

STUDENTS UNDER FIRE

A REPORT ON ARMY ACTIONS AT BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY
ON DECEMBER 4, 1986

BIRZEIT PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE
DECEMBER 1986
BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY
OCCUPIED WEST BANK

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INTRODUCTION

On December 4, 1986, soldiers near Birzeit University's old campus shot and killed two University students, Jawad Abu Selmieh and Saeb Dhahab, both senior chemistry students. Ten other students were injured by army gunfire and hospitalized. Another student was later wounded by the Ramallah Hospital when the army fired rubber bullets at persons gathered there.

A press release issued by Birzeit University on December 4 stated that the events of that day constituted "the worst incident of army brutality in University history." The following preliminary report utilizes extensive accounts from faculty eyewitnesses, and several accounts from students, to draw a detailed picture of the events of the day, beginning with the erection of an army checkpoint on the Birzeit-Ramallah road that unleashed the fateful chain of events. The report also draws a number of preliminary conclusions on the pattern of army behavior on December 4 from examining the evidence in these accounts. These are included in the last section of the report.

Most accounts were obtained within three days of December 4 - although conditions in the town of Ramallah, which was under military curfew for part of this time, made this work difficult. Rules of evidence were observed, with each witness taken separately, except in the case of the joint statement of two faculty members, and without prior knowledge of other witnesses' statements. Several press accounts are included at the end of the report.



THE EVENTS OF DECEMBER 4, 1986

I. THE CHECKPOINT

Background

In the week preceding December 4, army checkpoints erected for three days in succession had already disrupted academic life and created a tense atmosphere. On November 29, an army checkpoint erected in the early morning hours on the Birzeit-Ramallah road barred all students and faculty from entering Birzeit University. A day of classes was completely lost. The checkpoint stayed in place on Sunday, when the University is normally closed, and soldiers at the checkpoint barred students from returning to their dormitories in Birzeit or from attending scheduled make-up classes on campus. Students reported army harassment throughout the day, including army patrols cursing and insulting students. Female students were subjected to sexual innuendos and insults.

On Monday morning, December 1, an army checkpoint initially barred all students, faculty and employees from proceeding to the University. Later in the day, faculty and employees were admitted, but students continued to be denied passage. The University issued a press release the same day. Israeli journalist Yehuda Litani, writing in the December 12 issue of the Jerusalem Post noted: "Three days before last week's demonstration [i.e. on December 1] Bir Zeit University published a press release saying that "For the third day in succession, an army checkpoint on the Birzeit-Ramallah road this morning barred students and faculty from entering Bir Zeit University... Bir Zeit University warns that the policy of 'closure by checkpoint' is escalating and poses a serious threat to the university's ability to function..."

The release went on to state that the military authorities had erected 11 checkpoints since the beginning of Birzeit's academic year on October 20. A report released by Birzeit University's Public Relations Office, Academic Freedom at Birzeit University 1985-86 documented 36 checkpoints in the 1985-86 academic year, terming the checkpoints "de facto" closures and a violation of students' right to education.

Arbitrary Harassment

Soldiers erected a checkpoint near the village of Abu Qash on the Birzeit-Ramallah road sometime before 7:45AM on December 4. Classes and office hours at Birzeit begin at 8:00AM and this is the "rush hour" for traffic towards the University. As students and faculty in cars and buses waited at the checkpoint in an ever-lengthening line of traffic, soldiers demanded that students descend from buses and began to register every student's name and identity card number. Passage to the University ground to a halt. Sometime between 8:15-8:30, faculty and students descended



from cars and buses and decided to walk towards the checkpoint to see if it was possible to enter the University by foot.

Sit-in: "Our students have the right to education"

When denied passage, a number of students and staff sat peacefully down on the road near the checkpoint. It was stated to the soldier in charge that the group was peacefully asking for the removal of the checkpoint. It was also stated to the soldier that this was not a demonstration. The soldier radioed for reinforcements. Birzeit faculty member Dr. Ali Jarbawi described the scene at about 8:30:

"An army truck from Ramallah arrived and wanted to pass through the road. Dr. Saleh Abdul Jawad wanted the students and faculty sitting in the road to allow it to pass and they did. An Israeli Volvo arrived with an army officer wearing a kippe who spoke to Saleh in English. Saleh said: "These students, like the Jewish students at Hebrew University, deserve to be educated. They should not be denied education." The officer shouted at Saleh to shut up and Saleh said "Don't tell me to shut up." The officer ordered Saleh to come to the jeep and he did.

Tear Gas: 20 second warning"

Dr. Jarbawi continued: "The officer took a tear gas cannister and started playing with it. He tossed it three times in the air and said "I want everyone to move." He then just opened the cannister and tossed it into the crowd. Saleh and myself shouted to the students "Don't throw stones."

Another faculty eyewitness, Dr. Roger Heacock, stated: "I arrived at the checkpoint and people were already sitting in. There were four soldiers around but the atmosphere was fairly relaxed. An army truck arrived and Saleh insisted it should pass and the students complied. A little before 9AM, an army jeep arrived, with soldiers saying "get up, get up" as they passed the sit-in. There were no buses at this time, as they had gone back to Ramallah.

"I didn't hear any warning that they would use teargas. Within 20 seconds after the officer said that people should return to their cars, tear gas was thrown. I think there were two cannisters. Meanwhile, Saleh shouted "under no circumstances should anyone use violence."

