

PALESTINE: Pedagogy of the occupied tardiness

Written by
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7 March 2013 – On school days in Hebron you can find members of CPT watching as teachers and students pass through the checkpoints that separate their homes from their schools. Two of the schools attended by children living in and near the Old City lie within the "H2" area of Hebron, which is under the control of Israeli soldiers and police. In order to reach their schools, children and teachers must pass through metal detectors. Soldiers frequently search their backpacks and briefcases. High school students and teachers are sometimes subject to body searches, and frequent ID checks often make both teachers and students late for school.

On 18 February the principal of the Ibrahim School for boys, Jaafreh, was present at the checkpoint, as he is most mornings, making sure that his students made their way through checkpoint 209 and hurrying them along to school. Jaafreh is well known to both CPT and the soldiers at the checkpoint, and he was not in fact passing through the checkpoint but on this particular morning soldiers approached him and demanded to check his ID. The soldiers held Jaafreh at the checkpoint and did not allow him to return to his school until after the school day had begun. "It's just an example of what we go through every day," he told CPT.

CPT monitors two of the checkpoints used each school day by children and teachers attending school in H2.

Detention

Palestinian activists working with the Committee for the Defense of Hebron staged a nonviolent protest on 1 March in the city of Hebron during a week-long remembrance of the killing of twenty-nine Palestinians by an Israeli settler at the Ibrahim mosque in 1994. Other events in the city included a photo exhibit and several film screenings. Protesters demanded the opening of the road between Hebron and the surrounding villages, and reaffirmed the solidarity between Palestinians inside and outside of Israeli prisons.

Protesters attempted to walk from a nearby Mosque to the entrance to the Old City, but were stopped by Israeli soldiers who used tear gas and sound grenades. During the demonstration, twenty-two-year-old Ibrahim Alehih was badly injured and then arrested and taken to the military base.

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After Alehih's arrest CPTers encountered his 8-year-old sister. She had witnessed his injury and arrest and was too upset to leave the entrance to the military base, despite the fact that soldiers were continuing to fire tear gas canisters in the public square where she was standing.