

## Where Is The Palestinian Gandhi?

By Mazin Qumsiyeh

### About This Issue

U2 singer Bono recently expressed his hope that “the people in places filled with rage and despair, places like the Palestinian Territories, will in the days ahead find among them their Gandhi...”

He himself saw the coming of such a Palestinian “remote at the moment.”

We urge Bono to go to the Palestinian Territories and to meet with Palestinians such as our feature writer, Dr. Mazin Qumsiyeh, a Yale University scientist, author of the forthcoming “Popular Resistance in Palestine,” and a nonviolent human rights activist.

**John F. Mahoney**  
Executive Director

On Thursday, May 6, 2010, we sat in front of the massive bulldozer carving up the land of the small village of Al-Wallaja. We were an eclectic group of about 50 individuals: Al-Walaja residents, other Palestinians, internationals including Israelis, young, old, males, females, Jews, Christians, and Muslims.

Peacefully we tried to explain to the soldiers gathered ominously around us that we were there at the invitation of the land owners, that the colonial activity of building a wall on the people’s land is illegal per international law.

The soldiers dragged us away, arresting four of us: me, a Canadian young man and two brothers from Al-Walaja. They particularly abused the two brothers using pepper spray and beatings. Three others were injured and one was hospitalized.

*(Continued on Page 2.)*

## AMEU Board of Directors

Jane Adas (*Vice President*)  
 Elizabeth D. Barlow  
 Edward Dillon  
 Rod Driver  
 John Goelet  
 David Grimland  
 Richard Hobson  
 Anne R. Joyce  
 Hon. Robert V. Keeley  
 Kendall Landis (*Treasurer*)  
 Robert L. Norberg (*President*)  
 Hon. Edward L. Peck  
 Donald L. Snook  
 Rosmarie Sunderland  
 James M. Wall

## AMEU National Council

Hon. James E. Akins  
 Hugh D. Auchincloss, Jr.  
 William R. Chandler  
 Paul Findley  
 Moorhead Kennedy  
 Ann Kerr  
 Mary Norton  
 Marie Petersen  
 Don W. Wagner  
 Miriam Ward, RSM

## Executive Director

John F. Mahoney

AMEU (ISSN 0024-4007) grants permission to reproduce material from The Link in part or in whole. AMEU must be credited and one copy forwarded to our office at 475 Riverside Drive, Room 245, New York, New York 10115-0245. Tel. 212-870-2053; Fax 212-870-2050; E-mail: AMEU@ameu.org; Website: www.ameu.org.

## Popular Resistance In Palestine

What happened to us in Al-Wallaja is but one of thousands of such encounters; far more violent attacks and arrests of participants have taken and are taking place in Palestine.

I first learned about popular resistance from observing such acts over the years and not because anyone taught it to me. As a child, I recall soldiers humiliating my father who with dignity refused to obey their unjust orders. I recall relatives engaged in defiance of the occupation, and high school friends who paid a heavy price for any acts of resistance, big or small, or even simply for being a Palestinian in Palestine.

I've spent many years in the U.S. but have returned frequently, including during two intifadas. In the U.S. I was involved in hosting speakers on nonviolent resistance, all of them practitioners and not theoreticians. This included Jeff Halper, co-founder of The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, and the Palestinian Salim Shawamreh, whose home was demolished three times by the Israeli army and rebuilt three times by Halper's committee as an act of civil disobedience to injustice.

In June 2005, we hosted Al-Rowwad Theater Group from Aida

Refugee Camp, a group engaged in using art and theater as a form of resistance. I recall a poignant moment during that trip that illustrates the resilience and dignity of our people.

We were driving the refugee children in two vans from Connecticut to Vermont for their next appearances. I was driving one van with an adult next to me and six playful but well behaved children behind me. About two hours into the trip, I was engaging in a political discussion with the teacher which got a bit heated like the air outside the van. We were a bit depressed about the state of affairs in Palestine with the entrenching of the apartheid system. Out of nowhere, I feel this tap on my shoulder and the ten year old girl from behind telling me "Don't worry, uncle Mazin, Palestine will be free."

I do not remember what I mumbled in response but both I and the teacher stayed silent until the next stop. There, I was taken aside and told by one of the adults in the Theater Group that her mother was murdered by the Israeli army. He explained that this is not publicized and I should keep it to myself because it is important for her to feel like the other children. In later conversations with this girl, I was struck by her positive energy and lack of even any hint of bitterness.

## Also in This Issue.....

- \* Page 12.....The Link's Link, interview with Ali Abunimah, cofounder of The Electronic Intifada
- \* Page 13.....Sen. Jim Abourezk reviews "60 Years Later," by Tom Suarez
- \* Page 14.....In Appreciation: Hasib Sabbagh
- \* Page 15.....Video Catalog
- \* Page 16.....Book & Video Order Form

I personally have met hundreds of decent, brave, inspiring Palestinians like her.

There is Sa'ed Abuhijla. He was jailed and tortured, and his mother was assassinated in front of his eyes on the balcony of their home in Nablus. Sa'ed is kind, open, fun, but also defiant. He holds no bitterness that I can detect.

There is Sa'ed Bannourah of Beit Sahour, shot at point blank range in the back and paralyzed for life. Now he spends most of his time writing and editing for the International Middle East Media Center, an indispensable outlet for news of popular resistance in Palestine.

On July 20, 2007, while participating in the weekly demonstration in Bil'in, I watched as Eyad Burnat—himself injured many times in popular resistance—picked up his cousin Ibrahim who had been shot in the head with a rubber-coated steel bullet and carried him to an ambulance. Afterwards, we interviewed Eyad. He stood composed, his shirt soaked in his cousin's blood. The interview is on YouTube, and I urge readers to view it. ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_ZB\\_hlziDKQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ZB_hlziDKQ)). Despite all the brutality, Bil'in, he says, will continue its nonviolent resistance against the illegal occupation.