The Detention of Dr. Saleh Abdul Jawad

Heacock continued:

"When the students and faculty began to move away, Saleh was grabbed, throttled, kicked in the rear and placed in the original jeep. I ran back towards Saleh and asked "Are they arresting



you?" Saleh said "yes." At this time, two rocks fell but hit no one. A soldier aimed a M16 rifle and I shouted "Don't shoot."

"Soldiers began to herd students toward Ramallah. They fired a few blank bullets in the air. When everyone reached Dr. Baramki's house (the acting President of Birzeit who lives on the outskirts of Ramallah), the army came and ordered them to proceed to Ramallah. I was detained, with my one-year old son, for about twenty minutes by a soldier."

II. THE OLD CAMPUS

Background

The old campus of Birzeit University, which houses the Faculty of Arts, is located in the town of Birzeit. The new campus, which houses all other University facilities, is about 2km away, on the road to Ramallah. On the morning of December 4, only five faculty members had managed to get to the old campus; a number of students were present who live in the dormitories or elsewhere in the town of Birzeit.

News of the Checkpoint and Student Reactions

When students on the old campus heard the news of the checkpoint, the dispersal of students and faculty by teargas, and the detention of Dr. Saleh Abdul Jawad, they met in the University courtyard. Dean of Arts Dr. Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi reported:

"A spontaneous meeting of students began in the old campus courtyard around 10AM. There were about 150 students. They talked about the checkpoint incident, and other incidents like the attacks on Arabs in the Old City of Jerusalem, and the situation of Palestinian camps in Lebanon. At about 10:30AM, students left the old campus and built roadblocks. They were singing about "national unity." There were very few faculty members on campus: beside myself there was Ahmed Harb, Ziad Abu Amr, Walid Sharif and Hashem Abu Sido.

Assistant Dean of Arts Dr. Ahmed Harb also noted that the student meeting focused on the checkpoint incident:

"At 10AM the students began to gather in front of the old library building in the old campus. There were about 120 students, at the most 150. They had heard what had happened at the checkpoint and had begun chanting and singing. They had heard that one of the teachers had been detained and assaulted at the checkpoint and that teargas had been discharged. They were talking among themselves, counting the number of checkpoints there had been recently, the number of times they had been turned back from the University. 'This is just humiliating us. We're not animals. We're not nothing,' they said."



The army opens fire

The faculty and student eyewitnesses questioned concur that the army opened fire on students at roughly 11AM, about 10-15 minutes after students had left the gates of the old campus. Faculty member Ziad Abu Amr said:

"The shooting started shortly before 11; I was listening to the 11:00 news after there was firing. There were bullets and teargas. The shooting came from the Post Office area."

Hannan Mikhail Ashrawi noted:

"Shortly before 11AM, I heard distant sporadic shooting. I heard shots before I heard the sound of teargas cannisters. The army must have shot immediately on encountering groups of students."

A student eyewitness, who wishes to remain anonymous, provided the most detailed account of the shooting.

"A short while after students left the old campus, they congregated on the road between the main gate of the old campus and the Post Office. Soldiers were positioned in the pharmacy and also on the water tank hill. It was about 11AM by the time the students arrived at the Post Office. Some soldiers advanced near to the Post Office. Others began firing tear gas cannisters from a distance into the air. There were about 3 or 4 cannisters discharged, two of which fell on the roof of the buildings opposite the Post Office.

"At 11AM, the first injury was sustained by Student A,* who was hit in the upper part of his body, opposite the Post Office at the interchange. Students carried Student A back in the direction of the hostel, and he was taken to Ramallah Hospital in Ziad Abu Amr's car. Within minutes, two more students were shot, Student B in the legs and Student C."

Soldiers advanced, using live ammunition, and more injuries occurred:

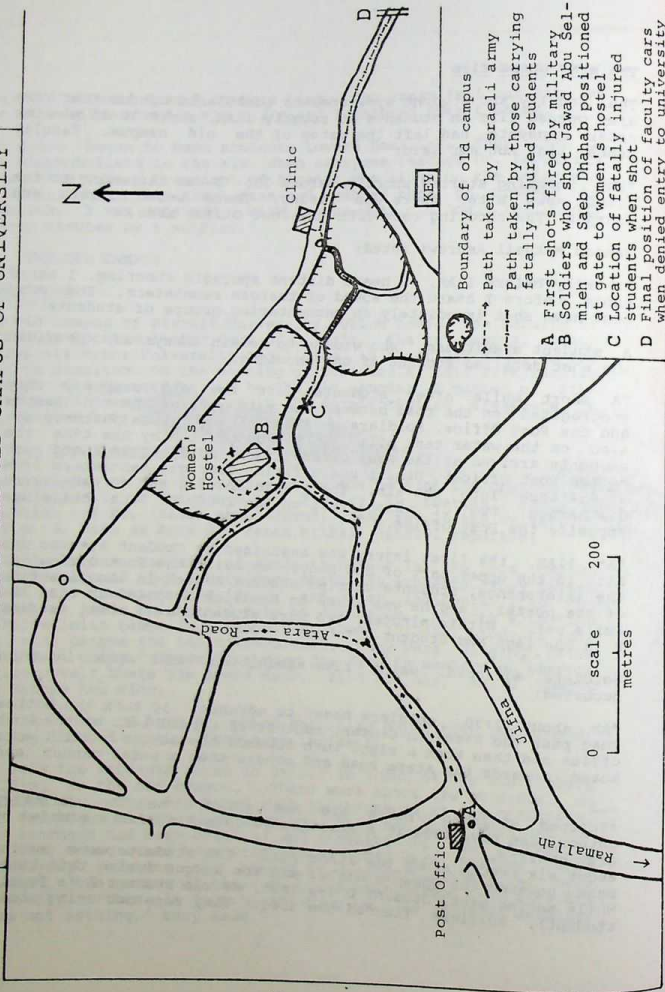
"At about 11:30, soldiers began to advance: 30 took the bottom road past the Research Center; another 25 turned left at the Post Office and then took a right turn towards the mosque. Still more moved towards the Atara road and others took a water cannon and

