



WW COMMENTARY

Growing condemnation of Israel

By Monica Moorehead, June 12, 2023

There used to be a time when to publicly raise the name Palestine and the Palestinians' right to their homeland was considered almost taboo. It was all but forbidden in imperialist centers like the United States.

But after the various heroic Intifadas (mass uprisings) that the Palestinians began in the late 1980s up until the current resistance to the heinous brutality of the Zionist settler state of Israel, the world view of the Palestinian struggle has radically and dramatically shifted. Not even the banning of the Palestinian flag by the Israeli government has stopped this growing solidarity.

No longer is it the prevailing view that to protest Israel's existence is to be anti-Semitic. Being anti-Israel is proudly being anti-Zionist and anti-racist.

Speaking out against Israel, however, still arouses controversy and retaliation. Consider what happened when 24-year-old Yemeni-American graduate student, Fatima Mousa Mohammed gave a powerful, moving talk opposing Israel during the City University of New York (CUNY) Law School commencement May 12.

Mohammed unapologetically spoke out against "Israeli settler colonialism" and how it continues "raining down bullets and bombs on worshippers, murdering the old, the young ... encouraging lynch

mobs" and "expelling Palestinians from their homes." (tiktok.com/@muslingirl/video) Many in the audience interrupted her remarks with cheers.

While praising CUNY's support for the movement to boycott, divest and impose sanctions (BDS) on Israel, she also denounced CUNY's collaboration with the New York Police Department — which she characterized as "fascist" — and stated "that daily, Brown and Black men are being murdered by the state at Rikers [Island prison]."

Days later, Mohammed's speech was virulently criticized as "hate speech" and "divisive" by Fox News, the New York Post and even New York Mayor Eric Adams, an advocate of big real estate interests that are gentrifying so much of the city.

Hitting back on June 1, anti-Zionist Jewish students defended Mohammed against racist anti-Arab and misogynistic attacks by disrupting a CUNY Board of Trustees meeting. They stated that Israel has nothing to do with their Jewish identity and that Judaism is being used to justify crimes against the Palestinian people.

The group said that the CUNY Board does not speak in their name, and they want the Board abolished so that CUNY can be run by its workers and students. They promoted #WeStandwithFatima. (mintpressnews.com)

Legendary singer refuses to be silent

Another example of standing up to Israel's policies occurred when world famous musician, Roger Waters, founder and former member of Pink Floyd, faced repression. The German government recently tried to ban Waters from performing in Frankfurt, due to his outspoken solidarity with the Palestinian people. Fortunately, that ban failed.

The Berlin regime had recently banned demonstrations in Berlin in late April/early May commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Nakba, which is what Palestinians call the 1947-48 forced displacement and massacres that led to the establishment of Israel.

After Waters visited the Israeli-occupied territories in 2006 and saw the conditions for Palestinians, he refused to perform in Tel Aviv. Since then, he has denounced Israel as a settler state and a racist apartheid regime. Members of the British Parliament are now attempting to ban Waters from performing in England, falsely labeling him anti-Semitic.

Waters also denounced the murder of prominent Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, killed by an Israeli army sniper in 2022, and also that of Rachel Corrie, a 23-year-old woman from Washington state crushed to death by an Israeli bulldozer when she tried to stop the uprooting of a Palestinian home in 2003.

In the U.S., Waters has also been an avid supporter of Black Lives Matter, protesting with his music the police killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Philando Castile.

These two examples of Fatima Mohammed and Roger Waters are just the tip of the iceberg, when it comes to the growing numbers of activists and just ordinary people who are speaking out in the streets globally against the horrific treatment of the Palestinian people, who have been fighting to regain their homeland.