I have met thousands of such people and their energy kept me working hard while in the U.S. to build organizations, write, speak, publish, visit Palestine more frequently, and act. When I finally moved back to Palestine on a full time basis two years ago, I had resolved to emulate these heroes of mine.

We, Palestinian Christians and Muslims, have no shortage of self-sacrificing heroes to inspire us. One of the first is Jesus/Yassou', who practiced nonviolent resistance against oppressive Pharisee and Roman rulers. His message is loud and clear in loving our enemies, working diligently and nonviolently to defend the weak, and acting in ethical ways that are pleasing to God without concern for

negative repercussion. That model is highly respected by his followers and those include Palestinian Muslims, who venerate Jesus as a prophet.

The true Muslim seeks peace with God and man: with God by total submission to his will because He is the source of all goodness and purity, with man by spreading good deeds. But this does not mean that Islam is passive: "O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah (God), even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you swerve, and if you distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah

is well-acquainted with all that you do." (Quran, 4:135).

In the Islamic and Arab world, popular resistance has thus become well established. One of Mahatma Gandhi's colleagues in the Indian subcontinent was a Muslim by the name of AbdelGafar Khan. In the 1920s and 1930s, Khan established his army of nonviolent resisters among the Muslims of Peshawar and then spread the movement to other districts. They had a unique uniform, discipline, and totally nonviolent methods. In one demonstration alone, the British forces opened fire killing hundreds of his unarmed army.

As in Christianity, Islam does not encourage hating those who do evil, only the evil deeds are hated. "Love your enemies" does not mean loving their acts of injustice. The believers dislike evil deeds (*Yakrahu Al-Munkar*) and not evil-doers (*Al-Munkireen*). In all other religions (Buddhism, Judaism etc.) you find similar sayings.

## Popular Nonviolent Resistance To Zionist Colonization

In the 19th century, the Zionist movement tried to use its significant resources of money to purchase



Eyad Burnat, co-founder of The Popular Committee Against the Wall and Settlements, after carrying his cousin to an ambulance.—YouTube

land for colonial settlements. The technical transfer of paper ownership of some land was facilitated through bribes, the use of so-called absentee-land owners, and other tools established in the bureaucracy of a corrupt and decaying Ottoman empire.

While the size of these early parcels of lands was relatively small, they a) represented a beachhead for colonization, and b) the peasants who farmed these lands for generations were forced out, giving the first hint of what was to come.

It is thus not surprising that in the 1880s, we find the first demonstrations, petitions, and other forms of civil resistance. The two segments of society that were most involved in this resistance were the peasants (fellahin) and the intellectual elite who were able to read and understand the Zionist goals of transforming Palestine into a Jewish state. In the latter group we find Palestinian representatives in the Ottoman parliament such as Ruhi Al-Khalidi and Hafez Abdel-Hadi.

For over 40 years, resistance was exclusively by civil and popular means. Armed resistance entered the picture in very sporadic, small and unorganized ways in the 1920s. In 1886, villagers of Al-Khdaira and Malbas protested the growth of the settlement of Petah Tikva. These early protests caused the Ottoman government to restrict settlement of those who entered the country as tourists and overstayed their three-month entry permit.

The struggle at the popular level intensified in Dec. 1908, when villagers of Kafr Kama (near Tiberias) tried to reclaim land taken by the Jewish Colonization Association. New newspapers like Al-Karmal and Filastine became vanguards of nationalist and anti-Zionist expression. A small uprising occurred in 1911 that set a pattern of uprisings separated by periods of relative calm for decades to come. The intervening periods between these uprisings usually spanned 8-15 years or more depending on geopolitical circumstances. There were thus distinct uprisings in 1911, 1920, 1929, 1936, 1956, 1972, 1987, and 2000. This year, 2010, looks like the beginning of another uprising.

It was the failure to get further support from Ottoman rulers that led Zionist leaders to lobby European powers, particularly Britain and France. It paid off.

On June 4, 1917, Jules Cambon, secretary general of the French Foreign Ministry, sent a letter to Nahum Sokolow of the World Zionist Organization, pledging "to help the renaissance of the Jewish nationality on the land from which the Jewish people were exiled so many centuries ago." And on November 2, 1917, Arthur Balfour, the British foreign secretary, sent his letter to Lord Rothschild announcing that "His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."

Palestinians learned of these declarations in the middle of WWI, a war that reshaped Western Asia as it did other parts of the world. The resistance to the British occupation and its attempts to develop a "Jewish national home" in Palestine accelerated after the end of WWI.

In 1918, two youth organizations (Christian and Muslim mixed) were formed in Jerusalem representing clan alignments of the era: *Al-Nadi Al-Arabi* (the Arab Club) and *Al-Montana Al-Adabi* (the Culture Forum). Founders of the former included members of the Al-Husseini family, and of the latter Fakhri Al-Nashashibi and Hassan Sudki Al-Dajani. This was the first inkling of familiar divisions in the politics of Palestine. Their visions of resistance differed on the point of whether to cooperate with the British authorities or not. But resistance on the ground was growing and intensified because of the 1917 Balfour Declaration. The First Palestinian Arab Congress was held in Jerusalem, from January 27 to February 4 1919, with 27 delegates attending from throughout Palestine.

The massive British repression in the 1920s convinced some of the locals to take up armed resistance. This resistance was insignificant and happened after four decades of purely nonviolent resistance. Meanwhile, the civil popular resistance continued and actually accelerated. On March 11, 1920, many peaceful demonstrations were held in all major Palestinian cities concomitant with the foundation of the underground Haganna forces, the forerunners of the Israeli army. On 4 April 1920, a religious festival, held annually and called Mawsam Al-Nabi Musa, was transformed into a large nationalist demonstration. The uprising of 1920-1921 was the first obvious

mass movement for liberation under an increasingly Zionized administration of Palestine.

