigation revealed that Roman Abramovich, former owner of Chelsea Football Club, donated \$100 million to El-Ad. Israeli mayors and ministers regularly parade through Sheikh Jarrah, celebrating each home taken and promising "Jewish continuity" in Jerusalem. This is not a "real-estate dispute." It is the systematic erasure of an indigenous community.

SILWAN

Palestinians in Jerusalem's Silwan neighborhood are routinely ordered by the occupation to demolish their own homes to make room for Zionist settlers. They are then forced to fund their own dispossession, paying thousands of dollars in demolition fees. **The justification is that Silwan's homes were built "without authorization," yet 93% of building permit applications submitted by Palestinians to the Israeli occupation municipality in Jerusalem are rejected — a figure that rises to 99% in the West Bank.** The headlines will not tell you that, for years, Yontan Yosef, the former "spokesperson for the settlers" in Sheikh Jarrah and an affiliate of Nahalat Shimon International, was the city councilman personally responsible for blocking tens of thousands of Palestinian building applications. Zionist officials cite "illegal construction" as the pretext for destroying Palestinian homes, but even under international law, the Israeli authorities have no jurisdiction over the eastern part of Jerusalem. In reality, the demolitions are part of a larger plan: to build a "biblical park" atop Silwan's rubble. The occupation authorities frequently declare Palestinian lands as "national parks" in order to forcibly displace Palestinian communities, bolster settler presence, encircle Palestinian neighborhoods with artificial "natural" borders, and promote colonial tourism. This park will be named "King's Garden," evoking the biblical kingdom of King David and Ir David. To translate: the occupation is using ancient religious mythology without archaeological evidence as a pretext to destroy hundreds of Palestinian homes. Even with evidence, no biblical story could justify the forced displacement of a native population. Today, thousands of Palestinian lives in Silwan hang in the balance.

INTERVIEW

'We Turn Walls Into Voices'

I Witness Silwan on their cultural resistance



LEFT: Murals of the eyes of Filipina revolutionary Bai Bibyaon Ligkayan Bigkay and a Silwan community member. **RIGHT:** Silwan community painting in Batn Al-Hawa, Silwan. Kobi Wolf



New York War Crimes: What is I Witness Silwan?

I Witness Silwan: We are a community-based public art project rooted in Silwan, Occupied Jerusalem. Our project has involved hundreds of local artists and community members of every age, joined by artists and activists from around the world.

We paint murals on Palestinian homes targeted for forced displacement and demolition by the Israeli government and Zionist settlers. The murals give us joy and assert our ownership over our homes and agency over our futures. We turn walls into voices and streets into stories that passersby must reckon with.

We conduct bilingual tours to share Silwan's real history and provide an alternative to the settler tourist industry, which caters to Christian Zionists and uses "heritage tourism" to justify the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians. We also run community-based youth programs, create social media content, film videos and documentaries, sell merchandise in our online shop to support the project, and more.

What are some of the common motifs that show up across I Witness Silwan's murals? How would you describe these murals to someone who hasn't seen them before?

The most publicly visible murals in Silwan depict 23 pairs of eyes of local and international leaders, martyrs, activists, workers, and more — all of whom keep watch over us Silwan residents as we resist the daily violence of Israeli occupation and ethnic cleansing.

People whose eyes are featured on the walls of Silwan include Ghassan

Kanafani, George Floyd, Che Guevara, Bai Bibiyon, Malcolm X, and Rachel Corrie, as well as Palestinian farmers, and freedom fighters from the Silwan community.

Other mural imagery includes Palestinian liberation symbols (poppies, birds, hands flashing the victory sign), portraits of neighborhood children and elders, Al Aqsa Mosque, and quotes from significant Palestinian figures (poet Mahmoud Darwish, poet Fadwa Tuqan, martyred activist Nizar Banat, graphic artist Naji Al Ali, and martyred journalist Shireen Abu Akleh).

What are the conditions in Silwan right now and how have they changed since October 7? What are the forces responsible for or complicit in these conditions?

In Silwan, 55,000 Palestinians are resisting the daily violence of occupation and forced expulsion. Israel's ethnic cleansing and destruction of Silwan is part of a wider effort to force all Palestinians out of Jerusalem.

Though the level of militarization and rate of ethnic cleansing has dramatically escalated since October 7th, Zionist colonization of Silwan has been underway since 1967, when Israel declared Jerusalem as its capital. Armed Israeli soldiers and settlers roam the streets and shoot, arrest, or otherwise abuse Palestinians, especially children and community leaders like I Witness Silwan's co-director Zuheir al Rajabi. The I Witness Silwan team often paints murals while surrounded by guns and threats of murder.

There are several specific forces behind the ethnic cleansing of Silwan that we are trying to target:

1. **The Israeli tourism industry** re-named Silwan the "City of David" in 1967. The "City of David" is an ever-expanding biblical theme park that entertains over 1 million tourists annually with Zionist fantasies based on false archeology. The "City of David" includes tunnels underneath Silwan that whisk tourists from one spot to another and compromise the structural integrity of the Palestinian homes above. The propaganda spread by the park attempts to erase Palestinians' deep historical roots in Silwan, making the struggle to document our history imperative.

2. **U.S.-based Christian Zionists**, who comprise the majority of visitors to "City of David", believe that biblical prophecy requires Jews to colonize "the holy land," expel non-Jews, and destroy Muslim holy sites to bring about the second coming of Jesus and the apocalypse. Prominent Christian Zionist politicians like Trump's U.S. ambassador to Israel, Mike Huckabee, have financial ties to the settler industry.

3. **Settler "non-profit" organizations** like Ateret Cohanim and El-Ad, backed by the Israeli state and military, spearhead violent expulsions and court cases that rubber-stamp fabricated purchases of land to displace Palestinians. These organizations get much of their funding from U.S.-based counterparts that funnel tax-exempt money from American donors to Israeli settlements.

4. **International companies** like Korea-based HD Hyundai sell the construction equipment and industrial vehicles that Israel uses to demolish Palestinian homes.

We often talk about how the Palestine movement's cultural front must highlight contradictions in the Zionist-complicit art world as well as elevate the work of Palestinian artists. How do you see I Witness Silwan's work as being part of that cultural front?

Art and culture are essential tools for political education. Visual art, in particular, transcends language and literacy. It can convey ideas and reflect experiences more effectively than words. We've seen this in Silwan, where international visitors find their way to the neighborhood after seeing the giant murals of eyes on the hillside. Often, they arrive knowing nothing about Israeli occupation or ethnic cleansing in Jerusalem and then leave with knowledge and appreciation of Palestinians' struggles and resistance here.

Political public art communicates powerful messages in widely accessible spaces that are often sites of contested power, like the streets of occupied Jerusalem. Creating public art in these contested spaces allows us to assert community ownership over them.

Collaborative murals create a broader shared culture and a sense of belonging and empowerment. We see this especially with children in Silwan. Their participation gives them back a piece of their stolen childhoods and encourages hope and action for a better future.

The relationships and shared culture that collaborative mural projects build serve other organizing contexts: We

channel them to mobilize people for actions and campaigns. These are the gifts we hope to spread to organizers around the world.

How do you see I Witness Silwan's work as being part of the broader struggle for a free Palestine?

Like all Palestinians, the residents of Silwan are defenders and protectors of our homes and homelands. We are fighting for our right to remain in the places where we live and have lived, in some cases, like that of the Siyam family, for up to 900 years.

