



BIR ZEIT UNIVERSITY NEWSLETTER

A Newsletter Issued by Birzeit University, Occupied West Bank, October 1984, Vol.III.No.4

AGGAD BUILDING OPENS



Dr. Faqih greets guests at opening.

The Omar Al Aggad Engineering Building, the new home for the Faculty of Engineering, was officially opened in a September 27 ceremony. Over 300 guests attending the opening, were welcomed by Dr. Sa'di Al Faqih, acting head of the Board of Trustees.

Before cutting the ribbon, Dr. Faqih acknowledged the contribution of Omar Al Aggad, a Palestinian engineer whose \$6,000,000 donation made the construction of the new facility possible. At present, some 300 students study in the University's five-year undergraduate engineering pro-

gram. The Faculty of Engineering was established in 1979 and graduated its first class of 33 in 1984.

STRIKE RESOLVED

A student strike at Birzeit University over tuition and several related issues ended on October 31 when the University Council and the Student Council reached agreement on all points. The strike broke out at the beginning of the academic year when an increase in tuition of about 40JD annually (\$100) was announced for new students able to pay. Average tuition under the new schedule is about 200JD annually. Students unable to pay full fees would receive assistance.

The agreement between students and administration froze the payment of tuition by new students for one month pending the results of a socioeconomic survey now being conducted by a special committee to assess each student's financial condition. During the next six months, another special committee with student participation will make recommendations on over-all fees policy.

A statement released by Vice-President Dr. Gabi Baramki praised the "spirit" that led to resolution of the crisis and the commitment of all parties to the University and its goals.

LETTER FROM BIRZEIT

Dear friends and colleagues,

We are pleased to announce that our student strike has been resolved through democratic discussion and dialogue between all parties in the University. The commitment of Birzeit faculty and students to education and to the development of Birzeit University promises a fruitful 1984-85 academic year.

This November, I will travel to the University of Amsterdam to sign an "Exchange Agreement of Cooperation Between Amsterdam and Birzeit Universities." The relationship between our two universities has already been fruitful: we have exchanged guest lecturers, for example, and co-sponsored, along with Durham University, an October 1983 International Symposium on Rural Society in the Middle East. The expansion of our cooperation and exchange will be of benefit to both our institutions and is greatly welcomed by Birzeit University.

This agreement is one of a number of exchange and cooperative agreements Birzeit has with universities around the world. We are interested in expanding our ties with other universities and with the international academic community and feel we have much to offer and to benefit from such relationships.



G.A. Baramki
Vice-President

The Birzeit University NEWSLETTER is published bimonthly by the Birzeit Public Relations Office. Please write the Public Relations Office for more information about the University or to report a change of address.



Dr. Hanna Nasir

HANNA NASIR 10 Years of Exile

November 21, 1984 marks the tenth anniversary of the deportation of Dr. Hanna Nasir, President of Birzeit University.

In the middle of the night on November 21, 1974, Israeli army officers took Dr. Nasir from his home, blindfolded and handcuffed him and drove him to the Lebanese border, where he was ordered to cross on foot. There was no trial, no opportunity for defense, and no appeal. Despite repeated efforts by the international academic community and human rights organizations, Dr. Nasir remains unable to return to his home and his post at Birzeit University.

Birzeit University thanks all those who have spoken out on behalf of Dr. Nasir and the University, and asks that colleagues and friends around the world continue to press for the reversal of the unjust expulsion of Dr. Hanna Nasir, and the almost 1500 other community leaders deported by the authorities since 1967.

APPOINTMENTS

The following are new appointments of administrative officers, deans, and heads of departments and programs for the 1984-85 academic year.

- * Vice-President for Academic Affairs: Nabil Kassis, Ph.D.
- * Dean of the Faculty of Science: Riyadh Amin, Ph.D.
- * Assistant to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts: Ahmed Bekr, Ph.D.

