

“All the Consent
That’s Fit to Manufacture”

Three Years
“The cost of compromise and
surrender is far greater than
the cost of resistance.”
— Mohammad Sadegh Shahbazi



LEFT: Palestinians pick flowers at Gaza’s al-Bureij Camp, March 5, 2025. Photo by Moiz Salhi. TOP: Residents of Mansouri in southern Lebanon watch an Israeli detonation destroy their village, September 11, 2026. Photo by Hussein Malla. BOTTOM: Mourners on the day of the funeral following U.S. attack on Shajareh Tayyebah Elementary School in Minab, Iran, March 3, 2026.

ONE STRUGGLE ON ALL FRONTS

A September That Resembles Us

The writer Nour Abdel Latif pens a letter to Gaza

My Beloved Gaza,

Wondrous September is here once again, stirring in my heart the sadness of one season ending and another beginning. It welcomes me with gentler breezes and warmer memories of you. And is there anything more tender than memories of picking olives from my father’s orchard?

I am a city girl, and all I know of life in the village is the farming taught to me by our garden plot. Yet that one connection bound me more deeply to the land and to ancestors I never met, but whose stories I learned by heart. I felt the lingering touch of their hands in the hollows of tree trunks we touched together, though across different times. I remember my grandfather’s old house with its tall doors and high ceiling like a cavern. It was a labyrinth of rooms opening onto one another, and it was the perfect place to play hide-and-seek. This house and its garden witnessed the succession of wars waged against Gaza, from the Nakba of 1948 to the ongoing genocide that began in October 2023.

My grandfather built the house with thick walls and a lower floor, below ground level. The bedrooms were installed there to shield the family during war. But he did not know that the genocide would obliterate it entirely, until nothing remained of it but the memories that dwell in my heart. In the garden grew pomegranate, sycamore, and guava trees, but the olive trees were the dearest and most precious of them all. How could they not be, when they supplied us with oil throughout the year? Over the years, I learned to distinguish between the trees whose olives would yield abundant oil and those that would yield less, and I trained myself to be gentle with the olive blossoms so that the tree might offer the finest of its fruit.

September in my memory means waiting for the clouds to gather in your sky and for the sky’s first gift of rain, so that we could cry out

What will the Gazan
do now when the first
autumn rains fall?

“Sallabat” — a term farmers use to refer to the first light rain in autumn — and announce the beginning of olive-picking season. Then came the labor of the harvest and its sweet toil. From dusk till dawn, we picked, gathered, and sorted the olives. Our hands would be stained with oil until they turned black. We pressed as much as our need required and packed the rest in sacks ready to be taken to the olive press east of Shuja’iyya, so that they may return to us as oil in yellow jerrycans to give to loved ones. And then there are the breakfasts in the morning: fava beans, labneh and cheese and za’atar, a cup of sage tea, and pressed olives cured with arugula leaves. The highlight of these breakfasts is a bowl of freshly pressed olive oil, with its delicious, tangy flavor and vibrant color. The days would pass quickly; as our elders say, “During olive season — you blink, and the day is done.”

Where is that September of old, Gaza? And what is your September like today, my darling? Where is my grandfather’s house? Where are the olive trees? Where is that exquisite oil from the orchard? And where are the yellow jerrycans we used to store the oil in? The very same yellow jerrycan that Refaat, in that famous photograph, was carrying while running to save the last of his oil. What remains of a Palestinian if they lose their oil, olives, and land? How will they survive? What will the Gazan do now when the first autumn rains fall?

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Martyred journalists Mohammed Qraieqa, Moamen Aliwa, and Mohammed Noufal.

What We Sacrificed

Mahmoud Shalha: Our colleagues gave their lives to their people

Mahmoud Shalha worked alongside martyred journalist Anas al-Sharif throughout the genocide. This summer, a year after al-Sharif was martyred, Shalha and 23 of his colleagues were fired by Al Jazeera in a shameful and cowardly betrayal. Shalha submitted the following message as a testament to Gaza’s journalists, whose work continues under unimaginable conditions. His words serve as an introduction to the testimonies from journalists in Gaza about their martyred colleagues contained in this issue (pp. 4–5) — a selection from The Living Record, a substantial oral archive compiled by The New York War Crimes and released in the summer of 2026.

There is nothing in this world more precious to a person than their soul, and our colleagues who have passed away gave their souls and gave themselves for their people, for the truth, and to convey the voice of truth.

If there is a message I wish to share with the world, it is this: Some journalists in Gaza gave their lives, gave themselves, left everything behind, and renounced this world in order to amplify the voice of this oppressed people and to convey the voice of truth and justice.

Although we know full well the magnitude of the danger we face, we will continue the path that our colleagues were on before they passed away. We will continue our work.

I worked as a photographer with my uncle Anas al-Sharif, who had been an Al Jazeera correspondent since the start of Israel’s war on Gaza.

We were covering and documenting events in northern Gaza, specifically in the Jabalia refugee camp and northern Gaza, in the area that witnessed the most intense fighting at the start of the war. The worst of Israel’s genocide was in northern Gaza.

We endured starvation; we endured daily massacres; we endured a human holocaust; we endured murder. There was nowhere to sleep, nothing to eat. There wasn’t even a bathroom to relieve oneself privately.

Life was practically non-existent. With no equipment, no means of communication, no internet, and no way to send or receive the message, and despite the danger — anyone who went online in the north was targeted — we covered the events and risked our lives, climbing to high ground to get a signal on our eSIM cards so

we could send our reports and make our voices heard to the world via Al Jazeera’s broadcast.

We sacrificed to deliver sound and images at a time when Al Jazeera’s own people — the staff who had worked with them before the war — had abandoned northern Gaza and Gaza City and fled to the south.

We continued to broadcast the footage and carried on Al Jazeera’s mission; we were its voice and its image from northern Gaza.

After nearly three years of coverage, and after the martyrdom of my colleague, my beloved, and my uncle Anas al-Sharif, as well as my colleagues Mohammed Noufal, Mohammed Qraieqa, Ibrahim Zaher, and Moamen Aliwa — I was the sole survivor of that attack — I had expected Al Jazeera to reward me and ensure my survival. Management had other ideas.

While I was documenting events and sending footage to Al Jazeera, they contacted me to inform me on a call that lasted no more than fifteen seconds, “Your employment has been terminated. Good luck.”

I had no prior notice. They terminated me without paying any dues, without paying anything at all. Just one phone call. “Take care,” they said, “your employment is over, Al Jazeera management.”

When I first received this news, I was shocked and stunned. This is my job, but also my calling. My colleagues gave their lives for it, and I wanted to continue on their path and carry it forward. It is also my source of income for me, my family, my children, and my siblings.

It breaks my heart that they didn’t appreciate our effort, our hard work, and what we’ve lost over the past three years.

It was a huge, huge shock.

I don’t want to stop carrying on the message of the martyrs, the message that my colleague and uncle Anas al-Sharif died for.

I’m still reporting on events and sharing footage through my own platforms — Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media — so that I can continue to report the truth that my colleagues died for.

To the journalists and colleagues who were martyred while covering the war, this is our pledge and our commitment to you: We will continue to speak of you, to remember your deeds, and to honor the heroism you displayed as you sacrificed your lives for your people.

NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

‘PALESTINE IS A WINNING CAUSE’

As we were putting together this issue, rescue workers in Gaza City pulled the remains of 96 martyrs, 58 of them children, from a single site in Zeitoun that the Occupation bombed three years ago. A six-story building — damaged by bombardment — collapsed, killing 21 people. Dozens of the displaced were martyred in drone strikes. Meanwhile, on the day he inaugurated two new settlements in the West Bank, the Israeli finance minister said that the entity needs “to go to war in Judea and Samaria, to do what we did in Gaza.” Yet the biggest story related to Palestine in the mainstream media concerned a rapper who had been dropped from a stadium tour, at the urging of a billionaire stadium owner, for saying “Free Palestine” on stage.

This was depressing. It was also a strange relief, an indication that solidarity, even at the discursive level, can still be threatening to capital and to empire. Often this is not how it feels. It feels instead like “Free Palestine” has become possible to say in direct proportion to how impossible it is to do. It is up to us to decide the slogan’s meaning. One task for the movement is to defend “our right to be effective,” as a former member of Palestine Action puts it in our featured roundtable discussion, with more rigor and fervency than we defend our rights to free speech.

We cannot afford to stop at ‘Free Palestine’

Palestine is a winning cause. Many people who say the right words also seek to do the right thing. They are being misled by so-called movement leaders and political figures who are trading on that sincerity to raise money, advance their careers, and gain access to power — without ever using that power to fulfill a popular mandate. Take the case of Michigan Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed, who, in 2024, backed Michigan’s “Uncommitted” campaign, helping mobilize 100,000 Democratic primary voters to withhold their support from then-President Biden in protest of his genocidal policies. But after winning the Democratic nomination for Michigan’s U.S. Senate seat, he was seen giggling at a campaign event with Kamala Harris, who helped facilitate the genocide under her vice-presidency. El-Sayed has also repeatedly condemned the Palestinian resistance, even implying, in an interview with CNN, that Hamas is evil. These photo ops and speech acts are not merely “pragmatic” necessities for swinging liberal voters.

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Sliman Mansour, 1947–2026

When your village has been or can be destroyed, a painting of your village becomes a testimony. Mansour understood this early, and he painted as a witness. What can we take away from a life like his, aside from heartbreak? We can learn that erasure begins with the image.

Rebirthing the Spirit of the Revolution

Interviews by HELYEH DOUTAGHI

The imperialist media and state apparatuses that shape political discourse in the United States have, for decades, normalized narratives about Iran that reduce it to an object of Western intervention instead of recognizing Iranians as political agents with their own histories, institutions, and contradictions. The Iranians most eagerly platformed in English-language media affirm the geopolitical premises of U.S. foreign policy. Millions of Iranians whose political commitments do not conform to those narratives are routinely rendered invisible, caricatured as irrational fanatics, or simply dismissed as “regime plants.” This erasure has material consequences. When Iranians are threatened with “annihilation,” civilizational destruction, or collective punishment, the systematic dehumanization of Iranian political subjects makes such violence easier to normalize.

For this edition of The New York War Crimes, I talked to two Iranian organizers whose politics are explicitly grounded in social justice, national sovereignty, and resistance to imperialist intervention from within the institutions, social movements, and political traditions of the Islamic Republic.

Alireza Mirghaffari is the president of the Association of the Gas Refineries Workers’ Unions of Bushehr Province. The group represents approximately 15,000 contract workers in 12 refineries of South Pars, the site of one of the largest gas reserves in the world and home to Iran’s most strategically important gas fields. South Pars was directly targeted by U.S.–Zionist forces during the recent war of aggression against Iran.

Mohammad Sadegh Shahbazi is a political organizer and activist whose political formation began when he was a student at the University of Tehran. He has participated directly in Iran’s electoral politics, including running for parliament, while also developing sustained critiques of Western-oriented political projects and their domestic and foreign-policy orientations.

Mirghaffari and Shahbazi’s exclusion from English-language coverage is not incidental: They offer access to political traditions and forms of organization that are routinely excluded from Western discourse about Iran. At a moment when Iranian society has endured war, sanctions, foreign intervention, and profound internal political tensions, listening to those who have organized within the country — and who view anti-imperialism as a condition shaping the lives of everyday Iranians — is indispensable to any serious understanding of Iran. Dominant representations of Iran privilege rhetoric that can easily be incorporated into familiar Western narratives of liberalization or regime change. These interviewees are not detached observers of Iranian politics; they are active participants in political, social, and class struggles that have unfolded within the country. The full interviews may be read at newyorkwarcrimes.com.

Alireza Mirghaffari

The impact of war on organizing efforts and labor struggle in South Pars

On 18 Azar (December 9, 2025), roughly three months before the beginning of the war and one month before the attempted coup in January 2026, we organized the largest labor gathering in post-revolutionary Iran in Asaluyeh. We organized it on behalf of approximately 15,000 workers, and between 5,000 and 6,000 workers came into the streets. That mobilization demonstrated the considerable capacity of organized labor in Iran to advance its demands through collective action.

Given the outbreak of war and the events of recent months, organizing has become more complicated. Our immediate priority has become the preservation of Iran’s territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence, and security, while continuing to pursue workers’ demands within that framework. We see the defense of Iranian sovereignty as the precondition of workers’ rights and the advancement of their struggles.

Workers who had been organizing regular strikes and demonstrations across different refineries temporarily suspended their protest activity after the

war began. Instead, many volunteered for additional shifts and increased their presence at work so that damaged production units could be restored and returned to operation as quickly as possible. For us it was clear that restoring productive capacity was not simply an economic task. It was part of the social, national, religious, and political responsibility of the working class. This became particularly important following attacks on South Pars’ energy infrastructure and the assassination of officials and specialists.

At the same time, access to officials and authorities responsible for addressing workers’ demands has become more difficult. We face two simultaneous realities: the urgent necessity of rebuilding damaged refineries and restoring production, and a political and security environment that has made the pursuit of workers’ demands more complicated.