Palestinians are fighting one struggle against Israeli ethnic cleansing, even though its specific mechanisms may vary by region. The forces behind the ethnic cleansing that I Witness Silwan exist across all of Palestine. As the Gazan artist Ayman Alhossary said when he contributed a mural, "We are one body, from Jerusalem to Gaza."

What is your vision for the immediate and long-term future of I Witness Silwan, both in Jerusalem and around the world?

I Witness Silwan has always been an international project that uses technology to bring artists and their work to Silwan and connect struggles across borders.

We are bringing our murals to the rest of the world, whether they are painted, wheatpasted, projected onto a wall, dropped as a banner, or posted on social media. We envision art in the streets, public spaces, protests, college campuses, places of worship, museums, cultural spaces, companies, and institutions complicit in Israeli ethnic cleansing. We are aiming for the murals of

Silwan to become a recognizable visual language that the Palestine movement and other movements for justice can use wherever strategic.

We want to instill curiosity about, conviction in, and connection to Palestinians' freedom struggle. We want to drive the world to "look Palestinians in the eye[s]," to use writer Mohammed El-Kurd's phrase.

How can U.S.-based organizers and culture workers get involved and support I Witness Silwan's work?

Artists and culture workers can join our international cultural intervention by reproducing and circulating I Witness Silwan's murals and by creating original artwork that critiques the forces behind ethnic cleansing in Jerusalem. They can use and share this art for actions, art-based interventions in public spaces, community mural projects, social media, and more.

Possible actions include banner drops, projections, or posting at institutions complicit in Israeli ethnic cleansing; art-oriented disruptions of Christian Zionist events, Israeli tourism expos, settler organization fundraisers, etc.; mural-painting, wheatpasting and graffitiing in high-traffic public spaces; and more. Organizers can also get involved with existing campaigns like Not on Our Dime or the recently launched Home Destroyer HD Hyundai.

Please connect with us by emailing iwitnesssilwan@proton.me if you are interested in getting involved and have any questions. Follow I Witness Silwan on Instagram ([@iwitnesssilwan](https://www.instagram.com/iwitnesssilwan)) or check out our website (iwitnesssilwan.org) for more updates on how to get involved as this campaign progresses.

The Only Stable Front

An interview with Basil Farraj on the Palestinian prisoners' movement

Basil Farraj is an assistant professor at the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Studies at Birzeit University in Ramallah, Palestine. His recent article "Palestinian Prisoners: Smuggling Freedom, Writing from Captivity" discusses a selection of writings by Palestinian political prisoners, situating these texts as practices of "smuggling freedom" from the Israeli carceral system and shedding light on their political and social meaning. The New York War Crimes editorial collective sat down with Basil to discuss his research, the importance of political prisoners to the broader Palestinian liberation struggle, and the state of resistance practices in Zionist captivity today.

New York War Crimes: Let's start with your research background and how you came to study the Palestinian prisoners' movement.

Basil Farraj: I was born in Jerusalem and work at Birzeit University in Ramallah. I come from a family that has and has had political prisoners. My father was continuously in and out of Israeli prisons and so were my uncles; my brother was arrested at one point. Later, I got into the academic part of studying imprisonment, not just my family's imprisonment but the experiences of other communities outside of Palestine. I actually think that through Palestine we can better understand the violence inflicted on other communities; we can understand how the Zionist prison has become global.

Could you talk a little more about how Israel exports its violence around the world?

One example is the exchanges between the US and Israel during the "War on Terror." Israel has legalized torture and violence through different laws and convoluted ways of presenting the state. The Israelis had a term



Palestinians in Khan Younis embrace prisoners after their release. February 15, 2025. Hatem Khaled

called "moderate physical pressure" that was part of a list of recommendations by a state committee formed in 1987 to review the use of violence in interrogation rooms. Basically they came up with the recommendation that "moderate physical pressure" could be used when the security agents feel there is a serious threat to public security. This statement was actually used by the Americans during the War on

Terror. There is a CIA memorandum from 2001 that specifically referenced these Israeli terms to legalize torture.

Other examples are the CIA training of paramilitaries in Latin America, Chile, and Colombia, and the exporting of Israeli weapons, surveillance tactics, and technologies. Your readers must know about Pegasus or NSO Group — technologies that are intended to create a sense of fear of surveillance that

contributes to regimes of carcerality. You don't have to be imprisoned inside a physical space of confinement to feel these constant modes of surveillance; they're haunting communities worldwide.

Do you see your academic work as having a political goal? How does it connect to the broader Palestinian movement?

The Israeli occupation controls your freedom, your ability to conduct research, your ability to go to conferences. They arrest students, professors, teachers. So there's this sense of violence that encapsulates the academic experience in Palestine. But specifically, in regards to academic work relating to political imprisonment, it definitely serves a political purpose because when you're analyzing a case of injustice and violence there should be a way to engage with that context in order to change it. Otherwise, our work is not important; it would just stay within the university setting. In Palestine, the university setting is very much entwined in Palestinian society and in political movements. If you look at Palestinian universities, they have graduated resistance fighters and leaders.

Let's discuss your text, "Smuggling Freedom, Writing from Captivity," which you began before the genocide and published in January of this year. How did that piece come about and what were you trying to do with it?

What takes place inside Israeli prisons is political and that is something

Israel has been trying to take away, especially now. They've been trying to depict Palestinian prisoners as dangerous, as terrorists. In fact, they always deny the term "political prisoners" for Palestinians; they're always described as security prisoners. When you think about the texts of the prisoners' movement, all of them were smuggled out of Israeli prisons either with liberated prisoners or in capsules that prisoners swallowed and took out in the bathroom. As I was researching these texts, I realized that these practices are about more than smuggling books. They attest to the political nature of imprisonment. They allude to a potentiality of freedom for all prisoners.

In the movement, we often say that Palestinian prisoners are the compass of our struggle. Reading your article, it becomes clear that prison literature is a big reason why.

It's true. Throughout the Palestinian struggle for liberation, the prisoner's movement has been the only stable front, [in contrast to] the fragmentation that has taken place outside of Palestine and the political fragmentation between Hamas and Fatah. The scope of Palestinian prison literature is very wide; you'll find books that discuss resistance, love poems, messages to family.

The way I read these texts, even if the prisoner is talking about his own experience, they're sending messages to Palestinians that may be arrested and saying it's possible to resist Israeli violence. Even [the martyred political

prisoner and author] Walid Daqqa's texts, which do not describe interrogation, say that it's possible to resist. It's possible to smuggle out this writing. It's possible to dream of freedom even after you've been in captivity for over 38 years. These texts arise from very brutal conditions and their authors believe that it's possible to attain this freedom that does not yet exist. That's why, if you go to any Palestinian library, you'll find a section on prison literature.

Let's talk about Walid Daqqa. In his text "Searing Consciousness," he describes how the Israeli carceral system has evolved to "mold Palestinian consciousness by shattering its collective values." After the signing of the Oslo Accords, overt forms of torture became less common in Zionist captivity, replaced by surveillance infrastructure and strategies to isolate prisoners and break their will. That's all changed now. Since October 7, we've seen Palestinians emerge from Zionist captivity bearing the marks of extreme torture and deprivation. They describe being caged in small cells for weeks without basic necessities. Given this, what can we still take from Daqqa's text?