The resistance only intensified as Britain decided to appoint the openly Zionist Herbert Samuel as first high commissioner of occupied Palestine in June 1920. As the nonviolent demonstrations were met with violence, the situation deteriorated. An uprising in 1929, known as *Hibbet Al-Buraq*, involved both armed and popular tactics of resistance to the attempted take-over of Waqf land, including the Western wall, and left in its wake 116 Palestinians and 133 Jews dead.

The First Arab Women's Congress of Palestine gathered about 200 women and was held on 26 October 1929 in Jerusalem. The demands were those of the Palestinian people: against the Balfour Declaration, against the establishment of Jewish colonies, and for self-determination. They elected a 14-member Executive Committee headed by Matiel E. T. Moganam. Moganam later wrote a book titled "The Arab Women and the Palestinian Problem," which detailed the activities of the movement.

On 13 October, 1933, 7,000 angry demonstrators filled the streets of Jaffa. The British forces opened fire killing 12 and wounding 78 Palestinians with one policeman killed. Two weeks later, in Jaffa, 24 peaceful demonstrators were killed and 204 injured. The vicious, indiscriminate attack on unarmed civilians incensed an already seething population.

Forms of nonviolent resistance escalated in the uprising of 1936-1939 and included demonstrations, boycotts, tax revolts, and other forms of civil disobedience. The British authorities responded to the growing civil resistance by declaring a state of emergency with general curfews and drastic measures against any disturbances. Villages and towns were fined for refusing to pay taxes. Personal properties were confiscated and homes were demolished. Hundreds of strike organizers were imprisoned. The worst of these measures for many Palestinians was the collective punishment of demolishing hundreds of homes in towns like Nablus, Bethlehem, Hebron, Lod, Safad, Al-Majdal, and Qalqilia. On the morning of 18 June 1936 the authorities demolished large sections of the old city of Jaffa, leaving 6,000 homeless.

Lessons can be learned from this period. The 1936

uprising was highly successful where popular resistance with some limited armed resistance achieved a remarkable success in the first eight months. This included the longest strike in Palestinian and perhaps world history. The uprising was weakened by a number of factors: 1) the massive oppression including destruction of large areas of some Palestinian towns like Jaffa by the occupation authorities (as a form of collective punishment), 2) the collaborationist Arab regimes who pushed the Palestinians to "trust" the British authorities, 3) the Palestinian political leadership, mostly self-appointed, which first stood against the uprising, then claimed its leadership, then traded at its expense.

But the struggle continued and when Palestine was fragmented with the Nakba of 1948, new forces rose to resist the land grab. The Armistice lines of 1949, the so-called Green Line, had ceded to the Jewish state 78.5% of what had been Palestine just one year before.

The next Nakba, that of 1967, was Israel's aggressive war that violated International Conventions and lines of cease fire and left it controlling the Sinai, Gaza, the West Bank and the Golan. The defeat of Arab forces in 1967 and the success of Fatah and other factions in the battle of Al-Karameh in 1968 changed the geopolitical landscape: Fatah and other factions entered the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1969, an organization with major guerilla groups but also significant popular resistance sections such as the General Union of Palestinian Women and General Union of Palestinian Students. The Palestinians, under the umbrella of the P.L.O., soon forced a supine, reluctant world not only to recognize their existence but to recognize that they had a national liberation struggle with political goals based on international law.

Inside Palestine, the resistance also continued. Part of the problem for Israel is that, unlike 1948, in 1967 there was no mass exodus—ethnic cleansing could not be repeated—so Israel was left as an occupation force over millions of Palestinians. The Palestinian cause received a significant boost from Israel's oppression, which strengthened ties between Palestinians throughout historic Palestine, and solidified the Palestinian leadership after the dramatic failure of the Arab regimes. Self reliance developed slowly

---

---

and made its most significant impact in the proliferation of Palestinian institutions in the 1970s, including Palestinian universities. Intellectuals joined hands with the rest of society to develop various forms of popular resistance.

Resistance within the Green Line, i.e., Israel proper, took a few years to develop after the lifting of military rule in 1966. Meanwhile, in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, i.e., Gaza and the West Bank, resistance stirred gradually as the people recovered from the war. A small uprising in Gaza in the early 1970s was put down brutally by Israeli forces led by the "bulldozer" Ariel Sharon.

The increased mobilization among Palestinians inside the Green Line took a bold step forward in 1975-1976. At a meeting held in Nazareth on March 6, 1976, 48 heads of municipalities and local village councils called for a day of protests and strikes to be held on March 30, should Israel go ahead with its land confiscation policies. When it appeared the strike day was a go, many areas outside of the Galilee decided to join, including in the West Bank. This day is now known as "Land Day" throughout Palestine. The events actually started on March 29, with a demonstration against the Israeli army's provocative mobilizations in the village of Deir Hanna. Later that evening, the village of Araba Al-Batoof demonstrated in solidarity and a young man, Khair Muhammad Yassin, was killed by Israeli soldiers, the first martyr of the 1976 Land Day. More martyrs fell over the next 24 hours. The events were well organized and participation was high. The Israeli authorities reacted violently resulting in many injured, six nonviolent protesters murdered, and hundreds arrested.

These events coincided with the Koenig Memorandum, a confidential, internal Israeli government report that stressed the need "of diluting existing Arab population concentrations" for the sake of long-term Jewish interests; specifically, it laid out plans for further discrimination and ethnic cleansing to "make the Galilee more Jewish." The Israeli government condemned the leaked memo, but no government official repudiated its racist content.

Much has been written about the success of the 1987 uprising, also called Intifada Al-Hijara, the Uprising of the Stones. Massive Israeli violence was met

with demonstrations, boycotts, civil disobedience and all the arsenal of popular nonviolent resistance tools. Live bullets were fired at children throwing stones (and on rare occasions Molotov cocktails). But most Intifada actions were innovative acts of nonviolent resistance that, despite massive Israeli propaganda efforts, exposed the world to what this struggle was about. Israel's response was ordered by Defense Minister Yitshak Rabin, who instructed his soldiers to break the arms and legs of Palestinians who protested Israel's occupation of their land. Israel became known for what it is: an occupying colonial power. Like the 1935-1939 uprising, the 1987 uprising provided a wealth of lessons and a wealth of achievements that give us hope for the future.

