



Women for Palestine • Australians for Palestine
Palestinian Community Association of Victoria
MELBOURNE - AUSTRALIA
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PALESTINE

UNCUT

Premier screening : 5 June 2007
Festival screenings : 16-17 June 2007

Special Palestine Film Festival exposing 40 years of occupation

Melbourne-Palestine Film Festival

Program June 2007

INTRODUCTION

The Melbourne-Palestine Film Festival is a new initiative that has been driven from the first by Palestinian film buff Ayman Ouda. His passion is to introduce some of the best Palestinian films being made today to Australian audiences and it is this passion and his determination that has made this possible.

A festival of films was inevitable and two generous sponsors set the ball rolling. *Women for Palestine*, *Australians for Palestine* and the *Palestinian Community Association of Victoria* have supported Ayman throughout and took on the task of promoting the festival to expose through the world of cinema, Israel's 40-year occupation of the last remaining lands of Palestine.

Screening rights for all the films were obtained by Ayman, and, with a handful of others, the films were carefully selected to most accurately present to Australian audiences, the stark and awful reality of life under occupation and what the catastrophe of dispossession has meant for four generations of Palestinians unable to return home.

We hope that these films will bring a greater understanding of the Palestinian narrative and encourage Australians to speak out against the injustices that have been unfairly borne for so long by a people, not only denied their homeland, but also their freedom and their dignity.

Guest speaker Maher Mughrabi will introduce the two films being shown in the film preview and will also introduce three other films during the film festival.

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GUEST SPEAKER

Maher Mughrabi

Maher Mughrabi is a Scottish-Palestinian journalist and writer with 10 years' experience on newsdesks in Britain (including The Independent, The Scotsman and The Daily Mail), the Middle East and Australia who currently works for The Age. His work for The Age has included articles on the Danish cartoons controversy and Western perceptions of Islam, as well as an exclusive interview with the son of one of the Iraqi men kidnapped with Australia's Douglas Wood and later murdered. He has lectured at Melbourne University on the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, to the Melbourne Writers' Festival on Zionism and to public audiences around Australia on Middle Eastern affairs and issues of Muslims and migration.

TIMETABLE

Special Film Preview

Tuesday 5 June 2007, 7.00-9.00pm

Like Twenty Impossibles
Until When . . .

Palestine Film Festival

Saturday 16 June 2007

10.30am	Children Nevertheless Women in Struggle
1.00pm	Peace, Propaganda & The Promised Land
3.30pm	The Colour of Olives
6.00pm	Rachel Corrie: An American Conscience

Sunday 17 June 2007

11.00am	They Do Not Exist Palestine, Summer 2006
1.30pm	The Way Back Home The Iron Wall
4.00pm	Ripples Cross

Palestine Film Festival – Film Synopses

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- The Palestinian Olive Harvest
- Demonstrations against the forced closures of civilian areas that result in soldiers violently evicting activists from closed military zones
- Daily struggles against the military imposed curfews within the West Bank City of Nablus
- Mark Turner and another international activist are shot by the Israeli military
- While recovering from gunshot wounds, Israeli elite commandos raid the hospital where Mark and Josh are staying
- Activists staying inside a Palestinian home slated for demolition by the Israeli military are forced out at gunpoint when soldiers arrive to demolish the house
- Activists reunite in London for a benefit concert to assist Palestinian families who have lost homes in Israeli operations

Directed by Mark Turner and David Schler, Edited by David Wruck, Produced by David Schler (<http://ripplescros.com/>)

Violence- medium

Sex- none

Language- low

Drug use- none

Nudity- none

Rating-MA

National Cinema for a nation that does 'not' exist

The film 'Divine Intervention' was refused entry for the 2002 Oscars because the filmmaker Elia Suleiman is a stateless person. Any film nominated for the Oscars must be released from the filmmaker's country. Not only filmmakers, but Palestinians in all walks of life face the same denial of their birthright when they want their Palestinian identity to be recognised.

The first Palestinian film ever to have been made was a short documentary by Ibrahim Hasan Serhan who recorded the first visit to Palestine of Saudi King Abd Al-Aziz bin Abd Al-Rahman bin Faysal Al-Saud in 1888. He also filmed the king's subsequent visits to Jerusalem and Haifa.