I wouldn't say that what's taking place now contradicts Daqqa's texts. I think actually it's an attestation to what he's saying. In "Searing Consciousness," he talks about 2004 as a particular moment in which Israelis tried to teach Palestinians not to resist against Israeli occupation. And once again today, with this torture and this violence, Israelis are trying to teach Palestinians that it's not worth it to resist the occupation, that they should be submissive to Israeli violence and power. What's central in Daqqa's text is that the Zionists will use whatever means they can to mold Palestinian consciousness. When they saw Palestinians on October 7 shed their fear of Israel, storm these walls, try to attack Israel militarily... When they saw Palestinians believe that liberation is possible — that's when they released their brutal violence. In a way, Walid Daqqa's argument is very present now.

What kind of resistance and political organizing is still happening in Zionist captivity?

Nowadays, it's very hard. They have nothing in their cells — no television, no books. But I've heard stories of prisoners making chess boards and pieces out of bread and hiding them. I've heard stories of prisoners teaching English and Hebrew to each other. If they find a pen, they hide it. They write things down on cardboard. I've heard stories of prisoners exchanging their memories with each other, trying to narrate stories from books that they no longer have access to. I think these small moments of resistance are very important because they show that Palestinian political prisoners are trying to stay alive, trying to stay political, and, maybe most importantly, trying to maintain their sanity.

GOD IS A REFUGEE

By RASHID HUSSEIN

God has become a refugee, Sir.

So confiscate even the carpet of the mosque.
Sell the church for it is His property,
and sell the town crier in the black auction.
And extinguish the wicks of the stars, otherwise they might
light up the lost wanderer's path.
Even our orphans, their father is absent,
Confiscate our orphans, then, Sir!

Don't apologize! Who said you are an oppressor?
Don't be upset! Who said you are an aggressor?

You have liberated even the grazing cattle
the day you gave Mohammed's field to Abraham.
The horses roaming free across the mountaintops
descend to become yours, most civilized Sir.
The land presents you peace... and its wheat
is gratitude gathered in a lake of gold.
Did you not liberate its neck from the plowman,
as the bull gloated before the hay feeders?
For you are justice and every tyrant craves
for your reign to come without tomorrow.

You have killed the spring, so my wilderness
is a quaking anger and a revolution not yet extinguished.
You who have planted landmines in my gardens,
bombing the blossoming almond season.
How many have you exiled, and they said:
The most honorable ruler,
How many have you jailed... and they said:
The most just master!

And you sculpted "representatives" for us to worship
but they are slaves weeping for one another.
And you wanted me enslaved, to be bought and sold
you wanted me a desperate, to live without diversion
you screamed: you are the remnants of a nation
scattered across caves, so sit.
But you forgot that untended coals
are enough to start a fire, enough to light and guide!

Don't be upset! These words are without mouths.
Don't panic! These words are without hands.

Whence is this land? Its soil burns with fire,
How did you bear its flames?
Where did you get this wheat? How did you steal it,
This grain born from our congealed tears?

If I were to squeeze your bread in my fist,
It is my blood that would drip onto my hand!

This poem was written in 1960; it was recently translated by the New York War Crimes editorial collective. Hussein first read this poem at the Organization of Arab Farmers' conference in Akka, in protest of the 1960 Israeli "Land Law," which classified 93% of the lands in historic Palestine as "state-owned." The poem also references the 1950 "Absentee Property Law" which allowed the Israeli government to arrogate the properties of Palestinian refugees displaced during the Nakba.

THE MARTYR HOSSAM SHABAT — MARCH 24, 2025

'Keep fighting, keep telling our stories'



If you're reading this, it means I have been killed — most likely targeted — by the Israeli occupation forces. When this all began, I was only 21 years old — a college student with dreams like anyone else. For past 18 months, I have dedicated every moment of my life to my people. I documented the horrors in northern Gaza minute by minute, determined to show the world the truth they tried to bury. I slept on pavements, in schools, in tents — anywhere I could. Each day was a battle for survival. I endured hunger for months, yet I never left my people's side.

By God, I fulfilled my duty as a journalist. I risked everything to report the truth, and now, I am finally at rest — something I haven't known in the past 18 months. I did all this because I believe in the Palestinian cause. I believe this land is ours, and it has been the highest honor of my life to die defending it and serving its people.

I ask you now: do not stop speaking about Gaza. Do not let the world look away. Keep fighting, keep telling our stories — until Palestine is free.

Hossam wrote this with the knowledge that, like more than 210 other Palestinian journalists since October 7th, he would be targeted and killed by the U.S.-Israeli forces.

Nour Abdul Latif searches for the old Gaza she loved

Continued from page 1

for they had no home to return to. Others set their tents ablaze, as if to burn away the memories of suffering they had endured throughout the genocide. From all directions, the displaced surged toward the coastal road: families, children, the elderly — all making their way toward Gaza with unwavering determination.

I saw an elderly woman leaning on her cane and walking slowly, yet she was still returning! She wore the traditional Palestinian dress, a sign that she had lived through the Nakba of 1948. This time, however, she was returning to a refugee camp and not her original village. I saw mothers carrying newborns in their arms — tiny souls born during the war, going home for the first time. I saw young men who had lost limbs in the war racing against time to reach Gaza. Some used crutches; others still had metal rods protruding from their healing limbs. Despite their pain, they chose to walk back. Those who could not walk were carried by their loved ones on stretchers or pushed in wheelchairs, refusing to be left behind. Many had come from distant displacement sites like Khan Younis and Deir Al-Balah, making the journey on foot through the dense crowds, as vehicles were unable to reach them. They would remove items from their luggage out of exhaustion and then continue on their way. The entire scene was overwhelming, and my heart yearned to join the march of returnees on foot.

“Oh, paths of return, crowned with longing.”

We got into the car and headed toward Salah Al-Din Road, where vehicles had been gathered for days, awaiting the moment of return. The line stretched from Khan Younis in the south to al-Nuseirat in the north — an exhausting sight. We decided to take a shortcut via a dirt road in Al-Nuseirat to save hours avoiding traffic. The erratic road had been carved out by the occupation, like an erratic snake, twisting aimlessly. There was no reason for its

countless turns except to inflict further suffering on the displaced until the very end. The road opened in the Mughraqa area, now a completely leveled land, resembling a desert of endless rubble. We saw a few residents searching through the remains of their homes, hoping to salvage anything to sustain them in their hardship. Warning signs on the eastern side of the road forbade us from approaching, as the occupation forces were still present. Tanks stood on the horizon, and occasionally, a warning shot would ring out.

The road was congested and completely devoid of basic necessities. We passed many stranded cars, their fuel exhausted or their batteries dead — just a few of the many difficulties people faced while navigating these devastated, debris-filled areas. After many hours, we reached a vehicle inspection point, overseen by the Egyptians from the Egyptian-Qatari committee, as per the agreement. In the background, American Marines monitored the inspection process, fully armed.

I stepped out with my children while my husband drove the car through a scanner device. A U.S. soldier waved at the children from a distance with a broad smile — an odd and unfamiliar sight in such dire times. The Egyptian official greeted us with his warm accent, evoking mixed feelings of estrangement and sorrow. I clutched my children's hands in anguish and went to wait for my husband on the other side of the road.

The Reunion

Minutes now separated me from Gaza. I saw no standing buildings, endless stretches of rubble. Streets, alleys, and entire neighborhoods had been completely erased. For over fifteen minutes, we saw no human presence until we finally spotted a group of young men. We asked them where we were, and they replied that we were on Street 8 in southern Gaza City. We could hardly believe what we saw — everything around us had been obliterated to the point that we could see the

sea from afar, obstructed by nothing!