The unorganized and popular revolt generated leadership from the ground. Within a month, these natural leaders of the resistance issued their first call to action on Jan. 4, 1988 under the "joint resistance leadership" which became highly organized and effective. The first call to action included a call for a strike and civil disobedience from Jan. 11 to 13. Subsequent calls included a variety of nonviolent protests, all implemented professionally despite Israel's savage oppression. According to many activists I interviewed, a core group met regularly to provide ideas and plans of execution at the local level in every major town and refugee camp in the Occupied Territories, including Jerusalem.

The actions included calling for days of strikes, building public sites to commemorate victims of the occupation, refusal to pay taxes (an action started in my hometown of Beit Sahour), developing self-sustenance through farming and other methods, mass resignations, refusal to pay unjust civil and criminal fines, holding public prayers, refusal to abide by military orders, flying Palestinian flags (illegal at the time), and many more. During the tax revolt of 1988 and 1989, The Palestinian Center for Rapprochement Between People (P.C.R.), established in 1988 and based in Beit Sahour, invited Israelis and internationals to help challenge the occupation policies by such acts as breaking curfews.

On December 28, 2000, the people of Beit Sahour invited internationals, including Israelis, to march on the Israeli military camp at the edge of town, known by the locals as Ush Ghraib. Hundreds of marchers

---

---

got into the camp in a brilliant act of nonviolent resistance. Their success led to the founding of the International Solidarity Movement in Beit Sahour.

Two facts emerged from all this: 1) that the 1987-1991 uprising became a way of life in the Occupied Territories at least in terms of self-reliance, and 2) that the P.L.O. is the only major Palestinian political power that has a direct ability to end the Intifada. This pushed the United States to start the Madrid process, and when Israel felt under pressure by the capable Palestinian negotiators, the Oslo process was concocted. For Israel it was low fruits picked in exchange for ending the resistance and the international pressure on Israel.

With the signing of the Oslo accords, there developed an unprecedented situation in the history of resistance to colonial occupation. A "Palestinian authority" with a strong police force was established in the most heavily populated areas of the West Bank and Gaza while under direct Israeli occupation. The authority was expected to keep a restless population in check. This, combined with talk of "wait for negotiations," made the initiation of any kind of resistance rather difficult. Popular resistance persisted, albeit at a reduced level. The first suicide bombing happened after the American-Israeli Baruch Goldstein massacred 29 worshippers in the Ibrahimi mosque in Hebron and Israel rewarded its settlers by dividing the mosque and putting native Palestinians under a 40-day curfew.

As a result of the Oslo process, the number of settlers in the West Bank and Gaza doubled between 1993 and 2000. Israel also introduced massive restrictions on movement within the Occupied Territories, isolated and intensified efforts to Judaize Jerusalem, forced economic stagnation, and fragmented what remains of Palestine.

People were fed-up and the conditions were ripe for another uprising. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak gave his ultimatum to Yassir Arafat to sign a final deal that would have left Palestinians in large Bantustans and would have abrogated basic rights like the right of return to Palestinian refugees. But the straw that broke the Palestinian back was the visit of Ariel Sharon, surrounded by 1,000 armed Israeli soldiers and police to the holy Muslim site of Al

-Aqsa mosque in late September 2000. The Al-Aqsa intifada (uprising) started on 28 September 2000 and continued until 2006. It involved mostly Palestinians and internationals engaged in popular resistance and a few Palestinians engaged in armed resistance. 4,000 Palestinians, including many women and children, were murdered.

## A Look to the Future

Resistance to colonial occupation by any means is a right and an obligation recognized by all people and supported by international law.

In the Western media, there is far too much emphasis on armed or violent resistance which, as a percentage of the total daily acts of resistance and the number of people engaged in it, is minuscule. Perhaps this is why Israeli forces are focused on snuffing popular resistance. As we have seen there is a rich and innovative history of popular resistance in Palestine that gives us energy to look to the future with hope. But there are other trends that give us strength.

The use of the internet and other modern communication tools (e.g. cell phones) makes it even harder for Israel to hide the atrocities committed in places like Nablus, Jenin, and Gaza. These tools also facilitate mobilizing grassroots activism locally and internationally to expose and directly challenge colonial repression and defend human rights. The popular



Dr. Mazin Qumsiyeh being arrested at Al-Walaja, May 6, 2010.

resistance in Palestine and around the world makes it impossible for the Israeli system to hide behind a history of anti-Jewish feelings in Europe in order to get away with ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and crimes against humanity in Palestine.

The movement for boycotts, divestments, and sanctions (BDS) was launched on July 9, 2005, when 170 Palestinian civil society organizations issued a comprehensive call for BDS. This is now the central organizing document for local and international activism. (See box on page 10.)

Hundreds of organizations, unions, churches, and other groups have taken up the BDS call in the past few years. This is bound to accelerate as Israel consolidates its apartheid regime in the guise of the process that is supposed to give rise to “a Palestinian state” — the so called “two-state solution.”

Taking advantage of a U.S.-led “war on terrorism” (including the illegal invasion of Iraq), the Israeli government decided to up its pressure, killing internationals (e.g. Rachel Corrie), demolishing whole sections of refugee camps, and building an apartheid wall deep inside the West Bank to steal more Palestinian lands.

But resistance to this wall and other colonial activities has only accelerated and is expected to grow. Small resilient villages have become famous in the media and among Palestinians and internationals making pilgrimage to join the struggle: Budrus, Masha, Al-Walaja, Al-Ma'sara, Ni'lin, Bil'in, Jayyus, Nabi Saleh, and dozens more. Israeli attacks on Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem have led to the creation of active popular committees in places like Silwan and Sheikh Jarrah.

