

Testimony in Opposition to Ohio HCR 10
Ohio Senate Committee on Transportation, Commerce, and Workforce
Pamela H. Beck
March 21, 2018

Thank you, Senator LaRose and distinguished members of the Transportation, Commerce and Workforce committee, for the opportunity to speak with you today.

I am Pamela Beck of Shaker Heights. I am a member of the national steering committee of the United Church of Christ Palestine-Israel Network, and I am an active supporter of Jewish Voice for Peace. Both groups work for equality, peace and freedom for Palestinians and Israelis. Both groups collaborate with other faith and human rights groups in the United States, Israel and around the world.

The United Church of Christ has more than a million members, is headquartered in Cleveland, and voted support of Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions (2015) and the international rights of Palestinian children (2017). Other denominations have passed similar resolutions or have similar advocacy groups - Presbyterian, United Methodist, American Baptist, Church of the Brethren, Quaker, Unitarian, Mennonite, Disciples of Christ, etc.

HCR10 arises from a well-funded budget line of the Israeli government and pro-Israel interests. HCR10 seeks to stifle speech on campus on **one topic** — criticism of the policies and actions of the government of Israel. We are here to assure that all on our college campuses and in our communities have freedom of speech and assembly for exploring information in depth regarding the Palestine/Israel situation.

It is not anti-American to criticize the U.S. government; e.g. for its \$3.8 billion annual military gift to Israel. It is not anti-American nor anti-semitic to criticize Israeli government actions that are in defiance of international laws and standards for civil and human rights. We opponents of HCR10 repudiate the Israeli government's over-reach and legislative campaigns to deny **the human and civil rights of Americans**.

Boycotts and divestment are **non-violent and effective** means of bringing attention to injustices. The Palestinian BDS movement has been nominated for the **Nobel Peace Prize** this year. The BDS efforts do not challenge Israel's existence; they address the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and denial of human and civil rights of Palestinian people.

In the United States, it takes effort to find out what is happening to the Palestinian people. One of the proponents of this Resolution mentions the documentary “The Occupation of the American Mind.” You should watch it and see how YOUR perceptions have been developed through the spin and control of a public relations campaign, including free trips to Israel for legislators. If you took one of those trips, were you told...

1. ...you can identify Palestinian homes by the large black or white tanks on their roofs to store water. The Oslo Accords (1993-95) gave Israel control of the West Bank water for 10



years, but Israel never returned it to the Palestinians. Israel provides water on a basis of 20% to the 2-3 million West Bank Palestinians at intervals of once a week to several weeks. **In contrast**, in the illegal Israeli settlements, on land stolen from Palestinians, the 750,000 Jewish residents have the other 80% — unlimited water 24/7 for homes and swimming pools.

Much of the water infrastructure in the Palestinian territories, including wells and cisterns needed for animals and crops, has been destroyed by the Israeli government. Palestinians are not allowed to dig new wells. Rain that falls on Palestinian homes and into Palestinian cisterns is considered Israel water, and the usage is metered and charged.



Bullets shot at Palestinian water tanks are devastating to the owners.

2. ... how Palestinian homes are invaded after midnight by large groups of soldiers in full battle gear?

PALESTINIAN CHILDREN IN ISRAELI MILITARY DETENTION

NO WAY TO TREAT A CHILD
www.nowaytotreatachild.org

STAGES OF DETENTION

Arrest

Israeli forces arrest children from their homes in the middle of the night, at demonstrations, or near military infrastructures such as checkpoints and the separation barrier.

From the moment of arrest, nearly 3 out of 4 Palestinian children experience some form of physical violence.

This typically consists of being slapped, punched, kicked, or struck with a soldier's helmet or rifle.

Transfer

Once a child has been arrested, they are typically bound, blindfolded, and forced into a military vehicle.

In the vehicle, children are often subject to physical violence and verbal abuse.

The transfer period can last anywhere from several minutes to several hours.

The child is not told where they are being taken.

Interrogation

Children are most often interrogated at a police station or an interrogation center. They arrive bound, blindfolded, frightened, and sleep deprived.

Interrogation techniques are mentally and physically coercive.

Children have no right to an attorney during interrogation.

In 97% of cases, children are denied access to a parent during interrogation.

Hearing

Children appear before an Israeli military court within 24 to 96 hours of their arrest, depending on their age.

This hearing is the first time children will see their attorney and parents since their arrest.

The overwhelming majority of Palestinian children are held in custodial pretrial detention.

Hearings are conducted in Hebrew with Arabic translation.

Sentence

There are three parts to a military court sentence: imprisonment, a fine, and a suspended sentence.

About half of child detainees will receive a custodial sentence of 3 to 12 months. Depending on the circumstances, some receive longer sentences of 1 to 3 years.

No person under age 12 can be prosecuted in the military courts.

EACH YEAR THE ISRAELI MILITARY ARRESTS AND PROSECUTES AN ESTIMATED **700 PALESTINIAN CHILDREN**. FROM ARREST, PALESTINIAN CHILDREN ENCOUNTER **ILL-TREATMENT & TORTURE** AT THE HANDS OF ISRAELI FORCES. **THREE OUT OF FOUR** EXPERIENCE SOME FORM OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE FOLLOWING ARREST.