*Injured students' names are not given, as the military authorities have made it a practice to detain students wounded by army gunfire.

about six trucks along the Jifna road. The students were moving back towards the women's hostel and the mosque during this time. While moving back, Student D was shot, as was Student E (a female student). Soldiers flooded the area. They were not using tear



PLAN OF BIRZEIT VILLAGE AND OLD CAMPUS OF UNIVERSITY



KEY

Boundary of old campus

- Path taken by Israeli army
- - - - - Path taken by those carrying fatally injured students

- A First shots fired by military
- B Soldiers who shot Jawad Abu Selmieh and Saeb Dhahab positioned at gate to women's hostel
- C Location of fatally injured students when shot
- D Final position of faculty cars when denied entry to university

0 scale 200 metres

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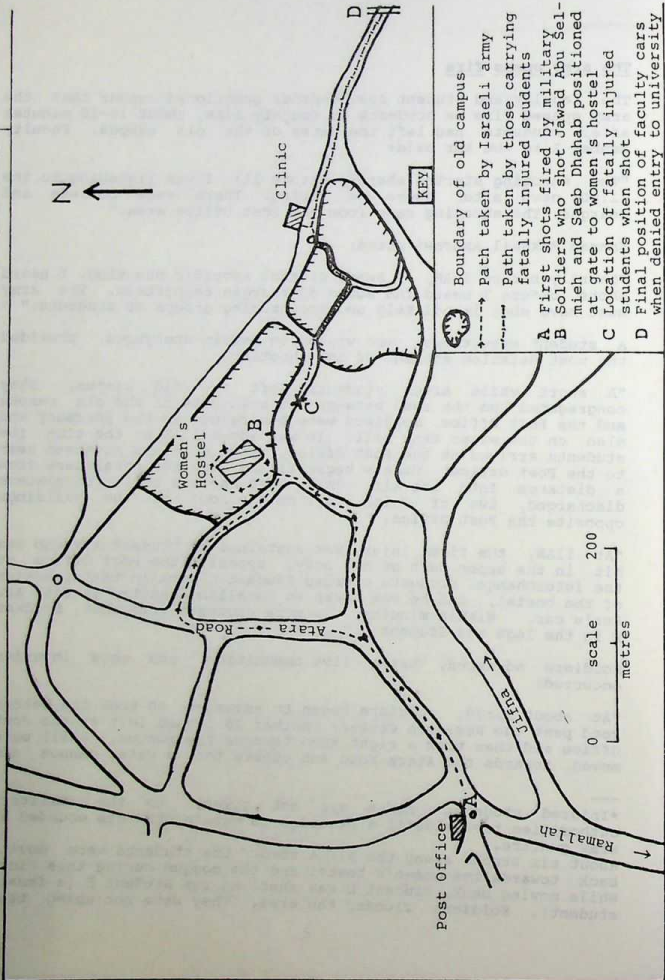
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PLAN OF BIRZEIT VILLAGE AND OLD CAMPUS OF UNIVERSITY



gas, only live ammunition when positioned in this area. About 10

minutes later, three soldiers jumped the fence behind the hostel and hid by Rooms 10 and 11 directly behind the hostel.

"One of the soldiers began to shoot rapid fire from a distance of about 5m and hit a student, Student F, in the thigh. Another soldier moved to the steps next to Room 3 and 5 and began to shoot upwards. Meanwhile, soldiers were on the main road and were shooting at the front door of the University. At this moment, two more soldiers stuck their guns through the gate of the Hostel, and began shooting in the direction of the University. Jawad (Abu Selmieh) was hit next to the tree on the right as you go from the hostel to the University. I was right next to him when he fell. Jawad was carried to the University and from there to the clinic. In the same area some minutes later Saeb (Dhahab) was hit."

The fatal shootings occurred after many students were back in the campus. Soldiers were in no sense "under siege" or reacting from panic. Rather, they seem to have been deliberately aiming at individual students. Faculty member Ahmed Harb also witnessed the shooting of Jawad Abu Selmieh:

"I convinced the students to move back within the campus. I was standing by the gate when Jawad was shot. He had turned towards the campus and was hurrying back when a soldier shot him in the back."

The army bullet in fact entered Jawad's side, apparently as he was turning away towards the old campus gate.

In one of the last incidents of this period three international exchange students, all female, were trapped in the women's hostel and reported:

"Soldiers entered the hostel, fired a gunshot towards the ceiling, arrested three male students near the door, locked the door and took away the key."