The joy in my heart froze. Everything was ash — no life, no hope. We moved through unfamiliar roads, guessing the locations of streets and landmarks we once knew. Gradually, we began to see signs of life. But what kind of life was this? Destroyed streets, trash scattered everywhere, sewage flooding every corner. Some houses were barely habitable, yet people still lived in them, clinging to existence despite the unbearable conditions. Small fires burned in various places, ignited by hands seeking warmth in a world of cold death.

We navigated the streets until we reached my family's home, where my parents awaited me. My father — a steadfast oak tree, who had survived the Nakba of 1948 — had spent a lifetime in exile before finally settling in Gaza. He had adamantly refused to leave, not just the city but even his home. He firmly

believed in our return and insisted that all attempts to displace Gazans would fail, just as they had throughout Palestinian history. And my mother — the fragrant blossom of my days — had faced all this devastation by maintaining life in a warm, clean home despite the relentless blows of extermination, siege, and starvation. The shells had devoured the rooms, the windows, and the doors of the house one by one, yet she endured.

As I approached the house's open doors, I was greeted by the scent of the ancient jasmine tree, still enchanting even after its branches had been withered by shelling and white phosphorus. My heart raced ahead of my feet, and I threw myself into my parents' embrace, unable to believe that this reunion was finally happening after months of separation, deprivation, and tears. I couldn't believe that I would sleep in the warmth

of a home, under a roof, in a bed — that the nights in a tent were over, at least for now.

We went to check on our own home, which was in an area affected by the ground invasion. At first, we didn't recognize the street or the neighborhood. Miraculously, the building was still standing. But, as always in Gaza, happy endings never last. After engineers examined the structure, they determined that its western foundations needed to be demolished and that the water, electricity, and sewage networks were completely destroyed. Our apartment had multiple holes from shelling and bullets, parts of it were burned, and whatever had survived the war had been looted by thieves.

Gaza, the Phoenix

It took me a few days to believe that I was truly in Gaza. Day after day, we

wandered the streets, walking among ruins, searching for the familiar landmarks that had changed forever. Nowdays, I pass by a destroyed place and try to recall what once stood there. Most of the time I fail, even though I once knew Gaza as well as the lines on my own palm. It feels like piecing together a puzzle lost in my memory. I see the same streets every day and am still astonished by the destruction. New details of this devastation reveal themselves each day.

I walk with lost eyes, searching for the old Gaza I loved, but I cannot find it. My steps are heavy with sorrow, as I tread on soil mixed with the blood of martyrs. I pass through alleys that once echoed with children's laughter and sounds of life, but now they are silent. The houses have turned into graves, holding the remains of their inhabitants to this very moment. I continue walking, imagining that I can still hear the sounds of those past joys. Tears gather in my heart, but do not escape my eyes. It seems as if I have lost the ability to cry.

Yet this phoenix city always rises from death, always carves its way back to life, a flower blooming from the harshness of the rubble. Despite all the suffering and the ongoing siege, the people of Gaza strive to revive what remains of their homes or to turn the land that once held a thriving house into a place for a new tent. At a time when the world has failed to fulfill its promises of reconstruction, Gaza's brave youth continue to hold hope in their hearts, determined to reclaim life from beneath the ruins. Gaza, which has survived the clutches of genocide, will always remain in the hearts of those who have lived there or known it — a city of hope and resistance that refuses to die, no matter the circumstances. Gaza, the only city of sincerity in a world full of deception and betrayal.

Even if the whole world turns its back on us, we will remain loyal. Gaza will continue to resist, to rise from death, as it always has throughout history.

And as I always say: We will remain, and Gaza will remain — until the very end.



Palestinians in Gaza returning to the North after ceasefire. January 27, 2025. Ramadan Abed



Lebanese child amidst the destruction of the southern suburb of Beirut after the 2006 war. August 15, 2006.



A photograph of poet Muin Bseiso during his funeral procession in Cairo, Egypt. January 1984.

‘You Do Not Leave Your Personal Vendetta to History’

By
MUIB BSEISO

This is the testimony of a Palestinian poet who endured the American-Israeli siege of the patriotic Beirut.. or the Beirut standing steadfast behind its barricades, as it still does today. I pen this testimony on the 27th of June, 1982.

On the morning of the second day of the ceasefire.. I have no idea on which page this testimony will end.. for the ceasefire could be shattered at any moment by an Israeli plane and an American decision.

And yet, I found within myself the strength and resolve to write this testimony.. for my friends and comrades, the writers and poets across the Arab world and beyond, to the farthest street imaginable, even those writers and poets whose voices have not reached us, due to the comfort of geography.. or the indifference to the fate of a small capital on the map.. a capital that filled its sack with sand and crouched behind it, defending a window that has not yet burned.. and a wall that has not yet shattered.

I also found the courage within myself to write this testimony to warn of the grave danger in the sense of mental comfort that many writers and poets here and elsewhere fall into.. as soon as they sign a telegram protesting the orchestrated genocide of Palestinians and Lebanese patriots.. or calling for lifting the siege off Beirut.. those who have remained silent fell under the shadow of the Israeli tank.. now shackled by its chains.. it drags them along the path of its invasion and genocide.. and as for those who have sought refuge in geographic safety, I believe that they have fallen into the trap of self-deception, as neither a writer nor a poet among them can claim that they did not see or hear.. thus claim that the crime was far from them.. the crime is no secret.. for Beirut, set ablaze by the American-Israeli machine, is not cloaked in invisibility. In vain, they try to eat their bread without the taint of smoke, but the smoke rises even from the music they compose for their children.. it will rise from the very paper on which they write.. for the smoke has stained their hands, and in vain they attempt to wash it off with ink.

This testimony is not a military report on the events surrounding the ongoing genocidal holocaust.. I leave the task of writing military reports to the experts. Yet, in this testimony, it is impossible to separate between the military, political, and sentimental crimes of the Israeli tank.. for the warship and aircraft which bombed us did so with an American-Israeli decision.. a decision of political, followed by, military elimination..

Nor does this testimony fall within the framework of a political decree.. or a literary statement.. oh how far removed am I from those two frameworks.. soon, not long from now.. will come the one who would draft and announce the political and literary statement.. it is only a matter of time.. for the literary police hounds.. and cats of publishing houses with their most widely distributed poets and writers.. who fled to where the Israeli tank stood.. it's only a matter of time.. the carts of publishing house will come.. laden with writers, critics, poets, authors of masters and doctoral theses.. and the military experts, and writers of military columns in monthly and quarterly magazines.. to search in the ruins.. for suitable rhymes for their poems.. of children yet to be buried.. heroes for their stories and novels.. and the military experts will write extensively not of the mold of the fighters who fought behind barricades of dirt and stone in Beirut.. but of the mold of the bombs and missiles.. of the mold of the Israeli pilot in the F-15 or F-16..

It's only a matter of time.. for filmmakers and directors of destruction cinema to arrive.. in order to turn the pockets of our dead fighters inside out.. and write the script for the new film.. I already know what the camera would capture: a wax doll buried in the rubble.. the camera focused on her outstretched arms.. her head floating above her outstretched arms.. her head floating above the debris.. it will be a free set design for the directors, photographers, and spectators who will ogle at this scene.. they will stand in solidarity with the wax doll.. indeed, they have already shown their solidarity by purchasing a ticket for such a film.

It's only a matter of time before all the harlots who followed the Israeli tank come to form the republic and government of the Israeli tank.

And I hope that this time never comes.. I hope it never comes.. you do not leave your personal vendetta to history.. your personal vendetta against those who left a child, your daughter.. of ten years.. feeling as though you've never given her the geography nor history of Palestine.. you left her to search for her map on her own.. for her national anthem.. for anything that would affirm her belonging to a wax doll.. as a prelude to her belonging to a homeland.

