



*Maher al-Akhras, CNN photo*

By Ed Crouch, November 2020

Just before Halloween, Israel arrested a Palestinian journalist in the West Bank, filmmaker Abdelrahman al-Thaher, one of more than 20 Palestinian journalists reportedly currently detained by Israel for emphasizing Palestinian rights. Similarly, Maher al-Akhras, 49 year old father of six, has been critical of Israel's apartheid policies, and has been imprisoned multiple times, serving a total of over 5 years.

He was detained on July 27th without charges, and went on a hunger strike for 103 days, drinking only water. Michael Lynk, UN rapporteur for the Palestinian territories, called on Israel to immediately release or charge him. Finally, the Israelis agreed to release him from the hospital on Thanksgiving. He nearly died.

798 Palestinians have already lost their homes in 2020, including 404 minors who lived in 218 homes. Put out onto the land with no food or shelter, in the midst of a pandemic. Plus, Israel demolished 301 non-residential structures.

The week of November 8th the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights documented 180 violations of international law by Israel Occupation Forces and settlers. A 2016 resolution of the UN declared "all settlements in the West Bank as illegal." Yet in mid-November Defense Minister Benny Gantz "approved the legalization of 1,700 housing units in the West Bank," plus the construction of 108 homes in East Jerusalem.

Between November 5th and 11th the Israeli Occupying Forces "carried out 96 incursions into the West Bank, including the invasion of civilian homes and shootings, inciting fear among civilians, and attacking many of them," 94 Palestinians were arrested, including 9 children, 2 women, and one journalist.

Canada voted "Yes" (163-5) on a UN resolution supporting Palestinian self-determination. Excellent! But by 2019, the US reduced its funding of the UN Relief Agency by 360 million. Contact your members of Congress about this need here.

Ed Crouch, gecrouch61@gmail.com Sadly, I will be writing this Blog less frequently. More likely every two or three months, in order to pursue other writing projects. However, I'll still appreciate your sending material about the plight of Palestinians. Thanks this month for the poignant missives from Ibrahim Soudy, John Berg, Dr. Rennie Coit, Matt Weiner, and Linda Bevis.