Even in besieged Gaza, at risk of death, people still demonstrate at the so called “buffer zone,” the 30 -mile-long, up to 1½-mile deep border declared by Israeli occupation forces as a no-man's land.

And human rights activists from around the world still challenge Israel's illegal naval blockade of Gaza. Most recently, on May 31, 2010, a Freedom Flotilla of unarmed civilians in six boats, tried to take 10,000 tons of aid to Gaza—humanitarian supplies that Israel bans. They didn't make it. At 4 a.m., in international waters, Israeli ships surrounded the flotilla and masked gunmen in gas masks fast-roped

from helicopters onto the deck of the lead ship. The assault resulted in nine civilians dead and 60 injured. No Israeli soldiers were killed.

As it does to justify all of its disproportionate assaults on Palestinians, Israel claimed self-defense. But this time it did not work. Soon after the deadly raid at sea, the U.N. Security Council, in an emergency meeting, condemned the acts and called for an investigation. Even the U.S. concurred. This time the shooting down of unarmed civilians engaged in non-violent resistance compelled governments to take action that violent resistance never would have.

Palestinian resistance by definition is a rejection of oppression and an attempt to gain freedom and chart our own free future. Rulers and occupiers all maintain a power structure that enables them to dictate their agendas. Their most important tool is to force the maximum number of natives to feel helpless and defeated. In this, Ben Gurion's expectation that “the old will die and the young will forget” has failed miserably.

The young are actually resisting in larger and larger numbers. In the holding cell at an Israeli military camp, I saw how strong was the conviction of the two brothers from Al-Walaja, even while we were handcuffed. The Israeli soldiers, armed to the teeth, were weak and unsure of themselves. Afraid and uneducated, some of them even began to rethink what they were doing there—one soldier pleaded desperation in job hunting.

I believe this apartheid system is losing its head, not unlike the last days of apartheid in South Africa. Why, for example, would some 30 occupation soldiers show up at my home at 1:30 in the morning, while I was away, if not to traumatize my elderly mother, my sister and my wife?

Without popular resistance in its myriad forms, Palestine would have become a pure Jewish state and at a very low cost to the occupiers. Instead, today there are over 5.5 million Palestinians living in historic Palestine. The Zionist project, well-funded, violent, and supported by superpowers, failed at its stated goals. We as Palestinians succeeded in resisting an incredible onslaught, in maintaining our presence, in improving our education, and most of all in keeping our humanity and strengthening our connec-

---

---

tions to our land and to fellow humans around the world. It is only a matter of time before we succeed in gaining our freedom and regaining our stolen lands. This is because we will never give up.

While it is militarily strong, Apartheid Israel is a failure on moral, ethical, legal, and even management grounds. This colonial state is now engaged in a desperate effort to force its victims to capitulate. But even some Israeli leaders acknowledge that the determination and will of the vast majority of the Palestinian people can never be broken. We are proud of our history, a history of resistance that now spans 130 years. We will continue to engage in all forms of popular resistance: resistance by art, by education, by civil disobedience, by writing, by standing in front of bulldozers, by working our lands, by *sumud* (persistence), and by never being willing to give up our rights to return and to self-determination. For us “to exist is to resist.”

Finally, to the question posed by Paul David Hewson (aka Bono) in the title of this article: Where is the Palestinian Ghandi?

The reality is that there are more than 200 groups engaged in popular, nonviolent resistance inside Palestine, including Israeli organizations. Sixty-two of them are listed on page 11. Should Mr. Hewson, who has given concerts inside Israel, ever wish to visit the Occupied Territories, I'd be pleased to introduce him to all our Palestinian Gandhis. □

## We Shall Return

By Tawfiq Zayyed,  
Former Mayor of Nazareth

It is a thousand times easier  
For you  
To pass an elephant through the  
needle's eye  
To catch fried fish in the milkyway  
To plow the sea  
To teach the alligator speech  
A thousand times easier  
Than smothering with your oppression  
The spark of an idea.

Here we shall remain  
A wall on your chests.  
We wash dishes in the hotel  
And serve drinks to the masters  
We mop the floors in the dark kitchens  
To extract a piece of bread  
From your blue teeth  
For the little ones.

Here we shall remain  
A wall on your chests  
We starve,  
Go naked,  
Sing songs  
And fill the streets  
With demonstrations  
And the jails with pride.

**An Israeli soldier tries to tear away a banner commemorating the death of American peace activist Rachel Corrie during a demonstration against Israel's separation wall on March 21. A group of Palestinians, Israelis and internationals carried the banner as they walked towards lands of Beit Jala that had been bulldozed earlier in the month by Israeli authorities. Israeli soldiers closed off the road with barbed wire, preventing the demonstrators from reaching their destination. *Link* author Mazin Qumsiyeh (at right with video camera) was among the activists. Although demonstrators had begun to disperse after speeches, soldiers used tear gas against them.—  
Photo by Anne Paq/Activestills**



## **Palestinian Civil Society Calls for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel**

One year after the historic Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) which found Israel's Wall built on occupied Palestinian territory to be illegal, Israel continues its construction of the colonial Wall with total disregard to the Court's decision. Thirty eight years into Israel's occupation of the Palestinian West Bank (including East Jerusalem), Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan Heights, Israel continues to expand Jewish colonies. It has unilaterally annexed occupied East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights and is now de facto annexing large parts of the West Bank by means of the Wall. Israel is also preparing—in the shadow of its planned redeployment from the Gaza Strip—to build and expand colonies in the West Bank. Fifty seven years after the state of Israel was built mainly on land ethnically cleansed of its Palestinian owners, a majority of Palestinians are refugees, most of whom are stateless. Moreover, Israel's entrenched system of racial discrimination against its own Arab-Palestinian citizens remains intact.

