

جامعة بيرزيت



النشأة

العدد السادس

أذار ١٩٧٩

تصدر عن مكتب العلاقات العامة والمطبوعات والاعلام

✓

INTRODUCTION

This is a special issue of the "Bulletin" intended to serve two purposes: to show the extent to which the University is being harassed unjustifiably by the Military Authority and; to appeal to the friends of Birzeit University as well as to the advocates of freedom in the world to support the University's right to pursue its academic mission without interference.

This issue of the "Bulletin" includes statements released by the University and eye-witness accounts of the events that took place during the month of March 1979. It also includes other relevant information.

Birzeit University has evolved to a fully accredited University with recognized standards of academic excellence despite the continuous maltreatment it receives at the hands of the Military Authority. The contents of this issue represent a sample of this treatment during the month of March 1979. It also represent a new manifestation of the intensified campaign against the University which was started in 1967. The article in "Maarif" of March 16, 1979 is an example.

Birzeit University is a free and independent academic institution. It is a member in good standing of the International academic community. As such it has internationally recognized rights to pursue its academic freedom without interference from the Military Authority.

SPC

LG

341

B57

N373

BZU

Statement from Bir Zeit University

Birzeit University is declaring a strike today, March 13, 1979 to protest the violence which characterized the actions of Israeli soldiers yesterday, who invaded Birzeit, shot at unarmed students seriously injuring four, and imposed a general curfew. The military authorities, in addition, enforced collective punishment on the town's civilian population, and created a general atmosphere of terror.

We believe that the exaggerated show of force was completely unwarranted and provocative. The entry into town of large contingents of Israeli soldiers (more than one hundred) headed by the West Bank military governor himself, the shooting at students conducting a peaceful political march, and the herding of the town male population into the church courtyard inflamed the situation further.

Similar incidents of invading educational institutions, shooting at and beating up of unarmed students, and generally harassing civilian populations have occurred throughout the West Bank during Carter's visit to Jerusalem, which leads us to the conclusion that such occurrences are the result of a deliberate policy rather than being isolated, arbitrary actions on the part of soldiers.

The generation of such an atmosphere of violence and repression removes even further the prospects of a genuine peace in the area and violates basic human rights of the Palestinian people.

We demand that a full and just inquiry be conducted into the matter, that the Israeli officials responsible be brought to justice, and that no similar occurrence takes place in our country.

(chronology attached)

A Brief Chronology of Events in Bir Zeit on Monday, March 12, 1979

- 9:30 a.m. An army checkpoint was positioned on the Ramallah-Birzeit road. Students and faculty were forced to return to Ramallah.
- 10:00 a.m. Birzeit University students held a meeting in the Assembly Hall to discuss the recent events surrounding President Carter's visit.
- 10:30 a.m. A group of University and local high school students went on a peaceful protest march in the town of Birzeit. A small contingent of soldiers was keeping a watch over the events from a distance but did not intervene during the demonstration.
- 11:45 a.m. Sporadic shooting was heard in the town, but no injuries were reported or seen.
- 12:30 p.m. After most of the protesters had dispersed and a small group was standing near the center of town, soldiers opened fire and shot four persons, all from the back. Three of the injured were transferred to Ramallah Hospital and the fourth to Hadassah Hospital. Their names and condition are as follows:
1. Fa'iq Muhammad Ali, Birzeit University student. Hit in the neck. Extensive injury to the jaw.
 2. Maher Lutfi Abdel-Sayeh, local resident. Injured in the leg.
 3. Sami Abdul Rahman, local high school student, hit in the chest. Abdominal injury reported.
 4. Hassan Muhammad Ali, local high school student. Hit in the chest with critical lung damage.

Meanwhile, a convoy of six large army trucks full of heavily armed soldiers arrived in Birzeit, accompanying high-ranking military officers.

1:00 p.m. Dr. Baramki, Birzeit University Vice-President, went to see the officers to inquire about the shooting. He was told that the soldiers fired in response to shooting by the demonstrators. They ordered Dr. Baramki to return to campus and keep everyone inside.

1:30 p.m. The army announced over the local mosque loudspeaker that they have imposed a curfew and that anyone seen in the streets will put himself in danger.

2:00 p.m. At Ramallah Hospital, four Birzeit University lecturers were questioned at the gate by soldiers. They were asked specifically whether or not they were reporters. They finally allowed two of them to enter, but the two others were roughly pushed back when they tried to enter. After an argument, their passports were confiscated and not returned until 6 p.m.