Firing stopped shortly before noon. It had gone on for almost an hour in several locations and its toll had been great. Aside from the two fatally injured students, ten other students required hospitalization, and a number of others were treated for light wounds.



Transport of the wounded

Immediately after the first injuries occurred in the Post Office area, ambulances were summoned to the old campus. Hannan Mikhail-Ashrawi said:

"Shortly after 11AM, reports came of injured students and I called Ramallah and Maqassad hospitals immediately for ambulances."

Faculty members only had two private cars on campus. Ziad Abu Amr took the first injured student (Student A) to Ramallah hospital, departing from the old campus about 11:15. Hannan Mikhail-Ashrawi reported:

"I then heard five students were injured and drove to the girl's hostel. There were three injured. I took Student C who had a leg injury in my car to take him to Ramallah Hospital. I drove by the Jifna road. I arrived there about 11:30, and stayed to check on Student A, who was in the operating room. I left the hospital around noon; two more injured students had arrived in private cars."

Meanwhile, the situation on the old campus had worsened. The three faculty members present had no cars, shooting continued and more students were wounded by army gunfire. The new campus had been contacted to send faculty members in cars to the old campus. Professors Nabil Nahhas and Abdul Salaam Abdul Ghanni responded. In their account, they note delays at four army checkpoints: at the last checkpoint, they were prevented by soldiers from driving their cars up the road to pick up the two critically injured students, Jawad Abu Selmieh and Saeb Dhahab, and thus had to walk to site and carry the dying students by foot back to the cars, with accompanying army harassment.

The two teachers arrived at the first checkpoint near the Birzeit Post office. Nabil Nahhas stated in a joint account taken from him and Abdul Salaam Abdul Ghanni:

"People told us it was impossible to pass...we decided to go through the Jifna road. There we encountered a military checkpoint a few yards past the mechanic's shop. A soldier said: "You cannot pass. Shooting is still going on." I insisted that the injured students must be evacuated. The soldier said "on your own responsibility." We drove the cars a few yards and went up the hill... There was an army checkpoint: a soldier drew his gun and shouted at us, forcing us to back up. Meanwhile, a watercannon truck was making its way up the hill.

"We returned to find another road. There was another army checkpoint. The soldier was very nasty and rough. I said we had permission to pass. The soldier asked for "written permission." I asked him to talk on the walkie-talkie to his commander and the



soldier finally did so. The answer was "let them go in front of you and you follow them." We agreed.

"We advanced up the road, followed by the soldier. There were stones on the ground, and an electric cable was laying on them. The soldier ordered me to clear it. I refused, saying it might be a live wire. Finally, the soldier agreed to go back and try to find another road.

"Finally, we arrived at the checkpoint near the old campus, just beyond the Archaeology Department ...students were on campus. A soldier screamed at me to return. I said I had permission. Soldiers were leaning on a wall and firing into the air.

"The soldier said we could not pass because there were rocks on the road. I said I could clear them, but the soldier refused. There were around 15 soldiers near the checkpoint. Finally a soldier let me pass "on his own responsibility" and on foot. No cars were allowed through the checkpoint.

"I ran towards the clinic (opposite the back gate of the University) and, with the assistance of other faculty members Ahmed Harb, Walid Sharif and Albert Aghazarian, carried injured student Jawad Abu Selmieh, who was alive but appeared in a critical condition, towards Abdul Salam's car. We were delayed by a soldier who demanded Jawad's identity card."

Faculty member Walid Sharif, described the scene as the faculty members transported the injured student:

"An officer in charge of the group of soldiers down past the Archaeology Department took my identity card and demanded the name of the injured student from me. I said to him: "He'll soon be dead so you can read about his name in the newspaper tomorrow." The officer also tried to make me personally responsible for getting the names of all the injured students for him."

As Abdul Salam Abdul Ghanni sped towards Ramallah Hospital with Jawad, the other faculty members returned to the campus and found another critically injured student, Saeb Dhahab. Whalid Sharif noted:

"We returned to the old campus and by this time Saeb Dhahab had already been shot. Students had carried the body into the campus and we took him from them to carry him to Nabil's car. He was bleeding very heavily from a wound in the region of the heart. We took the body to the clinic but the doctor told us that he could not do anything for him. We then carried him down the hill towards the cars. The soldiers stopped us and demanded "Who's this?" I couldn't understand why they were stopping us like this when the student was obviously dying."



Ahmed Harb, who also assisted in transporting the two wounded students gave the following account:

"The soldiers were not allowing cars to enter the vicinity of the University to remove the wounded. They had been stopped down the road past the church, near the Archaeology Department. We had to carry Jawad about 200 meters to the nearest car. I begged a soldier to allow one of the waiting cars to enter to pick up the wounded but he refused. Soldiers even chased after us demanding the identity card of the student we were carrying... You know none of us are trained in first aid. We didn't know how to carry seriously injured persons. I'm sure that the serious condition of the students was worsened by this. We had to do it because the soldiers would not allow the cars to enter."

Jawad Abu Selmieh, according to Abdul Salam, may have died shortly before arriving at Ramallah Hospital. Nabil Nahhas transferred Saeb Dhahab to the ambulance from Mogassed Hospital, which he met near the village of Sorda, halfway to Ramallah. Saeb died shortly after arrival in Ramallah Hospital.