In light of Israel's persistent violations of international law, and

Given that, since 1948, hundreds of U.N. resolutions have condemned Israel's colonial and discriminatory policies as illegal and called for immediate, adequate and effective remedies, and

Given that all forms of international intervention and peace-making have until now failed to convince or force Israel to comply with humanitarian law, to respect fundamental human rights and to end its occupation and oppression of the people of Palestine, and

In view of the fact that people of conscience in the international community have historically shouldered the moral responsibility to fight injustice, as exemplified in the struggle to abolish apartheid in South Africa through diverse forms of boycott, divestment and sanctions;

Inspired by the struggle of South Africans against apartheid and in the spirit of international solidarity, moral consistency and resistance to injustice and oppression,

We, representatives of Palestinian civil society, call upon international civil society organizations and people of conscience all over the world to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era. We appeal to you to pressure your respective states to impose embargoes and sanctions against Israel. We also invite conscientious Israelis to support this Call, for the sake of justice and genuine peace.

These nonviolent punitive measures should be maintained until Israel meets its obligation to recognize the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination and fully complies with the precepts of international law by:

1. Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall;
2. Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and
3. Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in U.N. Resolution 194.

*Issued July 9, 2005*

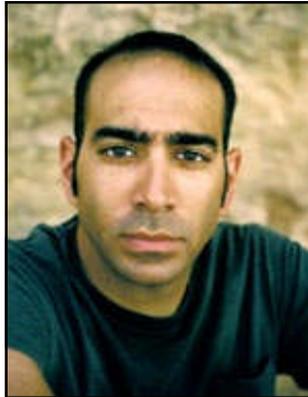
## Palestinian Civil Resistance/Nonviolent Groups

- Addameer Prisoners' Support & Human Rights Association: [www.addameer.org](http://www.addameer.org)
- Adalah: [www.adalah.org](http://www.adalah.org)
- Al-Haq: [www.alhaq.org](http://www.alhaq.org)
- Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights: [www.mezan.org](http://www.mezan.org)
- Al-Rowwad Cultural and Theatre Training Centre: [www.alrowwad.virtualactivism.net](http://www.alrowwad.virtualactivism.net)
- Alternative Tourism Group: [www.atg.ps](http://www.atg.ps)
- Applied Research Institute, Jerusalem: [www.arij.org](http://www.arij.org)
- Arab Assn. for Human Rights: [www.arabhra.org](http://www.arabhra.org)
- Association of Forty: [www.assoc40.org](http://www.assoc40.org)
- Aswat: [www.aswat-palestiniangaywomen.org](http://www.aswat-palestiniangaywomen.org)
- BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights: [www.badil.org](http://www.badil.org)
- Bil'in Village Popular Resistance Committee: [www.bilin-village.org](http://www.bilin-village.org), [www.bilin-ffj.org](http://www.bilin-ffj.org)
- Birzeit University Right to Education Campaign: [www.right2edu.birzeit.edu](http://www.right2edu.birzeit.edu)
- BOYCOTT! : [www.boycottisrael.info](http://www.boycottisrael.info)
- Civil Coalition for Defending the Palestinians' Rights in Jerusalem <http://www.ccdprj.ps>
- Coalition for Jerusalem: [www.coalitionforjerusalem.blogspot.com](http://www.coalitionforjerusalem.blogspot.com)
- Combatants for Peace: [www.combatantsforpeace.org](http://www.combatantsforpeace.org)
- Dar Annadwa: [www.annadwa.org](http://www.annadwa.org)
- Defence for Children International-Palestine: [www.dci-pal.org](http://www.dci-pal.org)
- Gaza Community Mental Health Program: [www.gcmhp.net](http://www.gcmhp.net)
- Global Palestine Right of Return Coalition: [www.rorcoalition.org](http://www.rorcoalition.org)
- Golan for Development: [www.jawlan.org](http://www.jawlan.org)
- Hebron Rehabilitation Comm.: [www.hebronrc.org](http://www.hebronrc.org)
- Holy Land Trust: [www.holylandtrust.org](http://www.holylandtrust.org)
- Independent Comm. for Human Rights: [www.ichr.ps](http://www.ichr.ps)
- International Solidarity Movement: [www.palsolidarity.org](http://www.palsolidarity.org)
- Ittijah—Union of Arab Com. Based Orgs: [www.ittijah.org](http://www.ittijah.org)
- Jerusalem Legal Aid & Human Rights Center: [www.mosaada.org](http://www.mosaada.org)
- Joint Advocacy Initiative between the YMCA and YWCA: [www.jai-pal.org](http://www.jai-pal.org)
- Khalil Al Sakakini Cultural Center: [www.sakakini.org](http://www.sakakini.org)
- Library on Wheels for Nonviolence and Peace Association : [www.lownp.com](http://www.lownp.com)
- Maaber: [www.maaber.org](http://www.maaber.org)
- Mandela Institute for Human Rights : [www.mandela-palestine.org](http://www.mandela-palestine.org)
- MIFTAH-Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy: [www.miftah.org](http://www.miftah.org)
- Muwatin--The Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy: [www.muwatin.org](http://www.muwatin.org)
- Nil'in Village Popular Resistance Committee: [www.nilin-palestine.org](http://www.nilin-palestine.org)
- Occupied Palestine and Golan Heights Advocacy Initiative: [www.opgai.net](http://www.opgai.net)
- Open Bethlehem: [www.openbethlehem.org](http://www.openbethlehem.org)
- Open Shuhada Street Campaign: [openshuhadastreet.org](http://openshuhadastreet.org)
- Palestinian Boycotts, Divestments, and Sanctions Movement: [www.bdsmovement.net](http://www.bdsmovement.net)
- Palestinian Campaign for Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel: [www.pacbi.org](http://www.pacbi.org)
- Palestine Center for Human Rights: [www.pchrgaza.org](http://www.pchrgaza.org)
- Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement between People: [www.rapprochement.org](http://www.rapprochement.org), [www.pcr.ps](http://www.pcr.ps)
- Palestinian Grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign (Stop the Wall): [www.stophthewall.org](http://www.stophthewall.org)
- Palestine Heritage Center: [www.palestineheritagecenter.com](http://www.palestineheritagecenter.com)
- Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group: [www.phrmg.org](http://www.phrmg.org)
- Pal. Non-Gov. Orgs. Network: [www.pngo.net](http://www.pngo.net)
- Palestinian Prisoners' Society: [www.ppsmo.org](http://www.ppsmo.org)
- The Parents' Circle/Families Forum: [www.theparentscircle.com](http://www.theparentscircle.com)
- Popular Struggle Coordinating Committee: [popular-struggle.org](http://popular-struggle.org)
- Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies: [www.rchrs.org](http://www.rchrs.org)
- (The) Rebuilding Alliance: [www.rebuildingalliance.org](http://www.rebuildingalliance.org)
- Regional Association of the Unrecognized Villages: [www.rcuv.wordpress.com](http://www.rcuv.wordpress.com)
- Right to Enter Campaign: [www.righttoenter.ps](http://www.righttoenter.ps)
- Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center: [www.sabeel.org](http://www.sabeel.org)
- Sawt Al-Amel: [www.laborers-voice.org](http://www.laborers-voice.org)
- Society for Self-Development, Hebron: No website
- Ta 'ayush: [www.taayush.org](http://www.taayush.org)
- Tent of Nations: [www.tentofnations.org](http://www.tentofnations.org)
- Union of Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees: [www.pal-arc.org](http://www.pal-arc.org)
- Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees: [www.pmps.ps](http://www.pmps.ps)
- Wi'am Center: [www.alaslah.org](http://www.alaslah.org)