In the Hospital, the military authorities issued orders for the transfer of the three patients to Hadassah Hospital in Mount Scopus. The apparent reason for this order was to prevent the press from entering the hospital and seeing the injured students. Expert medical opinion at the Hospital rejected carrying out the transfer of one of the students, Hassan Muhammad Ali, due to his serious condition. The two other patients were taken to Hadassah Hospital.

2:15 p.m. The Military Governor of the West Bank, Benyamin Bon-Eliezar, called Dr. Baramki, Birzeit University Vice President to the Birzeit Post Office, (where he had set up temporary headquarters). He informed Dr. Baramki that in an hour or so, providing everyone stayed calm, he would lift the curfew and arrange for the transport of the Birzeit University Community to Ramallah.

- 3:10 p.m. In Birzeit, the army announced over mobile loudspeakers that all males over the age of 14 must go to the courtyard of the Catholic Church in Birzeit. The identification cards of the residents were checked there and they were made to sit on the ground. Some were interrogated. Houses in the town were searched during the curfew after the men had left. Some female residents were beaten during the house searches. The Birzeit University Community stayed within the campus.
- 3:30 p.m. At Ramallah Hospital, a physician from Hadassah Hospital was brought in the army to give his medical opinion as to whether the seriously injured student could be transferred to Hadassah. The physician, who barely examined the student pronounced him fit for transfer. Several Ramallah Hospital attending physicians vehemently disagreed with the opinion. After about 2 hours of negotiations between the physicians, an attorney and the family of the student on one side and the Hadassah physician and the officers on the other, the decision to transfer was postponed pending word from the Legal Advisor to the Military Government
- 3:40 p.m. In Birzeit, Dr. Baramki went to the church but could not see the Military Governor. He went to the Post Office, where was told by an officer to keep the Birzeit University students inside the campus and to await further notice.
- 5:10 p.m. The telephone line between the University and the outside was cut; the line to the local Post Office, however, had been severed since about 1 p.m.
- 5:40 p.m. The Military Governor of the West Bank called Dr. Baramki to the Post Office and told him that within an hour or two, if everything goes well, the curfew will be lifted and that he will be informed. He assured Dr. Baramki that he need not worry about

making sleeping arrangements for the approximately 400 students, faculty and staff on campus. He also assured Dr. Baramki that he had decided that the army would not enter the campus "this time" and that women students would be allowed to move between their hostel and the dining hall.

- 6:30 p.m. Shortly after Dr. Baramki returned to the campus from his meeting with the Military Governor, he met around eight soldiers who had entered the campus. He informed them firmly of the Governor's decision, but they were very rude to him and refused to leave except after a tense interchange. However, they did continue to prevent women students from coming to the dining hall.
- 8:30 p.m. The Ramallah Municipal Council, which was in session to discuss the situation, was informed by Yigael Karmon, advisor to the Military Governor of the West Bank that the curfew had been lifted and that worried families could go to Birzeit to bring back the students and staff.
- 9:00 p.m. About 50 cars approached Birzeit but were firmly turned back by soldiers manning the checkpoint at the entrance to the town. They said they still had orders not to allow anyone in or out of the town.
- 9:30 p.m. The Birzeit University Community saw the males in the Church yard leaving and heard the army vehicles departing. They then knew that the curfew was lifted. During the next two hours, enough means of transport were found to take the students and staff to their homes.

Birzeit, March 13, 1979

Statement from Bir Zeit University

In our statement of March 13, 1979, we brought to your attention the shooting of four persons by the Israeli army in Birzeit on March 12. We indicated then that three of the injured were forcibly transferred from Ramallah Hospital to Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem by the military authorities. In what follows, we would like to describe the treatment that one of the injured persons received during and after his stay at Hadassah Hospital.

Fa'iq Muhammad Ali, a second-year student at Birzeit University, was shot in the jaw and suffered from a fractured mandible. During his stay at Hadassah Hospital, where he was under armed guard and where he was refused a visit from his lawyer, three attempts were made by the Israeli Security Services to interrogate him. They failed to do so due to the general health condition of the patient. Eight days later he was released by the hospital authorities while an intravenous fluid line was still inserted in his arm. At this point, he was taken to the Security Services headquarters in the Russian Compound in Jerusalem in a police vehicle. Once again, the officers attempted to interrogate him. At this point, however, blood from his arm started flowing back into the intravenous line, and the officer in charge decided to postpone the questioning and told Fa'iq to "go home." When he protested that he was too weak and had no money to take a taxi, he was driven to East Jerusalem and dropped off where he fainted and was subsequently taken to Ramallah Hospital by a passing motorist.

