

PALESTINE; Death And Mayhem On Land Day. Israel Forces Open Fire on Activists

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Global Research, March 31, 2012

Popular Resistance Blog 31 March 2012

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

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Two of our friends were among the over 150 people injured today by the Israeli occupation forces. Demonstrations were held in dozens of locations in Palestine and the border areas of Palestine. Other demonstrations were held for Land Day in cities around the world. The ambulance took our friend and home guest Don Bryant (US Citizen) to the hospital as he was hit in the head by a tear gas canister. We quickly gathered the rest of the group and rushed to the hospital. There we find many injured people (I counted 8 in the emergency room and two at the X-ray). One of the injured there was our friend Yusef Sharqawi hit with a rubber-coated steel bullet that fractured his shoulder blade. Mohamed Zakout, 20 year old was shot and killed by Israeli forces in Gaza as he participated in a demonstration near the Erez checkpoint. In Jerusalem, Israeli occupation forces used horses to trample on people and arrested 36 individuals. Before all is done Israel will likely to arrest 300 people. Below is our video and other relevant videos.

Some of my students have more logic/sense than the political leadership of the USA, Israel and the "Palestinian authority" combined. For example, last week we had a lively discussion about roles of politicians in creating the problems and perpetuating the disastrous human rights violations here. I don't teach this course human rights but I coach it so after we exchanged significant information about these issues all of it showing the bad things of politics (collaborations, agreements of surrender, etc), I asked to take time for us to talk just about the positives (no negatives). I was surprised at some of the good comments that

came out: persistence of the Palestinian people, demonstrations and many forms of popular resistance happening, the fact that rights are not lost for people even when their leadership is corrupt and weak, the fact that many were martyred/injured/imprisoned for their work for Palestine, the fact that while some collaborated and even sold their conscience and their heritage, more simply refused ...

So it is that we can always look at the glass half empty or half full. We can always curse the darkness or light a candle and hope for the best. We can feel depressed and powerless or we can actually do something. I was anxious before the demonstrations today. Our mind racing to worry about level of participation/attendance and about Israeli authorities' violent reaction to peaceful demonstrators (there is after all a long history of that including shooting at unarmed demonstrators). We have to remind myself of the positives and forget all the negatives (or at least just learn from them lessons and keep them in the back of our mind). The march was a success even before it started. The thousands who tried to arrive to us here in Palestine got an education THROUGH the process of preparing to come to nearby borders and they each told many others where they are going and why. This ripple effect that started months before today's events is critical. Here are a few other positives before, during and after this event today:

-37 Indian activists were stranded in a ship off the port of Beirut for 36 hours. Activists in India mobilized speaking to parliamentarians and other officials and the Indian embassy was able to get the Lebanese government to finally issue the visas for them. This ensured that more people became aware of our predicament here: not only the Zionist regime but the collusion sometimes of Arab regimes. It also meant more activism in India will be growing and more boycotts, divestments and sanctions.

- Hundreds of activists from different countries did not know about each other or their common interests until this event. The process of linking together via physical meetings and internet empowered many of them and they became more active in their local communities. I know of several examples where new projects (e.g. on boycotts, divestment, sanction, different ways of media work etc) were started in some countries or localities because they learned from the networking with other activists.

- Activists learned via doing how to work in team efforts, how to make collective decisions etc. These skills are useful for any kind of collective work.

- The attempts by the Zionist manipulated media to hide and ignore the brutality of the apartheid regime is backfiring. More and more people stopped seeking news via these corporate outlets and started to get news directly via blogs, live feed, email etc.

- Israeli Brigadier General Yoav Mordechai said about the events today "It's important to remember that this is the first day. The Nakba and Naksa days are ahead of us, and that is where the challenge will be." It is obvious that they start to worry!

I could go on to list a few more. But we need now to focus on our next events: the Welcome to Palestine Campaign for 15-21 April. We do need people to work hard on this (volunteers are always welcome). Action is the best antidote to despair.

Our video in Bethlehem: <http://youtu.be/7U1qQVqVnsM>

Other videos

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVuxQJw-6TI>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ukH9VBD2Zeg>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkF9awg-HPA>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nffbnyZW4ws>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ikals8s4i4Y>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BXJnBZfX1GA>

Pictures

http://photoblog.msnbc.msn.com/_news/2012/03/30/10940732-violence-on-land-day-as-israeli-forces-and-palestinians-clash

Take action Land Day

http://www.stopthejnf.org/unitedstates_takeaction_landday2012.html

Israel Defense Ministry plan earmarks 10 percent of West Bank for settlement expansion. Newly released maps indicate Civil Administration secretly setting aside additional land for Jewish settlements, presumably with the intention of expanding them. By Akiva Eldar

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/israel-defense-ministry-plan-earmarks-10-percent-of-west-bank-for-settlement-expansion-1.421589>

More links/news on this land day events

<http://www.imemc.org/article/63234>

<http://www.imemc.org/article/63235>

Thousands of demonstrators mark Land Day in Jordan

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2012/Mar-30/168555-thousands-of-demonstrators-mark-land-day-in-jordan.ashx#axzz1qc3PIPcd>

Rabbis of Anti-Zionist Group Join Protest Marking Land Day on Lebanon-Israel Border

<http://tv.ibtimes.com/rabbis-of-anti-zionist-group-join-protest-marking-land-day-on-lebanon-israel-border/4523.html>



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