Heads of Departments: New Appointments

Arts

- * Arabic Language and Literature: Nafi' Abdullah, Ph.D.
- * Education and Psychology: Fathiya Nasru, Ph.D.
- * English Language and Literature: Ilham Abu Ghazaleh, Ph.D.
- * History: Mohsen Yusef, Ph.D.
- * Political Science Program: Ali Jarbawi, Ph.D.
- * Sociology and Anthropology: Mahmoud Mi'ari, Ph.D.

Science

- * Biology and Biochemistry: Abdul Salam Abdul Ghani, Ph.D.
- * Chemistry: Abdel Latif Abu Hijleh, Ph.D.
- * Mathematics: Carmela Armanios, Ph.D.
- * Physics: Ghassin Yassin, Ph.D.

Commerce and Economics

- * Business Administration: Suheil Abboushi, Ph.D.
- * Economics: Sa'id Haifa, Ph.D.

All other officers and heads of departments remain the same as 1983-84 appointments.

Durham Exchange

Third year Business major, Lana Al Khaldi is the first Birzeit student to be selected to spend a year as an undergraduate student at Durham University, in the North East of England as a beneficiary of the Durham Birzeit Studentship Fund.

This charitable fund established in February 1983 by a joint staff-student committee in Durham aims to increase awareness among British undergraduates of the everyday problems facing their Palestinian counterparts in the Occupied Territories. It is part of a broad program of co-operation between the two institutions which has already included exchange of Faculty, and participation in joint research projects. A delegation of 11 staff and students from Durham visited Birzeit during June 1983 to encourage these links.

In Durham Lana will live in Van Mildert College where she will have the chance to participate fully in college and university life. She will follow courses in Economics and Business compatible with her studies in Birzeit.

Summer Courses

21 students from 9 different countries registered for the international summer courses held for the first time in July and August 1984. Courses in colloquial and written Arabic taught by Omar Othman, and in 'Problems of Development under Occupation', supervised by Salim Tamari drew an enthusiastic response from participants.

Organisers of the courses were satisfied with this first attempt, and are confident that in future years more students will be attracted, and a broader selection of courses offered. Details of courses and application procedure for Summer 1985 will be available in the New Year.

BIRZEIT ABROAD

* Dr. Bishara Abu Ghannam (Chairperson, Department of Mechanical Engineering) spent a month at Liverpool University this summer participating in research on blade design in turbomachinery. The results of this research, undertaken in association with the British company Rolls Royce, will be published soon.

* Dr. Hani Najim (Mechanical Engineering) researched "Measurements of Reynolds Shear Stress in Separation Flows" during a summer stay at Leicester University in England.

* Dr. Muhammed Abdul Haq (Chairperson, Civil Engineering) attended a September 25-28 conference on engineering technology in Leipzig (GDR).

* Dr. Mazin Hamad (Chemistry) spent two months in the summer at Essex University, England, doing research on "Mossbauer and Rapid Kinetic Investigation of Iron Ascorbate," a study directed at causes and cures of rheumatism.

* Dr. Bakr Abu Kishk (Dean, Faculty of Commerce and Economics) and faculty members Dr. Omar Qadi and Hisham Jaber attended a UNIDO conference in Vienna on "The Economic Situation in the Occupied Territories" from September 10-14. Dr. Qadi and Mr. Jaber delivered a paper at the conference.

Dr. Amin Abu Leil (Arabic) will spend the 1984-85 academic year on sabbatical leave. He is currently conducting research in the archives of the Royal Academy of Islamic Civilization in Amman.

* Dr. Carmela Armanios (Chairperson, Math) attended the Twelfth Australasian Conference on Combinatorial Mathematics and Computing, held at the University of Western Australia in Perth from August 13-17. Dr. Armanios delivered a paper on "A New Five-valent Distance-transitive Graph", which will be published in the conference proceedings.

* Dr. Emile Sahliyyeh (Political Science Program) is completing two books on the occupied territories while on sabbatical leave in Washington, D.C. He has received research grants from the Woodrow Wilson Program and the Ford Foundation for the 1984-85 academic year.