While at Ramallah Hospital, waiting for medical attention, Fa'iq was spotted by a security officer who approached him and interrogated him for about one hour. He was told to return to the Security Services in a week's time for more questioning. After the security officer had departed, Fa'iq telephoned a Birzeit University official, who then made arrangements for his admission to Maqased Hospital. As of this writing, Fa'iq is recovering from the aftermath

of his "treatment" at Hadassah Hospital and at the hands of the Security Services. He will be discharged soon, we hope, to continue his studies at Birzeit University. It will take many years, however, to erase the memories of this most callous cooperation, conscious or not, between the physicians in charge of Fa'iq at Hadassah and the Israeli Security Services.

A Short Story

It is said that on Monday last (19/3/79) an Israeli military patrol invaded the Palestinian village of Bani Na'im in the District of Hebron.

After imposing a curfew on the village and ordering all the young people of both sexes including the students of all three schools located in the village, to stand outside for several hours, the soldiers broke into the houses and searched them. While this was happening, a student carrying some books appeared at the entrance to the village and was asked where he was coming from. He replied that he was a university student.

Which university?

Birzeit....

No sooner had he finished than the soldiers set upon him, beating, kicking and cursing.

The person's name is Zahran Muhammad Manasra - a second year student at the University.

And so.. The story has a similar ending for inhabitants of other Palestinian villages.

March 21, 1979

Bir Zeit University Statement

At eight o'clock on the evening of Sunday, 25 March 1979, the Israeli Military Governor of the Ramallah District summoned Dr. Izzat Ghorani, a member of the Birzeit University administration, and handed him a military order for the closure of the University for a week. The order stated the following:-

Since I believe that this order is necessary for the security of the Israeli Defense Forces and for law and order I order the following:-

To everyone administering Birzeit University in the District of Ramallah: Close the said University and suspend its administration for the period 26 March 1979 at 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 a.m. 1 April 1979.

(Signed)
Military Governor of Ramallah
25 March 1979

The University protests this order as well as the means used to effect it. It specifically protests the following:-

- 1- Closing the University with no justification for such an act. The University has been carrying on its proper and normal functions as an academic institution.
- 2- The Occupation Authorities did not give the University any advance notice to enable it to vacate the campus. Since the University was informed that the order specifically included University dormitories, resident students in the University hostels in both Birzeit and Ramallah had to be sent to their families in distant locations in the middle of the night under very difficult travel conditions.

- 3- The University protests the unfounded allegation that the preservation of law and order requires its closure.

The Vice-President of the University protested the closure order and the manner of its enforcement in a letter to the Military Governor and demanded that the order be cancelled to enable the University to continue its normal functions.