Under these conditions, we do not believe that worker organization can be defined simply as workplace protest. Genuine organization means that workers must be capable of recognizing the historical priorities confronting them, maintaining organizational cohesion, defending their class interests, and at the same time protecting the productive infrastructure of the society that workers themselves produce and reproduce.

International solidarity with Iranian workers

When we speak about meaningful solidarity, I think we first have to recognize a fundamental reality: Workers in the imperial core live within an economic structure in which a significant part of their material position and purchasing power is, at a structural level, connected to unequal relations between the center and periphery. This does not erase the common interests of workers across the globe, but it does mean that we have to take seriously the different material and historical positions from which workers enter the global class struggle.

That also does not mean that workers in the U.S. are powerless or without responsibility. On the contrary, they possess considerable power to impose costs on their government and employers. But exercising that power requires political and historical consciousness about the role their labor can play within the imperialist system.

We saw some examples of this during the genocide in Gaza. Workers and trade unions in the United States (as well as others in Europe), including workers involved in logistics and other parts of the supply chain, have challenged shipments connected to Israel and attempted to disrupt their own participation in the U.S.–Zionist machinery of death. These actions demonstrate that workers in the West are not merely passive witnesses of their governments’ foreign policies. They have the capacity to intervene at the point of production and within the supply chains through which war is materially organized.

We have not yet seen the same level of action in relation to Iran. The first

step is therefore education. Western unions and workers need to understand

the history of their governments’ aggression against Iran’s sovereignty and self-determination: from the 1953 coup

against Mohammad Mosaddegh following the nationalization of Iranian oil, to

Western support for Iraq during its war

against Iran, to decades of sanctions,

assassinations, sabotage, and more recent

military attacks and interventions

against Iranian sovereignty.

That historical understanding should lead to a practical political position. Workers in the United States should continue fighting for fair wages, job security, and safe working conditions. But they should also ask whether their labor contributes to the production, transportation, or provision of the means through which workers in other countries, including Iran, are being attacked.

For us, this is not an abstract question. South Pars, where I work, has itself been targeted. The weapons used in attacks against our infrastructure are produced through military industries and supply chains in Western countries. So when an American worker produces military equipment, or works within a logistics system that transports it, the question cannot be reduced to that worker’s own wages, safety, or job security. There is also a question of what that labor produces in the world beyond the workplace. Workers must ask how their labor, their company, its technologies, and its logistical infrastructure are incorporated into the global political

economy, and whether that system contributes to the killing of workers and civilians in countries such as Iran.

Meaningful solidarity begins when workers in the imperial core recognize that their security and prosperity cannot be built at the expense of insecurity and death for workers in the global periphery.

Solidarity with Iranian workers therefore cannot mean speaking on our behalf, appropriating our demands, or transforming our struggles into instruments of political pressure against the Iranian government. It is our responsibility to critique and hold to account our government. Solidarity means that workers in the imperial core must understand their government’s role in our disempowerment and death. It means understanding the history of intervention, opposing sanctions and war, and using the organized power of labor to impose costs on the institutions and employers that participate in these systems of violence.

If an Iranian worker is standing in the face of war to protect their refinery or factory, their family, and their society, then solidarity from an American worker should begin with ensuring that their own labor is not being used to destroy that refinery, kill that worker, or make that family’s life more precarious.

Workers, everyday life, and the meaning of victory in the war

In this war of aggression, the United States has failed to achieve its stated objectives of intervening in Iran’s internal political order, dismantling its sovereignty, “changing its map,” as Trump claimed, or looting its national wealth and strategic resources, including oil and gas. Iran, by contrast, has successfully defended its territorial integrity and sovereignty, while making significant advances in decolonizing West Asia — effectively rendering key U.S. bases in the Persian Gulf inoperable and asserting sovereignty, for the first time ever, over one of the world’s most critical corridors for the movement of energy and capital.

This does not mean that the United States has ceased its efforts to create the conditions for political destabilization, including through economic warfare, heightened volatility, and the persistent threat of all-out war and continued acts of aggression, all of which impose immense material and psychological costs on ordinary people. The Iranian people have endured enormous pressure and paid a considerable price. Yet the Iranian Revolution of 1979 was a collective political project through which Iranians decided that they would not live under imperial subjugation; the history of colonial and imperial domination, as well as recent examples of U.S. intervention in countries such as Syria and Libya, demonstrates that the collapse of national sovereignty and security can produce conditions that are vastly more destructive.

It is also important to note that, despite the economic pressure produced by war, decades of U.S. sanctions, and more recently the U.S. naval blockade, the basic systems of production and provision have not collapsed. Prices have risen and people face significant economic pressure, but there has been no generalized shortage of essential goods nor a complete breakdown in access to food and other necessities. For us, the continued production and provision of essential goods is itself part of what a resistance economy means.

Iranian society is politically and ideologically diverse. There are serious critics of the government, people who oppose the state entirely, millions who support the Islamic Republic, and still others who have volunteered to defend the country or taken to the streets in support of its armed forces. The experience of war — and the direct targeting of civilians, schools, hospitals, and productive infrastructure — has nevertheless made one reality more tangible across these political differences: Without sovereignty and security, it becomes exceedingly difficult to pursue sustained internal reform, advance social justice, or achieve meaningful social and economic progress.

Mohammad Sadegh Shahbazi

Life in Iran and winning the war

The absolute majority of the Iranian people believe in victory. Not only did they remain standing in an asymmetric battle against two nuclear powers and



An Iranian woman takes part in a rally in Tehran on al-Quds Day in support of the Palestinian people. March 13, 2026.

defeat the enemy’s objectives, but they also inflicted real pain on the enemy: Roughly 20 American bases across 10 countries were targeted, the aura of the world’s foremost superpower was shattered, and the prices of oil, gasoline, jet fuel, sulfur, aluminum, helium, and more were brought under control. Above all, the U.S. — like Britain after the Suez Crisis — was reduced to a former superpower. Iran was revived; the people have been in the streets every night for over 210 nights. Iran was victorious in the moral battle. It never retreated from principle, standing against the child-killers of Epstein Island who perpetrated atrocities like Minab. The self-proclaimed “defenders of women’s rights” turned a stadium of Iran’s female volleyball players into blood and dust.

In all countries, under wartime conditions, officials worry about the people’s resilience; in Iran, the people worry that officials might show weakness. Despite inflation and the inevitable problems that result from war, the Iranian people are more resilient than some of its officials. Polls show that over 80% of the people believe in standing against the West, in victory. Every night that Iran targets the U.S. in the Strait of Hormuz, Jordan, and the Persian Gulf countries, popular gatherings become more passionate in the streets. Many people, despite political, ethnic, religious, and other differences, have hoisted the Iranian flag, the flag of revenge, on their homes and cars. Iranian polls show that nearly 70% of the people have participated in these nightly gatherings, and many who have not come also support standing firm.

The war turned Iran back into a united nation; the Iranian dream was revived. This is not merely the “gathering around the flag,” nor is it merely Hegel’s spirit of the age — it is the rebirth of the spirit of the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Iranians have once again joined the spirit of the revolution. Many of those who had criticisms of the system now believe in Khamenei’s ideas and understand what U.S. imperialist arrogance is.

The cost of war on the Iranian people

Naturally, war has costs. The people and the government in Iran have paid various costs: the martyrdom of the people, the children of Minab, the girls of Lamerd, the sailors of the Dena destroyer, the families of the Sunni com-

munity of Sirik, Iranian defense forces, officials, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and others. No sane person seeks war, but no honorable and sane human being accepts humiliation either. The United States seeks to enslave Iranians. Iranian officials, despite the opposition of many people, even pursued three rounds of negotiations with America, resulting in three wars: the 12-day war, the 39-day war, and the 13-day war (the Hormuz battle). Leading up to the 39-day war, Iran placed great concessions on the table, but the United States was satisfied with nothing less than complete surrender.

The willingness to bear a cost is, at times, precisely what genuine solidarity demands

Opposing war is good, but on the condition that we take justice into account. It matters who is the oppressor and who is the oppressed. The resistance of the oppressed against the oppressor, and of the one who has been aggressed against the aggressor, is a reasonable and human matter.

Iranians did not start the war and even tried to fend off the shadow of war through negotiation. Unfortunately, the United States and Israel are not only warmongers, but also treaty-breakers, and observe no human or moral principles.

The Iranian nation is aware of the costs of war, but through the experience of its own history and the history of other nations, it has learned that the cost of compromise and surrender is far greater than the cost of resistance. The Iranian nation knows that if it does not stand today, it will suffer the fate of Iraq, Syria, Libya, Sudan, Somalia, Venezuela and others.

But the Iranian nation is not in a position of weakness; by standing, Iranians have gained dignity. They inflicted pain on the Epstein coalition by controlling the Strait of Hormuz; they rose above the level of a regional power.

Forging meaningful alliances with the Iranian people from the heart of empire

First, they must recognize how the U.S. corporate media has perverted their understanding of countries that come to be considered the enemy of the U.S. because they resist its domination, and take serious steps to unlearn those.

Second, they should never approach the Iranian people from a position of presumed moral or intellectual superiority. It is now for the world to see what our nation recognized nearly five decades ago: that the United States and the Zionist entity are among the gravest violators of human rights, particularly in light of the ongoing, livestreamed genocide. They should engage with the Iranian nation on equal footing. We need a global anti-arrogance front that takes real action, not performative solidarity with statements and signatures.

Third, they should effectively protest (that is, impose a cost on) the crimes of the United States against the Iranian nation.

Fourth, they should refuse to welcome war criminals responsible for grave violations of international law to their cities; despite assurances from the mayor, we once again saw Netanyahu welcomed in New York City.

Fifth, they should make the centers of power, wealth, and information that support Israel and supply it with weapons, money, energy, and food the target of their actions or boycotts.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, they should not underestimate the conditions and sacrifices that genuine solidarity may require. Meaningful solidarity requires recognizing that, in a time of active genocide and fascist repression, it may come at a significant cost. To stand with people may require accepting consequences and making sacrifices. That willingness to bear a cost is, at times, precisely what genuine solidarity demands.

The fact that anti-war activists, leftists, and anti-imperialist forces, despite great efforts, have not been able to prevent wars such as those in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, Gaza, Lebanon, Yemen, and Iran shows that the ideology and strategy of struggle need to be revised. We have experiences in Iran that we are prepared to make available to justice-seekers around the world.



Striking workers at the South Pars Gas Complex in 2025.



The Living Record

More than 260 journalists have been killed in Israel’s genocidal war on Gaza, more than in any war in history. To be witnesses for their people, they sacrificed everything. Here, Gaza’s journalists tell the stories of their martyred colleagues.



Journalists as a Collective
remembered by Yafa Abu Akar

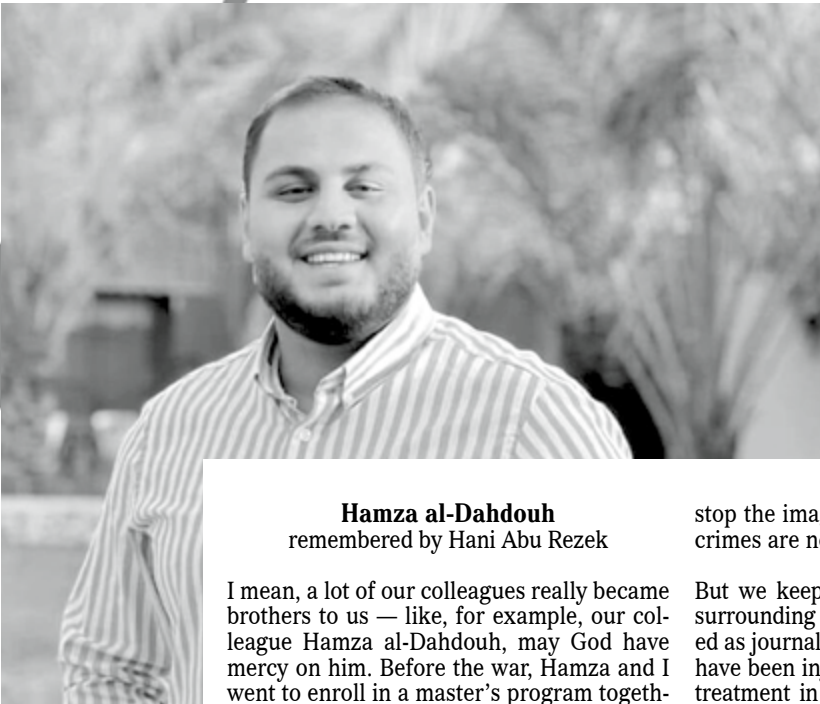
Since the start of the war, from the very first day until this moment, I have worked as a reporter in the field, documenting the stories of our martyrs, stories that ensure our people are remembered as human beings with full lives, not just numbers. They have mothers, they have children, and they have stories of their own. I have also written about fellow journalists, men and women who were martyred in the field. Over 50 members of my family have been martyred. Among them are my uncles, their wives, and my cousins. They were killed in direct attacks on their homes. As a journalist, I have felt distressed and demoralized as a result of the deliberate killing of my colleagues. At the beginning of the war, I fled to the South. I saw with my own eyes how journalists are targeted, how they are martyred. Over 239 Palestinian journalists have been killed. Nowhere in history have 239 journalists been killed in one place except in the Gaza Strip. What I mean is that journalism itself is a target. We are covering the genocide in Gaza with our blood, our writing, our voices. In the field, we only report the truth. A truth that many will not like, a truth that may kill many of us. This genocide, to be more precise, is an ethnic cleansing of the Gaza Strip.