Films that actually talk about Palestine and the struggle for self-determination in their own homeland were first being made almost 50 years ago covering stories about the 1967 war and Israel's occupation of the remaining Palestinian lands as well as the Palestinians' catastrophic dispossession in 1948, known as al Nakba.

'Like Twenty Impossibles'

Tuesday 5 June 2007 – 7.00-9.00pm ACMI

Palestine

2003

Film Duration 17 minutes

Documentary

Director | Annemarie Jacir

Language: English and Arabic with English subtitles

Occupied Palestine, a serene landscape now pockmarked by military checkpoints. When a Palestinian film crew decides to avert a closed checkpoint by taking a remote side road, the political landscape unravels, and the passengers are slowly taken apart by the mundane brutality of military occupation. Both a visual poem and a narrative, like twenty impossibles wryly questions artistic responsibility and the politics of filmmaking, while speaking to the fragmentation of a people.

Violence- low

Sex- none

Language- medium

Drug use- none

Nudity- none

Rating-MA

'Ripples Cross' the Film

Sunday 17 June 2007, 4.00pm State Library Melbourne

Palestine

2006

Film Duration: 93

Documentary

A film by Mark Turner & David Schler

Language: English, Arabic and Hebrew with English subtitles

While teaching young students about the unreliability of western media's reporting on the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, finance major Mark Turner declares that the only way to really know what is happening in the Middle East is to go and see for yourself. After suffering the loss of a close friend, Mark decides to do just that; he sells his car, buys a video camera and leaves his home in Littleton, Colorado to learn firsthand about life in the Israeli-occupied territories of Palestine.

RIPPLES CROSS is the astounding video record of Mark's journey into the heart of the Mid East conflict, where he and other activists confront Israeli troops at the Palestinian border, attend local rallies and protests, and are caught off-guard on a quiet city street when gunfire erupts all around them. This brave and audacious film testifies to one's ability to move boldly beyond traditional methods of political activism, while offering a call to anyone who dreams of actively working toward making our world a better place for all

RIPPLES CROSS is a documentary film highlights the experiences of international human rights activists in Palestine. Mark and the other activists highlight what life is like under military closures and curfews in the West Bank. The activists share their experience of occupation including:

Settlements and related infrastructures are impacting every aspect of life for all Palestinians from land confiscation, theft of natural resources, confiscation of the basic human rights, creation of an apartheid-like system, to the devastating impact in regards to the future of the region and the prospect of the peace process.

Palestinians and Israelis began the peace process based on a very simple principle: land for peace. Settlements destroy that principle and create a land with no peace.

[www.theironwall.ps]

Violence- medium

Sex- none

Language- low

Drug use- none

Nudity- none

Rating-MA

'Until when . . .' the Film

Tuesday 5 June 2007, 7.00-9.00pm ACMI

Palestine

2004

Film Duration: 76 Minutes

Documentary

Directed & Edited by Dahna Abourahme, Produced by Annemarie Jacir

Language: Arabic with English subtitles

Set during the current Intifada, this documentary follows four Palestinian families living in Dheisheh Refugee Camp near Bethlehem.

Fadi is 13 and cares for his 4 younger brothers; the Hammashes are a close-knit family who pass on the lessons of life with humour and passion; Sana is a single woman who endures long commutes to do community work; and Emad and Hanan are a young couple trying to shield their daughter from the harsh realities of the occupation. They talk about their family histories in Palestine while looking to the future with humour, sorrow, frustration and hope.

Until When paints an intimate in-depth portrait of Palestinian lives today

[www.falafeldaddy.org]

Violence- low

Sex- none

Language- low

Drug use- none

Nudity- none

Rating-MA

'The Iron Wall' - the Film

Sunday 17 June 2007, 1.30pm State Library Melbourne

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The outbreak of the second Intifada in September 2000 saw an intensifying of the situation in Palestine/Israel. In the US, there was growing activism and awareness about the issue, yet the media mostly portrayed Palestinians as terrorists. As Palestinian filmmakers based in New York we felt a need to address this image bias. We hoped to put a human face to Palestinian refugees, those at the core of this issue.

The original vision had a much broader sweep; to follow refugee families in several countries. In the summer of 2001, I conducted a video workshop at a youth centre in Dheisheh Refugee Camp near Bethlehem. There, I met the four families now at the heart of this film.