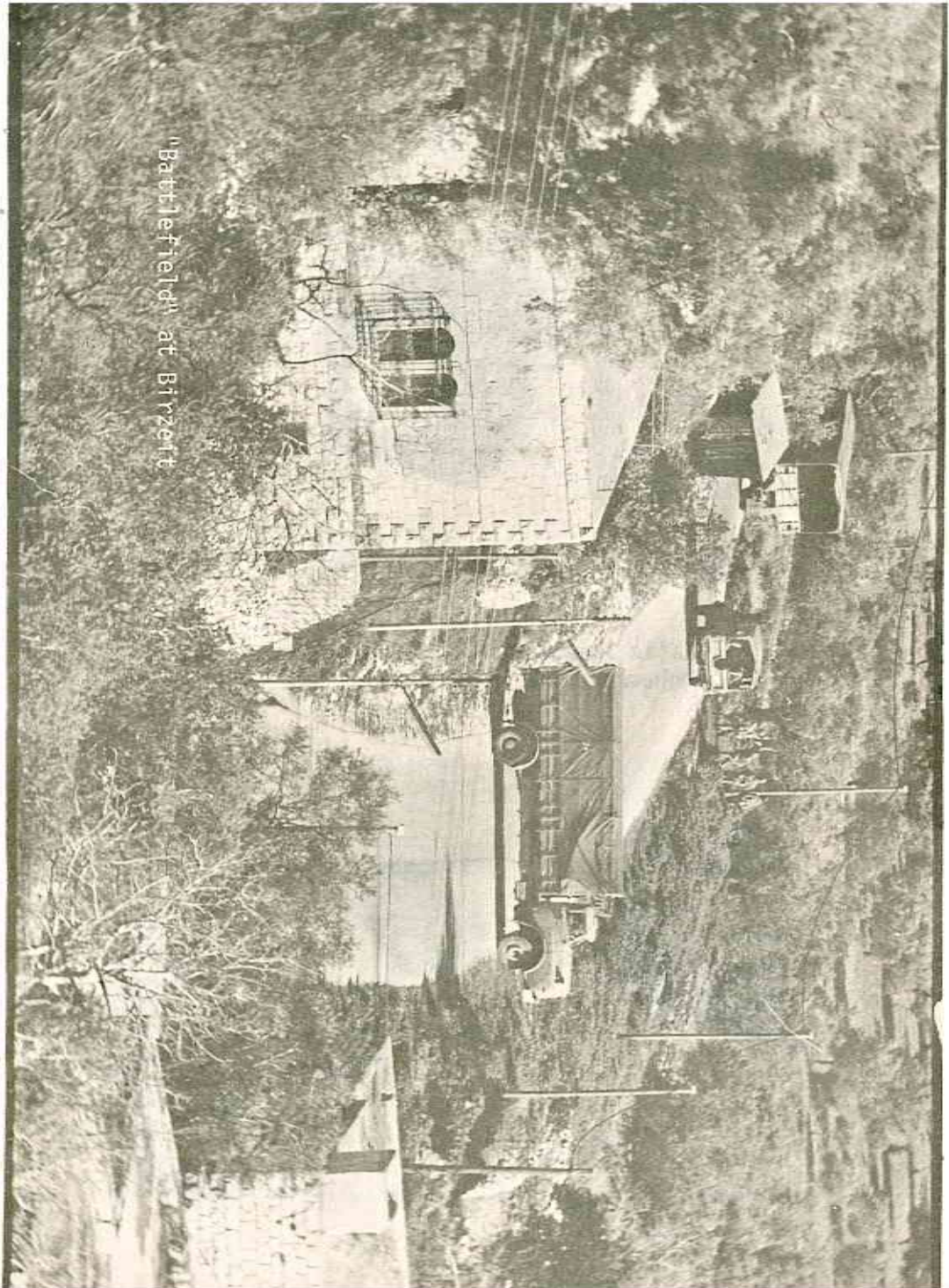
The University protests and deplors this act which is a part of a continuing series of infringements of the University's right to carry on its educational responsibilities. The University appeals to its friends and to all individuals and organizations to support it in its effort to put an end to all such arbitrary acts which conflict with the most fundamental rights and liberties.