I've been subjected to many things when it comes to our colleagues, most recently the targeting of six of our fellow journalists. Honestly, I've lost faith in this unjust world that watches our colleagues being killed, our children being killed. It watches our children being starved and humiliated, our women walking through houses searching for their children's remains.

It was a big shock when I went the morning after their tent was targeted. I went to cover the mar-



tyrdom of Anas al-Sharif, Mohammed Qraieqa, Mohammed al-Khalidi, Ibrahim [Zaher], [Moamen Aliwa,] and Mohammed Noufal. The sight of blood on the tent was extremely shocking. These are only journalists carrying their cameras and their voices. They are Gaza's real voice. It was traumatizing to see the blood, to see the scene. I saw silence from Arabs and silence from journalists. In that moment, I almost lost my mind, to be honest. I tried to hold myself together and control my nerves while I walked through the place for the report, but I could not contain myself. My colleague Mohammed Qraieqa lost his father as a young child. And now history repeats itself: His son Zein and his three young children will also live without a father. They will live the same story as their father. Anas, too, who was always asking us to take care of his mother and children. Mohammed, Mohammed al-Khalidi, the poor man, the journalist who had no place to sleep after work. He was in the tent because he didn't have one of his own. He could not sleep on the street, and so our colleague Mohammed al-Khalidi was struck there. Many stories still affect us. The moment our colleague Ahmed Mansour was targeted and burned inside a tent at Nasser Medical Complex. The whole world saw his body burn, but we, his colleagues, could not save him. These memories affect our work and our psyche, but we remain determined to deliver our message and our voice. If I, Yafa, stopped working after everything I lost, who would continue after me? If I, Yafa, considered all these martyrs as mere numbers — I feel heartbreak anytime, live on air, I would say only, "100 martyrs," I am supposed to say who those 100 martyrs were. Mention them by name. I should name them and speak of the heart of every mother or child they left behind and of every wife's grief. Every martyr has a story. Each one is a tale in its own right. Every tale carries a lifetime's worth of blood and tears.



Hamza al-Dahdouh
remembered by Hani Abu Rezek

I mean, a lot of our colleagues really became brothers to us — like, for example, our colleague Hamza al-Dahdouh, may God have mercy on him. Before the war, Hamza and I went to enroll in a master's program together, but unfortunately, the war started, and we weren't able to pursue it. Hamza, may God have mercy on him, was martyred in the first few months of the war, along with several colleagues, when the car they were in was targeted.

Honestly, Hamza was like a brother to me. He was a dear friend; he was a well-mannered, humble person. He had dreams and ambitions, but those ambitions and dreams were never realized, because he was martyred in the bombing. May God have mercy on him.

We really did share everything, the laughter, the sadness, the grief. But that was his fate, God's will and decree. God chose him as a martyr, along with his mother and several members of his family. This is the life we're living. Every day, we lose fellow journalists in the field because the Israeli occupation is trying to crush the truth and



stop the images from getting out, so that its crimes are not exposed.

But we keep going, despite all the dangers surrounding us. We are being directly targeted as journalists, and many of our colleagues have been injured and are now being denied treatment in hospitals outside Gaza. This is the reality we have been living throughout this genocidal war. It has spared nothing and makes no distinction between journalists, paramedics, or civil defense workers, because everyone in this war is a target.

I have so many memories of Hamza, God have mercy on him, especially our breakfasts together. We were always going out for breakfast, to the sea or at al-Zawiya Market, a popular market in Gaza. I also remember how, just before the war, Hamza and I went to enroll in the university together. We were in the same cohort. A month later, the war began, so Hamza never got the chance to continue his degree, because he was killed during this genocidal war. These, I mean, are the things that, more than anything, I remember the most. I keep thinking, ya Allah, all those times we had breakfast, all the times together — the sad times and the happy ones... There were so, so many things we shared between us.

Hassan Eslayeh
remembered by Ali Eslayeh

It's not easy to tell — where do I even start? Every day we count — not reports, but names. Names of colleagues, brothers, people we worked with, ate with, played with, ran with... And in the end, we bid them farewell as martyrs. Hassan Eslayeh, ya Allah... He wasn't just a journalist. He was a media institution unto himself. He never hesitated. He was always ahead of everyone. His voice calmed everyone. His words warmed the heart even in the midst of the fire. Unfortunately, Hassan is gone, but his image and his voice remain with us in every corner of Gaza. Hassan was my cousin, the son of my paternal aunt, and my boss at work. But he is not alone. There are so many journalists today living among the rubble. I'm one of them, too. I am a journalist living in a tent, without a home. All our homes have been destroyed. No electricity, no clean water. During the day, we run to document people's suffering while at the same time trying to provide food for our children. And the hardest part is that sometimes we can't even find out whether members of our own family are alive or not, because communications are cut off, and there's simply not enough time. And the catastrophe is so, so huge, beyond what anyone can imagine. What has happened in Gaza is annihilation, a genocide. Destruction of every aspect of life.



Bilal Jadallah
remembered by Rasha Abou Jalal

I was working with international media organizations, and most of my work was in English, aimed at audiences outside Palestine. I wrote reports and journalistic stories for foreign newspapers and organizations. To be honest, although I was relatively well known outside Gaza, many of my local journalist colleagues didn't really know me well. The reason was simple: I rarely wrote or published in Arabic, and my presence in local media was limited compared with my work in international media. One day, Bilal Jadallah called me. He surprised me with an offer I never expected. He spoke to me with such kindness and respect. He invited me to join the judging panel for Press House's annual competition to select the best stories submitted by journalists in Gaza. I was very happy about the call, but at the same time, I was also surprised. I kept wondering how he had noticed my work when I wasn't very involved in the local media scene. But this was one of the things that set Bilal apart; he followed the work of real journalists wherever they were. He didn't limit his attention to the names that were most visible or prominent on the local scene.

We sometimes receive compliments and positive feedback from many people, but when they come from someone like Bilal, they mean something different. He was a man of great stature, with long and deep experiences in media and journalism. He had worked alongside generations of journalists and helped train and support hundreds of young men and women. This is why, whenever he offered a word of appreciation or praise, I felt genuinely proud. I felt that he wasn't just encouraging me personally; he believed in the importance of producing journalism about Gaza, from Gaza. He always made me feel that the work we're putting in, however difficult or exhausting, mattered and had value.



I mean, this is not just a media story. This is the story of people with a conscience: A journalist photographs the body of a child while tears run down his face. Every day he stands in front of a camera, sometimes running to help, other times looking at photos of the wounded and martyred in the hospital morgue. Man, it's something the mind simply cannot grasp. We've been living with this pain for two years. And then we go back to reporting as if we aren't human. No, we are human. As a journalist, I am more human than ever. But the pressure is overwhelming. We speak today not only to document. We tell stories to immortalize, for the world to remember us, so they remember that journalism is not a crime, ever. Journalism is not a crime. Hassan, may God have mercy on him, was martyred as a result of massive incitement, really massive incitement from near and far. All of this because he was a journalist? Because he filmed? Because he documented? Ya Allah... Has the camera really become a target? Has every microphone become a weapon? But we cannot stay silent.

May God have mercy on Hassan Eslayeh and on every colleague who was martyred. All my love and strength to those still out in the field, steadfast despite the hunger, exhaustion, and death we see around us. There is no power nor strength except through God.

But then the day I will never forget came, in November 2023. We were living through extremely difficult days. Displacement was consuming our lives. The bombardment was endless. We felt fear every moment. As I remember it, we were leaving Gaza City and heading south, looking for anywhere that might be safer. Amidst the chaos, fatigue, and fear, I received the news that Bilal Jadallah had been martyred. I just couldn't believe it at first. I felt like the news was more than I could take in. I kept telling myself this was impossible. Bilal, Bilal himself? The man who was around us, supporting journalists, encouraging them, and bringing them together?

When the news was confirmed, I felt such deep sadness. I wasn't just grieving for a colleague or a media figure. I was grieving for someone who was carrying an entire project dedicated to supporting journalism and journalists in Gaza. It was a massive shock, in the midst of that harsh journey of displacement, while I was thinking about the children, shelter, food, famine, the unknown. I found myself thinking about all the memories I associated with him. I remembered his first call. I remembered our meetings at Press House. I remembered his words of encouragement. I admit, I felt genuine fear about the future of journalism in Gaza. I felt that journalism in Gaza had lost one of the people who cared most deeply about it, defended it, and believed in its significance.

Even now, whenever I remember Bilal, I think about how a person's real impact isn't felt in the positions they occupied or the titles they held, but in the people they supported and encouraged, and the doors they opened for them. For me, Bilal will remain one of the people who helped strengthen my presence as a journalist and gave me space to connect with my colleagues and with the local journalistic community. His name will remain tied to beautiful memories, moments of humanity, and professional experiences that are impossible to forget, no matter how many years pass.



Heba al-Abadla, Ayat Khadoura, and Marwa Musallam
remembered by Mona Khader

I chose to speak about my colleague Heba al-Abadla because of the bond we had. Heba, while she was still at university, started training with us at Filastiniyat. She was a really bright, strong young woman even back when she was at university. She had huge ambitions to become a well-known journalist. She looked up to many women journalists, including our colleague Shireen Abu Akleh, may God have mercy on her, who was also assassinated by the Israeli occupation. She wanted to become like them. She worked very hard at school and graduated at the top of her class. She was an advocate for human rights and freedoms. She was very well-read and intelligent. Heba got married after graduating, but her marriage did not keep her from pursuing her ambitions. She had a daughter. Heba's life was... I don't know what to say. Heba was just very, very ambitious. She had incredibly high aspirations. She went on to join a number of journalists' groups and collectives. She always loved reporting. She really, really enjoyed broadcast journalism. She put a huge amount of work into developing herself as a journalist. Heba was a victim of the Israeli occupation. The last thing I remember from Heba was her pleading on Facebook to be rescued. The occupation forces had besieged her neighborhood, as happened to so many colleagues who were martyred in their homes, whose homes were destroyed. Perhaps the most recent was Marwa Musallam, who kept appealing for help on Facebook for maybe a week from under the rubble. No one could rescue her because civil defense's capacity had been severely depleted after two years of war and blockade, with no new supplies or equipment coming in. It was only after her martyrdom that she was removed as a skeleton from under the rubble. Skulls under their homes. I hope Marwa is the last journalist whose body has to be recovered. The war is still



ongoing and this is very, very frightening. It is terrifying.

Despite all this, journalists, men and women, are still there in Gaza. They are determined to keep showing what's happening, to keep reporting this genocide.

Going back to Heba... I keep thinking about the distress we felt with her in those final moments as she begged everyone to rescue her. She appealed to the Red Cross and kept calling them. No one at all was able to rescue them and she was martyred while holding her daughter. She was posting on her page about everything that was happening. She wrote about the airstrikes on the house they were in. The place where they were sheltering. Everyone in the house was a civilian. She kept writing about the tanks advancing until she was martyred. And that also reminds me of another colleague. Heba was martyred while she was posting on Facebook, calling for someone to rescue her, for everyone to help her. She couldn't... This occupation is a criminal occupation. A criminal, murderous occupation.

There's also my colleague Ayat, Ayat Khadoura. Ayat was martyred and even now her voice still rings in our ears as she cried out to the world to rescue her, "Save us, save us, save us." Ayat was martyred, but her voice still echoes in our ears because she was calling on everyone to rescue her until she was martyred. No one was able to rescue her from this criminal occupation, which targets civilians and anyone trying to bring the truth to light. Ayat Khadoura stayed in a refugee camp in North Gaza, giving voice to the North right up until the last moment of her life. The same was true of Heba al-Abadla, who kept sharing news on her own social media platforms until her final moment. Marwa Musallam, who was martyred a while ago, did the same thing. She too kept appealing for help while trapped under the rubble. What can we say about the journalists who've been martyred?



Mariam Abu Dagga
remembered by Baraa Lafi

My life is still frozen on August 25, 2025, the day I lost you. The day when, only moments before I lost you, we were sitting together, having coffee. Then we heard the first explosion and ran out to cover it. You were martyred and left this world forever, and I was injured. My physical wounds were so minor compared with the wound to my soul, a wound that will never heal. Ever since then, I have been living in the memory of that day, August 25, 2025. I have not forgotten you, not for a single moment.

You are someone the whole world should know about. Everyone should know who Mariam was. Mariam Abu Dagga was in her thirties. She was the mother of one child, her son Ghaith, whose life also stopped on that day. Mariam was a devoted and loving daughter. As a journalist, Mariam was brave. Very brave, braver than many men. Anyone could tell you that. Mariam in the field was not unassuming and timid — no. She was fearless. She ran toward the fire, she was first on the scene.