In the next month, as they shared their lives with us, I was captivated. Each had something unique to add to this place called Dheisheh, and to do their stories justice it was important to allow them their due time and course. It seemed wiser to abandon the broader sweep for a more local in depth look. We returned again in the winter of 2002, and spent another month with them.

The film developed into a slice of life spanning three generations. What I hope to convey is the way these families live the details of the everyday, and the everyday ways in which they are able to find hope and laughter, generosity and forgiveness despite the anger, pain and sadness. It is this very human and very universal face that demands to be seen.

Palestine

2006

Film Duration 52 minutes

Documentary

Directed by Mohammed Alatar, Produced by Terry Boullata

Language: English & Arabic with English subtitles

In 1923 Vladimir Jabotinsky, leading intellectual of the Zionist movement and father of the right wing of that movement, wrote: "Zionist colonization must either stop, or else proceed regardless of the native population, which means that it can proceed and develop only under the protection of a power that is independent of the native population - behind an IRON WALL, which the native population cannot breach."

From that day these words became the official and unspoken policy of the Zionist movement and later the state of Israel. Settlements were used from the beginning to create a Zionist foothold in Palestine.

After 1967 and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, the aim of the settlement movement became clear - create facts on the ground and make the creation of a Palestinian state impossible. Thirty nine years of occupation and the policy started showing results. There are now more than 200 settlements and outposts scattered throughout the West Bank blocking the geographic possibility of a contiguous Palestinian territory.

The Iron Wall documentary exposes this phenomenon and follows the timeline, size, population of the settlements, and its impact on the peace process. This film also touches on the latest project to make the settlements a permanent fact on the ground - the wall that Israel is building in the West Bank and its impact on the Palestinian's peoples.

'The Way Back Home' the Film

Sunday 17 June 2007, 1.30pm State Library Melbourne

Palestine

2006

Film Duration 33 minutes

Documentary

A film by Ghada Terawi

Language: Arabic with English subtitles

The Way Back Home is a personal attempt to address existential Palestinian concepts, like Exile, Return and the dream of the Homeland. Abu Nizar, after more than half a century in his Moroccan exile, still recalls the finest details of "Home", although the cruelty of alienation marked his personality. Husni is an artist in permanent search for an affinity with the "Place". Munira, the actress, determined to be part of all the daily details of the homeland, refuses to be marginalized. And Arafat for whom the image of Palestine, he has never seen, is still romantic, and "filled with the Jaffa oranges' breeze".

The Way Back Home is the journey between the dream of a homeland and the real one.

Violence- low

Sex- none

Language- low

Drug use- none

Nudity- none

Rating-MA

'Children Nevertheless' the Film

Saturday 16 June 2007 , 10.30am State Library Melbourne

Palestine

1984

Film Duration 22 minutes

Documentary

A film by Khadijeh Habashneh Abu-Ali, (Produced by Palestinian Cinema Institute & the General Union of Palestinian Women)

Language [English & Arabic with English subtitles]

The film is about the orphan children of Tall El Zaatar refugee camp, in the outskirts of Beirut, Lebanon. The General Union of Palestinian Women, (GUPW), established "Bait El-Somoud", a house to host these children after they lost their parents.

The year 1979 was dedicated as the "International Year for Children". The film compares the actual tragic situation of Palestinian children as with the "International Declaration of Child Rights".

Violence- medium [Scenes of dead children's bodies]

Sex- none

Language- none

Drug use- none

Nudity- none

Rating-MA

'Women in Struggle' the Film

Saturday 16 June 2007, 10.30am State Library Melbourne

Palestine

2004

Film Duration 56 minutes

Documentary

Produced & Directed By Buthina Canaan Khoury

Language: English & Arabic with English subtitles

The documentary film Women in Struggle is about Palestinian women whom are ex-political detainees demonstrating their struggle during their years of imprisonment in Israeli jails exploring the affects and influence on their present life and their future outlook.