Birzeit, March 26, 1979

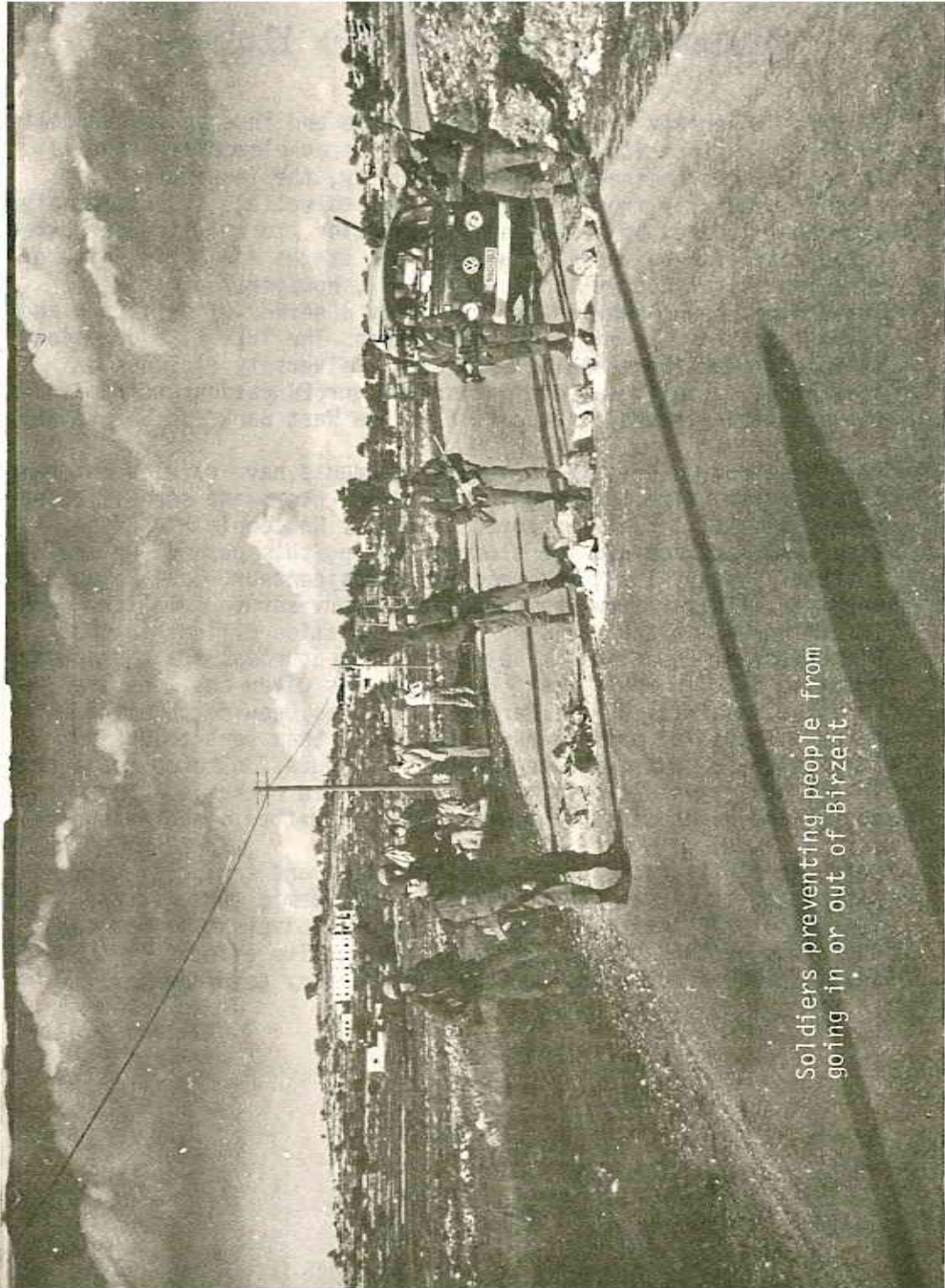


Fa'iq Muhammad Ali an Hassan
Muhammad Ali in hospital





"Battlefield" at Birzeit



Soldiers preventing people from going in or out of Birzeit.

Statement From Bir Zeit University

Birzeit University has always been a free and independent academic institution since its founding in 1924 as an elementary school. In response to the needs of its community, the institution evolved naturally from secondary school to college and ultimately, although hindered by being under occupation, to a fully-accredited university. The University retains such status today, in spite of Israeli military occupation. Since 1967, however, our academic freedom has been thwarted and eroded by a series of arbitrary and harmful acts by the military authorities. The latest, a decision to forbid practice teaching by Birzeit University students in government schools, seriously disrupts our Education program and threatens the future of education in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

For three years, Birzeit University students have carried on their necessary practice teaching in West Bank government schools under supervision of Israeli-approved teachers. No complaints of any kind were made against the students during this period. On the ninth of January 1979, Academic Vice-President Dr. Gabi Baramki received a letter from the Education Supervisor in Ramallah informing him of the decision of the Education Officer in the Department of Education in Bethel to deny approval for continued practice teaching this year. No reason was given and, despite repeated inquiries by Dr. Baramki, none has been forthcoming to date. A letter of protest has, therefore, been sent to UNESCO. Permission for our graduate students in Education to do research in the government schools has similarly been withheld. (Both topics and names of students have been submitted - see Appendix).

Both the arbitrary nature of this decision and the delay and disruption it causes in our legitimate academic pursuits are typical of the treatment accorded Birzeit University since 1967. Any study of this history reveals the negative effects on this institution of decisions made by the military government:

Illegal Customs Duties: Before 1967, Birzeit University was exempt from customs duties under Jordanian law. On October 8, 1970, a request for continuation of custom-exempt status was made. It was refused, contrary to international agreements calling for the maintenance of the status quo in occupied territories.

The amount paid in duty in the interim is sufficient to have built a new building or completely equip a laboratory (for example, \$46,000 in duty for laboratory and cafeteria equipment only over twelve years). Construction of our new campus has been rendered more expensive as well. The duty on the steel for the new Library Building alone amounted to \$20,000. Although, Birzeit University is not subject to customs duties on books, it does pay VAT. (12%). It is our understanding that universities in Israel are refunded the V.A.T. they pay; Birzeit is not.

