

FACTS ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS AND THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES (OPT)

1. 400,000 Palestinians have been ethnically cleansed from the OPT since 1967;
2. A total of at least 49,000 Palestinian homes have been either demolished or confiscated since 1967;
3. In 1982, it was disclosed by the head of the settlement division of the World Zionist Organization that Israeli government leaders had adopted and implemented a 30-year settlement-expansion plan with the goal of placing one million settlers in the OPT. That settlement expansion plan and the 48-year occupation has resulted in Israel making \$2-3 billion per year based upon its agents' profiteering and pillaging activities;
4. Due to RE/MAX's marketing, at least 700,000 new, permanent "Jewish-only" settlers, trained in the use of sniper scopes and Hewlett Packard/Motorola surveillance devices have moved into the OPT;
5. 56,000 new homes and apartment buildings have been built for "Jewish-only" settlers with American tax dollars; our tax dollars also built a network of "Jewish-only" highways linking up the settlements and providing direct access to major urban centers like Tel Aviv and Haifa;
6. As detailed in four Israeli government reports (1992, 2003, 2005, and 2009), those structures were built on the basis of false affidavits, complete absence of approved architectural plans, illicit building permits, and violations of local zoning codes. Based on those reports, especially Israeli Special Prosecutor Talia Sasson's 1995 report which called for evacuation of illegal settlements, it is obvious that those structures were built, for the most part, on private Palestinian property;
7. Numerous war crimes (e.g., orders to "fill Palestinian bodies with bullets" and promotions based on the number of Palestinians killed) have been committed by the Israeli army, which receives at least \$100 million per year from American donors courtesy of substantial tax write-offs (see attached sworn statements from Israeli army veterans admitting to the commission of war crimes during 2000-2010);
8. U.S. pro-Zionist donors like Sheldon Adelson and Irving Moskowitz send upwards of \$1 billion to Israeli settlements every year, and take huge deductions on their 1040s for these charitable contributions;
9. This is not a new phenomenon, however. In 1932, pro-Zionist individuals and entities based in London sought tax-exempt status in connection with the mission that they were pursuing overseas. The U.K. Charities Commission rejected that petition because the mission was the establishment of "Jewish-only" enclaves in Ottoman Palestine. Unlike our Treasury Department, the U.K. Charities Commission rejected the petition because it did not view that activity as being charitable;
10. Until Treasury starts enforcing its tax-exemption regulations, these donations are deemed tax-deductible charitable contributions. Therefore, the American taxpayer has been funding settlement expansion, wholesale violence, and arms trafficking in the OPT for at least 35 years. Even though that conduct violates numerous Treasury regulations, seven federal criminal statutes, and President Clinton's 1995 Executive Order re promoting violence in the Middle East, the Treasury Department refuses to do anything about it;
11. Every year, banks Leumi and Hapoalim send substantial donations to "Jewish-only" settlements, and end up supporting arms trafficking, ethnic cleansing, setting up sniper and military tactics schools, and result in wholesale violence being inflicted on the local Palestinian population, e.g., home demolitions and confiscations, live target practice, poisoning water wells and livestock, and theft and destruction of private property.

WAR CRIMES ADMITTED TO BY ISRAELI SOLDIERS

As recited in *Our Harsh Logic: Israeli Soldiers' Testimonies from the Occupied Territories, 2000-2010* and in other sources, the war crimes and atrocities committed by Israel Defense Force (IDF) veteran personnel included, but are not by any means limited to:

- (a) Soldiers ordered by their commanders to “fill Palestinian bodies with bullets,” who did so, resulting in needless civilian deaths.¹ For example, Hiba Barghouthi lost her brother while he was back from the U.S. to visit family, and Doa’a Abu Amer lost 14 family members as a result of the war crimes repeatedly committed in Gaza;
- (b) Impressionable 18-year-old recruits were told by commanding officers and clearly understood that moving up in the ranks was dependent on the number of “Palestinian kills” that they accumulated.² Thus, IDF personnel were encouraged and incentivized to murder as many Palestinian civilians as they could when they entered a Palestinian village at 2 a.m. looking for weapons. As detailed in the book, the only “weapons” they ever found were knives and forks;
- (c) Some of these soldiers laughed at traumatized Palestinian children seeing their mothers’ body parts smeared all over the living room wall;³
- (d) They told of a routine, daily practice of demolishing homes on a whim without any specific authority or order to do so;⁴
- (e) They saw young, traumatized Palestinian children urinating or defecating in their pants as a result of either witnessing demolition of their homes or violent attacks on their parents;⁵
- (f) They were told by their commanding officers to put the “rifle barrel between the teeth [of wounded Palestinians] and then shoot”;⁶
- (g) The officers attest to the fact that there was wholesale looting, i.e., soldiers stole cash, family heirlooms, computers, and lots of valuables, jewelry for the most part, i.e., a consistent pattern of looting;⁷
- (h) At 2:00 am upon entering a village, they were ordered to throw grenades at doors and explosives up on the roof to wake up and terrify sleeping Palestinian family members. *Why?* To show the Palestinians who was in control of their lives 24/7;⁸

¹ Our Harsh Logic p. 79

² Id.