* Dr. Alexander Flores (Cultural Studies) delivered a paper on "Problems in the Emergence of Communism in the Arab East: The Cases of Syria, Lebanon and Palestine" at an August 29-September 1 colloquium on the Middle East in the Inter-war Period, sponsored by the Institute of European History and held in Bad Hamburg.

* Dr. Simon Kuttab (Chemistry) was a visiting Associate Professor at the University of California (San Francisco) this summer, where he conducted research on "Conversion of tertiary amines to minimum ions as toxic reactive intermediates."

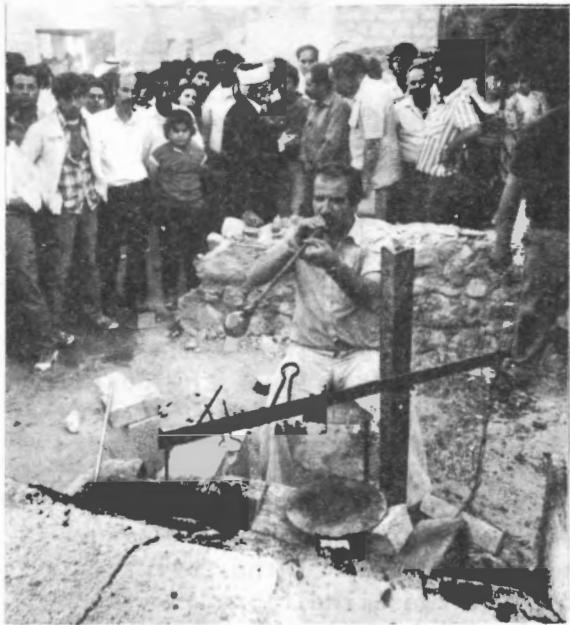
* Dr. Abdel-Latif Barghouti (former Vice-President for Academic Affairs) is on sabbatical leave for 1984-85. He is researching Arabic folklore and literature

lecture tour

Albert Aghazarian, Assistant to the Vice-President for Public Relations, conducted a ten-city speaking tour of the U.S. from September 20-October 15, which included a keynote speech at the annual conference of the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, which sponsored the tour.

Aghazarian spoke of the problems of higher education in the occupied territories and the problems of Palestinians under occupation to audiences in Miami, Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, Denver, St. Louis, Boston, Princeton, New York and Washington, D.C. In Washington, he addressed the annual Black Congressional Caucus Weekend.

Festival Round-Up



Glassblower at Birzeit Festival

A total audience of 55,000 attended the 26 nights of performance during Birzeit's Festival '84, held throughout the month of August on Birzeit's old campus. One of the Festival's principal goals was to introduce participating groups to a wider audience.

After a September 19 press conference for local journalists, Festival Director Taysir Masriyeh told the Newsletter that the success of the Festival proved that people in the occupied territories were thirsty for artistic events. He believes that the content of the festival should change annually, and would like to see an emphasis on traditional crafts in the exhibitions of next year's festival. International participation would also be solicited for these exhibitions.

The "Palestinian Village," used as an exhibition hall in this year's festival was taken down and stored for use again next year. The village attracted

a responsive audience for its glassblowing, weaving, ceramics, painting and poster exhibits, several of which had craftspeople practicing their skills and answering questions from their viewers.

Prizes were awarded by Samir Sbeiha, President of the Birzeit Student Council, Ibrahim Awadullah, acting mayor of Birzeit and Taysir Masriyeh. The prizes determined by panels of judges, were given in four categories: in the folk-dance competition, first prize was awarded to the Popular Arts Group (Ramallah), and second prize to the Judhur Troupe (Birzeit University). In the song competition, first prize went to the Ar Rameh Group (Ar Rameh, Galilee) and second prize to Sanabil (Birzeit University). The first prize in the theatre competition was shared by Al Hakawati (Jerusalem) and the Jawwal Troupe (Sakhnin, Galilee).

In the poster competition on the theme "Academic Freedom: Permanent Struggle," Katie Sofan, a Ramallah artist, won first prize, and Suleiman Mansour, a Jerusalem artist, was awarded the second prize.

faculty news

* Dr. Sharif Kanaa'neh was recently appointed Director of the Birzeit Research Center. Dr. Kanaa'neh, an anthropologist who has published extensively on Palestinian society and folklore, is the former president of Al Najah National University.