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thamra.org

The Arc of Resistance

Witnessing the release of Palestinian prisoners from Zionist dungeons

Photos and text by
DINA SALEM

A quick scan through the Telegram channels confirms what we already know: the waiting is indefinite. Once again the promise of release is subject to the whims of the army. Everyone suggests a potential hour. No one is willing to make guarantees. You never know what could happen. Under the shadow of our occupiers' disgraced loss, cer-

tainty is a thing we have learned to unlearn. Hope is the only thing keeping us afloat in the hours ahead.

And then they arrive, the PA crowd. Suited in their borrowed importance, surrounded by an entourage of civil servants, loyalists, and recognizable faces of Ramallah's managerial class. One after the other, their security personnel clear a path through the throng. Local journalists greet them with a warmth reserved for familiar patrons;

foreign ones do not bother to learn their names. They've arrived for the picture — not to witness, but to be seen. Cameras on and the air fills with rehearsed gestures and meaningless platitudes. Something about honoring our freedom fighters, another about *sumud*. Etc etc. In a cliché display of political absurdism, they tout this moment as their own. But in the whispers among the crowd, it's not a question. We know who's to thank.



"Did you get the list?" A friend asks upon every announcement of an upcoming exchange. His brother's name is never there.

Then, at last, movement. The bus has left Ofer; the live broadcast confirms it. Minutes away now. The women brace themselves, clutching their palms against their lips, gripping each other, their facial expressions equal parts anguish and disbelief. Children sense the commotion and grow restless with questions. The bus is within sight. A sob escapes, then another. Photographers are already settled atop the edges of the gates. Young medics have lined up the wheelchairs. A choir of whistles and chants crescendos as the bus reaches a halt, and one can only brace for the upcoming human tsunami.

A trace of tired smiles and waving hands appears behind the darkened windows of the white bus, the one we've all come to recognize across the weeks of scheduled prisoners' exchanges between the resistance and the Zionist entity.

One after the other, they emerge. One after the other, they leap beyond what the martyred prisoner Walid Daqqa referred to as the "Parallel Time," and into our time, yet another disjointed temporal landscape. Young and old, their skinny battered bodies bearing the aftermath of years, decades, of the darkest intervals in Israel's prisons. They profess the most abominable forms of torture, calling for the world to not forget their brethren left behind.

The arena is overrun with families trying to reclaim a lifetime of severance. Boys leaping into their fathers' arms, reaching for their hands, their feet.

Men gripping their mothers' shoulders, kissing their heads before collapsing to their knees. Many gaze into the eyes of the children they brought into the world but have never so much as touched or held. It is estimated that more than 2,000 political prisoners were released in Gaza and the West Bank during the first phase of the ceasefire agreement. Some were taken before October 7, others in the aftermath of the Zionist entity's violent rampage of mass arrests. To be a freed prisoner (*Aseer/a Muharrar/a*) in Palestine is its own ontological category. It is not a condition as much as it is an inheritance.



The poles of the struggle have reached unparalleled contention. The liberated returning home today do so in a context of unprecedented siege and violence in the West Bank. So many are forced to resume survival under genocide in Gaza, to reconcile the grief of incarceration with the martyrdom of loved ones. Others find themselves alone, banished into exile, received not by the warmth of their kin or the



People ask if you're here to receive a loved one. Time stretches, then coils again. Rumors persist and multiply. 8 o'clock, someone says. We've already been waiting for five hours. No, not before midnight. It's been announced. Either way, we are here, however long it may take. The Zionist entity has warned

of celebrations, vowing to condemn all those who dare to partake in these euphoric moments to the same destiny as those they have come to receive. No one seems to give a damn.

But the real waiting happens elsewhere. Mothers, daughters, brothers, fathers, grandchildren — bodies

pressed against the cold, eyes scanning the horizon for the moment that will break them open. In the women's bathroom, numbers are exchanged: my son, sixteen years; my father, twenty-two; my brother, two life sentences, plus seven years; my uncle, since he was a teenager.



Beyond its romantic iconography, the image of the prisoner-hero is a difficult one when confronted with the contradictions and the material conditions of imprisonment and release, which haunt the lives of those imprisoned and their families for generations.

To witness a return of this sort is to gaze at the imagined having been made real, by order of the resistance.

The collective punishment prisoners face is well-sustained within the post-Oslo era of counterinsurgency. In February, the comprador PA, in compliance with the demands of their

Zio-American and European sponsors, announced the abolishment of provisions that allocated direct financial aid to families of prisoners, martyrs, and those wounded by occupation forces. Their funds would be funneled into a vague and broad welfare system that encompasses all Palestinian families, dissolving their status into a bureaucratic machinery of need.

The prisoner-icon, steeped in abstraction and romanticism, is one whose condition is never truly reckoned with beyond its symbolic utility. The show ends, the cameras turn away, and the prisoner is left to confront the wreckage of their stolen lives. Houses demolished, family members long gone before reunion, a life of perpetual surveillance. Nael Salameh Obeid (Abu Mohammed), fell to his death after collapsing from a rooftop in the village of Issawiya, Jerusalem, just one week after his release under the sixth round of exchange. Nael spent 21 years in Zionist prisons. According to The Prisoner's Society, the Zionist entity rekidnapped at least 20 of those who were freed since January 19. Few know their names, fewer still will know their stories.

crete and steel. And yet, here they are, marching back into a world that has sanctioned their disappearance. The images of their liberation can, if only for a moment, rupture settler myths and the plight of defeatism that have long drained our collective consciousness in the world before Al-Aqsa Flood.

It is bittersweet that they return to an ever-changed and ever-changing

Palestine. Their liberation, like all victories wrested from the occupier, carries a significance beyond its immediate moment. It reasserts the principle that the resistance does not abandon its own, that it is able to achieve what no one else ever could in the course of our struggle. In the image of their freedom lies the certain truth that the flood's gates remain open.

DECOLONIZE EVERYTHING

The Red Nation Addresses the Movement

We know the entire history and future of Palestine because we have lived it. We endure the settler colonial project that calls itself the United States. We survived the elimination and removal of our ancestors. We are in our fifth century of resistance. We know that Palestine's future is a certain future because we are still here!

— The Red Nation's message to the Free Palestine National March on Washington, November 4, 2023

We have always believed Palestine is the tip of the spear in the fight against colonialism, the guiding light toward liberation and decolonization everywhere. Over the course of 500 years of Indigenous resistance in the Americas, it's remained crucial to remember our collective histories and to nurture the spirit of resistance uniting Indigenous peoples around the world. Land Day is one such act of remembrance.

Each year, Land Day signals the coming spring, announced by the blooming of red poppies across the region. For generations, the land bore witness to stories of survival, sacrifice, and resistance, holding the scars of settler violence and reminding us of our shared struggle. The red blankets of the fields mark an annual renewal in our commitment to the struggle for Palestine.

Our solidarity is a bridge. We reject the settler state of Israel just as we reject the settler state of the U.S.

We acknowledge that Land Day is not only a commemoration of a historical event but a continuation of the struggle for decolonization, which is actively and bravely fought for in Gaza and the West Bank. Demonstrating continued commitment to the land and to the struggle against Zionist colonization, Land Day is a reminder that Palestine will never submit to settler colonialism. Our struggles are united in this commitment; Zionism is only one form of settler colonialism. In their fight against Zionism, Palestinians have shown the world new ways to resist settler colonialism. Palestinian resistance has not only strengthened our own analyses against the settler project, it has provided us with tools and strategies to combat settler colonialism on Turtle Island and everywhere else colonialism exists. The struggle for a

free Palestine is the struggle for decolonization everywhere.