All faculty eyewitness accounts corroborate that soldiers obstructed the transport of wounded students, particularly in the case of the fatally injured Jawad and Saeb. They did not allow the cars to reach the injured students and they harassed the faculty members by demanding identity cards of students who were clearly critically injured. Soldiers at the earlier checkpoints delayed Nabil Nahhas and Abdul Salam Abdul Ghanni even though they knew they were trying to get to injured students. At no time did the soldiers seem to consider offering any assistance themselves. Indeed, after Nabil Nahhas said (in Hebrew) to one soldier that students were bleeding and needed to be evacuated. He replied: "They did this so let them suffer."

The delay of the Ramallah ambulance

As noted earlier, Hannan Mikhail-Ashrawi called the Ramallah and Maqassed ambulances shortly after 11AM. Ramallah is about 10 minutes distance from Birzeit by car; Mogassed, which is located in Jerusalem, about half-an-hour. Staff members at the Board of Trustees building in Ramallah also called ambulances at about 11:30, when they heard the first reports of injured students. When the hospitals informed them that the ambulances had been dispatched immediately after the old campus call, they became concerned and contacted the University attorney, Raja Shehadeh, to ask him to inquire with the military authorities whether ambulances were being delayed by the military, and he immediately contacted the authorities.

The Ramallah ambulance finally arrived on the old campus about 12:20. Hannan Mikhail-Ashrawi noted:

"At about 12:20, the Ramallah ambulance arrived. I talked to the



driver and he said he was delayed at a checkpoint and that he had been dispatched immediately after they received my phonecall. I note that I had time to travel back and forth to the hospital, as well as wait there to discuss matters with the doctors, before the ambulance finally arrived."

After the Ramallah ambulance arrived, other ambulances from Maqassed and Bethlehem also arrived on the scene. Five wounded students were transported to Ramallah Hospital.

III. THE HOSPITAL

Background

Ramallah Hospital, a government-run institution, is situated 1km from the centre of Ramallah, about 12km from the old campus of Birzeit. All the injured students were received at this hospital except two who were transported immediately to Maqassad Hospital in East Jerusalem.

From 11:25 onwards injured students began to arrive at Ramallah Hospital, including the two fatally injured students Jawad Abu Selmiah and Sa'eb Dhahab who arrived at about 12:00 at an interval of 5 minutes. Students and members of the university staff had begun to congregate at the hospital from before 11:45AM. Having heard about the situation at the old campus in Birzeit they were anxious to receive news of the injured students and to donate blood, if required. Faculty member Roger Heacock reported:

"I arrived at the hospital at about 11:50AM. There was a small crowd of people already there. There was a lot of agitation. People were obviously very upset. Hugh Schofield [a journalist with the BBC Arabic Service] asked if there were any casualties. One employee refused to comment. Another said that he would tell us. We learned that there was already one student dead and three wounded. Not long after noon an ambulance from al-Moqassed Hospital arrived. They took out a student lying on a stretcher. I knew he was dead. He was blue."

An army jeep arrives

Other members of the University continued to arrive. At 12:15AM Dr. Ali Jarbawi entered the hospital compound. He was asked to go upstairs and identify the second dead student, which he in fact was unable to do. He then descended again to the ground floor where he witnessed the arrival of the military jeep:

"I stood outside two or three minutes and the army jeep arrived. It was about ten minutes since I arrived at the hospital. I was with the Ramallah doctor. The jeep tried to enter the yard and it did enter. It stopped. Students began to say, "Go away". I talked to the soldier who was driving the jeep and told him to leave the



yard and the students would go inside. They agreed to leave and they stopped outside the compound. We shut the gate."

The situation had not been sufficiently defused, however. The military seemed intent on exacerbating the situation. As Dr. Jarbawi described:

"A student came up behind me and the soldier shouted at him to go away. The student said "You go away". The soldier said, "If you don't move, I will shoot you." He ran forward, opened the gate, and cursed the student. The student tried to retreat and the soldier pointed his gun and shot the student in the back (with a rubber bullet). The distance between them was about 2 meters. The student collapsed and two students carried him away. Everyone started running and a soldier fired tear gas. I was inside the door with two other students and one in a wheelchair who had come to donate blood. I heard soldiers outside shooting. We hid in the corner. Outside, about 4 meters away, a soldier was shooting."

Dr. Heacock continued:

"Dozens of students were running around the hospital, panic-stricken. We talked with the hospital personnel whose behaviour was exemplary in trying to prevent the army from entering the hospital. They (the military) surrounded the hospital apparently trying to prevent anyone getting in or out".

After Dr. Jarbawi and the hospital doctors had secured the departure of the military from the compound, they closed the gate and shortly afterwards two ambulances carrying five wounded students arrived. The army maintained their presence around the hospital for the rest of the day.

