

Palästina-News Nr. 20, November 2022

What you don't learn in Switzerland

The aim of this newsletter is to improve information about events in Palestine and Israel, with a focus - but not only - on the German-speaking part of Switzerland. For this purpose, articles from English-language online newspapers, online portals, publications, etc., are quoted in abbreviated form.

References provide a link to the original article and/or publication medium. The edited articles have been shortened and may not fully reflect the opinions of the authors. Martin Luzi Büechi (MLB)

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Elections in Israel: Hope dies and Jewish supremacy rises

The following article is from Yahav Zohar, 42, from *Green Olive Tours* in Jerusalem. I met Yahav on a tour through the Old City of Jerusalem last May. He is a Senior Partner & Tour Guide from *green Olive Tours* (https://greenolivetours.com), was born in Jerusalem and has lived in the city all his life. He has been a journalist, a translator, a political activist and a spokesperson for human rights and a sustainable political solution in Israel-Palestine. He has a great knowledge of the political situation, gained through years of involvement with *Combatants for Peace*, the *Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions* and other peace and human rights initiatives.

By coincidence we found a "common past" of our families. Yahav had worked and lived in a building of my daughter's Palestinian family on King George Street in Jerusalem. But it was not just that. In a mail he wrote to me: *"my daughter learnt to crawl on the beautiful patterned floor tiles, similar to those I wondered as a child in my grandparents' apartment in the Tannous family house".* His grandparents had lived in the family house of my daughter's Palestinian great-grandparents in Thalbiyeh, Jerusalem.The Tannous family had to leave in 1948. MLB

The big surprise to of this Israeli election is the rise of the extreme right 'Otzma Yehudit' (Jewish Might/Power) party, and its expected inclusion in government. The head of this party, Itamar Ben Gvir is an outspoken supporter of the Rabbi Meir Kahana, who's party was barred from running in the Israeli elections for its outright support of Jewish supremacy and its call to deny non-Jews any civil rights and to institute a system of religious Jewish law. Ben Gvir has been arrested and charged dozens of times and convicted at least eight times, for membership in a terrorist organization, hate speech, interfering with the work of the police and more. One of his demands for joining the next government will be his appointment as minister of public security, in charge of the police.

This turn of events has been a shock to many more liberal Israelis, who view the projected government coalition of Netanyahu's center-right Likud with the ultra-orthodox and the extreme

right as a threat to Israeli democracy. Others yet suggest that Israel has never been a true democracy and that the rise of the extreme right is the natural result of Israel's long standing oppression of Palestinians.



Holy Sepulchure, May 2022, MLB

Since its inception Israel has maintained two parallel systems, electoral multi-party democracy for some, mostly Jews, and military government for others, exclusively Palestinian. For decades, official Israel has been trying to put a nice face on this ugly truth, making out that the occupation and military government are a matter of security, unfortunate, undesirable and in some sense temporary. But as settlements grew and the system of oppression became more entrenched, this prospect receded and the parties calling themselves left-wing lost public support and shrunk almost to the point of disappearance.



Everyday life for Palestinian in Jerusalem, May 2022, MLB

Though the winning side of these elections is clearly the right, the parties on the losing side are ot left-wing but a collection of centrists and secular right wingers. The parties that still identify as left make up less than 10 percent of the parliament. The change of government is not expected to dramatically change the policy of holding Palestinians under military government in the West Bank and under siege in the Gaza strip. What is changing is the official rational for doing so. While the outgoing government explained the occupation as an unfortunate necessity, a matter of security, the incoming government, and particularly the far-right segment of it, combine religion and nationalism in an ideology of Jewish supremacy. In their view Jews are intrinsically superior and the land belongs exclusively to them by right of divine promise, Palestinians remaining without political rights is therefore permanent and desirable.



Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem May 2022, MLB

Israelis, and especially younger Israelis who have grown up into this reality, no longer buy the centrists' platitudes. For many of them, Ben-Gvir is a hero for speaking the truth that others are trying to hide, that Jewish supremacy is the underlying logic of the entire Israeli state, this never changes, whether Palestinians rebel or acquiesce, and the reason for it must be that Jews are intrinsically superior, God chosen.