The Red Nation has been an advocate for Palestine since the group's beginnings. We see ourselves as a continuation of the Red Power Movement of the 1960s and 70s, which in itself was a continuation of the Pueblo Revolt, the Battle of Greasy Grass, and the countless rebellions that have en-

ian organs as the bounty of redskins. We see stolen Palestinian children as our children, who were stolen by both boarding schools and the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). We witness how the limbs of our children make their way into plastic bags both here and there. We see Palestinian political prisoners as our own. Less than

settler goal of elimination is evident, not just materially but also ideologically and symbolically. To that end, we reject the narratives of normalization that deny the legitimacy of Palestinian resistance. The language of normalization enforces coexistence and peace, ignoring the immeasurable violence of settler colonialism and obfuscating all acts of resistance that do not fit within

ject the settler state of the U.S., and so must anyone in solidarity with the Indigenous nations of Turtle Island. The rights to land and dignity that we demand for our relatives in Palestine are the same that we demand for ourselves.

We see Palestine as an alternative path where the Native Nations of Turtle Island had an opportunity or chance

Return in Gaza, he was welcomed into our office in Tiwa Territory, otherwise known as Albuquerque. We shared a meal, we shared stories, and we built bridges across the world. He visited the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center where he saw traditional woven belts made by Pueblo People. He was surprised to learn that the designs were not Palestinian. Tragically, the next time we heard news about Ahmed was in October 2023, when Israel bombed his home in Gaza and murdered his 13-year-old son. His last word was "Dad."

We reaffirm our belief in a future where we will outlive and outlast the empires that will crumble under the weight of their conceit.



Indigenous protestor on horseback confronting police at Standing Rock Sioux Reservation. April 2016. Ryan Vizzions

sured our existence within our homelands. We see our rebellions mirrored in the Al-Aqsa Flood, Land Day, and the Great March of Return. We have used the tools and principles of these rebellions to further our 500-year-long resistance.

We see Palestine in ourselves. We hold Palestinian flags and adorn ourselves with keffiyehs at Standing Rock, Mauna Kea, and on the National Day of Mourning. We see empty settler ideology manifesting itself in colonial monuments, land theft, and normalization of state violence within the Global North. We see olive trees in our buffalo. We see the theft of Palestin-

two months before the first Land Day in 1976, Leonard Peltier was arrested during the aftermath of the Reign of Terror on the Oglala Sioux Reservation. Forty-nine years later, Indian Country received news that Leonard Peltier was going home — the same weekend Palestinian political prisoners were returned and thousands displaced by the war on Gaza made their way back home.

Palestine is a mirror. We confront the same settler project that demands the removal of the native by either displacement or destruction. Our Indigenous existence poses a contradiction to the existence of the settler. The

this narrative. We reject the tone policing of occupied people; anger with and rejection of the settler state is righteous and legitimate.

Our very existence today as Indigenous people of Turtle Island is the direct result of our ancestors' refusal to surrender to the demands of U.S. settler colonialism. Indigenous resistance in all forms is always legitimate in the face of genocide and land theft. We understand Palestine as part of the continuum of Indigenous resistance and unapologetically support Palestinian resistance wherever it occurs.

Our solidarity is a bridge. We reject the settler state of Israel just as we re-

ject the settler state of the U.S., and so must anyone in solidarity with the Indigenous nations of Turtle Island. The rights to land and dignity that we demand for our relatives in Palestine are the same that we demand for ourselves.

We mourn those lost in the struggle for a free Palestine. We mourn for a father who has lost his son, but we acknowledge that we have gained armies of ancestors. Much like Jacob Johns, the warrior who was struck by a Trump supporter's bullet, we fight to stay alive and in this struggle. This Land Day, we reaffirm our belief in a future where we will outlive and outlast the empires that will crumble under the weight of their conceit, a future where land and relatives will be returned and we are no longer "Indigenous" in relationship to the settler states. For the Indigenous Nations of Turtle Island, we too are the unattended coals — enough to start a fire — and Palestine lights our way.

TO FIGHT SIDE BY SIDE: LEONARD PELTIER'S CALL FOR SOLIDARITY

Leonard Peltier, P.O.W.
Marion Federal Prison
July 13, 1982

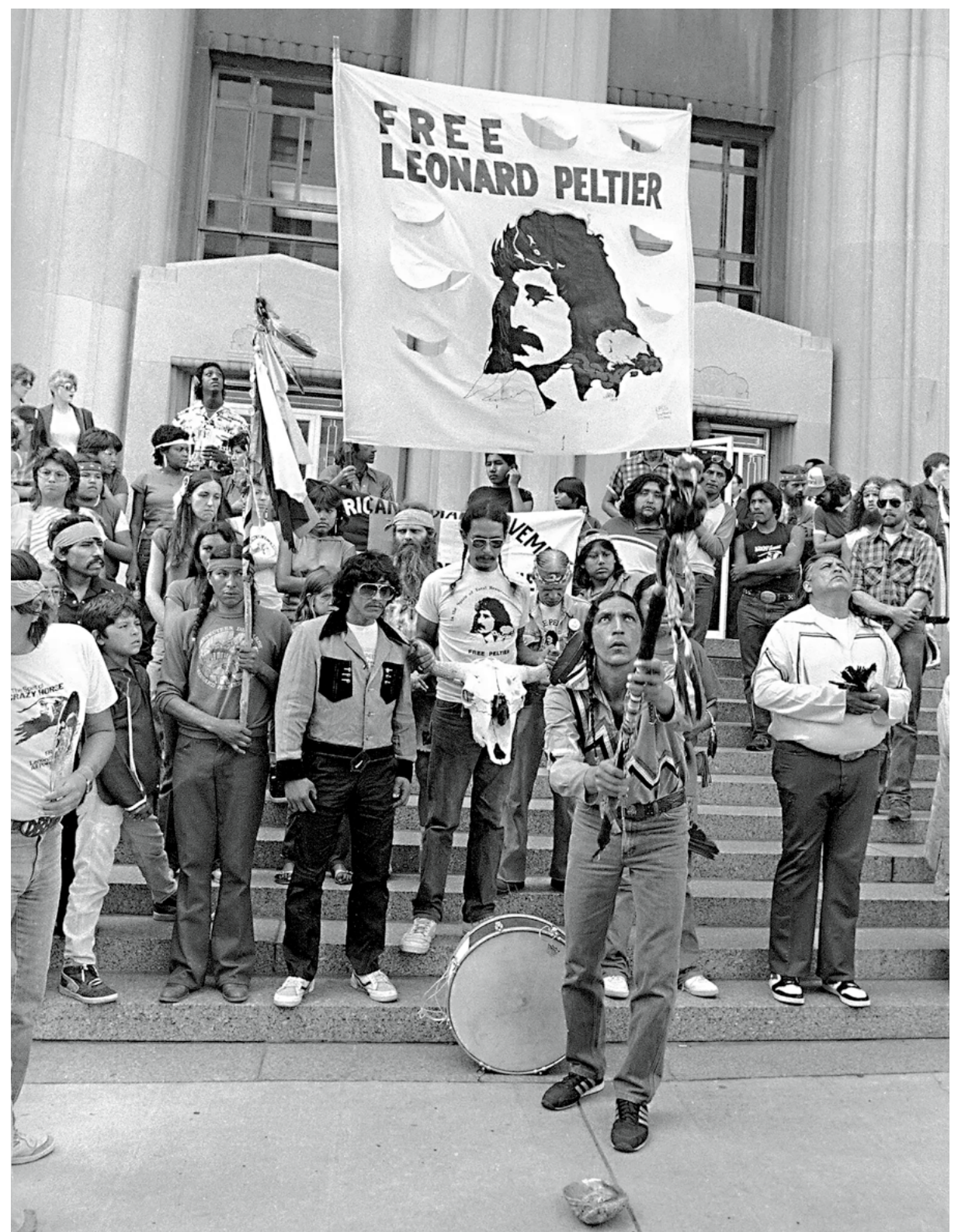
Greetings Comrades, Brothers & Sisters,

I send to you and the Palestinian people my strongest solidarity during this critical period in the struggle of the PLO and Lebanese people against the forces of U.S. and Israeli aggression!