End of the Siege

Sometime after 1PM, negotiations started to permit students trapped in the old campus and the women's hostel to leave Birzeit in safety. A number of senior officers arrived on the scene, including Colonel Reuven, Advisor on Arab Affairs, and General Barak, the Head of the Central Command, who arrived about 4PM. Soldiers refused to allow staff of the girl's hostel to bring in food for the trapped students. Two other students who had been detained on the Atara road were discovered in mid-afternoon by Hannan Mikhail-Ashrawi. She stated:

"Sometime between 2 and 3PM, I heard two students were detained on the Atara road and went to see them. They were sitting by the intersection, guarded by soldiers, with their hands tied together. They had been there all morning. They had been beaten with the butt of a gun. I said they needed to see a doctor and the soldier told me "Well bring a doctor." I asked him to loosen their bonds but he refused. The students were in tears and freezing from the cold. I went back and forth asking for



permission to have them come to the clinic and see the doctor. Finally, the doctor went to the Atara road and said one of them needed stitches. The soldier said "Stitch him on the sidewalk."

About 5:30PM, soldiers started to withdraw from Birzeit. By 7PM, all students had left the old campus.

Aftermath: Closure of the old campus

On December 8, General Ephraim Sneh, Civil Administrator of the West Bank, handed a military order closing Birzeit's old campus to Birzeit's Acting President Dr. Gabi Baramki. The order came on the last day of a three-day period of mourning declared by the University after the deaths of Jawad Abu Selmieh and Saeb Dhahab. A press release issued by Birzeit University on December 8 noted that "the military authorities have thus 'answered' international protesting over the army shootings with the collective punishment of the victims. The closure order also constitutes another provocation by the army of the University community, already gripped by grief and tension over the deaths of its colleagues."



CONCLUSIONS

In all three major incidents on December 4 - at the checkpoint, on the old campus and in the Ramallah hospital - the army acted first with provocation, and then with excessive force, according to all eyewitness accounts. The number of different incidents at different locations indicates a clear pattern of army behavior, rather than a single incident where soldiers "lost control" or were caught in an "impossible situation," as the career army officer who has admitted to shooting and killing student Jawad Abu Selmieh later told reporters (see appendix on "The Case of the Settler Officer.")

The Shootings

Several major conclusions emerge from accounts of the shootings on the old campus:

1) Although a few tear gas cannisters were fired initially, the army quickly abandoned the use of tear gas and began to fire live ammunition directly at students. The first serious injury was sustained within minutes of the first army-student confrontation (Student A, a chest injury). The number of chest and leg injuries sustained by students, as well as the two fatal injuries, indicate that soldiers were shooting not to control the situation, but to wound and perhaps to kill.

2) The two fatal injuries, which occurred within five minutes of each other near the women's hostel at a back gate of the old campus, happened after many students were inside the old campus and the army was in control of most of the town of Birzeit. At this time, according to student witnesses, soldiers had taken positions near the hostel and were able to carefully aim at students before firing. As the account of Dr. Ahmed Harb confirms, Jawad Abu Selmieh was shot in the side, after he had turned towards the university in an attempt to get into the old campus and safety.

Obstruction of Transfer of the Wounded

International law is quite clear on the responsibility of an occupying power to facilitate the care of the injured and not to obstruct civilian medical personnel in the carrying out of their duties. Yet on December 4:

1) The Ramallah ambulance was delayed at an army checkpoint, according to the statement of the driver to Birzeit faculty when he finally arrived at the old campus. This is also confirmed by the fact that the ambulance was dispatched after a phone call at about 11:15 and arrived at the old campus around 12:20. The trip to the old campus from Ramallah is at most 15 minutes. The military authorities were notified sometime after 11:30 by the University attorney that ambulances may have been delayed. (Also see No Mercy: A Report on Army Actions at Birzeit University on November 21, 1984 (Public Relations Office, December 1984) for



detailed documentation of the military authorities' delay of ambulances on November 21, 1984, a delay which resulted in Birzeit student Sharaf Al Tibi dying before he reached the hospital).

2) Faculty members Abdul Salam Abdul Ghanni and Nabil Nahhas, who were attempting to reach the old campus in private cars to transport the injured were delayed at four army checkpoints. Transport of fatally-injured students Jawad Abu Selmieh and Saeb Dhahab was also obstructed by soldiers on the scene barring cars from driving to pick up the injured and by demanding the identity cards of the dying students.

Hospital Shooting

Soldiers opened fire with rubber bullets on persons gathered near the Emergency Room entrance in the Ramallah Hospital compound about 12:30, wounding one student who was hit at close range. The arrival of the Israeli military at the hospital was an inflammatory act in itself. The use of force was wholly unnecessary and provocative.

The Checkpoint and Army Policy Towards the University

Finally, we note the action that unleashed the fatal chain of events on December 4 - the erection of an army checkpoint on the Ramallah-Birzeit road and the subsequent throwing of teargas on a peaceful gathering of students and faculty, as well as the detention of Dr. Saleh Abdul Jawad, who was clearly trying to prevent the use of violence. As described earlier, the military practice of closing the University by checkpoint had escalated in the weeks preceding December 4, and had become a *de facto* policy throughout the last academic year. These checkpoints were a visible symbol of the army's harassment of the University community, which made the 1985-86 academic year the worst in University history in terms of the violations of the human rights of students (See Academic Freedom at Birzeit University: 1985-86, Birzeit Public Relations Office).

These military policies and practices had a tragic culmination on December 4, resulting in the loss of life of two senior students, Jawad Abu Selmieh and Saeb Dhahab. This loss is irreparable. It is unclear whether world reaction to the events of December 4 and their aftermath will result in any practical restraints on army behavior. Israeli journalist Yehuda Litani, writing in the December 12 issue of the Jerusalem Post, quotes Colonel Shmuel Goren, coordinator of activities in the Occupied Territories as saying: "We have absolutely no intention of changing our policy."