Reading carefully through Israeli media and social media, it becomes clear that most opponents of the extreme right are not worried about what this new government will mean for Palestinians, but about what it will mean for the maintenance of the liberal Israeli bubble in Tel Aviv, for businesses staying open on the sabbath, for women's rights and for LGBTQ people's rights. They fear

that some of the oppression and denial of freedoms that Israel has been imposing on Palestinians for decades will seep in to affect them, the privileged.

Those of us advocating for universal civil-rights in Israel Palestine, do not take any joy in the rise of the extreme religious right. It is undeniably noxious and dangerous. However, we can hope that it will cause more centrist, secular Israelis (and perhaps some of Israel's supporters around the world) to sit up and take notice of the dangers of maintaining the siege, military government and general oppression of Palestinians. That more Israelis realize that we cannot maintain liberal democracy for some alongside military government for others.

We will hope and work to use this crisis to build a new Israeli left, that includes the Palestinian citizens of Israel as full partners and we will advance a platform of true civil equality in a fully democratic state.

Environmental apartheid in Palestine: Israel steals water

IMEU

Environmental apartheid refers to Israel's systematic exploitation of the environment in Palestine/Israel and the discriminatory system by which Palestinians are dispossessed of their land, water, and other natural resources while being disproportionately impacted by ecological damage caused by Israel.

For countless generations, Palestinians have lived and worked sustainably and in harmony with the natural environment in Palestine, maintaining the indigenous landscape, sharing common resources, and growing a wide variety of crops, including watermelon, wheat, citrus, grapes, and olives, the latter of which form a central part of Palestinian culture and identity.



Private tanks are increasingly deployed on roofs of Ramallah buildings to provide much-needed water. Credit: Mohammed Najib/Al Jazeera.

Since 1948, when the state of Israel was established on 78% of Palestine and 3/4 of all Palestinians were expelled from their homes, Israel has been damaging and destroying the environment in order to exploit its natural resources; to pressure Palestinians to leave their land, as part of its repeated military assaults and 15-year-old illegal siege and blockade of Gaza; and to erase evidence of Palestinian existence and connection to the land.

Seit zahllosen Generationen lebte und arbeitete die palästinensische Bevölkerung nachhaltig und in Harmonie mit der natürlichen Umwelt in Palästina, indem sie die einheimische Landschaft erhalten, gemeinsame Ressourcen nutzen und eine Vielzahl von Nutzpflanzen anbauen, darunter Wassermelonen, Weizen, Zitrusfrüchte, Weintrauben und Oliven, wobei letztere einen zentralen Bestandteil der palästinensischen Kultur und Identität bilden

Seit 1948, als der Staat Israel auf 78 % Palästinas gegründet wurde und 3/4 aller Bewohner aus ihren Häusern vertrieben wurden, hat Israel die Umwelt geschädigt und zerstört, um die natürlichen Ressourcen auszubeuten, um die palästinensische Bevölkerung zum Verlassen ihres Landes zu zwingen, als Teil seiner militärischen Angriffe und der seit 15 Jahren andauernden illegalen Belagerung und Blockade des Gazastreifens, und um Beweise für die Existenz der Palästinenser und Palästinenserinnen sowie ihre Verbundenheit mit dem Land zu vernichten.



Swimming Pool in Ma'ale Adumim. © Amnesty International

Israel systematically denies Palestinians in the occupied territories and parts of Israel access to clean and safe drinking water. Israel steals more than 80% of water in the occupied West Bank and expropriates it for use in illegal settlements, denying Palestinians access to water while supplying Israeli settlers with enough water to fill swimming pools, irrigate crops, and wash vehicles.



A Local Council member from the village of Al-Auja holds a lime, which is not fully grown. He explains how, since the mid-1990s, lime trees have produced increasingly smaller fruits and yields due to lack of water. © Amnesty International

Because of Israeli restrictions, Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank and Gaza are restricted from drilling water wells and installing water pumps, and are denied access to the Jordan River and freshwater springs. The Israeli army also regularly destroys Palestinian pipelines and water tanks, blocking Palestinians from even collecting rainwater. As a result, Palestinians are forced to live on an average of just 19 gallons of water per day - well below the WHO minimum.