Interference in Administrative Development: Two years after a request was made for an enlargement of Birzeit University's Board of Trustees, permission was granted for a reduction of its membership, from ten to eight members.

Plans for a new campus site in Ramallah were implemented in 1972, including municipal expropriation of required land. After architectural designs had been commissioned and prepared and work was about to begin, authorization was denied by the military government. The result was a delay of three years to find another site.

Work Permit Delays: Birzeit University applies for work permits for its foreign lecturers before they enter the country. In past years, permits have been issued for varying and arbitrary lengths of time; others have been inexplicably delayed. For 78/79, 32 new applications were approved in principle, although 11 have not yet been received. Applications for 11 renewals have not been approved to date.

Censorship of Study Materials: Despite claims to the contrary, books and periodicals ordered by Birzeit University are subject to censorship. At least a dozen books have been confiscated and not returned. The two latest are a Bibliography of Palestinian-Jordanian Authors from 1970 to 1975 and the Plays of Ghassan Kanafani.

Vague and Hearsay "Charges": Repeatedly in the Hebrew press and elsewhere, Birzeit University is described in such terms as "a focal point of hostility and incitement against Israel." University officials are accused of providing "backing for the students to demonstrate and organize hostile and seditious public activity."

No one would deny the unpopularity of military occupation among the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including the students of Birzeit University. It is libelous, however, to suggest that this institution encourages, fosters or backs illegal activities. For example, the regulations of the University require that classes proceed as scheduled during demonstrations.

Such charges and misrepresentations go beyond the delays and harassment that make up the usual climate under which Birzeit University operates. They are reminiscent of a similar slanderous campaign directed at Birzeit University in 1973, prior to its forced closing for two weeks and in 1974 when its President, Dr. Hanna Nasir, was deported.

We repeat that Birzeit University is a free and independent academic institution that pursues its legitimate activities in spite of arbitrary and harmful measures against it by the Israeli Military Government. We wonder, with some concern, how long we can continue in the face of negative decisions against us such as the forbidding of practice teaching by our students in government schools.

March 16, 1979

APPENDIX

Topics of Research Projects intended as part of the requirements of the graduate program

1. Abdallah Omar Omari - Supervisor of Government Schools in Jenin area.

Topic: An Analysis of Supervisors' Reports to Determine if Qualitative Difference Exist Between Graduates of T.T.Is and Those with In-Service Education Equivalency Training.

2. Elias Qnazou'a - Supervisor in UNRWA schools, Hebron area.

Topic: A Study of Preparatory School Students' Inquiry Skills and Cognitive Processes as Related to Their Achievement in Science.

3. Khalil (Charlie) Mahshi - Birzeit University Faculty.

Topic: A Study of Post-Elementary School Students' Cognitive Processes Developmental Levels and the Relevance of the Science Curricula.

4. Othman Abu Libdeh - Birzeit University Faculty.

Topic: An Investigation into the Relationship Between Secondary School Teachers' Attitudes Towards Mathematics and Their Understanding of the Characteristics of the Modern Mathematics Curriculum.

5. Samara Rantisi - Supervisor in UNRWA Schools, Ramallah area.

Topic: Micro Education as Being More Fruitful than Traditional Teaching Methods.

An Eyewitness Account

Monday, March 12, 1979, started out to be an eventful, but peaceful day. Morning demonstrations, by high school and university students, marching and singing, were coming to an end by noon. Reporters who had spent the morning here, had left and most of the students had either gone home or were having lunch in the dining room. I had joined my wife, Nancy, for a sandwich in the sun in front of the university. We were just discussing the surprising fact that the soldiers hadn't come during the demonstrations when we saw some jeeps driving towards Birzeit.

Shortly after we saw the jeeps, we heard that soldiers were firing at students near the science building. We decided to go and see for ourselves what was happening, partly because we wanted to help if there was trouble and partly to see why in the world soldiers would be shooting when, as far as we could tell, the demonstrations were over.

As Nancy and I, accompanied by Wayne Derrick and Tom Weaver, rounded the corner of the road leading past the science building, we heard the shots. At first there were only a few, but as we crossed the Atara road, we heard a real fusillade--maybe twenty or thirty shots. That's when we heard that the first boy--Hassan Ahmad Al Haj, from Amir Hassan school--had been shot. As we continued up the road, the intensity of the firing again increased. We stopped when we heard bullets whistling around our ears. The buzzing of the bullets and the unmistakable whine of ricochets from the street convinced us that the soldiers were indeed firing at people, not merely over their heads.