Mariam felt everything deeply. Every morning, we would wake up, say goodbye to more martyrs, and then go out to report on what had happened. She became even more sensitive after losing her mother. She was heartbroken. After that, every grieving mother affected her deeply: the loss of a mother, a mother's grief. At funerals, she was often the one comforting the families and the children who had lost someone. Mariam was deeply empathetic. She was human in every sense of the word. I truly mean that: She was such a deeply caring person. I have lost her as a friend and a companion, and her son lost his mother. The world lost a journalist, but we lost her as a person. Someone



with whom we lived... We lived through the entire war together and spent more time with one another than we did with our own families because of our work and our reporting.

But what I want you to understand is that Mariam was no ordinary person, nor will she ever be an ordinary person, even in her absence. We will talk about her for the rest of our lives, about her and all our other fellow journalists, women and men, who were martyred. Because they deserve to be remembered. They deserve more than to be reduced to numbers. They deserve to have their memories honored for as long as we live, until the day we join them.

Mariam, now that we've reached the month that marks one year since you left us, I want to tell you something. We could never forget you. You never really left us, and you never will. Your memory will live on forever. I will keep speaking your name with pride, telling your story, and keeping your memory alive wherever I go. I want to tell you that you were the truest companion, the most wonderful mother, the best friend, and the greatest loss of my life.

I have lost so many people I loved. I have lost relatives who were martyred in this war. But losing you, Mariam, was devastating. I've lost so many people, but losing you alone felt as heavy as all those losses combined. We will never forget you. Your name and your memory will always be with us.

I will keep holding on to the things of yours that I still have. I still have your coffee cup. I still have your water bottle.

May God have mercy on you and receive you into His grace. Inshallah, may God give us the strength to bear your absence and reunite us with you one day in peace.



Mohammed Saleh al-Sharif
remembered by Israa al-Sharif

I'm the journalist Israa Sharif, the sister of the martyred journalist Mohammed al-Sharif. Mohammed was martyred at the age of 31 during the invasion of Jabalia Camp on November 15, 2024.

From the very beginning of his life and of his studies, Mohammed was very passionate about journalism. He really looked up to me, and he was always trying to become part of this world of journalism. He got involved with the Journalists Syndicate and the Press House, developing his skills and experience in the field. He didn't stop there. He was also always trying to find a journalistic niche of his own. It's true that he didn't have much luck in this field, but he created his own platform. He called it Al-Hannoun. He shared breaking news there and on various chats and channels.

He gave whatever he could, even at his own expense and through his own efforts, to help people, the poor, widows, and orphans. He was always looking for ways to help young people develop their skills. When doors closed in his face and life became more difficult because of the siege on Gaza, he tried to pass on his knowledge and experience and help students and youth develop their skills. He was always seeking out gatherings and forums for university students. He always sought, through his modest means, to make a name for himself in universities and youth initiatives. He would do this even if it was at his own expense. He gained nothing from any of this. He only wanted to leave a mark — a mark in entrepreneurship, a mark in media, a mark in humanitarian and relief work.

In terms of his personal life, Mohammed adored his wife and they had three children together, two girls and a boy. He was loving, very loving, and an ideal father. Mohammed was a modest man



He had dreamed of making a name for himself and being known. That night, his name and photo spread across the media, and his name echoed through every news group sharing the news of his martyrdom.



Ibrahim Mohareb
remembered by Rasha Ahmad

I'm here today to tell you about the brave, noble journalist Ibrahim Mohareb. My loyal friend Ibrahim is one of the young journalists who chose a path filled with difficulty and danger, but he never backed down. He was a freelance photojournalist who worked on a per-assignment basis with many news outlets. Most of the work he did, he did for free. For free. He conveyed the voice of truth to the world from within Gaza. His presence was not fleeting. He was always at the Journalists Syndicate's Media Solidarity Center in Khan Younis. He would capture moments before they disappeared. His camera was his only weapon; it was his tool, and his voice shouted out through his photos. People knew him for his boldness. He was not afraid to enter dangerous areas to document, even though he knew this press vest would not protect him. But it was a message to the world: I am a journalist, not a fighter. He was devoted to his work and attentive to the smallest details. He focused on people's struggles, on the truth, on everything.

During the last war, he became even more active and was present at almost every major news event covered in Khan Younis. With every photo he captured, he was sending messages to the world saying:



I am here, in the Gaza Strip. My people are alive, and there are crimes that cannot continue to occur in silence. In short, Ibrahim was a brave, fearless field journalist. He chose to be the eye of the people, to show the world, through his camera lens, what they couldn't say themselves.

But beyond everything, Ibrahim was human in every sense of the word. He was a modest young man, no more than 26 years old. He was loved by his friends, his colleagues, his neighborhood, and by everyone. He was known for his smile, which never left his face, despite the exhaustion he endured every day. Ibrahim was wounded. Ibrahim was incredibly loving to his family, especially to his late mother, may God have mercy on her. Even those who didn't know him well described him as calm, kind, and well-mannered. Ibrahim was not just a journalist. He was a loyal friend, a good neighbor, and a devoted son. He had a dream to see his country free and to grow old in peace. Every photo he took captured his hope for a future that was different. Even though daily life was full of danger, he never complained or backed down. On the contrary, he would always say, "This is my duty." His humanity became clearer still after his martyrdom. Ibrahim was the voice that stirred people's hearts. Ibrahim is not just a colleague. Ibrahim is a friend, a brother, a neighbor. Ibrahim is everything.

who loved to spread his beautiful spirit and sweet humor wherever he went. It's true that life was difficult for him. It's also true that the conditions young people in Gaza were living through were extremely difficult. But he was always smiling. He always had hope, and he would always spread that hope and optimism to everyone around him, whether it was at home, at work, or while volunteering. He volunteered for many organizations. He was always dutiful to his parents and loving to his family. He valued his relationships, was always there for people, and never let anyone down. Even in the midst of war and the difficulty it brought, he always tried to be a source of comfort for his family, to ease things for them and protect them. When the camp was invaded and indiscriminate bombardment intensified everywhere, he tried to protect his family and provide them with food. And despite all this, he would still try, whenever he could, to continue his journalistic work and report the news, including breaking news, through his platform and other channels, especially because he was in the camp and never left it. He and his family remained steadfast in the camp.

Mohammed was martyred while he was out trying to find some food for his family. He was martyred next to Kamal Adwan Hospital. A quadcopter drone targeted and assassinated him a few meters from the hospital. Had it been a safe place, people would have been able to reach him and help him. But because of the heavy gunfire and airstrikes, no one was able to rescue him, even though he was only a few meters away from Kamal Adwan Hospital. Mohammed was buried, because of the difficult circumstances and the security situation, in the courtyard of the Kamal Adwan Hospital on November 15, 2024.

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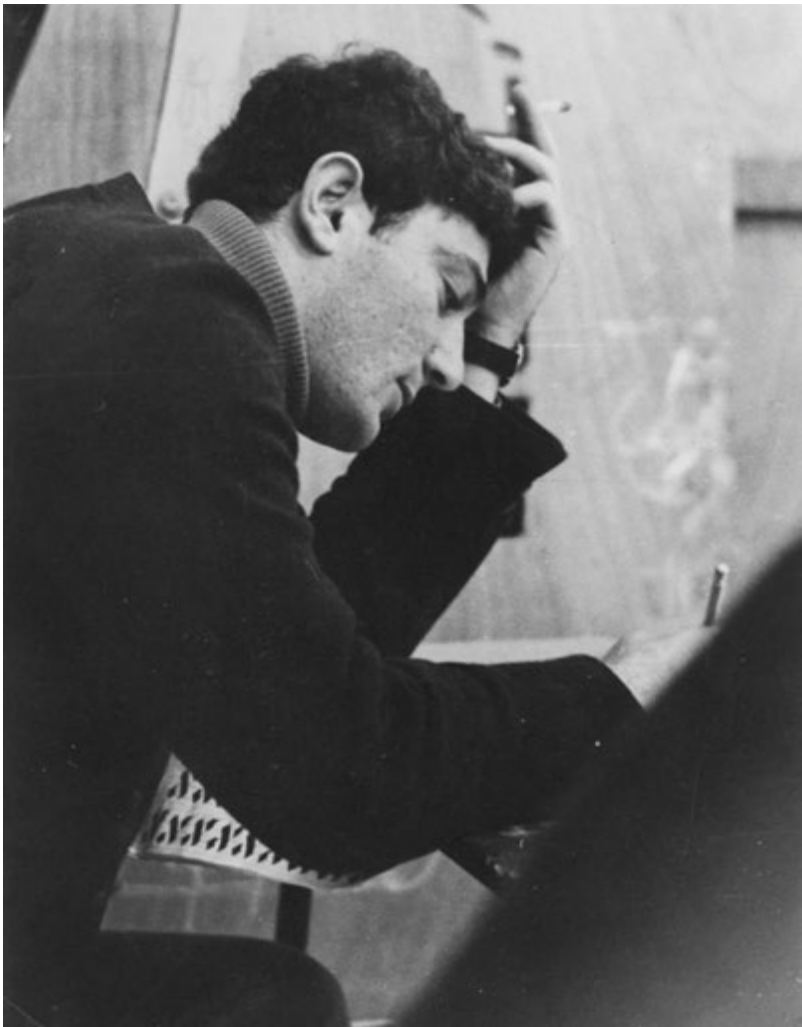
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Dignity Is a Weapon

Sliman Mansour, 1947–2026



Sliman Mansour, standing in front of his massive mural, titled “Revolution Was the Beginning” (2016), photographed in 2024.



The symbols embedded in my art, such as the enduring olive tree and the Palestinian embroidery, are not mere motifs; they are vessels of collective memory and steadfast resistance. Through them, I endeavor to transcend temporal boundaries, crafting a visual tapestry that resonates with the enduring spirit of a people subjected to physical and mental displacement.

— SLIMAN MANSOUR

Sliman Mansour, the Palestinian painter whose work evoked the steadfastness of his people, died on August 24 in Al-Makassed Hospital in occupied East Jerusalem. He was 79. Born months before the mass expulsion of his people, Mansour lived his entire life in the age of the Nakba and died in a city that is still occupied. The time that passed between his birth and death spans eight decades of Palestinian resistance to Zionist annihilation and erasure — a people’s rebellion that he took up with paintbrush, straw, mud, and henna. We are lucky that his oeuvre survives him, insisting that Palestine exists, that it has a face and a texture, and that no army has yet found a way to stop it from being seen. In remembrance, we can only write this humble obituary and love letter.

The fourth of six children, Mansour was born in Birzeit in 1947. His father died when he was 4, and his mother was then forced by financial hardship to send her children to a Lutheran boarding school for orphans in Bethlehem. His grandfather, Boulos Khoury, was a priest, and the Christian icons the child Mansour saw beside his grandfather in church informed his earliest work. As a boy, he learned the power of the image, its capacity to be a vessel for a people’s sorrow.

He was accepted to the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, but after

the Zionist entity captured the West Bank in 1967, Mansour feared he might never be allowed back into Jerusalem if he left. The outside world offered a scholarship and freedom from the city he knew, where the occupation could only promise repression and marginalization. Still, he chose Palestine, and he remained. He studied at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, graduating in 1970.

At Bezalel, Mansour was taught abstract expressionism, an artistic movement that interested him very little; he wanted to paint figurative subjects from life. His aversion was about more than the capriciousness of taste. During the Cold War, Washington promoted abstract expressionism abroad as the art of the “free world,” an art whitewashed of history and politics. Historians have documented how it served as one more weapon of cultural empire. The complete absence of an explicit political message in paintings by artists like Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and Mark Rothko became, paradoxically, the ultimate political statement: visual proof that the U.S. was a “free society” where artists could paint whatever they wanted. A colonized people is never offered that mirage of neutrality. When your village has been or can be destroyed, a painting of your village becomes a testimony. Mansour understood this early, and he painted as a witness.



TOP: Mansour in 1970, the same year he graduated from the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem.
BOTTOM: “The Camel of Burdens (Jamal al-Mahamel),” 1973.

In 1973, at the age of 26, he painted “Jamal al-Mahamel (The Camel of Burdens).” An old man, a porter, hunched under the weight of his load, carries the city of Jerusalem on his back, the dream of a Palestinian homeland, against an empty backdrop. The cityscape features the Dome of the Rock, dominant and shining. The painting is among Mansour’s most celebrated, in part because it rebukes the Zionist fantasy that invents ancient wars of religion among the Palestinian people. This work, painted by a Christian, portrays a unified people carrying one city, the weight doled out evenly for every Palestinian who prays for it.

The image became enormously popular during the First Intifada. It still hangs in homes, shops, and camps. More recently, it began appearing on T-shirts, tattoos, and phone screens. Palestinian journalist and author Ramzy Baroud remembers it in the living room of his family home in the Nuseirat refugee camp in Gaza. “The last time I saw that painting hanging in the living room of my old house in the Nuseirat camp in Gaza was also the last time I saw my

father, most of my brothers and many of my childhood friends,” he wrote. “My father died years later. The house was bombed. The painting no longer hangs where it once did, at the heart of our old refugee home.”