In 2017, Amnesty International released a report entitled, *“The Occupation of Water.” It concluded: “50 years on, it is time for the Israeli authorities to put an end to policies and practices which discriminate against Palestinians in the [occupied Palestinian territories] and to address their desperate need for water security. The Israeli authorities must lift the restrictions currently in place which deny millions of Palestinians access to sufficient water to meet their personal and domestic needs as well as to enjoy their rights to water, food, health, work and an adequate standard of living.”*

Israel’s theft of Palestinian water causes severe environmental damage. Since 1967, Israel has consolidated complete control over all Palestinian water sources in the occupied territories. Israel’s over-extraction of Palestinian water sources has caused a drop in the water table and a distortion in the natural flow of groundwater, increasing vulnerability

Israel verweigert der palästinensischen Bevölkerung in den besetzten Gebieten und Teilen Israels systematisch den Zugang zu sauberem und sicherem Trinkwasser. Israel stiehlt mehr als 80 % des Wassers im besetzten Westjordanland und enteignet es für die Verwendung in illegalen Siedlungen. Dadurch wird der palästinensischen Bevölkerung der Zugang zu Wasser verwehrt, während israelische Siedler und Siedlerinnen mit genügend Wasser versorgt werden, um Swimmingpools zu füllen, Ernten zu bewässern und Fahrzeuge zu waschen.

Israelischer Restriktionen verbieten der palästinensischen Bevölkerung im besetzten Westjordanland und im Gazastreifen, Wasserbrunnen zu bohren und Wasserpumpen zu installieren. Ihnen wird der Zugang zum Jordan und zu Süsswasserquellen verwehrt. Die israelische Armee zerstört ausserdem regelmässig palästinensische Rohrleitungen und Wassertanks und hindert die Bewohner daran, Regenwasser zu sammeln. Infolgedessen sind die Palästinenser gezwungen, mit durchschnittlich nur 19 Litern Wasser pro Tag zu leben, was weit unter dem WHO-Mindestwert liegt.



Israeli forces can be seen confiscating water pipes in the Jordan Valley, 6 July 2018 [Ma'an News Agency]

Im Jahr 2017 veröffentlichte Amnesty International einen Bericht mit dem Titel "The Occupation of Water". Er kam zu dem Schluss: *"Nach 50 Jahren ist es für die israelischen Behörden an der Zeit, die palästinensische Bevölkerung diskriminierende Politik und Praktiken zu beenden, und sich mit deren verzweifelten Bedürfnis nach Wassersicherheit zu befassen. Die israelischen Behörden müssen die gegenwärtigen Beschränkungen aufheben, die Millionen von Palästinensern und Palästinenserinnen den Zugang zu ausreichend Wasser verwehren, um ihre persönlichen und häuslichen Bedürfnisse zu befriedigen und ihr Recht auf Wasser, Nahrung, Gesundheit, Arbeit und einen angemessenen Lebensstandard zu geniessen".*

Israels Diebstahl von palästinensischem Wasser verursacht schwerwiegende Umweltschäden. Seit 1967 hat Israel die vollständige Kontrolle über alle palästinensischen Wasserquellen in den besetzten Gebieten erlangt. Israels übermässige Entnahme palästinensischer Wasserquellen hat zu einem Absinken des Grundwasserspiegels und einer Störung des natürlichen Grundwasserflusses geführt, was die Anfälligkeit

to extreme weather events such as floods and droughts, which damage Palestinian agricultural and residential areas.

für extreme Wetterereignisse wie Überschwemmungen und Dürren erhöht, die palästinensische Landwirtschafts- und Wohngebiete schädigen.

Israeli war crimes: troops shoot, wound, and delay medical care

Haaretz

Palestinian villagers protest theft of their land and incessant harassment by settlers from an illegal outpost. The army and the Border Police set ambushes for the protesters and shoot at them. A 16-year-old, who is left by the troops to languish on the ground, is seriously wounded. This grim spectacle was captured on video by an eyewitness. The event occurred on the afternoon of October 7, a Friday: Gideon Levy and Alex Levac; Nov 4, 2022.