The *No Way to Treat a Child* campaign seeks to challenge Israel's prolonged military occupation of Palestinians by exposing widespread and systematic ill-treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system. It is a project of Defense for Children International - Palestine and American Friends Service Committee.

SOURCES UN Doc. *Study Report On The Situation Of Children In the Occupied Territories* (2005), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2010), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2011), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2012), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2013), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2014), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2015), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2016), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2017), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2018), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2019), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2020), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2021), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2022), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2023), *The Situation of Children in the West Bank* (2024)

The soldiers ransack the home and take away a child — usually between the ages of 12 and 15, blind-folded, hands bound with tight plastic ties behind his/her back. The child is put into the back of a military jeep, poked, insulted, jeered and brought to a place unknown and inaccessible to the parents. The child is interrogated with physical and/or psychological abuse, may be put into solitary confinement for days, all without charges and without legal representation. The goal is to have the child sign a confession – written in Hebrew, rather than the child’s native Arabic, so he does not know what he is signing. If he gets legal representation, it is not until the military trial. Most are accused of throwing stones, an offense that has a maximum sentence of 10 to 20 years depending on a child’s age.

In the West Bank, Palestinians are tried in the military court with a 99% conviction rate; Jewish children in the illegal settlements are under civil law and given the freedom to throw stones at Palestinians.

— Let's go back to the language issue: Arabic is a semitic language, as is Hebrew. Arabs are semitic. So, the Israeli treatment of Palestinians is _____?

3. ...did you experience the disparity of freedom of movement for Israeli Jews versus Palestinians? Note the attached pictures:



An Israeli settler and a Palestinian walk on opposite sides of a concrete barrier in the West Bank city of Hebron. Because settlers have occupied land in the center of the largest city in the West Bank, the Israeli military enforces a matrix of movement restrictions to segregate the two populations, in this case prohibiting Palestinians from walking on the same section of road as Israelis.

A Palestinian girl looks through the bars of the Israeli military checkpoint controlling access between Bethlehem and Jerusalem as thousands of worshippers seek to pray at Al-Aqsa Mosque on the last Friday of Ramadan. Captured by Israel in the 1967 War, East Jerusalem, including the Old City and its holy sites, is still considered occupied Palestinian territory under international law.



Was your van stopped at a checkpoint, with the nose of a gun stuck through the window and pointed at you? Mine was. The Israeli cars with the yellow license plates sped through, while Palestinians in cars with white or green plates are stopped and forced to get out. Color makes it easy for the military to make sure Palestinian cars are not traveling on the fine highways reserved for Israelis. Those highways also block the roads that the Palestinians used to use to get to their farm land.

The Europeans have better news coverage of Israel and Palestine. European countries and the EU have provided assistance to the Palestinians — last year they provided solar panels so Palestinian villages could have electricity, BUT the Israeli forces came, disassembled them and took them away. Likewise, they destroyed newly built schoolrooms, leaving the children and teachers to learn and teach in a tent.

In the fall, as the community was beginning the olive harvest, settlers from the illegal settlements on the hilltop flooded the olive tree fields with sewage, making it noxious for harvest and killing the trees for the future.

These are just a few of the constant injustices. The freedom and the livelihood of Palestinians – Muslims and Christians who live well together — is being destroyed. They would like to live with equality, justice and peace with their Jewish neighbors. The Christians see the time coming closer when there will be no Christians living in the land where Jesus was born, walked, preached, healed and died.

American Christian Zionists ignore the Palestinian Christians. Instead, they support HCR10. There is a long history of Christian Zionism and its ebb and flow. Some felt/feel sorry for the Jews and and guilty for Christian complicity in the Holocaust. Others, such as the “Christian United for Israel” group are acting for their own self-interest. They regard the State of Israel as an instrument of God to hasten the End Time when Jesus will return to earth for the final judgement. They support the wars in the Middle East as a sign of the nearing of the End Time — in their time on Earth. They believe that on Judgement Day, Jews who accept Jesus as the Messiah will be saved and go to Heaven; those Jews who don’t will die and go to Hell. This narrative is disrespectful of Jews and Judaism; an anti-semitic attitude.

The facts on the ground in Palestine and Israel are reprehensible. It is important to inform Americans what our government is supporting.

There is another way — a just peace — with equal rights for all. Israeli and Palestinian human rights groups work together; they are a model to be held up to the forces of oppression. Unfortunately, the Israeli government works to suppress these groups.

It is YOUR responsibility as members of this Committee to prevent complicity of the Ohio legislature in suppressing these rights and truths. Do not let the power of a foreign country and its agents suppress freedom of speech. Demonstrate your moral integrity; vote it down or table it and let it die.

Attached: http://nwtac.dci-palestine.org/infographic_stages_of_detention

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SOURCES: ICJ, No Way to Treat a Child, Defense for Children International (DFCI), www.dfcintl.org; *The New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/26/world/middleeast/26israel.html>; *The New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/08/world/middleeast/08israel.html>; *The New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/26/world/middleeast/26israel.html>