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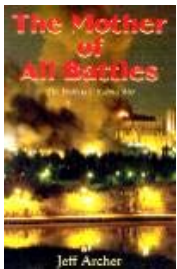
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The new book by Jeff Archer : "The Mother of All Battles: The Endless U.S-Iraq War"

Israeli forces open fire on Palestinian farmers and internationals in Al Faraheen
 Palestinian Information Center

5th February 2009

Israeli soldiers open fire on Palestinian farmers and international Human Rights Workers twice in three



days

Israeli soldiers again opened fire on Palestinian farmers and international Human Rights Workers (HRWs) on Thursday 5th February, as they attempted to harvest parsley in agricultural land near the Green Line.

Returning to farm-land of Al Faraheen village, in the Abassan Jedida area, east of Khan Younis, where soldiers had opened fire on Tuesday 3rd February, farmers and HRWs were able to harvest the parsley crop for only half an hour, before soldiers again began to shoot. A number of shots were fired into the air, before the soldiers started to aim in the direction of the farmers and international accompaniment. Bullets were heard to whiz past, close to people's heads.

The soldiers continued to shoot on the group, despite the fact that many members of the group had their arms in the air and were wearing fluorescent vests to make them highly visible, and identify them as Human Rights Workers; had erected a banner indicating that the farmers and accompaniment were civilians; contact had been made with the Israeli army to advise them that Palestinian civilians and internationals would be working in the area; the various international embassies had been advised of the planned accompaniment; and the internationals were announcing their presence via a megaphone - demanding that the soldiers stop shooting on unarmed civilians.

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:: Autodeterminazione e resistenza irakena di Aldo Bernardini, Ordinario di Diritto internazionale all'Università di Teramo

:: ONU - XX Assemblea Generale (1965):

La XX Assemblea Generale dell'ONU (1965) dichiara "la legittimità della lotta da parte dei popoli sotto oppressione coloniale, per esercitare il loro diritto all'autodeterminazione e all'indipendenza". Inoltre, l'Assemblea invita "tutti gli Stati a fornire assistenza morale e materiale ai movimenti di liberazione nazionale nei territori coloniali".

:: ONU - Risoluzione 1514

"L'Assemblea Generale dichiara che: la soggezione dei popoli a dominio straniero, conquista e asservimento costituisce una negazione dei diritti umani fondamentali, è contraria alla Carta delle Nazioni Unite ed è un impedimento alla promozione della pace e della cooperazione mondiali.

Tutti i popoli hanno diritto all'autodeterminazione; in virtù di tale diritto essi devono liberamente determinare il loro status politico e liberamente perseguire il loro sviluppo economico, sociale e culturale".

:: Convenzione di Ginevra, Protocollo Addizionale I (1977): La lotta armata può essere usata, come ultima risorsa, come mezzo per esercitare il diritto all'autodeterminazione.

:: Tribunale penale internazionale

In base allo Statuto del Tribunale penale internazionale, sono definiti "crimini di guerra":

- (1) attacchi lanciati intenzionalmente contro popolazione civili in quanto tali o contro civili che non prendano direttamente parte alle ostilità;
- (4) attacchi lanciati intenzionalmente nella consapevolezza che gli stessi avranno come conseguenza la perdita di vite umane



"We are unarmed civilians! We are farmers and international Human Rights Workers! Stop Shooting!"

With internationals acting as human shields, the farmers - after initially lying down to avoid being shot - attempted to continue harvesting. After a few moments, however, the shooting intensified and farmers decided to leave the area, rather than be killed. Internationals announced on the megaphone that the group was leaving the area - asking that the soldiers halt their fire. Instead, as the group started to leave, the shooting further intensified in rapidity and proximity. Even after the group had taken refuge in a house, approximately 1km from the Green Line, the soldiers continued to shoot at nearby houses that were demolished during the recent Israeli Operation Cast Lead.

This behaviour on the part of the Israeli soldiers was an almost exact repeat of their response to the presence of the farmers and internationals, in the same area of farm-land, two days before. On the Tuesday, however, the group was able to harvest for two hours before soldiers began to shoot. Whilst farmers had hoped to be able to wait-out the shooting, in order to continue harvesting, it quickly became clear that the situation was too dangerous for that to be possible.