## From **The Link's** Links

<http://www.electronicintifada.net>

The Electronic Intifada (EI) website was a pioneer in Palestinian advocacy when it was launched in 2001. EI co-founder Ali Abunimah (right) responded to the following questions posed by AMEU President Bob Norberg:



**Why the name "Electronic Intifada?"** The name originates from the late 1990s when I was among many young Palestinians, especially in the diaspora, who had found in the internet a way to get to know each other and even organize. We felt excluded from mainstream media and discourse, but here was a way for us to speak to each other and the rest of the world without mediation. It felt like a sort of uprising!

For us, the word "Intifada" had very positive, empowering connotations, but in the mainstream media it became synonymous with violence, especially after the outbreak of the second Palestinian intifada in 2000. So adopting the name formally for the new website in 2001 was a way to take the word back and tell people what it meant to us. Our weapons were words, thoughts, ideas and facts. And they still are!

**What did you hope to accomplish with EI at its inception?** I was one of four co-founders, the others being Nigel Parry, Laurie King and Arjan EIFassed. We had all been involved in using the Internet in its "early days" to educate people about Palestine. At the beginning I think our focus was much more on responding to what we saw as very biased mainstream media coverage—you could say the focus was very action-oriented, getting people to write to newspapers, contact radio stations and so on. I think our goal was to be an edgy, insistent and independent platform.

**What has surprised you the most in how EI has evolved?** Over time, EI developed from reacting to mainstream media toward developing our own original reporting and analysis—in other words to become a fully fledged, albeit small, "news organization." But our focus now is very strongly geared toward developing our own reporting. This has become even more important given the huge changes (some would say collapse) in the "old media." So we seem to have hit upon a model of "new

media" quite by accident. Instead of trying to be all things to all people, EI focuses on one issue and tries to do it very well, so what you get from EI you cannot get elsewhere.

We have also by necessity had to professionalize—we have wonderful people who make EI happen every day. But we remain almost completely reader-supported. As publications like yours know, it's a tough job to raise the funds every year, but our readers have been very loyal. I think they understand there is no other way to guarantee this sort of independent journalism.

**What persuades you that EI and its offshoots, Electronic Lebanon and Electronic Iraq, are successfully penetrating the mainstream media?** The "offshoots" were more time-limited projects. Electronic Lebanon was started during the 2006 war—we still report on Lebanon, but we don't seek to have a separate identity for that reporting. Electronic Iraq was started before the U.S.-led invasion; we found it difficult to continue with original reporting from Iraq because of the obvious dangers.

I think we've become less concerned overall about penetrating the mainstream media, and more focused on reaching our audience—and expanding our audience—directly. Social media and the web allow us to do this.

Young people generally don't use "old media"—reading newspapers or watching an evening news bulletin—and so why fight through all the gatekeepers to get 30 seconds of heavily edited reporting on the evening news. Of course "old media" still have a lot of influence, but that is diminishing. The new environment is becoming more democratic, and I think quality is what counts. EI is working on a new website that will incorporate a lot of the social media we're already using. Above all it will be even easier to use, nicer to look at and contain even better information.

**Can you give an example of EI's investigative reporting?** Investigative reporting is one of the things we love doing. A couple of examples:

- Former World Bank president and Middle East Quartet envoy James D. Wolfensohn is an investor in an Israeli company that is developing transport infrastructure for Jewish-only settlements built in the occupied West Bank in violation of international law: [electronicintifada.net/v2/article11238.shtml](http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article11238.shtml)
- A fellow at Harvard University's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Martin Kramer, has called for "the West" to take measures to curb the births of Palestinians, a proposal that appears to meet the international legal definition of a call for genocide: [electronicintifada.net/v2/article11091.shtml](http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article11091.shtml)

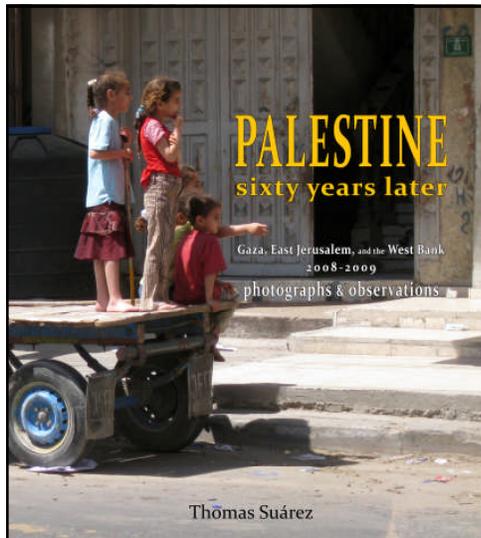
## BOOK REVIEW

### PALESTINE SIXTY YEARS LATER

By Thomas Suarez

Published 2010 by AMEU, 112 pages, \$18.00

Reviewed by Sen. James Abourezk



Thomas Suarez dedicated this extraordinary book of photos and text in a most unusual way:

In memory of the young Bedouin girl, name unrecorded, who was gang raped and murdered by Israeli soldiers in the Negev, August, 1949, and all the others of whom not even this much is remembered.