³ Id. p. 40.

⁴ Id. p. 47.

⁵ Id. The extent of the mental and physical distress on children goes back to the late 1980s. The Swedish Branch of Save the Children released in May 1990 a thousand-page report that detailed the effects of the conflict on the children in the OPT. Between 23,600 and 29,900 children required medical treatment for their injuries received from IDF beatings during 1987-1988. Almost one third of the children were ten years or under. One fifth were five and under. One third suffered broken bones, including multiple fractures. The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy, John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, 2007 p. 100. Another example of such violence occurred when IDF soldiers, taking target practice, shot ten-year-old Abir Aramin in the head while she was walking home from school, holding hands with her older sister. Her sister describes how she “suddenly flew out of her hand and lay bleeding on the ground.” The General’s Son: Journey of an Israeli in Palestine, Miko Peled, 2010 p. 148.

⁶ Id.

⁷ Id.

⁸ Id.

- (i) They would spray herbicidal germination-preventing material on olive groves and other private Palestinian agricultural land near the separation wall, poisoning 293 acres of fertile agricultural property in December 2015 alone. That conduct constitutes malicious and wanton destruction of private property—a war crime;⁹
- (j) They often observed their colleagues, encouraged by senior officials, killing horses, sheep, and other livestock—needless and wanton slaughter of farm animals.¹⁰ The soldiers knew that Palestinian shepherds and farmers depended on their livestock for their livelihood;
- (k) They were told to delay and sometimes prevent emergency vehicles and ambulances from going through checkpoints, virtually ensuring that any wounded Palestinians lying on the street would bleed to death.¹¹ In terms of vicious activity which have, in certain cases, caused IDF soldiers to have post-traumatic stress disorder, persistent nightmares, and commit suicide,¹² they were ordered to “throw grenades and then bullets in the head [of Palestinians].”¹³ They were also told to inflict serious bodily harm, including the loss of eyesight—“aim for the eyes to take out an eye.”¹⁴

Israeli soldiers were also ordered on occasion to prevent water trucks accessing various Palestinian villages dependent on such supplies because they were not hooked up to any water system.¹⁵ They told of Palestinian day laborers being crushed to death at various checkpoints while waiting for approval at checkpoints to enter a military zone or settlement to work.¹⁶ In referring to the settlers who would go on violent rampages against their Palestinian neighbors, when asked about this practice, the soldiers responded “stopping the settlers? The army can’t do a thing.”¹⁷ “The settlers do whatever they want.”¹⁸ In fact, “our overall mission is to ‘provide security’ for the settlers’ rampages,”¹⁹ not to defend Israel.

The situation is so bad that settlement security coordinators consider themselves to be commanding officers of IDF soldiers assigned to protect the settlers.²⁰ Battalion commanders often gave orders to shoot to kill at noncombatants like medical personnel trying to recover wounded or dead Palestinians. All of the soldiers repeatedly state that “I am ashamed at what I did.”²¹ As Israeli journalist Haggai Matar stated, none of Breaking the Silence members’ allegations have proven to be wrong.²² In fact, Chris Hedges, New York Times Pulitzer Prize winner, in his “Gaza Diary” specifically corroborated the routine practice of murdering 13-year-olds by IDF soldiers.²³

⁹ <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.701213>.

¹⁰ Our Harsh Logic p. 186.

¹¹ Id.

¹² Terrorist attacks are not the most common cause of death for Israeli soldiers, whether committed by farmers or otherwise. These days, suicide is. From 1992 to 2005, more than 450 soldiers committed suicide, averaging more than one every two weeks.

<http://www.ifamericansknew.org/stat/suicideidf.html>.

¹³ Our Harsh Logic p. 77.

¹⁴ Id. p. 102.

¹⁵ Id. p. 247.

¹⁶ Id. p. 250.

¹⁷ Id. p. 324.

¹⁸ Id. p. 344.

¹⁹ Id. p. 288.

²⁰ Id.

²¹ Id., passim.

²² <http://972mag.com/why-do-so-many-israelis-hate-breaking-the-silence/114763/>.

²³ http://www.bintjbeil.com/articles/en/011001_hedges.html.