The farmers of Al Faraheen are particularly aware of the level of danger they face when entering farm lands that are within 1 km of the Green Line - after watching their friend and colleague, 27 year old Anwar Il Ibrim, from neighbouring Benesela, killed by a bullet to the neck while he was picking parsley in the same area, just one week before.



The owner of the land, Yusuf Abu Shaheen, commented after Tuesday's gun-fire "If you [internationals] hadn't been with us today, the soldiers would have killed us all".

Whilst it has become increasingly dangerous for farmers to enter their lands near the Green Line, especially since the recent Israeli attacks, for farmers like Yusuf, there is an economic imperative to harvest his crops. Yusuf explains that just to plant the crops and keep them watered and fertilised, costs him \$2000 each month - money that has already been spent. There is the additional factor of a lack of water that increases the sense of urgency to harvest crops planted in the vicinity of the Green Line. Israeli forces broke the pipes for the area one week before their war on Gaza began. The parsley in the most dangerous areas, with water, could very well have been left for another week or two without harvesting - in the hope that the soldiers might become less aggressive over time. Without water, the plants are becoming



L'Impero si è fermato a Bahgdad, by Valeria Poletti

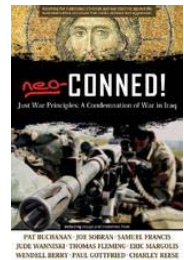
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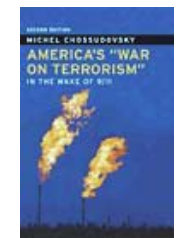
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"Neoconned" and "Neoconned Again", two new collections of essays



America's "War on Terrorism", book by Michel Chossudovsky

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tra la popolazione civile, e lesioni a civili o danni a proprietà civili ovvero danni diffusi duraturi e gravi all'ambiente naturale che siano manifestamente eccessivi rispetto all'insieme dei concreti e diretti i vantaggi militari previsti.

:: [Iraq anthem](#)
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increasingly tough, sweet and salty. If they are not harvested soon, they will become worthless.

The workers, who are employed by Yusuf to harvest the crops, also put themselves in mortal danger every time they enter the lands close to the Green Line. Like most in the Gaza Strip, they too are compelled by economic concerns to risk their lives for the meager sum of 20 shekels (\$5)/day. With an unemployment rate of 40%, and almost two-thirds (900 000) of Gaza's residents reliant on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the levels of poverty existing in Gaza mean that, for many families, money earned by sons and farmers risking their lives near the Green Line, might be the only money they have.

Anwar's mother explains that her son hadn't worked in the AI Faraheen area for 6 months - not since a large-scale Israeli incursion into the area in May 2008, and the following Israeli military aggression, made agricultural work in the area extremely dangerous. Anwar, the only son in the family, felt compelled to try to earn whatever he could to support the family - in particular to buy medicine for his ailing and paralysed father.

The ability of farmers to earn money from these lands is not only being threatened by the daily shooting from the Israeli army, however, but also by the inability to irrigate the crops. On Tuesday, Yusuf took the opportunity to remove expensive connecting valves from the irrigation pipes. On Thursday, an elderly farmer was pulling up all of the irrigation pipes themselves - now useless as it is impossible to get water to the area. This crop the farmers have spent two days trying to harvest, seems likely to be the last that will be planted there for some time.



Such actions - shooting at farmers trying to work their lands; and destroying irrigation systems - are part of the wider, systematic economic oppression of Palestinians. Along with sanctions and a siege that prevents Palestinians from importing and exporting goods; and denies freedom of movement to work in other countries, Israeli military forces also attempt to prevent Palestinians from deriving income from other methods, such as fishing and farming - through extreme levels of military force. Indeed, throughout the 23-day war on Gaza, the Israeli military, along with demolishing approximately 10,000 homes, and damaging many thousands more to the extent to which they are uninhabitable, intentionally killed hundreds of thousands of livestock, and bulldozed thousands of dunums of agricultural land.

In order to stand in solidarity with farmers in their struggle against this economic oppression, international HRWs will continue to accompany farmers to dangerous lands - challenging Israeli military imposition of "closed military zones" in areas that they claim to no longer occupy.

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