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXbksYpuoqs

A Palestinian Boy Went Out With Friends. An Israeli Soldier Shot Him in the Head: Gideon Levy and Alex Levac, Oct 15, 2022



A memorial banner for Mahdi Ladadwa, outside his family's home in Mizraat al-Gharbiyeh. The soldiers' method was the same in his case, as well as Nur Shreita's: First hurl tear gas to frighten the kids, then deliberately aim gunfire at one of them. Credit: Alex Levac

Video: A wounded teenager lies on a stretcher placed on the road. He's partially disrobed, his stomach is covered with a blood-stained white cloth, he is also bleeding. It doesn't look as if he is conscious. A Palestinian man tries to tend to him, then a few others, including an elderly man, lend a hand. As they make an effort to pick up the stretcher and get the wounded youth to a hospital, Israeli soldiers push them away brutally, barking at them and striking them with their rifle butts. One soldier fires in the air in order to disperse what he apparently perceives as a pack of stray dogs – in reality, distraught local residents trying to save their fellow villager and relative, who lies bleeding

Video: Ein verwundeter Jugendlicher liegt auf einer auf der Strasse abgestellten Bahre. Er ist teilweise entkleidet, sein Bauch ist mit einem blutbefleckten weissen Tuch bedeckt, er blutet auch. Es sieht nicht so aus, als ob er bei Bewusstsein wäre. Ein palästinensischer Mann versucht, sich um ihn zu kümmern, und einige andere, darunter ein älterer Mann, helfen ihm. Als sie sich bemühen, die Bahre zu nehmen und den verletzten Jugendlichen in ein Krankenhaus zu bringen, werden sie von israelischen Soldaten brutal weggeschubst, die sie anbrüllen und mit ihren Gewehrkolben schlagen. Ein Soldat schiesst in die Luft, um das zu vertreiben, was er offenbar für ein Rudel streunender Hunde hält - in Wirklichkeit sind es verzweifelte Anwohner, die versuchen, ihren Dorfbewohner und Verwandten zu retten, der blutend auf der Strasse liegt. Im Hintergrund sind verzweifelte Schreie zu hören.

Beitrag: Dies ist die Grenze der verstopften Stadt Qalqilyah im Westjordanland, die fast vollständig von einem Zaun umschlossen ist. Umzäunung? Die Baumschule auf der anderen Seite des Zauns gehört ebenfalls den Einwohnern von Qalqilyah, aber der Zaun schneidet sie von ihrem Land ab.

Ein blaues Rohr führt Wasser zur Baumschule. Letzten Freitag sass der 14-jährige Adel Daoud mit drei oder vier gleichaltrigen Freunden auf dem Rohr. Offenbar bemerkten sie die israelischen Soldaten nicht, die sich zwischen den Olivenbäumen im Hain neben der Baumschule auf der palästinensischen Seite des Zauns versteckt hielten. Plötzlich feuerte einer der Soldaten einen Schuss ab, der in Adels Stirn einschlug und im Nacken wieder austrat. Ein Loch im Nacken. Der Junge kippte auf die Seite. Augenzeugen zufolge verzögerten die Soldaten seine Evakuierung

on the road. Anguished cries are heard in the background.

Article: This is the boundary of the choked city of Qalqilyah in the central West Bank, which is almost completely encircled by a fence. Boundary? The tree nursery across the fence also belongs to the people of Qalqilyah, but the fence cuts them off from their land.

A blue pipe carries water to the nursery. Last Friday, 14-year-old Adel Daoud was sitting on the pipe with three or four friends his age. Apparently they didn't notice Israeli soldiers who were concealed by the olive trees in the grove next to the tree nursery on the Palestinian side of the fence. Suddenly one of the soldiers fired a round that slammed into Adel's forehead and exited from the back of his neck. A hole in one. The boy toppled onto his side.

Eyewitnesses say the soldiers delayed his evacuation to the hospital for about half an hour as he lay bleeding. A few hours later, Adel Daoud was dead. A boy who had dreamed of becoming a lawyer and liked to swim in the town pool, was killed on the edge of his city

ins Krankenhaus um etwa eine halbe Stunde, während er blutend liegen blieb. Ein paar Stunden später war Adel Daoud tot. Ein Junge, der davon geträumt hatte, Anwalt zu werden, und gerne im Schwimmbad der Stadt schwamm, wurde am Rande seiner Stadt getötet



Ibrahim Daoud holds a poster with a photo of his son, Adel. He says little, and his face is a study in anguish and pain.Credit: Alex Levac

