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Rafida Thaer Bader, RIP

At age 3, Rafida Thaer Bader was a beautiful child. She shined like a flower in spring, the rays of the sun reflected on her blonde hair, the red of her dress gave her round face a beautiful hue. April 23, 2006 was the day of her death. On this spring day, she was killed at an Israeli checkpoint in the West Bank. Rafida was the child of an Israeli Arab and a Palestinian. Together with her mother, brothers and sisters she made a trip from the Israeli-Arab village of Kufer Kanna to Beit Lokia, a village of her father near Ramallah. On that Sunday, the Israeli soldiers stopped the car of Rafida's family at the checkpoint of Kharbitah or the checkpoint of death as it is called by Palestinians, Modoin as it is called by the Israeli occupation.

This checkpoint separates the city of Ramallah from other towns, cities and villages in the West Bank. It is normal to be stopped for one, two, three hours or even a whole day at the Israeli checkpoints until one is checked up. The time and life of Palestinians has no value under occupational law of the Israelis. The harassment checkpoint of Kharbitah exists since before the second Intifada broke out. The checkpoint is famous for the levels of harassment meted out by the Israeli troops stationed here.

The students of Bir Zeit University and everybody else from the northern of the West Bank who need access to Ramallah because of work, study or for medical services, must pass the Kharbitah checkpoint and endure the harassment and risk being detained, arrested, tortured, long waits and other abuses and insults by the Israeli occupation soldiers. During the so-called "peace time", the Israeli soldiers closed the checkpoint any time they wanted, just to make fun and humiliate the Palestinians, to insult their human dignity. Under the military occupation, "fun" always causes suffering to the Palestinians, with the consequent increase in frustration, hate, and lust for revenge. The doors at the checkpoints are controlled remotely by the Israeli soldiers, they open and close them with a button fixed inside a cabin where one of the Israeli soldiers sits and presses it anytime he wants, or according to the instructions he receives over the radio from the other soldiers.

On Sunday the 23rd April of 2006, the electronic doors at the Israeli checkpoint of death, Kharbitah, the Israeli soldiers had "fun" again. They slammed the gate of the checkpoint shut on Rafida's head, splitting her skull in two and popping out one of her eyes. The child bled to death in front of her young brothers and sister. The spring visit of the mother and her children to the house of the grandfather was converted into a tragic event which the young children and the family will never forget. And why? Because of the long wait, the girl needed to go to the toilet. This unjustified murder was wholly supported and financed by the US and the European friends of Israel.

This is one of many real stories at the Israeli checkpoints, which daily tragedy of the Palestinians. Many pregnant women are delayed when trying to reach the hospital of Ramallah; they must give birth on this checkpoint in public and before the occupation soldiers who always express their sadistic victory feelings when they can cause a tragedy to happen. Many sick people were prohibited from reaching medical treatment and sent back home by the Israeli soldiers stationed on this checkpoint. The daily suffering of the students of Bir Zeit University at this checkpoint, the daily harassments and insults since before the Intifada started can't be described in short words. People who have not had to live through the harassment at an Israeli checkpoint will never be able to understand the feelings of the Palestinians.



During the peace time in 2000 - Man with donkey stopped at checkpoint in Shuhada street in Hebron.

The strong propaganda spread by Israel internationally, but especially in the western countries, suggests that these checkpoints, which are placed on roads in all of the West Bank between cities, villages, mountains, are there for “security reasons”. This is simply not true. The occupation’s checkpoints and the behaviour of the soldiers manning these checkpoints are a clear act of furtherance of genocide, supported by the corrupt governments of the U.S.A and the European countries.

The corrupted Palestinian government has failed to call the attention of the International community to the daily violations of basic human rights of the Palestinians at the Israeli checkpoints during the peace time, or “the golden time of the corrupt P.A.”, and ever since. What the collaborating P.A. has brought the Palestinians after signing so-called Oslo Agreement was a clear disaster and genocide. The corrupted government is busy doing their lucrative private projects. They forget the interests of the Palestinian civil organizations and society. While Palestinians must suffer at the Israeli checkpoints in the West Bank, the P.A people enjoy the company of prostitutes on the beaches near Tel Aviv. All PA officers and their entourage are given full VIP privileges by the occupation, never having to endure the humiliations of ordinary citizens at the checkpoints.