It is perhaps irrelevant to consider what the tasteless occupation made of a painter of such magnitude. Nonetheless, Zionist policies acted according to their logic, attempting to quash any expression of dignity the Palestinian artist might produce, for fear that it could inspire the public. In 1980, the Zionist army closed down an exhibition of work by Mansour, Nabil Anani, and Issam Badr in Ramallah after only three hours. Two weeks later, the artists were summoned and told that political painting, and even the colors of the Palestinian flag, were banned. As Mansour later noted, “They told us that painting the Palestinian flag was forbidden, but also the colors were forbidden. So Issam said, ‘What if I were to make a flower of red, green, black, and white?’, to which the officer replied angrily, ‘It will be confiscated. Even if you paint a watermelon, it will be confiscated.’”

TOP: “The Bride of the Homeland (Lina Al-Nabulsi),” 1976.
MIDDLE: “Palestinian Prisoners’ Day (Freedom),” 1980.
BOTTOM: Mansour working in his studio in 1985.

What followed is well known: The occupation thwarted Palestinian artists from working. Mansour recalled the oppression they faced: “Movement was difficult. Many artists were banned from traveling. Artists were often arrested and their works confiscated. I, myself, was thrown in jail four or five times.” Meanwhile, jack-booted soldiers dragged refugees from their sleep before dawn, forcing them to paint over every slogan and image on their walls. The art collector Sultan Sououd al-Qassemi notes that some of Mansour’s works were lost, destroyed, and confiscated by the Zionist authorities. The comical vulgarity and dull absurdity of such policies do nothing to attenuate the terror. A state armed to the teeth, nourished by U.S. empire, deploys the full force of its technofascist might to destroy the palette of a landscape painter. A cliché about how tyrants fear art because tyrants mystify while artists clarify comes to mind.

In 1987, as the First Intifada began, Mansour joined Vera Tamari, Tayseer Barakat, and Nabil Anani to found the New Visions Collective. Answering the call to boycott Israeli goods, they abandoned Israeli-made art supplies for mud, straw, wood, leather, henna, and natural dyes. Mansour was able to recall his childhood, when he would help his grandmother build beehives and ovens out of mud. Once he began modeling figures, he found that “the mud also reflects the human fate with the cracks.” His people, in other words, were being asked to wait in the dust, and he made the dust speak.

Resistance needs rifles, yes, because colonialism is violence, but an occupation is also enforced through the machinery of the market. Once you withdraw your custom, you begin to withdraw your consent. The movement initiated by Mansour and his cohort at New Visions is widely considered an artistic precursor to the

modern BDS movement.

In 1988, ever committed to representation of collectivity and dispossession, he made a series of four paintings of destroyed Palestinian villages: Yibna, Yalo, Imwas, and Bayt Dajan. His 1989 “Rituals Under Occupation” shows a funeral scene in which vast crowds carry a massive coffin shrouded in the Palestinian flag so long it disappears into the horizon, a painting of a people whose mourning is endless because the killing does not finish.

Mansour wasn’t an artist who barricaded himself in ivory towers. He was a consummate cultural worker who led the League of Palestinian Artists from 1986 to 1990, co-founded the Al-Wasiti Art Centre in Jerusalem in 1994 to connect artists in Palestine with those in exile, and taught at Al-Quds University from 2000 to 2014. He drew cartoons for Palestinian newspapers and illustrated children’s books. He advocated for cheap prints of his paintings so that ordinary people could own them. Amer Shomali, director of the Palestinian Museum, recalls that Mansour cared less about prestige and accolades than about how the work made the viewer feel, and wanted it understood and felt by the average Palestinian. “He was the mastermind of creating a Palestine that unifies us all as Palestinians, something that we long for and we work to live in.”

Mansour’s fellow painter Vera Tamari spoke to the heart of his work: “He wanted people to know that we are rooted here.” He also refused the easy role assigned to the colonized, that of the permanent, hapless victim. He painted Palestinians as vibrant people living busy lives. Villagers working the land, families gathering, the olive harvest, sumud in everyday moments. Dignity, he understood, is a weapon, too — the oldest one the dispossessed have.



“Rituals Under Occupation,” 1989.



TOP: Mansour as he works on his figurative series titled “I, Ismael (Ana Ismael)” in 1998.
BOTTOM: “The Sea is Mine,” 2016.

A stroke in 2021 affected Mansour’s left hand and made concentration harder. Later, he painted with supplemental oxygen, his lungs sclerotic and scarred by chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Still, in 2024, he made “On the Wing of an Angel,” a mural, 12 meters by six, in clay, straw, and henna, that hangs in the Palestinian Museum’s permanent collection. His only request for payment was that a fig tree be planted in his name in the museum’s garden.

When the genocide in Gaza began, the atrocities made Mansour rethink his early distaste for abstraction. By late 2023, he began a large painting without preparatory sketches, applying color straight to the canvas. His reasoning was simple: “All the images that come to my mind are really horrible.” The lifelong realist painter concluded that some horrors are so vast that they resist the figure. Among the victims of the Gaza genocide was his

friend and peer Fathi Ghaben, who died due to insufficient medical care in February of 2024 after being displaced from his home.

Mansour’s funeral was held on August 26 at the Anglican church in Birzeit. His children marked the day with a statement of grief: “We lost a father, our source of love, strength, and home.” The artists of Gaza’s Shababek group, a collective currently making art under bombs, said, “His works will remain a testament to his genius and creativity.” Alaziz Atef, an artist who spent five years working beside Mansour, called him his greatest teacher. Baroud said he left behind “a legacy that cannot truly be described, but only experienced.”

What can we take away from a life like his, aside from heartbreak? We can learn that erasure begins with the image. Zionism, as a project of annihilation, requires the disappearance of the Palestinian. A painter who

insists on being seen is an enemy of that project. That is why colors were banned, why exhibitions were closed, and why a dawn patrol forced refugees to whitewash their own walls. A painter who is beloved by the people is envied and despised by an occupation that doesn’t understand it can’t blot out love or roots.

People living under occupation understand that art isn’t a luxury. It doesn’t exist only in the halls of moneyed institutions. It is what a people make to prove that they exist, that they’re human. It teaches children the names of lost villages. It offers moments where people can be free. It extends a hand to the desperate, and it comforts them to know that they are not alone. All the machinery of death is impotent in the face of that power.

Sliman Mansour, thank you.

He is buried now in Birzeit, in the land he painted. In Palestine, a fig tree is growing in his name.

His people
were being
asked to wait
in the dust,
and he made
the dust speak



TOP: Mansour’s comic for *Al-Fajr*’s English edition, February 1, 1985.
MIDDLE: Speaking to a group of children in the village of Deir Ghassaneh, 1984.
BOTTOM: In his studio in 2009 with his painting “At the Checkpoint (Inda al-Hajiz).”



Photo by Gabriel Korty



ROUNDTABLE

Transforming Ourselves, Transforming the Movement

Our wins, our mistakes, and the tasks ahead

After Al-Aqsa Flood, when the U.S. and Israel set out to devastate Gaza, activists in the West tried to meet the strength, stamina, and ingenuity of resistance fighters on the ground. This was a difficult, even contradictory, task. “Activism implies an internal framework, a working *with* to effect change,” the Lebanese communist Soha Bechara told the magazine *Al Hayya* in 2022. “As for resistance, the term leaves no space for there to be any sort of *with*.”

For three years now, the Palestine solidarity movement has transformed and experimented with mixed results. We have worked, and succeeded, to raise global awareness of a genocide that we have failed to stop. Even as more of us profess anti-imperialist politics from the imperial core, we suffer from a profound confusion about whether we are truly working against what we oppose. As the U.S. and Israel expand this genocidal war across the region, it is imperative that we resolve our aims.

This past summer, we invited organizers from across our network to a critical and self-critical discussion about the state of the Palestine solidarity movement.

Participants included: **Leiala Mohammad**, a member of PAL-Awda NY/ NJ, a grassroots organization focused on stopping the sale of stolen Palestinian land; **Len Inniss**, a former member of Palestine Action, a direct-action group founded in 2020 and proscribed by the U.K. government in 2025; **Tara al-Alami**, the former general coordinator of the Palestinian Feminist Collective (PFC) and a member of Writers Against the War on Gaza (WAWOG), which publishes *The New York War Crimes*; **Abdullah Farooq**, who sits on the National Political Committee and the National Arms Embargo Committee of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA); and **Alex Colston**, a journalist who sailed with the Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) in 2025 and 2026.

These participants offer a range of perspectives across organization, place, tactic, and political perspective, as well as a willingness to disagree in good faith.

This conversation, which took place on July 11, 2026, has been edited for length, flow, and clarity, as well as for the security of the participants. The final question was posed several weeks later over text.

NYWC: Let's start at the heart of this struggle: land, and the right of return. Leiala, can you explain how land in Palestine becomes available for sale, how it gets sold, and what we can do — besides protest — to stop these sales?

Leiala: What they're doing in these land sales is far more significant than meets the eye. It allows the settler colony to create a record of “ownership” of Palestinian lands that becomes impossible to dislodge. They're laying a framework that ensures that stolen land is going to be part of the future state.

Alex: I'm curious if the way that you approach it is guided by focusing on particular places, particular neighborhoods, particular villages.

Leiala: Our approach is a little reactive. When we find out that there is a land sale happening in New York City, we target the sale itself. We try to identify who's responsible for carrying it out. We try to figure out where the land is being sold. We protest the real estate events themselves, and then we'll protest Nefesh B'nefesh, an organization that facilitates land theft and Palestinian dispossession.

Len: The tactics are mostly protests held outside these “Land Sale” events, is that right?

Leiala: Yes. We try to get people to infiltrate, but the only people they'll let inside are Orthodox Jews. For the most part, the actions that we have done are outside these events.

Len: Have any of the events been stopped?

Leiala: The very first sale that we found out about, which was happening in Brooklyn. This was in 2024. That event was shut down. We worked with the PAL Law Commission to serve legal demand letters to the physical hosts of the events, typically synagogues, and, when possible, the sponsors, though usually the sponsors are real estate agents in Israel with no local address-

es. We have also served these letters to the New York and New Jersey attorneys general. In New Jersey, legal papers were served at the home where someone was hosting a Palestinian land sale event. One of our comrades is now being charged federally for that, among other charges they and several other people are facing related to the ensuing Palestinian land sale protest.

What is the material reality that follows from an unstoppable land sale?

Leiala: When you attach a name, especially if it's an American name, especially if it's a rich white person, it becomes even more difficult to later take this land back.

Let's say there are some kind of trials and people are held accountable. You're replacing the past with this piece of paper that says “I own this and I'm an innocent person who bought a piece of land that is now mine, so what justice am I going to get if you are bringing back the rightful owners of this land?”

They are also trying to create this as a market: “I want an apartment in Israel. Every Jew should have an apartment in Israel.” They're targeting Jewish supremacists. They're targeting ultra-Orthodox Jews. They're targeting Jews desiring second homes.

They want the people who will be okay with ethnic cleansing, and the ones who will sign themselves and their sons up for settler militias. They want the people that will send their children into the IOF to do more ethnic cleansing, not only in Palestine and not only in the West Bank, but in Lebanon, in Syria.

The entity can do anything by force and money, but the use of force still has to be shored up by narratives grounded in process, legality, institutional legitimacy. Without institutional or legal backing, what are our levers of action? Len, could you speak to the effects that the terrorism designation had on Palestine Action, and what does basebuilding look like now that the designation has made it inherently risky to belong to this base of people?

Len: Palestine Action stopped existing the moment it was proscribed. Under the law, the membership rolls are presumed to be completely void. And if you give the government reason to think that you are still a member, they can put you in prison for 14 years.

I think we should all be materialists about this. The government gets to do what it wants to do. For years, organizers around the world tried to stop the Jewish National Fund, which takes and holds land for the sake of Jewish settlement. Eventually, Canada managed to strip the JNF of its charitable status; nevertheless, Israeli racist land practices continue unabated.

The reason Palestine Action attracted so much attention is because Palestine Action was really effective. Permanently shutting down weapons factories, especially during a genocide, is a really big deal.

We have several new direct action groups that have risen up out of the ashes. Today, People Against Genocide simultaneously attacked multiple weapons factories in the U.K. Direct action cannot be proscribed as a tactic. And it continues to get the goods here.

It's important to note, though, that people are in jail right now in the U.K. for smashing up weapons that were first made at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. If Elbit weapons are being made on New York State property, on New York-owned land in New York, then surely this great new mayor should have something to say about that.

Has the terrorist designation chilled or slowed the desire to do this direct action? Or are more people invested because of the crackdown?

Len: There are so many people who have been galvanized. People who had no idea about Elbit now think of it as an entity that saps up their own civil liberties.