The fact that these two outspoken individuals have gained national and international attention will no doubt deepen the condemnation and isolation of the Zionist state and its supporters like U.S. imperialism. This deepening is richly deserved and will eventually help return Palestine to its rightful owners. □



GRAPHIC: PALESTINE LEGAL



Roger Waters

PHOTO: AL JAZEERA

Hunger strike threat by Palestinian prisoners forces concessions

By **Teddie Kelly**, June 21, 2023

Over 1,000 Palestinian prisoners, who had been held without charges by Israeli authorities, were poised to launch a mass hunger strike beginning on June 18. But in a statement by The Administrative Detainees' Committee of the Palestinian prisoners' movement, the strike has been postponed.

Why? Because the organized and coordinated efforts of the incarcerated Palestinian workers have already managed to win some concessions from the Israeli occupation forces.

A statement signed by the Administrative Detainees' Committee in Occupation Prisons dated June 17, 2023, reads in part: "After the last dialogue session that took place last Wednesday, between the representatives of the captive movement and the prison authorities of the occupation, and after consulting the administrative prisoners, it was decided to give the opportunity to continue the dialogue after accepting some of the prisoners' demands and not responding to the main demands, until the beginning of next month.

"Respectively; We affirm the following:

"First: This opportunity is the last chance to respond to our just demands."

"Second: Our constant disposition and prompt response is the guarantor of the preservation of our rights and the enemy's response to all of our demands."

This mass effort comes just weeks after the martyrdom of Sheikh Khader Adnan, a Palestinian man locked up by the Israelis without having been charged with a crime. A prominent leader in the Islamic Jihad movement, Adnan resisted his jailers by refusing food and medicine for 86 days before dying on May 2. At 45 years old, the father of nine had already participated in hunger strikes at least four previous times between 2012 and 2021.

As Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network reported at the time of his death: "The Israeli prison administration refused to transfer him to a civilian hospital and refused his release on bail just last week, declaring that more information was needed about his medical condition. Just yesterday, yet another military court hearing in his case was postponed and delayed into the future, a clear policy



of acting to ensure his death behind occupation bars.

"The martyrdom of Sheikh Khader Adnan, the symbol of dignity, freedom and steadfastness, is an Israeli assassination, carried out with forethought and premeditation. It has been clear for the months of this strike that the occupation is determined to eliminate this symbol of prisoners' resistance and Palestinian sacrifice and commitment and love for his people and land." (workers.org/2023/05/70887/)

Repression breeds resistance

On June 18, Samidoun noted that "there are currently 1,083 Palestinians jailed under administrative detention — that is, without charge or trial on the basis of so-called 'secret evidence.' They constitute over 20% of the nearly 5,000 Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli occupation jails. Administrative detention orders are issued for up to six months at a time and are indefinitely renewable. Palestinian prisoners are demanding the end of administrative detention as a policy of terror and collective punishment against the Palestinian people." (tinyurl.com/3x5nupjp)

The Zionists can no longer ignore the political power of conscious, disciplined political prisoners. The mere threat of organized nonviolent resistance in the form of this planned hunger strike was enough to force the jailers back to the negotiating table after already granting some of the prisoners' demands.

According to People's Dispatch: "There are around 4,900 Palestinians inside different Israeli prisons, including 31 women and 160 children. Most of them face widespread atrocities from the Israeli prison authorities, including denial of family meetings, restrictions on interactions with other prisoners and torture, among others." (tinyurl.com/3mxjddb/)

We ask our brothers, sisters and siblings behind bars in the U.S.: Doesn't this sound familiar? How many thousands of our family members in the U.S. are currently behind bars, held on bogus charges or with no charges at all? How many are locked up now after waiting months or years for a trial?

How many humiliations, insults and beatings have you sustained in the effort to hold yourself with dignity in the face of your incarceration?

Incarcerated workers in the U.S. can connect their struggle to the resistance underway among Palestinian prisoners as a means of developing their own tactics. We at Workers World newspaper are well aware that merely reporting on hunger strikes and other organized strikes in U.S. prisons has been used as a pretext to censor this newspaper and block its distribution to our readers inside prisons, jails and detention centers.

We likewise must take every opportunity to force U.S. jailers to free our people and grant their demands. No struggle is too small to use as a lever to further wrench open the doors of the global prison system. □

More coverage on the Palestinian struggle

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