If these policies continue, tragic consequences are inevitable -- to individual young people and students, to the educational institutions that serve them, and indeed to the possibilities of peace and justice in the region. This report has attempted to present the facts of December 4 as witnessed by Birzeit faculty and students on the scene; we hope that its issues will be given serious scrutiny by the world community and lead to prompt and considered action.



CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS
December 4, 1986

- 7:45AM Checkpoint erected on Ramallah-Birzeit road.
- 8:00 Soldiers register names of students at checkpoint. Line of waiting buses and cars grows very long.
- 8:15 Students and faculty descend from cars and buses.
- 8:25 Peaceful sit-in begins near checkpoint.
- 8:40 Unofficial warning given by officer.
- 8:45 Dr. Saleh Abdul Jawad detained.
- 8:50 Teargas fired after 20 second warning.
- 9:15 First students who walked from checkpoint arrive in Sorda and are picked up by bus.
- 10:00 Army disperses students and faculty gathered in front of Dr. Baramki's house in Ramallah.
- 10:20 Meeting begins in old campus courtyard to protest checkpoint incident.
- 10:45 Students leave the gate of the old campus.
- 11:00 Army fires the opening shot.
- 11:05 First injuries sustained near Post Office
- 11:10 Injuries reported to old campus; Hannan Mikhail-Ashrawi telephones ambulances.
- 11:15 Dr. Abdul Salam Abdul Ghanni and Dr. Nabil Nahhas leave new campus in their cars to transport wounded.
- 11:15 First wounded student transported to Ramallah Hospital by faculty member Ziad Abu Amr.
- 11:25 Second wounded student transported to Ramallah hospital by faculty member Hannan Mikhail-Ashrawi.
- Two more students transported in private cars to Ramallah Hospital.
- 11:30 University attorney contacted by staff in Board of Trustees about possible army obstruction of ambulances; he contacts military authorities.



- 11:35-45 Jawad Abu Selmieh and Saeb Dhahab shot near girl's hostel at an interval of about 5 minutes.
- 11:45 Abdul Salam Abdul Ghanni and Nabil Nahhas arrive at old campus after delays at four army checkpoints. They are not allowed to drive their cars up to the wounded, who are carried by foot to the cars.
- 11:50 Jawad Abu Selmieh transported to hospital in car of faculty member Abdul Salam Abdul Ghanni.
- 11:55 Saeb Dhahab transported to Ramallah Hospital in car of faculty member.
- 12:20PM Ramallah Hospital ambulance arrives at old campus after delay at checkpoint.
- 12:20 About 40 students and faculty gather at Ramallah Hospital to donate blood, find out about wounded.
- 12:30 Army jeep pulls up at entrance to Ramallah Hospital.
- 12:33 Soldier opens fire in hospital compound with rubber bullets; one student wounded.
- 12:35 Shooting at hospital stops.
- 12:40 Two ambulances arrive at Ramallah Hospital: one carrying two injured students, and one three.
- 2:30-3:00 At old campus, Hannan Mikhail Ashrawi and doctor at Birzeit clinic try to assist two students detained on Atara road.
- 5:30 Students begin to leave old campus after army withdraws.

APPENDIX: The case of the settler officer

"An officer who lives in a West Bank settlement yesterday admitted to shooting one of the students killed at Birzeit last week. The career officer who serves in the Ramallah area said yesterday that he had been at Birzeit with another officer and a small group of about ten soldiers, and had been attacked from various directions by a barrage of stones and metal bars hurled by students from a distance of some fifteen metres."

This report appeared in the December 11 issue of the Jerusalem Post, written by Israeli journalist Joel Greenberg. In the following day's edition, Yehuda Litani reported:

"The students who took part in this violent demonstration singled out 'an officer.... wearing a knitted skullcap who aimed his rifle at heads and hearts.'

"I met the officer in question in Ramallah on Wednesday. He lives in one of the nearby settlements. He and another officer who was with him at the demonstration, described the events from their point of view.

"We were caught in an impossible situation. Had we retreated, no Israeli from the nearby settlements would be able to travel on the main road leading west, a road that passes through Birzeit. The students were 20 metres away, throwing rocks - not stones - at us, and then iron rods from a construction site.

"It was very dangerous. We first tried shooting tear-gas grenades at them, and then rubber bullets, but they did not help. They kept attacking with rocks and iron rods. We had to use real bullets in order to protect our lives."

An officer who appears to be the same one interviewed by Yehuda Litani for the Jerusalem Post was also spotted by Birzeit University members on the day of the killings, December 4, both at the checkpoint and on the old campus. Dr. Nabil Nahhas remarked:

"The soldier with the blue kippe was at the morning checkpoint and was responsible for throwing the teargas. He arrived in a Volvo station wagon, 1983. He was in civilian dress, but put on an army fatigue jacket after throwing the gas cannister. Later on, he was at the gate of the old campus. We pointed him out to the military governor. He went and spoke to the blue kipped soldier..."