This emotional dedication paves the way for Suarez's introduction summarizing the history of Israel's mean spirited and aggressive tearing of the Palestinians from their land and just as aggressively planting Zionist settlers in their place. This is followed by an excellent group of photographs displaying what Palestinians have done to overcome the Israeli occupation in the years since 1947.

Suarez's text covers most of the categories of a brutal occupation by Israel, with such section headings as "Buying complicity:" "The fallacy of 'negotiating' as unequals:" "Exploitation of the Holocaust and anti-Semitism:" and "Erasing, not just removing, Palestinians."

His photographs show how the Palestinians have coped with Israeli occupation—an occupation that, if it

were by any other country in the world, the U.S. would send in troops to alleviate the suffering of the occupied population.

But there are reasons for this inaction by the U.S. government—435 reasons: one for every member of Congress who chooses to look the other way as international law is being daily shredded before their very eyes. Instead of moving to end this occupation and its accompanying and ongoing theft of Palestinian homes and lands, the U.S. Congress continues to send more money to Israel. And it continues to provide political protection when the United Nations dares to criticize Israel's brutal actions, including the 2008 invasion of the largest open-air prison in the world—Gaza. The devastating assault of the most powerful military in the Middle East—that of Israel—on a small area holding in captivity one and one half million helpless inhabitants, was in fact endorsed by many members of Congress. To demonstrate the reach of Israel's potent lobby in America, amazingly, even the South Dakota legislature passed a resolution endorsing Israel's invasion of Gaza.

More than showing photos and describing the state of the Occupation, Suarez is able to relate personal stories from the survivors of Operation Cast Lead, the now notorious name given to Israel's invasion of Gaza. Suarez's book will illuminate today's Palestine for those who are only starting to learn about the conflict, as well as those who have recognized over the years the tragedy of the Palestinians and the crimes of the Israeli government in its efforts to hold onto the land that it has taken illegally, and, one might add, immorally. It is a book that should be read by every American citizen, especially those citizens who want to know how their tax money and their political support is being spent by their government.



Author Thomas Suarez in Gaza.

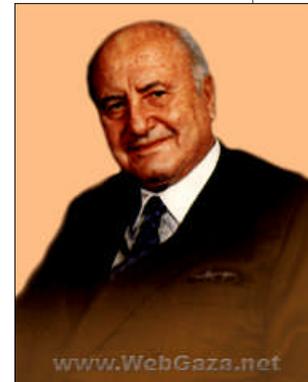
To order this book, please fill out form on page 16.

AMEU's complete catalog is at [www.ameu.org](http://www.ameu.org).

# In Appreciation

## Hasib J. Sabbagh

1920 – 2010



A philanthropist, Hasib Sabbagh gave generously to a wide range of social service, civic, humanitarian and educational institutions worldwide.

A Christian, he was the principal founder of Georgetown University's Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding.

A Palestinian, born in Tiberias and forced from his family home in 1948, his greatest passion was to see an independent Palestinian state.

In the early 1990s, during another economic downturn, our organization faced the dire choice of cutting educational programs or, worse, closing our doors. A grant from one of Mr. Sabbagh's charities saw us through the crisis. For that we are profoundly grateful.

Khalil Gibran once wrote that the significance of man is not in what he attains, but rather in what he longs to attain. Hasib Sabbagh attained much in life. As co-founder of one of the largest construction companies in the Middle East, his net worth at the time of his death was \$4.3 billion. It is, however, what he longed to attain that will define him: To bring Israelis and Palestinians to the table for good-faith negotiations that would lead to a sovereign Palestinian state, that was his lifelong mission. President Carter called him "one of my earliest and strongest allies in pursuing peace in the Middle East."

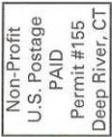
The directors and staff of AMEU extend their condolences to the Sabbagh family. As we share in their loss, we share, too, in Hasib's dream.

**John F. Mahoney**  
Executive Director

---

---





Americans for Middle East Understanding, Inc.  
Room 245, 475 Riverside Drive  
New York, NY 10115-0245

**To Support The Link**

**A \$40 voluntary annual subscription is requested to defray cost of publishing and distributing The Link and AMEU's Public Affairs Series.**

Contribution to AMEU (tax deductible)

Please Send Recent *Link* Issues

A check or money order for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed, payable to AMEU.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_

**A Lasting Gift**

**The work of AMEU has grown over the past 42 years because supporters have remembered us in their wills.**

**A bequest of a fixed sum or a percentage of an estate ensures that our voice will remain strong.**

**AMEU is a tax-deductible, educational organization. The amount of your bequest is deductible from the amount of money that is subject to state and federal inheritance taxes.**

**For further information, please contact John Mahoney at 212-870-2053.**

**Rush Order Form**

Please send \_\_\_\_ copy (copies) of "Palestine 60 Years Later" at \$18.00 per copy. Make checks payable to AMEU.

Please send \_\_\_\_ Videos checked on pg. 15 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Price (includes USPS postage): \_\_\_\_\_

Add \$3 per book/video for intern'l delivery \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL ORDER WITH CHECK TO:

**AMEU, Room 245, 475 Riverside Drive,  
New York, NY 10115-0245**

**Telephone 212-870-2053, Fax 212-870-2050, or  
E-Mail AMEU@aol.com**