An olive harvest lynching: an eyewitness account

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On Wednesday afternoon, a group of masked settlers lynched a 70-year-old Jewish Israeli woman who was accompanying a Palestinian farmer for the olive harvest in the occupied West Bank. Her name is Hagar Geffen. They attacked her with clubs until she bled, after which they beat her in the head with rocks. Yuval Abraham, October 20, 2022



Siedler schlagen auf die am Boden liegende Hagar Geffen

Die Siedler kamen aus einer Siedlung namens Ma'ale Amos, die sich in der Nähe des palästinensischen Dorfes Kisan, weniger als 20 Kilometer südlich von Jerusalem, befindet. Hagar war zusammen mit anderen Palästinensischen und Israelischen Aktivisten und Aktivistinnen in Kisan, um Ibrahim, einen älteren Palästinenser, dessen Land neben der Siedlung liegt, bei der Olivenernte zu begleiten. Hagar wurde mit gebro-chenen Rippen und einer durchsto-chenen Lunge in das Jerusalemer Shaare Zedek Medical Center eingeliefert. Ich konnte nicht mit ihr sprechen, aber Yasmine, eine palästinensische Aktivistin, die bei Geffen war, hat alles gesehen.

The settlers arrived from a settlement named Ma'ale Amos, located next to the Palestinian village of Kisan, less than 20 kilometers south of Jerusalem. Hagar was in Kisan, along with other Palestinians and Israelis, to accompany Ibrahim, an elderly Palestinian whose land is located next to the settlement, as he harvested his olives. Hagar was hospitalized in Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Medical Center with broken ribs and a punctured lung. I wasn't able to speak with her, but Yasmine, a Palestinian activist who was with Geffen, saw everything.

«When we approached the farmer's land, there were eight settlers - teenagers - with clubs. They didn't attack us, they only cursed. We passed them and saw that they had stolen all the olives and sprayed a toxic chemical on the trees in order to kill them. They sprayed 180 olive trees. As a farmer myself, I know that this chemical first affects the leaves, then moves to the rest of the tree, and finally to the trunk. It kills everything.

Suddenly, dozens of people, more than 50 of them, descended toward us from the hills. All of them were masked, holding clubs, and some of them had machetes and knives. I saw two of them holding axes. They ran toward us and began throwing stones like crazy.

We had young girls with us. Teenage girls and boys, as well as the farmer and his elderly wife. No one expected us to be attacked like this. We are a group of volunteers that came to help farmers whose land is close to the settlement.



The olive harvest season in Palestine has started. (Photo: Mahmoud Ajjour, The Palestine Chronicle)

Hagar filmed everything. I think she thought they wouldn't attack her because she is older and does not look Palestinian. They began to beat her mercilessly. Then they stole her phone, bag, and camera.

I saw how they dropped her body on the large rocks and then beat her with their clubs. She really



Hagar Geffen at the Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem. Credit: Emil Salman

«Als wir uns dem Land des Bauern näherten, standen dort acht Siedler - Teenager - mit Knüppeln. Sie haben uns nicht angegriffen, sondern nur geflucht. Als wir an ihnen vorbeigingen, sahen wir, dass sie alle Oliven gestohlen und eine giftige Chemikalie auf die Bäume gesprüht hatten, um sie zu abzutöten. Sie haben 180 Olivenbäume besprüht. Da ich selbst Landwirtin bin, wess ich, dass diese Chemikalie zuerst auf die Blätter, dann auf den Rest des Baumes und schliesslich auf den Stamm übergeht. Sie tötet alles ab.

Plötzlich kamen Dutzende von Siedlern, mehr als 50 an der Zahl, von den Hügeln herab auf uns zu. Sie waren alle maskiert und hielten Knüppel in der Hand, einige hatten Macheten und Messer. Ich sah zwei von ihnen mit Äxten. Sie rannten auf uns zu und begannen wie wild mit Steinen zu werfen.

Wir hatten junge Mädchen bei uns. Mädchen und Jungen im Teenageralter, aber auch der Bauer und seine ältere Frau. Niemand hat erwartet, dass wir so angegriffen werden. Wir sind eine Gruppe von Freiwilligen, die gekommen sind, um Bauern zu helfen, da deren Land in der Nähe einer Siedlung liegt.