But to say that it hasn't affected our ability to recruit would be silly. Also, we had built incredible platforms. Even though we had a complicated, multiple-city attack on Elbit happening in the U.K. today, almost nobody found out about it because we went from having literally a million followers across platforms to less than 50,000.

In a post-proscription atmosphere — and in the States, a post-Prairieland atmosphere — doing stuff where you get caught is really scary. I would recommend not getting caught.

We know that drones made in Brooklyn Navy Yard are being shipped via the U.K. to Gaza. What is the point of electing people who are sold to us as being on our side if they're not going to be on our side when we smash up Israeli drones being made in our backyard?

Can we hear about the electoral strategy that DSA has been engaged in and how that relates to the Palestine liberation movement?

Abdullah: The analysis that motivated our arms embargo work was twofold.

First: If we know that Israel as a terrorist state can only be stopped if we cut off the flow of weapons, then how do we actually do this?

Second: A supermajority of Americans support an arms embargo. How do we try to express that majority?

Our goal is to be able to take those majorities and actually build them in Congress, build them at the levels of city councils and exercise power, the kinds of power that Zohran Mamdani currently has in New York.

The goal of building a mass organization like DSA is to be able to inform an elected leader like Zohran that these are our priorities. To build support for an arms embargo in Brooklyn Navy Yard we need to go out and organize, talk to more of our coworkers, talk to our neighbors, talk to more people, get them to build this kind of mass organization.

Our electeds are going to see that and say this is a priority of people that live in New York City, and we need to take action on it.

Len: Are we all watching the same genocide? No offense, but the plan

to eventually somehow get to a point where we can take state power and actually enact a meaningful weapons embargo feels based in something other than reality.

People want to do more. They really want to do more. As of last year, the majority of people living in the U.K. supported a full weapons embargo, and no political party — with the exception of the Greens — offered one. What are we telling people who can't wait around for however many election cycles and want to actually stop the genocide now?

What Palestine Action told people in the U.K. is that if you undertake action to stop weapons from getting to Israel and you end up accused of a crime, we are going to work night and day to get you out of jail. We are going to make your court cases the thing that everyone goes to, rather than the next march.

We have built a movement around the people who are actually smashing up the weapons rather than building a movement around getting people elected. There's a reason that prisoner solidarity is one of the pillars of Palestinian society and why prisoner release was the aim of the operation on October 7, 2023. Prisoner solidarity is constitutive of Palestinian solidarity. This is not a struggle that can be served by people who preach nonviolence in the face of colonial force. We should be sober about the use of extra-legal tactics, of course. But we should also be willing to harness more of the energy of the movement for prisoner solidarity work.

Alex: Having to deal with the state, police, and military, regardless of the tactics being discussed here, people should be way more responsible toward one another about consequences and risks. Which isn't to say don't do it. But if I could wish something into existence, it would be greater social care among our cadres, comrades, and friends toward people who are taking on the state in a meaningful way.

We should cultivate that far more vastly than we currently do. These attempts to take over the state in order to provide us protection are too much of a long term plan. We need to build out the capacity to protect one another and these ambitious, insurrectionist, autonomous, and even state projects.

That's the thing I took back from the flotilla. For all the things we didn't do or did do, I can say certainly that we took care of one another.

Abdullah: We take a lot of lessons for our arms embargo campaign from the Central America solidarity movement in the '80s, which successfully won an arms embargo on military support for the death squads in El Salvador. Over the course of six years, a well-coordinated solidarity movement was able to elect seven congressional representatives, but then was able to force a number of other representatives to change their positions. They wound up winning a congressional vote.

We know that we can do this again for Palestine. It's going to take a variety of different tactics, and I'm not opposed to any of the tactics that people have mentioned.

As long as we're constantly thinking, how is this actually impacting Israel's war-fighting capabilities? How is this actually materially disrupting the flow of arms to Israel? And how is Israel responding to the actions that we're taking?

Some recent comments by Netanyahu are very revealing. Netanyahu said, “Oh, we don't need the U.S. to provide us with military support; we can get arms from India.”

I also want to highlight a recent amendment that's being pushed in Congress to effectively fuse parts of the Israeli and U.S. military. This is being pushed because there is this fear that an arms embargo is getting more popular.

These two things demonstrate that our movement actually has the potential to exert this power.

If Israel is going to fight us on every front, in the electoral front, in the labor front, in the cultural front, we should fight them on every front as well.



Photo by Gabriel Korty





Alex: You're right. Netanyahu and the current Israeli government have long been making plans to be able to independently arm themselves apart from U.S. state investment. Capital doesn't know any nationality.

They will find new ways to sell and manufacture and ship weapons. And there are ways to disrupt that supply chain via state intervention, and then there are methods that involve sabotage. It's legitimate to say there is a longer term plan to bring state leverage against Israel, but that should never preclude the possibility of sabotaging supply chains directly.

Now, the direct action campaigns in the United States are not sufficiently socialized where the risk is shared and people are there to support them.

There's not a proper infrastructure to protect people from this state or to act in the shadow of the state in a way that would prevent them from being targeted by the police and the military. Often people will go it alone, and that's a tactical error on our part.

There is not enough preparation for defending the moral and political legitimacy of doing things that are illegal. We know intellectually that it's legitimate for people to take those kinds of actions. But we do not have the proper legal and political infrastructure to protect people from the consequences.

They did do that for Pal Action and they were successful 70% of the time or so, but not every time. People were, in fact, indicted and convicted and faced extreme state punishment. The risk and the consequences are probably worth it, but we could do a lot better trying to protect people who are willing to take those kinds of actions.

So I think I can see both ways. To have state representatives willing to defend direct actions and sabotage and not tar them as terrorists would be a huge advantage. I don't always see that from our cohort of insurgent electeds.

Tara: What we are dealing with is just different theories of change within different sectors of the movement. The stakes are way too high for disagreements that risk slowing down the work. DSA is a political organization within the American political landscape and will ultimately work within that framework.

If this were a revolutionary organization, the end goal of organizing for an arms embargo or for a free Palestine would be the defeat of the U.S. empire. I assume that is not the position of the DSA. That's fine. When someone tells you who they are, you believe them, and you see how you can work with them, or up to what point you can work with them, and how you can broaden your coalition to the extent that it can be the most productive and useful.

This is why it's important to also engage in a moment of self-criticism. The flotilla, for example, is a tactic that has been used for almost two decades. There are moments where it has achieved incremental wins and there are moments where it has cost people their lives, specifically in the early days. What I would see as the latest win is that it has further exposed Israeli impunity and their willingness to engage in sexual torture of foreigners, to kidnap them from foreign waters. That's useful.

If we do this again, is it going to be useful? Probably not. People tried to get humanitarian aid into Gaza. The attempts were very well documented. The aftermath was very well documented. Now, the task is to prevent American amnesia from taking over, to prevent us from doing the same thing again in a few years, with the same result, and the cycle repeats.

This applies to every single sector of the movement. Whether it's organizing politically within parties, working with mass collective popular actions like the flotilla, organizing general strikes internationally in Europe or here, national marches, which groups like the PYM and PFC have co-organized, convening people at national conferences like the People's Conference and, importantly, participating in direct action.

Len: I agree. And I want to say that out loud twice. I agree.

The idea of empowering enough politicians to make it so the U.K. government is not a Zionist government is absurd.

And in the U.K., we've had to struggle against this idea that you could just get punched in the face a bunch of times and that would free Palestine. People would stop traffic on the bridge and get themselves beaten up by both police and civilians. The government heard us loud and clear, they just didn't care.

This is my issue with policies of non-violence like these protest groups have, like the DSA has in NYC. If we are all on the exact same page about the moral imperative of stopping genocide, then what are we to make of this policy and this attitude toward people who are

willing to use extralegal means of making a material difference? If we're doing something that's working and people "on our side" suggest other things to do instead that don't work, are we really in the same movement?

Theory is a weapon — that's not me, that's Amílcar Cabral. Use it. Read, study, and then determine the causes of things so you can be effective. People aren't stopping the genocide in part because they don't understand why it is happening in the first place. If you try to fit Palestine into a racial analytic, you will march in the wrong direction. If you try to make Palestine a purely humanitarian cause, you will flounder on the shore of a colonial project.

I don't know if the flotilla is getting punched in the face for Palestine or not, but I do think we should all ask ourselves what energy we're asking people to devote to our thing and what energy will be lost if they listen to us and we're wrong.

If you face repression for doing nothing, you might as well do something

Abdullah: I want to highlight two current examples of places where arms embargoes have actually been achieved.

The first is Spain, where grassroots pressure, pressure from the unions and the labor movement, and people who were in elected office and able to apply pressure from within the government resulted in a full arms embargo. Research from the Palestinian Youth Movement and Progressive International highlighted how ships carrying U.S. military cargo were docking in Spain, basically convincing the foreign minister to adopt a position — even before there was an arms embargo — that those ships wouldn't be allowed to dock. From there, with public pressure and with pressure from people within the administration, they were able to move to a full arms embargo.

Pedro Sánchez is not an anti-imperialist. He's not a socialist. He's center left. People didn't wait for the next election cycle.

The second example I want to bring up is Belgium, where the very first union-led arms embargo that I know about was imposed in October of 2023. Workers and then the unions that represented them at Liège airport near Brussels were able to take a very strong position in support of an arms embargo.

This then resulted in political pressure that was being exerted by groups like the Belgian Workers Party. And then legal challenges and pressure as well. All of these forces coming together and exerting this power eventually won an arms embargo.

A lot of the enforcement of the arms embargo, both in Spain and in Belgium, has come from grassroots groups that are doing research, union members seeing a shipment happening here and there, and then using the grassroots pressure to enforce.

So I want to push back on the idea that we either have to work within institutions or we work outside of institutions. We want to build majorities and exert power wherever we can find the opportunity to cut off the supply of arms to Israel.

Leiala: At what point do we stop working with the systems that we know aren't working for us, that we know have historically proven to work against us, that we know are going to take a while. At what point do we go against the system itself? What do we have to give up and what do we have to sacrifice to get there?

Can we even expect that kind of sacrifice living in the West or living in the U.S., operating under capitalist societies? We are complacent.

Alex: To something that was said earlier about whether we're just going on these ships to get our ass beat, we are not. We are sailing to Gaza. This is extremely important.

The flotilla as a tactic is part of a circulation struggle. A lot of goods, a lot of services, a lot of money go everywhere but to Gaza. What would it mean for people to organize themselves at a sufficient enough scale to provide basic necessities to people who need it most? This is the spirit and the concrete tactic of the flotilla. It's one that can be reproduced in a bunch of different places. Gaza is the place where it makes

the most sense to try, because not only are we prevented from doing it, we are systematically jailed and tortured for doing it. That is not something that I want, wanted, ever want to do. It's not something that anyone who is sailing on these ships ever wants to happen to them. But it is an ethic and it is a politic that is about meeting the needs of people where they are.

Does it become something else as it happens? A spectacle? A thing to expose the Israeli state? Yes. But these are all knock-on effects, not the primary intention.

What's interesting about the flotilla as it's grown from five ships to 55 ships is that its resources are being used. We have a huge map of a bunch of ports that activists want to block and they want to coordinate and collaborate with trade unions in these different states.

There's finite energy, finite number of people, finite amounts of what people can do, but all of these tactics mutate. The flotilla has already mutated in many respects. There are people who are taking the tactic and reproducing it outside of the Global Sumud Flotilla.

Thankfully we have a pretty global majority who have supported the flotilla as a tactic. I'm grateful for it. I'm glad that people supported it. But we can achieve majority sentiment, no problem. The question is what can that sentiment be turned into?

We are all talking about tactics that are not the number one way that our enemies are able to exert power, which is through violence. None of our organizations are capable of engaging in direct action that meets that kind of force. Sabotage sometimes seems like our greatest possibility. Our limitation here is quite obviously — for many different reasons — but obviously prison. Beyond prison, we are limited by the lack of desire within our movement to do that kind of action.

Abdullah: I resonate with the idea of us having finite capacity. That points to the need for us to grow and build our movement. We are in a moment where we have lots of popular support and we have to translate that popular support into power that can be exerted. The sky is the limit. We can go further with our rhetoric. But all of that is dependent on us being able to back up the people that we run for office.

I want to run someone for office who doesn't believe that Israel has a right to exist; who is able to openly say Israel was founded through an act of terrorism and that all that land is Palestine.

But in order for us to be able to get to that point, we need to build a lot more power. We need to build a lot more support among trade unions, a lot more support among the types of organizations that are actually going to be able to sustain that approach.

Tara: Even if what you want is for the office itself to be abolished and destroyed, you should still be joining these organizations. It's important to have different tendencies within organizations, within reason. Doing what you can with what you have is important. I don't think we're at a stage where it's useful to come up with new organizations, for example. People should deal with the landscape that exists and try to push the struggle forward from within that landscape. Whether that's DSA or other community grassroots organizations, whether it's through advocacy organizations that aren't political parties. All of this matters and is important.

But the question of whether we have popular support for Palestinian liberation and the end of the Zionist project remains unanswered, or maybe the answer is just no. I worry about using that term too loosely, especially in the U.S., because what would happen if we had popular support is a massive and material change in the flow of weapons, the flow of capital conditions domestically.

