

The Money Is In The Medicine, Not The Cure

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Israeli Soldiers Sexually Abuse Palestinian Children

By Stephen Lendman
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On September 10, Israel's YnetNews.com headlined, "IDF sexually abused Palestinian children," headlining:

"Damning (September 9) CNN report cites uncorroborated sexual abuse charges of Palestinian children detained by IDF." Military officials refused to "respond to abuse charges as no details (were) provided," a spokesman saying "We cannot address general claims on the subject in the absence of a specific complaint."

CNN's report "featured an unidentified Palestinian boy claiming that IDF forces attempted to insert an object into his rectum," and that dozens of officers present stood around laughing while it happened.

The network cited Defence of Children International (DCI) as its source, an independent NGO involved in promoting and protecting children's rights globally for over 30 years, founded on the date the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) passed 10 years later.

In May 2010, it asked the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture to investigate 14 cases of sexual assault or threatened assault it uncovered - committed by Israeli soldiers, interrogators, and police from January 2009 - April 2010. The abused children were from 13 - 16 years old, detained for offenses like stone-throwing harming no one.

DCI-Palestine expressed alarm about sworn affidavits children provided, explaining instances of sexual assault or threatened assault to obtain confessions. In 2009 alone, DCI reviewed 100 sworn affidavits attesting to the following:

- 97% of children said their hands were tied during interrogations;
- 92% said they were blindfolded or hooded;
- 81% said forced confessions were made;
- 69% said they were beaten or kicked;
- 65% said they were arrested from midnight to 4AM;
- 50% said they were verbally abused;
- 49% cited threats or inducements;
- 32% were forced to sign confessions in Hebrew they didn't understand;
- 26% cited painful position abuse;
- 14% were in solitary confinement;
- 12% were threatened with sexual assault; and
- 4%, in fact, were sexually assaulted.

It included grabbing boys by the testicles until they confessed, and threatening others as young as 13 with rape unless they admitted to "throwing stones at Israeli settler vehicles in the occupied West Bank."

DCI suspects these figures "may understate the extent of the problem," a conclusion substantiated in an earlier article titled "Palestinian Children Under Occupation," accessed through the following link:

<http://sjlendman.blogspot.com/2010/07/palestinian-children-under-occupation.html>

In its April 2008 report, the Palestinian Ministry of Detainees and

Ex-Detainees Affairs said over 7,000 children had been arrested since September 2000, the start of the second Intifada. About 360 were still held, some as young as 10, treated as harshly as adults, in violation of international law requiring special treatment for children.

Of these, 145 had been sentenced, 200 awaited trial, and 15 were being administratively held without charge for offenses as trivial as stone-throwing. The report also said about 500 youths arrested turned 18 in prison. About 75 were ill and not treated, and nearly all had been tortured or abused by beatings, hooding, painful shackling, and sleep deprivation for several days in the shabeh position.

It involves binding their hands and feet to a small chair, at times from behind to a pipe affixed to the wall, painfully slanted forward, hooded with a filthy sack, and played loud music nonstop through loudspeakers.

The article includes more on their treatment during detention and under occupation, clear evidence of state-sponsored brutality, flagrantly violating international law, Israel's specialty.

DCI-Palestine cited a 15 year old boy's experience after being arrested in September 2009 at 2AM at home:

"While sitting on the ground near the truck, a person speaking Arabic approached me and grabbed my hands and ordered me to stand up and accompany him. He grabbed me so violently and pulled me. He forced me to walk with him for about 20 meters, and I could see from under the blindfold that we stopped behind a military jeep. He slapped me hard twice and grabbed my testicles so hard and started pressing them. Then, he asked me whether I threw stones and Molotov cocktails and I said I did not."

"He started shouting and saying 'liar,' your mother's c..t.' He started beating me all over my body and once again grabbed my testicles and started pressing hard. 'I won't let go of your testicles unless you confess,' he said to me. I felt so much pain and kept shouting. I had no other choice but to confess" to stop the pain.

Every year, around 700 children are arrested, most for stone-throwing, then interrogated with no lawyer or family member present, prosecuted, and sentenced. Over 80% signed forced confessions, one-third written in Hebrew they don't understand. After conviction in military, not civil, court, most are imprisoned in violation of Fourth Geneva's Article 76. Its provisions include assuring "Proper regard....paid to the special treatment due to minors," one of many laws Israel violates, children abused like adults.

When confronted with hard evidence, Israel denies it, saying it respects and observes international law, when, in fact, it's abusively and consistently in violation.

On May 10, Haaretz writer Amira Hass covered the child abuse story, headlining "Over 100 Palestinian minors reported abuse in IDF, police custody in 2009," saying:

"69 minors complained of being beaten, four minors reported being sexually assaulted, and 12 said they were threatened with sexual assault." She added that most were intimidated, abused, and maltreated in custody, before and during interrogations. In addition, they got no food or water for many hours and were forced to name others to stop being mistreated.

DCI-Palestine legal advisor Khaled Kuzmar said many parents don't complain to authorities, having no "confidence in the system that abuses them." It's true. Police and military officials rarely investigate, and when do it, absolve abusers, victims not Jewish afforded no justice.

Like always, an IDF Spokesman dismissed "claims of deliberate deviation from procedures for arresting and interrogating minors, (saying their) arrests are carried out in keeping with international law; the arrests of suspects under 16 years old in the West Bank requires a military lawyer's approval....Minors are brought before a judge within a relatively short period."

He lied, including about quick resolution before a judge. In fact, children and adults are often held for weeks or months before appearing for trial or accepting a plea bargain, Israel's corrupted injustice system for anyone not Jewish - even children as young as 9 or 10.

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