Hagar hat alles gefilmt. Ich glaube, sie dachte, man würde sie nicht angreifen, weil sie älter ist und nicht palästinensisch aussieht. Sie begannen aber, sie erbarmungslos zu schlagen. Dann sta-len sie ihr Telefon, ihre Tasche und ihre Kamera.

Ich sah, wie sie ihren Körper auf die grossen Felsen stiessen und dann mit ihren Knüppeln auf sie einschlugen. Sie hat laut geschrien. Einige der Siedler brachten Steine herbei und warfen sie ihr auf den Kopf. Sie schlugen ihr mit Knüppeln aufs Bein, auf den Rücken und wiederholt auf die Brust.

Ich fühle mich sehr schuldig, dass Hagar dort zurückgelassen wurde. Dass wir sie dort zurückgelassen haben. Sie blutete noch eine

screamed. Some of them brought over rocks and dropped them on her head. They struck her with clubs in the leg, in the back, and repeatedly in her chest.

I feel a lot of guilt that Hagar was left there. That we left her there. She bled for a while until an Israeli ambulance arrived».

Weile, bis ein israelischer Krankenwagen eintraf».

Video: An Israeli soldier hands a tear gas grenade to an Israeli settler, who throws it towards Palestinian farmers during olive harvest in Burin: credit: @Yesh_Din

https://twitter.com/i/status/1583455530773020672

More than 100 settler attacks on Palestinians documented in the third week of October 2022: an eyewitness account

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What began as a family outing in Ramallah ended in a harrowing drive home, with military checkpoints and stone-throwing settlers at every turn. By Yara M. Asi, October 20, 2022

"There are now at least 650,000 settlers living throughout the occupied Palestinian territories, and new settlements are being approved regularly. One increasingly cannot drive between places in the West Bank that are just a few minutes apart without passing a settlement or an entrance to a settlement, all of which are illegal according to international law. And with the unceasing growth of the settler population has come unrelenting settler violence - with which I came face to face last week.

Chartering a taxi in Nablus, my family and I made the hour-long ride to the Ramallah area. The trip home back to Nablus started uneventfully. It had been a long day, and my kids quickly fell asleep in the backseat. There was little traffic, and we anticipated being home within the hour. But as we approached the Za'tara area a few kilometers south of the city, we saw the first signs of trouble. Ahead, we spotted a large group of settlers, most of them young men, waving large Israeli flags in the median near an intersection, and a few Israeli military jeeps and a Border Police van parked to the right, its lights flashing. The traffic light was red. Our taxi driver stopped a few hundred meters short of the light, waiting for it to turn green so as to avoid pulling up right next to the settlers and soldiers. "It's okay," he reassured us. That's when I noticed the large stones littering the road, and the settlers apparently noticed us.

They started screaming and running toward the taxi. I began to tense up. Many had their arms pulled back, loaded with stones. Our taxi driver threw the car into reverse. My husband turned around in his seat and silently gestured toward the kids, a fearful look on his face. I thought that



Israeli settlers attack Palestinians in the town of Huwara, near Nablus, occupied West Bank, October 13, 2022. (Oren Ziv)

°In den besetzten palästinensischen Gebieten leben inzwischen mindestens 650 000 Siedler, und es werden regelmäßig neue Siedlungen genehmigt. Man kann zunehmend nicht mehr zwischen Orten im Westjordanland fahren, die nur wenige Minuten voneinander entfernt sind, ohne an einer Siedlung oder einem Eingang zu einer Siedlung vorbeizufahren, die alle nach internationalem Recht illegal sind. Und mit der unaufhörlichen Zunahme der Siedlerbevölkerung ist auch eine unerbittliche Siedlergewalt einhergegangen, mit der ich letzte Woche konfrontiert wurde.

«In Nablus mieteten meine Familie und ich ein Taxi und fuhren eine Stunde lang in die Gegend von Ramallah. Die Rückfahrt nach Nablus begann ereignislos. Es war ein langer Tag gewesen, und meine Kinder schliefen auf dem Rücksitz schnell ein. Es

surely the settlers would notice the sleeping children in the backseat and retreat.



Settlers fire at Palestinians while Israeli soldiers stand by in the town of Huwwara on 13 October 2022 (AFP)

They didn't. They approached, screaming at us, just a few meters from the window. We ducked down as low as we could, my arms covering my kids' heads. I had heard the stories. I knew people died this way. Could this really be happening?