It's strange to me why the U.S. or North America always seems to be behind the rest of the world when it comes to any anti-imperialist or progressive or anti-colonial movement. But understanding why is really important. It's because this is the core of the capitalist beast.

There is value in playing into these contradictions and sharpening them in a way that creates more instability and more internal conflict within the heart of empire. What you are doing is trying to weaken the establishment that exists, to mobilize people around the idea that this establishment itself needs to crumble.

The way we can do this is not through seeking change from within, but organizing in a way that weakens the legs that it's standing on, that weakens the infrastructure that it has built.

This is why I was asking, do we actually have popular support for Palestinian liberation, which necessarily means

the end of Israel? I don't think we do.

The average American is not someone who is engaging with the political landscape or engaging with the U.S. foreign policy or engaging with America's involvement in several genocides, America's exploitation of its own workers domestically, America's history or present of capitalist encroachment, colonialism, and more at the same level that we are, or at the same level as members of our organizations. The average American is alienated and that is a condition of capitalism.

That's important to admit, even though it's not great and it could be demoralizing. Part of assessing the movement and assessing the wins that we have achieved is also accepting that.

We really need to assess the degree to which the people who control the world do not need popular support and the degree to which we actually have popular support at all.

Len: The ruling class can't be persuaded or shamed out of its position. Look at the stock market throughout this genocide and what you see is wealth consolidation. They are not losing money on this. Their position is rational.

It's important for people to understand that Zionism is not a belief structure or a structure of feeling, but rather a name for Yankee imperialism in the Middle East. We're not trying to change people's hearts and minds. We are trying to disrupt an imperial project and the way to do that is by raising the material cost.

And raising the cost works. Direct action works. Barclays, the U.K. bank, didn't divest from Elbit because people were marching in the street past its branches; Barclays divested when thirty of its branches got smashed up in the same night. What else is delivering these results?

Tara: We should keep attempting different tactics. Some of them have worked. We should keep doing them. Some of them have not. We should put them aside for a while.

I'm not the person who would be joining DSA. I'm also not the person who would be, right now in my life, joining a direct action group and participating in high risk actions. But I am a person who is working with what I have and engaging in the movement in whatever way I think personally, politically, ideologically, materially is the most productive.

But the question of what's the best way to move forward is a question for people who live in the West and are invested in life here to answer. And I'm not saying that it's not a question that we should engage with as an Arab diaspora. But it is a question that must be answered collectively first or, at least, with enough collective engagement nationally and locally first, before we can actually engage in a sustainable movement that can still have setbacks, but is at least on the trajectory towards liberation.

What would you tell a young person joining the movement today?

Alex: Never betray comrades, for to betray others is to betray yourself. Commit yourself in every way to flawed people, including yourself. As Lenin says, "the work of political agitation is never wasted."

Len: Imagine you have one shot to make a difference in this struggle. If you heard about a group of kids stealing two million dollars from a bank, you would think it was incredible and wonder how they pulled it off. I have heard of kids who pulled off a coordinated military operation and smashed up two million dollars worth of military equipment, a war's worth of drones, in twenty minutes. Things are possible that the adults in the room won't tell you are possible. Now is a time that requires commitment, but it also requires creativity and ambition, because groups that are committed to themselves, to each other, and above all to the cause have historically done world-changing things.

If you face repression for doing nothing, you might as well do something.

Tara: Join and never look back. This is a national liberation struggle that is much bigger than an individual, a collective, or an organization. Remember our martyrs who have sacrificed everything and keep Palestine in front of your eyes, as Basil al-Araj said. Our task is to literally change the world, and we must allow ourselves to be transformed by this movement, too. Allow this struggle and all the pain that comes with it to make it impossible to live in a world where a genocide is debatable, negotiable, or conceivable in the first place.

Leiala: Sabah el-kheir. Welcome.



Nuance Kills

On February 28, the United States bombed the Shajareh Tayyebbeh Elementary School in Minab, Iran, murdering at least 156 people, the majority of whom were children. That same day the U.S. and Israel carried out approximately 1,000 strikes on Iran and killed Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

One day later, *The Nation* published an essay by Sina Toossi, an Iranian policy analyst working at an American think tank, with the headline “The Iranian Voices America Isn’t Hearing.” The voices in question belonged to Iranians who were, the author wrote, “anti-authoritarian and anti-war at the same time,” and who rejected “both domestic tyranny and foreign intervention.”

The following week, in an essay published in *Dissent* magazine, an exiled Iranian journalist and an Indian expat economist argued that the attacks on Iran presented “a dilemma,” which they explained in conflicting terms, saying: “while it would be morally unacceptable to celebrate bombardment, it would be analytically unacceptable to deny that the architecture of coercion has been damaged.”

If it is immoral to celebrate bombardment, isn’t it also immoral to validate the empire’s justification for bombing, and to deny that the nation-state defends against bombing?

The same day the *Dissent* piece ran, Iran’s ambassador to the UN told Reuters that U.S. and Israeli strikes had killed more than 1,300 Iranian civilians in the first week of war. In the months to follow, while progressives in the imperial core debated the ethics and tactics of the Islamic resistance, as though those resisting the Zioamerican onslaught had all the time in the world to solicit the perfect Plan B, the death toll in Iran rose to 4,200; in southern Lebanon, to 4,380; in Gaza, to unimaginable heights.

Nuance kills, this much is clear. The liberal’s defensive weapon of choice, now taken up by broad swaths of the compatible left, nuance is, in and of itself, neither political nor moral. It is a feature of all competent political analysis, but it is not an analytic. It is also not a substitute for moral judgment. Anyone who claims to see both sides in an existential war must also decide which side they are on, which side is closer to revolution, liberation, and life, and

which is closer to death. Consciousness is a gift; it comes with the responsibility to choose. The abdication of this responsibility is fatal.

Why were there not more mass protests against the war on Iran? Or against Maduro’s abduction in January? In addition to the lack of a real Left party in the United States and the repression that the Palestine movement has faced on campuses and in the streets since 2023, there is the fact that American leftists were chastised by various pro-imperial voices, some of them Iranian and Venezuelan, to lament the war, but praise its outcome. As if violence is only justified when it serves to expand Western hegemony.

Consciousness is a gift; it comes with the responsibility to choose. The abdication of this responsibility is fatal.

Serial war crimes were justified not only by liberals but by progressives, even those who called themselves anti-Zionists or anti-imperialists, as leftist discourse resorted to reductive identity politics and calls to “hold space” for the “lived experiences” of those most affected. The fact that many of these experiences were being lived from Los Angeles and not Tehran, from Miami and not Venezuela, seemed not to merit consideration. Nor did the question of why these voices were so hard to distinguish from the sound of the imperial war machine, or why the most widely disseminated messages never contradicted in effect — only in affect — the dictates of U.S. foreign policy.

Anyone who condemned the U.S. empire’s kidnapping of a sitting president or the murder of a country’s leader was forced to believe that the

people who had been bombed in Caracas or Tehran were thankful for being burned from the skies; that decimating schools and hospitals and power grids were favors done for them instead of acts of war against them; that despite the U.S. funding genocide and expanding Zionist occupation for three years, their operations in Venezuela and Iran were done out of liberatory and philanthropic spirit.

“We can hold two truths at once” became the rallying cry, a logical progression for a sect of the Left that confused therapy-speak with a meaningful political line. The only way to know what to believe was to believe everything. Yes, the U.S. bombed the capital of Venezuela seven times, killing 100 people, but Maduro allegedly stole an election. Yes, Israel and the U.S. waged brutal bombardment and economic assault on Iranian life and infrastructure for decades, but Khamenei is an authoritarian ruler — doesn’t that make him just as bad as Trump?

Every declaration of nuance implies that a third alternative exists: that if we refuse both Maduro and Trump, both the Islamic regime and the American empire, a better option will present itself. There is no third way out of war. There are two sides that we must not falsely equate — on one side are the colonizers invested up to their necks in the militarism which backstops global hegemony and which they will not surrender. On the other are the nations and peoples under their boot. On one side are the oligarchs in suits and ties who flatten towns and cities; on the other, those who suffer under sanctions and permanent war, who bury their children too young, and who are robbed of their homes, their land, and their lives.

We do not reject nuance. Inside our organizations we argue, as we should: Our movements wither when we fear internal conflict and grow stronger when people speak to each other across different experiences, paradigms, and tendencies. What we refuse is to spend time publicly debating questions that should have been settled long ago among anti-imperialists, namely that U.S. imperialism is the key contradiction in our current world system.

The analysts, journalists, and so-called thinkers who practice endless both-sidesism on the page are not help-



The graves of schoolchildren killed by U.S./Israeli airstrikes in Minab, Iran.

ing to sharpen anti-imperialist analysis, but effectively blunting its forward edge. They are building no movement. They keep us in a discursive and ethical limbo, debating the world in circles while the land is destroyed. When the U.S. Air Force was carpet-bombing Hanoi, was it useful for American leftists to critique the tactics of the Viet Cong? When France was torturing and bombing Algerians, was it necessary for French philosophers to condemn the bombs that the FLN planted in the cafés of Algiers? There is a reason Camus was expelled from the Communist Party; we should be less afraid to purge the influencers “on the Left” who betray solidarity.

Ask yourself, next time you open a progressive magazine to find your favorite leftist scholars arguing for an imaginary alternative, what we gain by criticizing the methods of Hamas or the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps when the most powerful military on earth is already committed to bombing them into oblivion. However well-intentioned, this both-sidesism will be used to manufacture consent for imperial war, and to justify more extrajudicial killing and more genocide. The nuance of the op-ed page makes you useless in your own capacity. It also makes you useful to your own government, the one you claim to critique just as much

as you do that of Iran, or Venezuela, or Cuba.

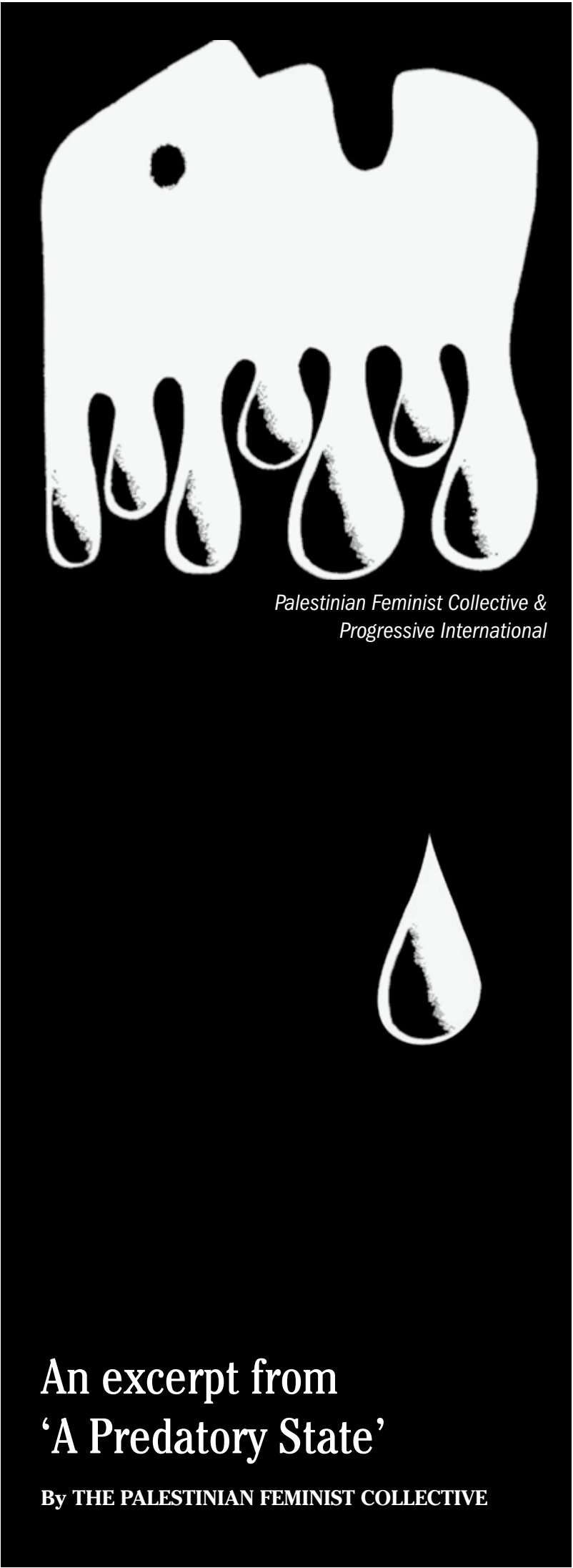
We need stiffer spines and straighter priorities. A sense of injustice requires a sense of scale. Without an anchoring perspective, those who seek out multiplying truths end up lost in a sea of prevarication, uncommitted to any course of action, or worse, deluded into believing that doing nothing is the only principled choice.

The United States and Israel are waging war on the global majority. The nations and people who arm themselves and fight this enemy deserve our loud and unwavering support. Stand with them or stand aside.