The focus is on the lives of four women who came out of their regular roles as sisters, mothers, wives, and took on a different role being involved in the Palestinian national struggle for independence. Without narration, these women give their testimony in their own words about their past difficult experiences, of their suffering while living their daily difficult life in the current Palestinian Intifada which was not an element present during the initial research of this documentary nor was the so called "war on terror and the apartheid wall

These additional three elements have made this film critical in exploring, identifying, and understanding how these women detainees made the effort to preserve their dignity and integrate in the social and political aspects of the Palestinian life. Although these four women are out of the actual Israeli prison they actually find themselves in a bigger prison carrying "prison" within them in every aspect of their life.

[www.womeninstruggle.com]

Violence- low

Sex- none

Language- none

Drug use- none

Nudity- none

Rating-M

Palestinian Filmmakers' Collective: Founded in late 2005, the Palestinian Filmmakers' Collective is a totally independent, volunteer-based collective founded and run by filmmakers. Our goals include working with our community to screen films, share our technical and artistic skills, and help make Palestinian films and information more widely available, create a Palestinian video library and organize activities and projects that promote Palestinian cinema.

Violence- low

Sex- none

Language- low

Drug use- none

Nudity- none

Rating-M

'Palestine, Summer 2006' the Film

Saturday 16 June 2007, 11.00am State Library Melbourne

Country of Production: Palestine

Year: September 2006

Film Duration 35 minutes

Documentary

Language: Arabic with English subtitles

Produced by Palestinian Filmmakers' Collective & Akka Films;

Concept/idea: Ismael Habbash, Annemarie Jacir, Raed Andoni;

Executive Producers: Rowan Al Faqih, Nahed Awwad; Co-Producer:

Nicolas Wadimoff

Both established as well as new Palestinian filmmakers came together in a project that would reflect the "mood" of summer 2006. In three minutes or less, filmmakers were restricted to using one-shot to tell their stories. Despite the fact that Palestinians have been dispersed across the globe, with the majority of them unable to come to their homeland, "Summer 2006, Palestine", initiated by the Palestinian Film Collective, was limited to those filmmakers who live in Palestine.

The result is a unique collection of short films from across Palestine, delving into the personal, the political, and the poetic - the spirit of a people struggling for freedom.

A mosaic of 13 short films less than 3 minutes in length, reflecting in one shot, and the mood of summer 2006.

Films:

- 1) Red, dead and Mediterranean; a film by Akram Al Ashqar
- 2) Not just any sea; A film by Nahed Awwad
- 3) Football on a Thursday afternoon; A film by Liana Bader
- 4) Janan; A film by Riyad Deis
- 5) Security leak; A film by Rowan Al Faqih
- 6) Flee; A film by Ahmad Habash
- 7) Coffee & cigarettes; A film by Ismael Habbash
- 8) Sound of the street; A film by Annemarie Jacir
- 9) A world apart within 15 minutes; A film by Enas Muthaffar
- 10) To the Arabs of Haifa a special message...; A film by Razi Najjar
- 11) Ferkesh (called off); A film May Odeh
- 12) Checkmate; A film by Amer Shomali
- 13) Traffic; A film by Mohanad Yaqubi

'Peace, Propaganda & The Promised Land' the Film

Saturday 16 June 2007 , 1.00pm State Library Melbourne

Peace, Propaganda & the Promised Land provides a striking comparison of U.S. and international media coverage of the crisis in the Middle East, zeroing in on how structural distortions in U.S. coverage have reinforced false perceptions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This pivotal documentary exposes how the foreign policy interests of American political elites--oil, and a need to have a secure military base in the region, among others--work in combination with Israeli public relations strategies to exercise a powerful influence over how news from the region is reported.

Through the voices of scholars, media critics, peace activists, religious figures, and Middle East experts, Peace, Propaganda & the Promised Land carefully analyses and explains how--through the use of language, framing and context--the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza remains hidden in the news media, and Israeli colonization of the occupied territories appears to be a defensive move rather than an offensive one. The documentary also explores the ways that U.S. journalists, for reasons ranging from intimidation to a lack of thorough investigation, have become complicit in carrying out Israel's PR campaign. At its core, the documentary raises questions about the ethics and role of journalism, and the relationship between media and politics.

Interviewees include Seth Ackerman, Mjr. Stav Adivi, Rabbi Arik Ascherman, Hanan Ashrawi, Noam Chomsky, Robert Fisk, Neve Gordon, Toufic Haddad, Sam Hussein, Hussein Ibish, Robert Jensen, Rabbi Michael Lerner, Karen Pfeifer, Alisa Solomon, and Gila Svirsky.