They started to throw stones. One of the soldiers waved on for our driver to go through the red light. He hit the pedal and we sped past the angry mob, their faces twisted with anger as they chased us through, our taxi bumping around on the stone-filled road.

I finally exhaled. It lasted maybe two minutes, but it was the first time I ever felt scared being in the West Bank - made even more terrifying by the sense of duty I felt to protect my kids and how powerless I was to do so in this situation.



Israeli soldiers stand by as Israeli settlers throw stones at Palestinians during clashes in the town of Huwara in the West Bank on October 13, 2022. (Oren ZIV / AFP)

herrschte wenig Verkehr, und wir rechneten damit, innerhalb einer Stunde zu Hause zu sein. Doch als wir uns dem Za'tara-Gebiet ein paar Kilometer südlich der Stadt näherten, sahen wir die ersten Anzeichen von Problemen. Vor uns sahen wir eine große Gruppe von Siedlern, die meisten von ihnen junge Männer, die grosse israelische Flaggen in der Mitte einer Kreuzung schwenkten, sowie einige israelische Militärjeeps und einen Lieferwagen der Grenzpolizei, der rechts geparkt war und dessen Lichter blinkten. Die Ampel war rot. Unser Taxifahrer hielt ein paar hundert Meter vor der Ampel an und wartete darauf, dass sie grün wurde, um nicht direkt neben den Siedlern und Soldaten zu halten. "Es ist alles in Ordnung", beruhigte er uns. In diesem Moment bemerkte ich die großen Steine, mit denen die Strasse übersät war, und die Siedler hatten uns offenbar auch bemerkt.

Sie begannen zu schreien und rannten auf das Taxi zu. Ich wurde angespannt. Viele hatten ihre Arme nach hinten gerissen und waren mit Steinen beladen. Unser Taxifahrer legte den Rückwärtsgang ein. Mein Mann drehte sich auf seinem Sitz um und gestikulierte stumm in Richtung der Kinder, mit einem ängstlichen Gesichtsausdruck. Ich dachte, dass die Siedler sicher die schlafenden Kinder auf dem Rücksitz bemerken und sich zurückziehen würden.

Aber das taten sie nicht. Sie kamen auf uns zu und schrien uns an, nur ein paar Meter vom Fenster entfernt. Wir duckten uns so tief wie möglich, meine Arme bedeckten die Köpfe meiner Kinder. Ich hatte die Geschichten gehört. Ich wusste, dass Menschen auf diese Weise starben. Konnte das wirklich passieren?

Sie fingen an, Steine zu werfen. Einer der Soldaten winkte unserem Fahrer zu, über die rote Ampel zu fahren. Er trat das Gaspedal durch, und wir rasten an der wütenden Menge vorbei, deren Gesichter vor Wut verzerrt waren, als sie uns verfolgten und unser Taxi rumpelnd über die Steine auf der Strasse kurven musste.

Endlich atmete ich auf. Es dauerte vielleicht zwei Minuten, aber es war das erste Mal, dass ich Angst hatte, im Westjordanland zu sein - was durch das Gefühl der Pflicht, meine Kinder zu beschützen, noch erschreckender wurde, und wie machtlos ich in dieser Situation war.

Watermelon: A slice of Palestinian resistance

Middle East Eye

Khaled Shalaby and Rakan Abed El Rahman, 17 August 2022

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpDlz6t0PLE&list=RDCMUCR0fZh5SBxxMNYdg0VzRFkg



Referencies

- ***IMEU*** (Institute for Middle East Understanding is a non-profit organization that offers journalists facts, analysis, experts, and digital resources about *Palestine* and *Palestinians*): https://imeu.org/article/environmental-apartheid-in-palestine
- ***HAARETZ*** (liberale israelische Tageszeitung, hebräisch und englisch): https://www.haaretz.com/
- ***+972 Magazine*** (independent journalism from Israel-Palestine, NGO, u,a, von der Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung gefördert): https://www.972mag.com/face-to-face-with-settler-violence-road-to-nablus/
- ***Middle East Eye*** (MEE hat den Sitz in London, founded in April 2014, MEE is an independently funded digital news organisation): https://www.middleeasteye.net/