The representatives of the corrupt PA are in many cases not Palestinians. They originate from the criminal milieu of different Arab countries, where they attached themselves, with auspices of western spy agencies, in one way or another to the Palestinian cause and were happy of their “return” to Palestine, carrying VIP IDs with new Palestinian names, and pursuing their own businesses, with the monies they steal from the Palestinian nation who is living through a real disaster under the occupation. For example, Nabil Shaat is an Egyptian, Khaled Salam is an Iraqi who was on the run from justice in his own country, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) himself has a Kuwaiti passport and still has business and a house there. This was the real reason behind breaking-out of the second Intifada. The wilful failure of the PA to take charge of the problems of the Palestinians, their ignorance of the suffering of the Palestinians under the occupation, and the suffering caused by the PA itself, often causing even more death and problems for the Palestinians than the occupation. But let us get back to Rafida.

The Racism of Israel, the Jewish State:

Rafida’s mother was born in Israel in the village of Kufer Kanna. It is an Arab village which is called Israel since 1948. The Arabs who live in this village are Palestinians, but since the village and all the Arab cities and towns declared as part of a Jewish State (the State of Israel), the identity of these Palestinians was decreed to be “Arab-Israelis”. These persons carry an Israeli C-Class ID, the worst class of ID in the [racist state](#) of Israel. It is enough for any one to visit the Arab villages, towns and cities in Israel and compare their living circumstances with those in Tel-Aviv, the illegal Jewish colonies on the West Bank, and other areas of Israel where Jews live.

Rafida’s father is a Palestinian from the village of Beit Lokia south of Ramallah.

According to the Israeli race laws, Palestinians from Arab Israel are denied the right to live with their partners from the West Bank, the partners are denied permit to stay in Israel. If a Palestinian family wants to live together, they must move to the West Bank and suffer all the consequences.

Israeli authorities arrested Thaer Bader, Rafida’s father, several times. They had found out that he was

living with his wife and his five children in Khana-Aljaleel in Israel, what is against Israel's race laws. The family of five children and a mother was left living alone and without sustenance in Israel.

Finally, the Israeli occupation killed Rafida at the Kharbitah checkpoint when she was on her way to visit her grandmother near Ramallah. They had decided to pick her up in order to visit Rafida's father at the Israeli jail, but the child was instead killed by the Israeli soldiers at the checkpoint and the family was denied permission to visit the father. After the soldiers delayed for hours, Rafida was transferred to the Israeli hospital at Tel Hashomer, where she died on April 25, 2006.

The story of Rafida's death illustrates the life of Palestinians at the Israeli checkpoints, the daily stories of the racism and discrimination between the people who live in the State of Israel. It also illustrates the useless Palestinian government.

This tragedy happened while President Abu Mazen was touring Europe, asking for money to build his presidential army. President Abu Mazen did not call the attention of the international public opinion to the deplorable death of the three years old child Rafida at the Israeli checkpoint, or to the many other daily incidents of gross mistreatment of Palestinians by the occupying troops. He did not mention any of this during his daily press conferences. His European partners have now decided to fully support the genocide against Palestinians, and the mention of this incident could have ashamed them. Abu Mazen knows his role well. A hireling of Israel and the western powers, he knows when to keep his mouth shut. Like the [Judenräte](#) under the Nazis, he knows that his role is not to better the lot of Palestinians but to deliver them to genocide, all the while appeasing, doing the dirty work for his masters, lining his pockets where possible.

Sadly, neither Abu Mazen and his coterie of traitors nor the Hamas are in a position to bring a real, just and lasting peace to the Palestinian civil society and to stop the occupation and the daily crimes of the Israeli soldiers. Abbas picked all the losers in the last elections, the corrupt people who were rejected in the elections, and gave them posts. He will fail because he has no popular support. Hamas on their part will fail because the west and Israel will do everything to make them fail.

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