Violence- medium

Sex- none

Language- low

Drug use- none

Nudity- none

Rating-MA

'The Colour of Olives' the Film

Saturday 16 June 2007, 3.30pm State Library Melbourne

Palestine
Mexico 2006
Film Duration: 60 minutes
Documentary
Directed by Carolina Rivas, Produced by Daoud Sarhandi
Language: Arabic with English subtitles

From Mexican director Carolina Rivas and cinematographer Daoud Sarhandi comes this elegant and visually breathtaking new film about the Palestinian experience. The Amer family lives surrounded by the infamous West Bank Wall, where their daily lives are dominated by electrified fences, locked gates and a constant swarm of armed soldiers. This unique and intimate documentary shares their private world, allowing a glimpse of the constant struggles and the small, endearing details that sustain them. The Color of Olives is an artistic and beautifully affecting reflection on the effects of racial segregation, the meaning of borders and the absurdity of war.

The Color of Olives was filmed in Masha, a Palestinian village 15 miles from Tel Aviv. It tells a story of a Palestinian family of eight, headed by Hani Amer and his wife Monira. The village has been disrupted by construction of the wall separating Israel from the West Bank. The Amer's home is now separated from their orange and olive groves by electrified fences, a military road and a checkpoint. Rivas shows how Hani and his children wait patiently each morning for soldiers to unlock the gate to allow Hani to go to work and the children to get to their school.

www.thecolourofolives.com

References: Catsoulis, Jeannette. (2006, July 12). *A Wall Runs Through It: One Palestinian Family's Tale*. The New York Times, p. B7

Violence- none
Sex- none
Language- none
Drug use- none
Nudity- none
Rating-PG

'They Do Not Exist' the Film

Sunday 17 June 2007, 11.00am State Library Melbourne

Palestine
1974
Film Duration: Minutes 25
Documentary
Directed by Mustafa Abu Ali
Language: Arabic with English subtitles

Do Palestinians exist or not? This film is an attempt to prove they do exist. This came as a response to the statements made by both Moshe Dayan and Golda Maier (both top Israeli leaders) who denied the existence of Palestinians and Palestine as well.

In 1974, three quarters of Nabatiyah Palestinian Refugee Camp, (70 Km. south of Beirut, Lebanon) had been demolished by Israeli air raids. The film consists of 9 chapters, and demonstrates that the Palestinian Refugees bombarded in Nabatiyah were not ghosts, but real people.

Violence- low
Sex- none
Language- low
Drug use- none
Nudity- none
Rating-MA

American actor Richard Gere expressed that U.S. citizens, who live in a democracy, should educate themselves, and they should tell the U.S. Government to behave responsibly. He confessed it was heart wrenching "...to see what is happening in this part of the world." Although the film gives voice to Palestinian doctors and counsellors, it lacks the voice of the average Palestinian. Perhaps the director's vision was to gain international support and attention through international speakers, but hearing from the victim's families would illustrate the effects of the occupation's oppression.

The Israeli soldier crushed her. Eyewitness accounts concurred that the soldier saw Corrie. After the incident, the unknown Israeli soldier smiled and waved to witnesses from the cab of his bulldozer. Yet, he would not step out of the bulldozer and face his unarmed victim.

The soldier's behaviour in front of the camera showed his humanity fell to the wayside. The first, Israeli fact-finding report about Corrie's death was not mealy-mouthed but an outright lie because it stated the bulldozer never touched her. The film shows footage from the cab of the bulldozer and the soldier says: "Dobby to two, I hit an object," (military terminology for a person). The fact the soldier never came forward publicly demonstrated he learned nothing from his crime because he did not take onus for his actions. While his family, friends and military comrades remain silent, they share the responsibility of this unresolved, heinous crime.

Violence- medium

Sex- none

Language- low

Drug use- none

Nudity- none

Rating-MA

NYT: A Wall Runs Through It:

One Palestinian Family's Tale

by JEANNETTE CATSOULIS

12 July 2006

The New York Times

With its contemplative tone and haunting images, "The Colour of Olives" may be the most peaceful documentary ever to arrive from a war zone. Filmed about 15 miles from Tel Aviv in Masha, a Palestinian village disrupted by the wall Israel is building on the West Bank, the movie observes an ordinary Palestinian family living under extraordinary conditions.