Myself, members of the American Indian Movement (AIM), Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, and its support groups stand in solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people for their traditional land. We understand your struggle based on our continuing war against the U.S. government and their attempts to annihilate us as a PEOPLE, and to steal what remains of our traditional land as shown by their action at Wounded Knee, Big Mountain, and most recently at Lame Deer on the Northern Cheyenne nation. The Israeli troops, carrying out their genocidal campaign, are acting today as the 7th Calvary acted in the past and continues to act in Indian Country. THEY are the war criminals who will be tried for their butchery of the Lebanese and Palestinian people in Lebanon! If I were free today I would take our RED warriors to fight side by side with the PLO to smash the imperialist forces of the U.S. and Israel. I know that the forces of liberation must and shall come together to fight as a united front in the unity of the four colors. We as RED warriors call upon the YELLOW, BLACK AND WHITE freedom fighters to stand united with the PLO in uncompromising solidarity with the Palestinian and Lebanese people's struggle against the Zionist forces of Israel.

I send my love and blood as a prisoner of war within the belly of the beast to continue the struggle.

VICTORY TO THE PALESTINIAN AND LEBANESE FREEDOM FIGHTERS! VICTORY TO THE PLO!



From the Archives: Rally in St. Louis demanding the immediate release of Leonard Peltier. 1985.



LEFT: A Palestinian woman and her son watch the martyrs' funeral procession in the Nur Shams refugee camp. April 21, 2024. Faiz Abu Rmeleh **RIGHT:** Tulkarem on Martyrs' Day. January 7, 2025. Dina Salem

Atop the Hill Overlooking Tulkarem *Zena Al Tahhan reports from the West Bank on the newest Zionist assault*

TULKAREM, occupied Palestine — High on the hill across from the Nur Shams refugee camp, a group of men keeps watch. It is the early morning hours of the first Friday of Ramadan, March 7. The rest of the city of Tulkarem where the camp lies, is fast asleep.

“Someone has to be stationed here at all times, to keep an eye on them,” one of the men tells my colleague and I, referring to the Israeli Occupation Forces. “We change shifts every few hours.”

The refugee camps of Tulkarem and Jenin in the northern occupied West Bank have been the target of a deadly ongoing Zionist military assault since January 2025. Amid the attacks, this hill has seen it all.

Some days you'll find Palestinians breaking down into tears as they helplessly watch soldiers tear down their homes in the camp. Other days, residents will anxiously wait for any sign that the assault has subsided before risking their lives to re-enter the camp.

And at any given moment, somebody will be reporting the maneuverings of the occupation soldiers back to fellow residents below.

“They just exited the Balaawi building. They're headed towards the cemetery.”

The assault, now entering its third month, is the longest in the occupied West Bank since the Second Intifada over 20 years ago. In mid-February, occupation authorities announced their plans to keep soldiers on the ground for the coming year, leaving the fate of tens of thousands of Palestinians forced from these areas hanging in the balance. Residents' hopes of imminent return quickly vanished.

Those displaced are stranded in shelters, mosques, schools, and wedding halls. There is little privacy: Only curtains separate each family. They are living on aid coming from nearby villages and communities that are already financially drained due to the occupation. The aid will run out.

Largest forced displacement in the West Bank since 1967

The Zionist regime launched its deadly assault on the West Bank on January 21, just two days after the ceasefire in the occupied Gaza Strip took effect. The attack began in the Jenin refugee camp but grew to encompass the rest of the city and its villages. The military expanded its assault to Tulkarem and Tubas in the northern West Bank less than a week later.

Within the span of a month, Zionist forces displaced more than 40,000 Palestinians from their homes in the refugee camps of Tulkarem, Nur Shams, and Jenin. It has been the largest operation of forcible displacement since the occupation of the West Bank began in 1967. Holding residents at gunpoint, occupation soldiers threatened to murder residents and their families if they did not leave and gave them only minutes to vacate their homes. Some were ordered to leave via loudspeakers mounted on military vehicles patrolling the streets.

Others endured armored drones flying into their homes through the windows broadcasting the soldiers' commands.

More than 60 Palestinians, including men, women, and children, have been killed and dozens more severely injured since the start of the operation. The majority of them are not combatants. In the first few weeks of the assault, Israeli Occupation Forces indiscriminately opened fire at anything that moved inside the camps, including people who tried to return home to grab essential belongings. CCTV footage of the ongoing attack shows Zionist soldiers executing children and elderly men for no reason as these residents were walking or running for their lives. The occupation has employed its whole arsenal against the northern West Bank: airstrikes, drone strikes, armored Merkava tanks, sniper fire, and armored bulldozers.

A key feature of the Zionist regime's systematic attacks on these refugee camps is its intentional destruction of infrastructure in what can only be

described as collective punishment. Israeli Occupation Forces have destroyed major infrastructure, including the road networks, and water, electricity and telecommunication lines. Officials estimate the cost of the destruction to the cities of Jenin and Tulkarem and their three refugee camps to exceed \$100 million, Tulkarem's deputy governor told me.

Occupation forces also continue to lay siege to hospitals and medical clinics, target first-responders with live ammunition, and block ambulances from transferring injuries and patients out of the camp to hospitals, leading to both direct and indirect killings.

What is unfolding in the northern occupied West Bank at the hands of Zionist forces is just a microcosm of a much larger ongoing Nakba. The West Bank as a whole has experienced an unprecedented level of mass ethnic cleansing and forcible displacement since the genocide in Gaza began. Decades of complete impunity for Israel's

expansionism have made this moment possible. In tandem with these military operations in the north, entire Palestinian villages are being erased. At least 30 villages have suffered from complete or partial forcible transfers since October 2023. Zionist colonizers escorted by occupation soldiers enter these villages systematically and unleash terror, forcing defenseless residents to flee.

The war on Palestinians is escalating on multiple fronts. The Zionist regime bombs and starves one third of the Palestinian population between the river and the sea in Gaza. It closes its noose around those in the West Bank.

But atop the hill overlooking Tulkarem, Palestinians sow the seeds of the occupation's defeat. They risk their lives to return to their homes and land. We find hope in developments like the student movement and know that still more needs to be done to prevent the settler-colony from swallowing what remains of Palestine.

STOP THE SALE OF STOLEN LAND! *By PAL-AWDA*

On October 7th, the Palestinian resistance shattered the myth of settler safety. The Zionist genocide accelerated Israel's pariah status, awakening the world to the horrors of the occupation. In response, the settler colony hastened its illegal sales of Palestinian land. Like much of Israel's violence, this theft is concurrently orchestrated in the United States by the sale of stolen Palestinian land through real estate events here and in Canada, which have grown more frequent since October 7th. We must view the orchestration of Zionist violence from within the belly of the beast and the enactment of settler violence on the ground in Palestine as not distinct but intertwined parts of the machinery of colonization. PAL-Awda has been monitoring and contesting these Stolen Land Sales for years to disrupt this machinery.