* Dr. Izzat Ghurani, former Vice-President for Financial Affairs, returned to Birzeit University after a sabbatical year spent at the University of Houston. Dr. Ghurani will teach in the Faculty of Commerce and Economics.

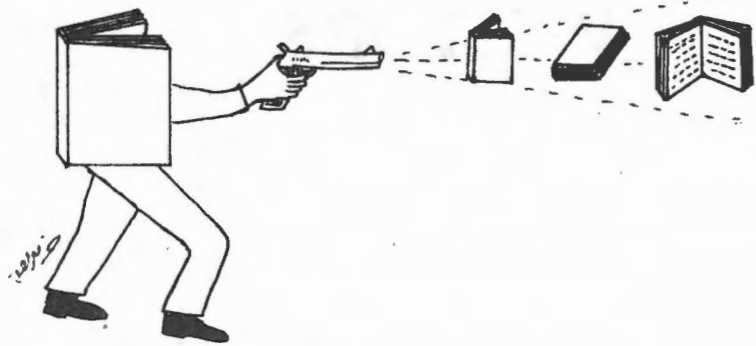
of fallacy & folly

A highly irregular column from the Birzeit Public Relations Office.

The intrepid researchers for this humble column stumbled with exhaustion this month as they sought the hidden meaning imbedded in the mysterious phrase "abuse by literary incitement," another sin of Birzeit University as catalogued by those guardians of public order, the holy authorities, in their briefing on "Higher Education in Judea and Samaria under the Israel Administration." (See previous newsletters for more explorations of this sacred text).

While lauding the authorities for their respect for the power of the word and their general love of learning, our researchers were unable to discover which books might hold the key to "literary incitement." They scoured the list of almost 1300 banned books, but none seemed capable of seizing the banner of mass revolt and plunging the world into darkest chaos. They strove to recollect the contents of the innumerable Arabic scientific, cultural and social journals and periodicals which the authorities heroically keep from sensitive Birzeit readers, but none met the challenge. Books, they concluded, were poor marchers and worse soldiers.

Then, an incident came to light that revealed with a stroke the hidden power of literature. On April 2, 1984 soldiers raided the home of five Birzeit students and took them to the police station. The reason: "inciting" books. "At last, a clue!" our researchers exclaimed, eager to discover which dreaded texts the lastardly students possessed. The full horror was finally revealed: the students had in their clutches several Cultural Studies textbooks published by Birzeit University, which included medieval and Renaissance texts, and a



"ABUSE BY LITERARY INCITEMENT"

Physical Education textbook also published by the University. All books were stamped with the Birzeit olive-tree insignia, clearly designed to whip the innocent victim into a hysterical frenzy. The reader will be relieved to know that these texts are still in possession of the authorities, undergoing careful scrutiny for their inciting content.

But research is not enough to stem the tide of "literary abuse," - forceful action is also needed. The Public Relations Office is happy to reveal here that many of the books and periodicals so wisely kept for Birzeit library shelves are lurking, ready to do their evil work, in the halls of Hebrew University libraries. We are sure faculty and students there will be grateful to the authorities for their speedy and permanent removal.

?

"Where have all the NEWSLETTERS gone?"

The Public Relations Office has launched an investigation into the "disappearance" of several mailings of the NEWSLETTER to addresses in the U.S., after discovering that many colleagues and friends in the U.S. have not received copies of the NEWSLETTER for the last academic year. The University may file a formal complaint and would appreciate hearing from American readers.

Town Arrest

The town arrest order against Business major, Walid Zaqt was renewed on September 1. His previous order had expired on August 22. The six month order will further impair Walid's academic progress, and will have a negative effect on his social and intellectual development. Under the terms of the order, Walid is forbidden to leave Gaza, and must sign in at Gaza Police Station everyday. He is not permitted to leave his house in Beach refugee camp after dark.