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Palestinian Feminist Collective & Progressive International

An excerpt from
‘A Predatory State’
By THE PALESTINIAN FEMINIST COLLECTIVE

‘AT EVERY LEVEL’ Sexual violence and the settler state

What follows is an excerpt from “A Predatory State: Israeli Systemic Sexualized and Gendered Violence Against Palestinians,” a new report by the Palestinian Feminist Collective, with support from the Progressive International. Released on June 30, 2026, the report documents Israel’s systemic, calculated, and institutionalized use of sexualized and gendered violence against Palestinians since the 1948 Nakba. The excerpt has been lightly edited for length and clarity. Download the full 187-page report at www.predatorystate.org.

There have been an estimated “three million life-years” of Palestinians lost in Gaza, mostly women and children, since October 2023. Israel continues to commit mass murder with the openly stated intention to eradicate Palestine. It also restricts movement, confining and obstructing the movement of Palestinians living under its military occupation, and engaging in 24/7 surveillance of our communities. The denial of Palestinian sovereignty, safety, and freedom of movement has impacted the regeneration of our communities, with Palestinian elders, women, children, and men all targeted for extermination. Our research has documented systematic and institutional practices of gendered and sexualized violence against Palestinians since October 2023. Through the process of documenting and analyzing these practices, we have also identified consistent patterns and methods that make this violence possible at every level: discursive, representational, spiritual, psychological, corporeal, environmental, and collective. These patterns and methods include colonial constructions of Palestinian men, the reliance on security theology, mass rape accusations with genocidal intent, the use of liberal feminist discourses of sexualized violence, and racialized and sexualized violence against Palestinian men.

The racialized constructions of Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim men as other, violent, aggressive, and sexually deviant mirror the colonial histories and patterns across colonial projects where Indigenous and Black men have been imagined as threats, primarily to white women. The fact that fabricated graphic accounts of the rape of some 300 Israeli women on October 7, 2023 immediately circulated before and even without independent, thorough investigations points to the weaponization of such allegations to construct Palestinians as barbaric and depraved. For decades, the international community and Israel have remained silent about the rape of Palestinian women. Yet, after October 7, Israeli settler women have been positioned as the ultimate victims. This double standard replicates a historical pattern: the feminine fragility of white — and in this case, Jewish — women is weaponized to construct the image of the dangerous Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim man.

On November 18, 2023, Jake Tapper, a CNN anchor, produced a segment with alleged testimonies about “rape

crimes” on October 7. One of the testimonies came from a video of an IOF soldier, claiming to be a paramedic who was among the first to respond at the Be’eri Kibbutz. With his back turned to the camera, he states that two young sisters (ages thirteen and fifteen) were found killed in a house, one of them naked, with semen on her. A December 1, 2023, Mondoweiss investigative piece into the Tapper story found that “every single witness and expert in the CNN report proves to either be lacking in credibility or have ties to Israeli government officials and institutions.” The story’s holes were largely due to the lack of evidence documenting two young girls matching that description at that site. Within weeks of Tapper’s report, Israeli state spokesmen and affiliated groups launched a major campaign alleging mass rape of Israeli women by Hamas fighters on October 7. Feminist scholars and activists were subsequently criminalized and punished for pointing to the lack of forensic evidence for these alleged rapes. About a month after the CNN report, *The New York Times* (NYT) published the infamous “Screams Without Words: How Hamas Weaponized Sexual Violence on Oct. 7” article. The piece was perhaps the

its goal was to empower survivors to speak out against men in power and the patriarchal structures of industries and the state that protect and enable perpetrators of sexualized violence. In the context of Palestine, the alleged victims identify with the structure of power, not as victims of it. Israeli and Zionist politicians weaponized the allegations of mass rape to justify genocide and provide cover for Israel’s sexualized violence against Palestinians. High-profile, white, colonial feminists weighed in, perpetuating the lies about mass rape. The colonial and imperialist feminist strategy of co-opting feminist movement catchphrases to serve state power was evidenced by the fact that in December 2023, the primary architects of the genocide, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. President Joe Biden, condemned international organizations for their silence on the alleged rapes of Israeli women on October 7. Meanwhile, these figures have never spoken of or denounced the sexualized violence enacted upon Palestinian men, women, and children, despite ample documentation. When Bret Stephens wrote in the NYT that “Silence is violence, but not when it comes to Israeli rape victims,” it was a

Muslim and anti-Arab racism has in these cases of militarized, sexualized violence. She highlights the fact that it is the external perception of gendered dynamics, roles, and expectations in Arab/Muslim cultures that informs the kinds of violence Arab men and boys are subjected to. Identifying patterns of sexualized violence in other military occupations is essential to understanding why so many of the documented reports of sexualized violence in this report are from Palestinian men and boys. Over the course of many years, there have been numerous videos, photographs, and testimonies of the IOF beating, laughing at, and physically dragging Palestinian men who are either stripped nude or in their underwear. These events occur in public places, in front of other men, with the explicit goal of sexualized humiliation. The racialized portrayal of Arab/Muslim/Palestinian men as savage rapists not only distorts perceptions of relations inscribed in colonial and imperial power but also obscures the way they, too, are subjected to systematic sexualized violence by occupation forces.

When Israel uses falsified allegations of sexualized violence supposedly perpetrated by Palestinians to establish moral justification for genocide, it is reversing the realities of power, repositioning Israeli settlers as victims and Indigenous Palestinians as perpetrators. And while this reality-bending is a form of epistemic violence, even worse is the way it manufactures consent for mass extermination through genocide. While currently focused on the now largely debunked allegations that Hamas systematically sexually assaulted settler women on October 7, it is important to consider why such allegations became so widely disseminated and upheld even when admittedly fabricated. Understanding that racially colonized and Indigenous men are portrayed by colonial and imperial regimes as hyper-violent, culturally backward, and politically antithetical to modernity and progress is paramount to exposing the ways accusations of sexualized violence have been weaponized by Israel to justify genocide in Gaza and renewed wars across the region. Such gendered stereotypes position the colonial and white or Western culture, women, and men as the progressive and morally superior counterpart, greenlighting any actions taken by the dominant group as aligned with progress and modernity for the greater good. However, beyond this othering, these depictions work to activate and justify colonial violence. As we have seen with the U.S. invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, and its forever so-called “War on Terror,” racist constructions of Arab and Muslim men as terrorists and uncivilized savages are intentionally manufactured to solicit consent for imperialist warfare. These racial and colonial conjurings are central to understanding the contemporary accusations of sexualized violence leveled against Palestinian men in the wake of October 7, 2023.

This reality-bending is a form of epistemic violence, even worse is the way it manufactures consent for mass extermination through genocide

first from a mainstream news source to claim a thorough, independent journalistic investigation into the allegations against Hamas had been conducted. NYT reportedly examined “video footage, photographs, GPS data from mobile phones and [conducted] interviews with more than 150 people, including witnesses, medical personnel, soldiers and rape counselors.”

Fabricating accusations of sexual assault not only serves to legitimize oppression, violence, and even genocide, but it also functions to elevate and exaggerate incidental claims of sexualized violence while obscuring systematic and institutional forms of colonial sexualized violence, including the sexual torture and rape of Palestinian detainees and prisoners, reproductive violence, and sexualized humiliation that Palestinians have been subjected to for decades. The “Me Too” catchphrase, for example, was refashioned in a campaign called “Me Too Unless You Are a Jew.” The campaign founders sought to create an emergency international call to “be the voice of all Israeli women who were brutally raped, abused, burned, beheaded and murdered.” These paradigms invert and obscure power relations. When the “Me Too” movement first appeared,

clear example of an appropriation of a catchphrase, initially meant to address structures of patriarchal power, to obfuscate structural power and colonial domination in the context of Palestine. Without the impediments to documentation that Palestinians face, the Israeli state was able to supply virtually no evidence for its claims, expecting instead that the allegations would be taken as fact and that no questions would be raised pertaining to the structural power relation between Israelis and Palestinians: the former an occupying military force and the latter a colonized, deprived, and subjugated people.

In the context of military occupation, normative patriarchal relations inscribed in power must be reconsidered. Scholars of gender studies have extensively researched how systemic sexualized violence, for instance, has been perpetrated against Arab and Muslim men alongside U.S. military invasions and occupations. In the case of Abu Ghraib, a U.S. prison camp in Iraq, evidence of U.S. female soldiers sexually abusing Iraqi men highlights the ways in which imperial and colonial material conditions can alter the power dynamics traditionally associated with sexualized violence. Dr. Jasbir Puar writes about the specific role that anti-



‘A SEASON OF BLOOD’

Wahaj Bani Moufleh
Documents Life in the
West Bank

The West Bank did not wake up one morning to find itself transformed. We’ve watched it fracture slowly, piece by piece: a home demolished, an olive tree cut down, a farmer losing access to his land, a shop shuttered, a checkpoint turning a 15-minute trip into an hours-long journey, a child hemmed in by barbed wire on their way to school. For me, the camera began as a passion before becoming a profession. On May 28, 2021, it became a cause. That day, my cousin Zakaria Hamayel was killed by Israeli forces and settlers in Beita, south of Nablus, while protesting a settlement outpost in the town. I decided then to document my people’s struggle: their stories, their pain, and their hopes. Over the past few years, as I’ve reported on villages and communities from Nablus to al-Khalil, I’ve come to barely recognize the only land I’ve ever known.

In al-Khalil, I watched families run through their morning routines. Parents parked their cars on the side of the road leading to the Qilqis checkpoint, grabbed backpacks from the back seats, and held their children’s hands as they led them to duck under the gate. The rest of the commute, which used to take only a few minutes by car, would have to be on foot. The gate has been closed for nearly three years now, dislocating the village from the rest of Masafer Yatta and transforming daily life.

A few villages away, a man sat in the doorway of what was once his home. Israeli forces demolished it and a number of other houses on September 8, uprooting 30 residents from the herding community of Khirbet al-Fakhit. They are among the nearly 40,000 internal refugees who have been displaced across the occupied West Bank since 2023.

In the Old City, more than 300 shops are shuttered, the streets are deserted, and occupation soldiers have been deployed to guard settlers on their weekly tours. The 64-year-old glass blower Yaqub al-Natsheh relit the furnace at his family’s glass factory, Land of Canaan, for the first time in three years. Nestled in a quiet alley, it is the last traditional glass workshop in the city; the other 17 have closed. As he blew and shaped molten glass by hand, he was doing what so many here do: refuse to let something disappear.

In Nablus, the city where I grew up, I have witnessed the myriad ways a family can be dispossessed. In Beit Imrin, northwest of the city, Israeli forces blew up the family home of political prisoner Dawas Hassoun. Afterwards, I photographed the rubble. Inside the neighborhood of al-Taawun, I watched Israeli bulldozers tear down two homes where more than 20 people lived. The reason given: the homes stood in Area C. A few hundred meters away, a new settlement outpost continued rising, untouched. In Huwara, south of the city, settlers terrorized the community

daily, stealing livestock, attacking farmers, and setting acres of land on fire. I have gotten used to photographing parents weeping for their children. But in Huwara, for the first time, I photographed a man weeping for his sheep.

The olive harvest is not just an agricultural season; it is a yearly reunion with the land, a memory passed down from parents to children, and the livelihood of many Palestinian families. In recent years, it has become a season of blood. I have seen blood shed for a tree, for a piece of land, for a memory.

In Gaza, journalists have paid the ultimate price. Here in the West Bank, many of us are paying it slowly. Detention was always a story that seemed to happen to other people, until it took my cousin, the journalist Mujahed Bani Moufleh. Israeli forces abducted him from his home in Beita and held him in administrative detention for seven months without charge. Soon after his release, he suffered a massive brain hemorrhage, which doctors linked to the starvation and medical neglect he endured inside. He spent seven months unable to speak. He told me prison had erased all his children’s faces from his memory but that of his youngest, Arab, who was three years old when he watched occupation soldiers beat his father during the arrest.

He is not alone. Ali al-Samoudi, 67, came home from a year in detention weighing 60 kilograms, half his weight when he was taken. Somaya Jawabra, arrested while seven months pregnant, has spent more than two years under house arrest, barred from working or even using a phone. Freedom, I have learned, is not the end of suffering. Sometimes it is only the beginning of a different battle.

Ras Ain al-Auja was one of the last Bedouin communities left in the Jordan Valley. In January this year, settlers cut it off, destroying the roads and barring food from reaching people and animals. While I was reporting there, a settler tried to unclip my camera from its strap. He was wearing a stolen keffiyeh and grazing his sheep on land that wasn’t his. Before her family fled, I asked 12-year-old Nahla Ahmad Trefat to tell me: If she could do one last thing in her home, what would it be? I expected her to mention a special toy, a piece of clothing, something to carry with her. Instead, she said, “I want to comb my hair.” Her words stayed with me. I had expected a more elaborate response in the face of such a life-altering event. Yet, Nahla distilled all the displacement, killing, settlement expansion, and demolition operations in the Jordan Valley into a child’s simple desire to do something ordinary in her home — perhaps for the very last time.



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