Settler violence in Palestine is a long-standing U.S. export. U.S. settlers make up 15% of the 700,000 settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and are known to be at the forefront of the most egregious settler violence. In February 1994, U.S. settler Baruch Goldstein massacred 29 Palestinians as they prayed at a Hebron Mosque in the holy month of Ramadan. Goldstein was a follower of the far-right religious Kach party, founded by fellow U.S. settler Rabbi Meir Kahane. Such collaboration between U.S. actors and settler violence in Palestine is not a historical anomaly but a key feature of Zionism in ideology and practice leading up to and accelerating in our present moment.

with more than 40,000 people forcibly displaced by the IOF since January's temporary ceasefire in Gaza. This land grab creates continuity between the settlements in the Jordan Valley — Yifit and Masu'a — and the settlements at the eastern end of the mountainside — Gitit and Ma'ale Efraim. The strategic annexation of land between long-established and “recognized” settlements is done with the goal of building new settlements there to create one contiguous occupied territory and, ultimately, absorbing the entire West Bank into the Zionist entity.

While settlers in Israel violently raid and clear Palestinian land, Zionists settle these lands by marketing the settlement movement right here in our backyards. Stolen Land Sale events hosted by Zionist real estate companies, such as My Home in Israel and My Israel Home, sell occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem land, some of which is still inhabited by Palestinians, exclusively to Zionist Jews across North America. While most sponsors of Stolen Land sales are Israeli, U.S. companies and citizens meddle in the illegal sales market. Formerly, U.S. real estate company Keller Williams sponsored Stolen Land Sales in the U.S. and Canada but was forced out of the market in March 2024 due to the political pressure on its domestic real estate enterprise and legal threats. Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, stands as the largest shareholder in Phoenix Ltd, an Israeli finance and insurance firm profiting from expanding West Bank settlements. Israeli banks that sponsor the sales, such as Bank Hapoalim, Bank Leumi USA, and Israel Discount Bank of New York, have branches in New York. The web of U.S. enablers of Stolen Land Sales extends far and wide, from the Zionist synagogues that host the sales, to the politicians who defend them by helping vilify our protests as antisemitic, the platforms — such as Eventbrite and Zionist newspapers — that publicize the events, the fanatic Zionists who attack our protests, and, ultimately, every Zionist.

Racial exclusion and militarized entry into Stolen Land Sales reflects the violence of their missions. To gain entry, registrants undergo an extensive and discriminatory vetting process. Prospective attendees are asked to prove their membership in a Zionist Jewish orthodox community and share the names of their synagogue and rabbi. They are asked if they have previously made Aliyah (a Hebrew word meaning “ascend,” but in this case defined as the return of the Jews to the land of Israel) and which settlement in occupied Palestine they want to purchase property in. At the door, police and armed private security guards perform pat-downs and background checks. Those who make



Palestinian burning signs in protest of Trump's Deal of the Century in Ramallah. July 2, 2018. Abbas Momani

Those living in the belly of the beast have immense responsibility and power to disrupt settler-colonial expansion.

Since October 7th, there have been around 1,800 settler attacks in the West Bank. While settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem have steadily grown since their inception in 1967, July 2024 saw the largest land grab since the disastrous 1993 Oslo Accords, with the Zionist entity seizing around 2,370 hectares of land in the occupied West Bank and instituting numerous checkpoints that turn two-hour journeys into 12-hour ones. The West Bank is enduring the largest displacement since 1967,

it through the intense vetting process are dazzled with “a golden opportunity” from the fascist brokers. The fascist ethnostate uses the whiteness of settlements to sell the ethnonationalist dream, with settlements touted to “have a lot of anglos.” Lofty financial incentives are a major selling point in Stolen Land Sales. Prospective settlers are offered benefits like tax breaks, lotteries that lower settlement prices to 10–15% under market value, and discounted mortgages from Israeli banks in exchange for colonizing the land. Settlers also reap *oleh chadash* (a Hebrew term that refers to a new immigrant to Israel) benefits, which provide perks such as tax-free income, employment assistance, and tuition benefits — a summation of the great extents the Zionist entity goes to colonize Palestinian land.

To combat Israeli land theft in the United States, PAL-Awda launched its Stolen Land Campaign after October 7th with the aim of shutting down Stolen Land Sale events by taking legal action against their sponsors, hosts, and collaborators and by protesting the sales events. Upon learning of Stolen Land Sale events, the PAL Commission on War Crimes, Justice, Reparations and

Return serves cease-and-desist letters to the sponsors and hosts of prospective land sale events. These letters outline the 22 international, federal, and state laws violated by the exclusive land sale events of occupied Palestinian land in the United States, including the Fair Housing Act of 1968, Civil Rights Act of 1965, and Article 49 of the Geneva Conventions.

The Commission also files notices and complaints with state attorneys general, state real estate licensing authorities, and civil rights divisions to prevent the events and urge officials to open their own investigations against those involved in the illegal land sales. These efforts have successfully shut down numerous Stolen Land Sales and caused the New Jersey Attorney General's civil rights division to open investigations against two of the My Home in Israel principles in March 2024. However, elected officials have largely failed to uphold the law and shut down Stolen Land Sales.

If, despite receiving legal warnings, events still go on, PAL-Awda mobilizes its allies and takes to the streets to confront the Zionist land grabbers. Stolen Land Sales are usually hosted

in synagogues, an intentional feature that enables organizers to weaponize accusations of antisemitism against protesters. Sales have taken PAL-Awda and their allies to heavily Zionist neighborhoods across the boroughs of New York City, Long Island, and New Jersey. In response, Teaneck and Bergenfield, New Jersey, have been making efforts to pass anti-protest ordinances aimed directly at the Stolen Land Campaign.

Our protests are met with incredibly violent Zionist counter-protestors. At our most recent protest against the Stolen Land Sale by the Getter Group hosted in Borough Park, Brooklyn, on February 18, Betar, a fascist organization protected by its state-given nonprofit status, along with other Zionist groups, rallied an aggressive mob to counter our protest. Palestine supporters were spat on, kicked, harassed, maced, and even physically struck by Zionists, resulting in the hospitalization of two protesters. Protestors were followed on foot and by car by Zionist mobs including the Shomrim (a fraternal nonprofit organization of Jewish members of the NYPD). From inside the event, Zionists threw jugs of water out of windows onto the protesters below. Counter-protestors

performed Islamophobic and profane acts, making sexual gestures with the Quran and attempting to set the holy book ablaze, trying to incite violence and decrease the morale of protesters. Despite this violence, PAL-Awda and our allies stood steadfast in the face of the attacks. In the aftermath of the protest, politicians and media outlets used tired claims of antisemitism to vilify Palestine supporters and ignored the real violence they endure.

Those living in the belly of the beast have immense responsibility and power to disrupt settler-colonial expansion. This campaign is one concrete way we can exercise that responsibility and power. We fight these Stolen Land Sales in the hope of preventing the theft of Palestinian land in the United States — in our backyards — by deterring sponsors, hosts and prospective attendees and exposing the true nature of Zionism as a racist ideology of Jewish supremacy. Being that we are largely protected from bearing the brunt of the Zionist entity's violence, this is the closest we come face to face with the Zionist entity. Every disruption of Stolen Land Sales is the potential disruption of a fascist settling Palestine.

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MARCH

THE DAY OF
THE LAND