Refusing to leave land that has been in his family for generations, Hani Amer – along with his wife, Monira, and their six surviving children – literally lives surrounded by the wall. A military road, a checkpoint and electrified fences separate the family home from the fields of oranges, olives and flowers they used to sell in Masha's now abandoned garden markets. Each day Hani and the children patiently wait for soldiers to unlock the gate and allow them to go to work and school. Sometimes they wait a very long time.

"The Colour of Olives" is a film about forbearance and isolation and near-mystical connection to the land. Avoiding direct-to-camera interviews, the Mexican director Carolina Rivas and her cinematographer, Daoud Sarhandi, communicate with languid, sun-dappled images of work-worn fingers and freshly picked fruit. (The film's rhythms are so soothing that the sound of a stone crashing through glass has the impact and terror of a gunshot.)

Using only natural light, Ms. Rivas and Mr. Sarhandi frame everything with an artistry that belies the difficulty of their working conditions, creating a film as unhurried and dignified as the Amer family itself.

'Rachel Corrie: an American Conscience' the Film

Saturday 16 June 2007, 6.00pm State Library Melbourne

Palestine

2003

Film Duration 75 minutes

Documentary

A film by Yahia Barakat

Language: Arabic with English subtitles

The documentary, "Rachel Corrie: An American Conscience," chronicles her humanitarian work with the International Solidarity Movement in Rafah, Gaza Strip, just prior to her murder in March 2003. While Corrie stood in front of a Palestinian home to prevent its demolition, an Israeli soldier in a Caterpillar D-9 bulldozer crushed her. Through interviews, Barakat presents a collective chastisement of the military occupation, the U.S. and Israeli Governments, as well as U.S. mainstream media.

In Rafah, a walk to school is a life or death situation for Palestinian children when they encounter Israeli soldiers who shoot at them. Even though 100 international, non-violent demonstrators, who carried posters and a draping banner, walked alongside the children, soldiers responded with gun shots and tear gas. People ran for their lives.

In April 2003 the late British peace activist Tom Hurndall (1981-2004) was in Rafah where he escorted several children to school. Gunfire pervaded the streets. Out of fear some of the children stood immobile. Hurndall rescued them. While he guided a girl to safety, Israeli Sergeant Wahid Taysir shot Hurndall in the head. Nine months later, he died. Immediately after the incident his mother, Jocelyn, travelled to Rafah to find out the truth. On June 26, 2005, the soldier will face the court's verdict.

Corrie made a conscious decision to travel to Rafah and assess the root-causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Through interviews with her parents, viewers learn about Rachel. When Rachel was ten, she made a list of her future professions. One of them was a humanitarian activist. Her parents, Cindy and Craig, read her stories about the Holocaust. She composed poems and she constructed crafts for her mother. She loved the Pacific Ocean and it bothered her that the Palestinian children of Rafah had no access to beaches when they were steps away from the Mediterranean Sea.

Her parents' perception of the conflict changed when they read Rachel's writings because they did not see this information in U.S. mainstream media. Internationals expressed their shock and their distress at the violence of the occupation. They talked about the peacefulness and the generosity of the Palestinians. Cindy Corrie said her daughter had a gift for acute observations. In front of the camera, Rachel talked off the cuff succinctly. Her command of language and analysis of the conflict resounded with intelligence. She not only had a sharp mind but she had a deep heart. She was a woman of character and valour.

Activists mourned Corrie's death and they brought carnations to the site. Many speakers emphasized the thousands of Palestinians who died at the hands of Israeli soldiers. While in Hebron, footage shows Israeli soldiers dragged a Palestinian man by his arms and legs and then they banged his face into the ground until he was unconsciousness. Settlers from New York walked the streets with semi-automatic weapons.

Subsequent to the footage are interviews with peace activists, including Hedy Epstein, a Holocaust survivor who believes the persecuted became the persecutors. She recalled a soldier at the Qalandiya checkpoint who told her if she travelled to Ramallah the Palestinians would cut her in half. One settler said he wants peace, so the Palestinians throughout the West Bank should move to Jordan and Tunis. His asinine remarks are not uncommon.