At present one other Birzeit student is under town arrest; former Student Council member Ghassan Jarrar. Lawahiz Al Jabari, another former Student Council Member has a restriction order forbidding her from travelling to the West Bank.

Town arrest orders are issued without charge or trial and constitute an extra-legal method of control employed by the military authorities.

OPEN NAJAH UNIVERSITY

At a press conference called by Al Najah University at the American Colony Hotel in Jerusalem on September 17, a joint statement was issued by the faculty, staff and student unions of all universities in the West Bank condemning the closure of the Nablus institution for four months, the longest single military-ordered closure ever imposed on a West Bank university.

The statement noted that the closure resulted in a delay in the graduation of 800 final-year students and the registration of over 1000 new students.



STUDENT SEIZED

On October 1, Israeli army officers entered the Birzeit Board of Trustees building in Ramallah. They broke up a meeting in progress between the Board of Trustees, members of the University Council and students and staff representatives.

The officer in charge ordered Marwan Barghouti, Secretary of the Cultural Committee of the Birzeit Student Council to come with the soldiers to Ramallah Military Headquarters. Marwan's protests that he was on University property and his request to see a warrant for his detention resulted only in a police officer writing an order on a blank piece of paper and handing it to Dr. Gabi Baramki, Vice-President of Birzeit University.

Marwan was released eight days later without charge or any legal proceeding. Birzeit University strongly protested this arbitrary arrest and harassment of student representatives.

COURT DECISION

In an October 2 decision, the High Court upheld the 1975 Zoning Plan for Birzeit's new campus. Birzeit University had petitioned the court after an individual built an illegal structure on University-zoned land (see August Newsletter for details).

VISITORS

* The President of the British National Union of Students, Phil Woolas, and the Chairperson of the National Organization of Labor Students, John Mann, visited the University on August 25 to meet with Birzeit Student Council President Samir Sbeihat and other student representatives. A possible visit by an official delegation from NUS was discussed at the meeting, described by Student Council member Wajih Qashmar as "highly successful."

* A ten-person delegation from the International Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth (IFLRY) visited Birzeit on September 17 to discuss the development of Palestinian universities in the occupied territories with Birzeit faculty and students.

* On August 18, Robert Smiley, Associate for International Affairs and Peacemaking in the Presbyterian Church, met with Ramzi Rihan, Vice-President for Planning and Development, to discuss obstacles to development of institutions in the occupied territories and other related issues.

* A delegation of Arab-American students visited Birzeit on August 6 to learn more about higher education in the occupied territories and the situation of students in particular.

* Two senior academics from the University of Alabama visited the Faculty of Engineering from September 11-18. Dr. Barfeld, the Dean of Engineering at the University of Alabama and his colleague Dr. Seifert, visited the University through AMIDEAST to prepare a report on the development of curriculum in Birzeit's growing Engineering Faculty.

International Summer Camps

The final International Summer Camp of 1984 came to a close on September 17. The three camps, each of eleven days duration, involved foreign volunteers, working side by side with Birzeit students, in a wide variety of manual tasks in different locations in the occupied territories. Two of the camp volunteers talked to the Newsletter about their stay.

Eve, a sociology student from Copenhagen University, and Nadia from Oxford University, agreed that the best thing about the camps had been the opportunity to develop friendships with Birzeit students, as well as to see at first hand different aspects of life in the West Bank.

Eve had not been particularly involved in Palestinian issues before coming to the camp, and had been concerned about what the camp would be like. She described it as "much better" than she

envisaged and is determined to help in making the problems of Palestinian students better understood in Denmark.

Nadia, from a North African family, was struck by the openness of the people she met, and overwhelmed by the hospitality of the people in the camps and villages visited by the volunteers. She commented that people "were even more generous than people in North Africa." Nadia had some suggestions to improve the camp: she wished more of the participating Birzeit students had been women, and suggested work projects be more carefully evaluated for their usefulness, a suggestion echoed by Eve.

Both highly recommended the camps a to make friends and to gain an understanding of life under occupation.