By this time we were crouching, trying to use the cover of the low buildings on the left side of the road. Looking ahead, we saw a group of eight or ten students--both boys and girls--who were caught out in the open. They had turned to run when we saw the second student--Fayeq Mohammad Ali of Birzeit University--go down. He had been shot in the head. I'll never forget the courage of the group of boys and girls who went out into the hail of bullets to bring Fayeq to safety.

When the students brought Fayeq behind the cover of the buildings, I was relieved to find that he was still conscious. After a quick look at his wound, I could tell that he had been shot in the left cheekbone. He was bleeding heavily and we all knew that it was absolutely essential to get him to a doctor immediately. Fortunately, there was a service taxi stopped in front of the science building and we were able to get Fayeq to the UNRWA Health Clinic in Jalazoun, where the doctor assured us that the wound was not fatal. From there, we went to the Ramallah hospital. The doctors there assured us that Fayeq's life was not in danger, but that Hassan, who had been shot in the back, was in serious condition. I have heard that both boys are recovering from their wounds.

Now that I've had a few days to mull over the events of March 12 and subsequent occurrences on the West Bank, I am forced to ask several questions. First, was the Birzeit shooting simply an act of incredible stupidity on the part of a few soldiers? But then, how does one explain the number of shots fired--at least fifty or sixty? What about officers? Surely there must have been a few present, given the number of troops in Birzeit at that time. I must conclude that the evidence forces an answer of "no" to the first question.

Why, then, did this incident occur? I quote from the letter which my colleagues and I wrote to the President of the United States on March 13, 1979, "...We are convinced that yesterday's (events) are part of the continuing campaign of harassment by the Israelis in the occupied territories...we and the people of this area are on the receiving end of official terrorism." No matter how much time I have to think about this, I will be unable to change that conclusion.

(Jerry Young), March 20, 1979

One More Israels - Provoked Shooting

Last Monday, March 12th 1979, about 2:00 in the afternoon, I saw a student get shot in the face by Israeli soldiers. This shooting, and others during the same time, was the aftermath of a demonstration which indicated sentiments against Carter's visit to Israel. This demonstration, as others in the past, consisted of piling stones across the roads, burning tires, and throwing rocks from behind buildings at armored troop carriers, or at dispersed soldiers stand at road crossings. These confrontations seem to have the same final score, always -n Israeli favor.

This particular Monday a group of students had moved along the road in front of the Physics building, going east toward the Post Office. Approximately 300 yards east of the Physics building the road curves slightly to the left, then continues down a slight incline another 400 yards to meet the Ramallah-Birzeit road. It was near this curve in the road where the boy was shot in the face. Several moments earlier, below this curve and out of my sight, a high school student had been hit in the back by a bullet and the Israelis would not allow the service taxi to take the student to the hospital in Ramallah. Of the several students who were near the corner, many ran back toward the Physics building when the first boy was shot. One of the students came to me and asked if I could go to the Israelis and ask that the taxi with the wounded high school student be allowed to pass. As I approached the corner, there were only four or five students still standing along the road; shots were clearly audible but it was impossible to tell where they were coming from or in which direction the Israelis were shooting. As I came to the corner, the student across the road from me, standing on the corner, suddenly fell to the ground. He had been hit in the jaw from behind, the bullet coming out his mouth. Because of the amount of blood, my first thought was that he had been killed. By now the Israelis were no longer shooting to scare.

When this student fell, the few remaining students ran back along the road toward the Physics building. Because I was so close to the corner and it appeared the Israelis were coming up the road, I knew it would be futile to run so I stepped into a narrow passage-way leading into the refugee camp. The Israelis did not come, however and then two or three students who were with the injured boy came and picked him up. We all ran back toward the university and another American who also saw this incident, Jerry Young, helped get this student in a taxi and he was eventually taken to a hospital in Ramallah.

(Wayne Derrick)

The Israeli press is launching a persistent campaign to turn the Israeli public opinion against Birzeit University. Following is a typical example of brainwash which appeared in MAARIF, the Israeli evening newspaper in its issue dated March 16, 1979 written by Yousuf Tisrael.

Title of the article:

Bir Zeit is a Springboard for Evil

The extremists have the upper hand in the West Bank. Israel is facing a united front made up of P.L.O. supporters who view this organization as their representative.

