

Israeli Barbarism: Terrorizing Palestinian Children, Prosecuting Them in Military Courts

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In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

On February 10, [Defence of Children International Palestine](#) (DCIP) headlined “Palestinian children victims of Israeli abuse designed to coerce confessions.”

Virtually always offenses weren’t committed or were too minor to matter. Guilt by accusation is official Israeli policy.

Palestinian children are treated as mercilessly as adults. Most troubling are brutal beatings, other forms of torture and prolonged isolation in solitary confinement.

On average for interrogation purposes is 15 days, said DCIP. For one child it was nearly twice as long.

“Between 2012 and 2014, Israeli military, police and security agents held 54 Palestinian children in solitary confinement for interrogation purposes prior to charging them with any offense,” DCIP explained.

Most abused children were between ages 12 and 17. The vast majority had to fend for themselves alone with no outside contacts.

Unlike Jews, Palestinian parents can’t accompany their children when interrogated.

“In 93 percent of cases, children were deprived of legal counsel, and rarely informed of their rights, particularly their right against self-incrimination,” said DCIP.

Children even younger than 12 arrive at interrogation centers shackled, blindfolded, and sleep-deprived.

Most experience physical abuse amounting to torture before, during and after interrogation.

“Almost all children confess regardless of guilt to stop further abuse,” said DCIP.

Often they’re forced to sign confessions in Hebrew they can’t read or understand.

According to DCIP’s Accountability Program director Ayed Abu Eqtaish:

“The Israeli military detention system subjects Palestinian children to several days of prolonged interrogation and isolation with the apparent goal of obtaining a confession at all costs.”

Israel is the only nation “automatically and systematically” prosecuting children in military courts with no due process or judicial fairness whatever.

Each year, as many as 700 Palestinian children endure horrific Israeli brutality. Most often they’re charged with stone-throwing – whether true or false, whether any damage or harm was done.

Military courts are used exclusively for Palestinians. Jews get civil justice. Palestinians get none, including young children.

DCIP denounced Israeli barbarism. It “demands (it) end night arrests, prohibit the use of solitary confinement, and ensure that evidence obtained by force or coercion during interrogations is excluded by the Israeli military courts.”

It explains Palestinians are systematically denied justice. Including brutalized young children. Some too young to understand what’s going on.

On December 31, [DCIP asked](#) “(h)ow was 2014 for Palestinian children?” Like experiencing a wide-awake nightmare for many.

Israel’s summer war murdered hundreds of children. In some case infants or newborns. Many others were injured. Some maimed for life.

Brutalizing Palestinian children wasn’t during Protective Edge alone. They “pay the heaviest price for the ongoing military occupation,” said DCIP.

Systematic Israeli barbarism includes:

“(w)holesale violations of children’s rights across the Occupied Palestinian Territory led to numerous fatalities and injuries, as well as psychological trauma resulting from collective punishment policies that affected children, such as house raids and demolitions.”

Palestinian children don’t know each day if they’ll live, die, be arrested, stay free, or be subjected to various forms horrific Israeli persecution.

Extremist settlers are as violent as security forces. Children are attacked at home, in school, going to and from school or at play.

There’s no place to hide. They’re victimized by whatever savage treatment Israel decides to inflict. Accountability doesn’t exist.

Young Palestinian children can be brutally beaten or otherwise mistreated with impunity. They’re fair game for all forms of Israeli ruthlessness. With no recourse for justice.

In 2014, Israeli murdered at least 11 Palestinian children – using live ammunition just societies wouldn’t tolerate.

Israeli forces routinely use excessive force. Palestinian fatalities and injuries follow. Incidents occur regularly.

Israeli soldiers and police operate any way they wish with impunity. Despite military regulations prohibiting live ammunition use except in instances of mortal threats posed.

DCIP found no evidence suggesting murdered Palestinians threatened anyone at the time of their shootings.

Lawless collective punishment is longstanding Israeli policy. Young children suffer most of all.

Arabs are criminalized for not being Jews. Their lives and welfare don't matter.

They're fair game for whatever horrific treatment Israel decides to inflict. It bears repeating. They have no recourse for justice.

On February 19, the [Palestine News Network](#) (PNN) headlined "Child Prisoners in Israeli Jails Tortured by Electric Shocks & More."

Citing new testimonies from tortured Palestinian children. Palestinian Detainees Committee attorney Hiba Masalha visited Palestinian children in HaSharon prison.

They're subjected to incredibly savage treatment and brutality amounting to torture, he said.

Last November, 16-year-old Muhammed Zidani was detained. On January 19, he was sentenced to 16 months imprisonment.

He said he was electro-shocked to force him to confess despite his having committed no crime. Soldiers arrested him at 2AM.

They "overwhelm(ed)" his home, terrorized family members, "dragged him to the Mascoubiya detention center..."

Soldiers beat him savagely en route. He suffered painful bruises and contusions over large parts of his body.

During interrogation, he was forced to kneel, put his head between his legs blindfolded with his hands shackled from behind.

He was kept in this position for four hours. Interrogation lasted half a day. He got no food or water. Was denied bathroom privileges.

"(I)nvestigators beat him on the face and stomach," he said. During one session, "a stick shaped machine" was put on his foot.

"(U)nbearabl(y) pain(ful) electro-shocking followed. Two more times to "pull confessions out of him."

He screamed in pain. Israeli brutality continues until forced confessions are gotten.

Child prisoner Kathem Annous (aged 15) experienced horrific Israeli torture. Last November he was detained. He remains in HaSharom prison.

He was treated as brutally as Mohammed Zidani. One soldier beat him with an iron-soled

shoe.

During interrogation, he was forced to kneel with his head toward a wall shackled from behind.

During hours of interrogation, he was “constantly beaten and slapped in the face. He was held at Mascoublya detention center for 12 days.

He was beaten en route to military court for a hearing. In a waiting room, his head was violently slammed against a wall for no reason whatever.

Hundreds of Palestinian children endure this type treatment annually. Some under age 10.

Fourteen-year prisoner Klaled Al-Sheikh remains in prison after 55 days on unsubstantiated stone-throwing charges with no parental contact allowed.

Whenever Palestinian children participate in peaceful demonstrations, they’re vulnerable to false charges like stone-throwing.

Khaled belongs with his family and friends at home and in school, not in prison. He’s anemic in need of medical treatment not provided.

He’s a 10th grade student guilty only of not being Jewish. He faces possible months in prison following hanging judge sentencing. So do other brutally treated Palestinian children.

“Child abuse in Israeli prisons is on the increase,” said PNN. Israeli ruthlessness considers young Palestinian children as fair game to abuse as adults. Racist regimes operate this way.

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Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine:

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