During the twelve years of the Israeli presence in the West Bank Birzeit has always been a problem for the military rule. The military governor began considering measures to be taken even before the first year came to an end. More than once he considered closing down the University indefinitely but so far the measure has not been enforced except once for a short period.

The Military rule has sufficient evidence to believe that a close instructor - student collaboration exists in non-academic activities. The Mayor of Ramallah, Kareem Khalaf once stated, "Anybody really interested in what goes on in the West Bank should go to Birzeit (to find out)". Indeed what happened there lately and what is written in editorials in the Arab press in East Jerusalem reflect the views of West Bank mayors and distinguished figures.

The one thousand students enrolled at the University appointed themselves as spokesmen for the inhabitants of the occupied territories. Furthermore, the students council acts as "operations headquarters" for the planning of strikes and demonstrations, and publishing leaflets as well as influencing other academic institutions in Arab circles to work hand in hand.

During Carter's visit to Israel this week calls came out from that mountain town, located to the north of Ramallah, addressed to students and instructors of teachers training centers and secondary schools to participate in strikes and demonstrations protesting that U.S. presidential visit. Although the response to these calls was partial, yet teaching discontinued in tens

of educational institutions and two teachers training centers were officially closed down by order from the military governor.

Storekeepers protest:

An atmosphere of tension prevailed in Birzeit throughout this week. Initially, the military rule maintained self-control and refrained from intervention. But following acts of street blockings and tire burnings performed by university students helped by non-university elements, the military rule decided on Monday to restore order. Hundreds of students took over the area in the vicinity of the University, burned an Israeli flag and hoisted the Palestinian flag. In addition they shouted slogans against the presidents of the United States and Egypt and addressed calls to the Arab states to prepare for a political and military struggle against Israel and Egypt. In fact the storming of the University campus by the Israeli troops was not an ordinary measure but the decision had to be taken to put a step to students' control over the town. A curfew was imposed for a period of five hours and the town's people were requested to produce their I.D's. and enable the troops to conduct a house reach in town.

The next day witnessed a relative quiet. Meanwhile, rocks, branches, burned tin cans, bars and petrol-soaked rags were seen on the streets in the aftermath of the riots.

The town's people resented the troops breaking into the town and condemned the shooting of three students. But there were some among them who criticised the students, and one of the storekeepers in town said that the University nowadays governs the made of life for the towns population who reject that (trend

It is further said that in the last couple of years some local V.I.P's. approached the University administration and requested that student activities be confined to University campus and to be kept out of the town streets. In connection with this, Dr. Gabi Baramki claims that control over hundreds of students outside the lecture hall and during breaks between classes is beyond the administration realm of power.

We are the best:

The students are happy (with this situation). The day following the clash with the Israeli army forces the students together with their teachers decided to discontinue lecturing at the University condemning the shooting and wounding of three young people from the town. The question which should be raised is why Birzeit students are always leading demonstrations and strikes. In answer to this question somebody remarked "We are the best, and the other student follow suit". And truly enough while Birzeit University students were on strike, hundreds of students in other locations responded favourably. Fifteen kilometers to the south of Birzeit, Ramallah students burned tires, placed street barriers, threw rocks at the security forces and Ramallah, with its shops and offices closed down appeared like a ghost city.

This new phenomenon in Birzeit was also manifested itself in the city of Ramallah. In addition to boys, girls demonstrated and threw rocks and for modesty's sake did that separately!!

Why did the christian-dominated Birzeit and Ramallah demonstrate while Nablus, Hebron, Jineen and Qalqeeliah remained quiet?

Kareem Khalaf, the mayor of Ramallah says that demonstrations are not "unnatural" and not necessarily organized.

In the military headquarters of the West Bank demonstrations are viewed differently. The military officers say that in the Arab society the adults are the ones who instigate the young. They add that students don't demonstrate or leave their schools in great numbers without encouragement by their teacher. Furthermore, the task by the security forces to contain demonstrations run by kids proves extremely difficult. Consequently, adults don't have to take part in street demonstrations. The mayors and other leading figures do not find any difficulty to express their views, and they were able to do so individually and collectively during Carter's visit to Israel voicing their objection to the imminent signing of the treaty between Egypt and Israel.

Hence, the circle of objectionists in the West Bank to the peace initiative is defined. Already Israel stands against a local leadership which has a united political stand based on the rejection of the autonomy plan.



BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY



BULLETIN

SPC
LG
341
.B57
N373
BZU

Sixth Issue

March 1979

PUBLISHED BY : PUBLIC RELATIONS & INFORMATION OFFICE