He had also been noticed at the checkpoint by Dr. Ali Jarbawi:

"An Israeli arrived with an army officer wearing a kippe who spoke to Saleh (Abdul Jawad) in English. Saleh said, 'These students, like the Jewish students at the Hebrew University



deserve to be educated.....'. The officer shouted at Saleh to shut up...."

"The officer took a tear gas cannister and started playing with it. He tossed it three times in the air and said, 'I want everyone to move.' He then just opened the canister and tossed it into the crowd.....".

Other members of the University commented that this officer appeared to be directing operations on the old campus when he arrived there from the checkpoint.

A number of questions demand attention. The officer concerned was a career officer in the Israel Defence Forces. He was presumably familiar with situations similar to that which arose on December 4.

1) Other soldiers in Birzeit on December 4 have asserted that the officer concerned did not follow military regulations in dealing with such incidents. Yehuda Litani interviewed other soldiers on the scene on December 4 and reported in the same article in which he interviewed the officer under discussion and one other:

"Other soldiers, serving in the same unit as the two officers in Birzeit last Thursday, said that, "although it was clearly a dangerous situation, the two officers were conspicuous in shooting, and not only towards the demonstrators' thighs."

2) His cavalier behaviour at the checkpoint of playing with the tear gas cannister and then tossing it in the midst of a crowd of people was inappropriate to the demands of the situation and provocative in the extreme.

3) A number of eyewitnesses to the events on the old campus of the University reported that no more than 4 tear gas canisters were discharged in the direction of the students in the area of the Birzeit Post Office. They also reported that the first student casualties were carried back to the university within minutes of the clash between students and the army began. This does not square at all with the said officer's contention that the army employed tear gas and rubber bullets for some time before the danger of the situation demanded that they use live ammunition. The complete absence of injuries sustained by soldiers also raises a question mark over this officer's analysis of the danger of the situation.

The University does not seek to lay the blame for the tragic events of December 4 on one officer. Eyewitness accounts confirm that the shooting on the old campus at Birzeit was a systematic assault upon the students by a large force of armed soldiers and can not be explained away by saying everything was the fault of one hothead. The questions raised here however, demand to be addressed.



Israelis Kill 2 Palestinians On West Bank

DEC 5
1986

By Glenn Fränkel
Washington Post Foreign Service

JERUSALEM, Dec. 4—Two Palestinian students were shot dead and at least 11 others wounded today when Israeli soldiers opened fire on demonstrators outside a college campus in the most violent such incident in the occupied West Bank in two years.

The Israeli Army and officials of Bir Zeit University in Ramallah, eight miles north of Jerusalem, gave widely differing accounts of the incident. An Army spokesman depicted it as well-planned and carefully staged by radicals seeking a violent confrontation, while faculty members contended that soldiers provoked the clash and opened fire on unarmed students. They claimed more than 20 persons were wounded.

[The Army Friday ordered an investigation of the soldiers' actions in the incident, Reuter reported from Tel Aviv.]

The Army sealed off the campus and a nearby hospital where the wounded were taken. It was not possible to confirm either account of the shooting.

The trouble began around 8 a.m. when students and teachers on their way to the campus were stopped at an Israeli military checkpoint, which has been in operation for four days. Dozens sat down in the road to protest the checkpoint,

See ISRAEL, A32, Col. 1

ISRAEL, From A1

which students contend was erected to harass them and prevent those without identification cards from entering the campus.

Participants said the demonstration was peaceful until a jeep full of soldiers raced up and hauled off a Palestinian lecturer at the front of the crowd. They then dispersed the crowd with tear gas.

A few hours later, witnesses said, 200 to 400 angry students emerged from the campus and began erecting a stone barricade on another access road. The Army spokesman said heavily outnumbered troops first used tear gas, then rubber bullets, then fired into the air in a futile effort to disperse the crowd, which attacked them with stones and pieces of pipe. Only then did the troops open fire, the spokesman said, "in order to get out of there alive."

But students who participated in the protests and witnessed the shootings said the stone throwing began only after soldiers fired tear gas at the demonstrators. The witnesses contended that the soldiers who then opened fire with their rifles were not in danger.

"We were calling out slogans [for the outlawed Palestine Liberation Organization]," said Aman, a 24-year-old student who asked that her last name be withheld. "Then they [the soldiers] were throwing tear gas. Then some people threw stones. Then [the soldiers] started shooting in the air and then they started shooting everywhere. They didn't care where they hit us."

The spokesman said soldiers are under instructions to shoot at the legs of rioters if their lives are endangered. Of the five persons listed as shot with live ammunition, three were shot in the chest or stomach and two in the legs, according to information released by Ramallah Hospital, where the victims were taken. Two of them—both male students from the Gaza Strip—died. A third student was reported in critical condition.

[Nurses at the hospital said students Jawad Abu Selmi and Saeb Abu Dahhab, both 22, died of head and chest wounds, Reuter reported.]

Israeli radio later quoted an unnamed Ramallah district military commander as saying, "Because you have many students—something like 400—you have a problem to shoot exactly at the legs. The orders to the soldiers [are] if they are under danger they have permission to shoot."

Students seized the two corpses and rushed them from the hospital into hiding. They claimed later they did so to prevent the Army from burying the bodies before an autopsy is performed that can determine how they were killed.

There were delays of 30 to 60 minutes in getting the wounded to the hospital, witnesses said. University officials blamed soldiers for holding up local ambulances, while the Army said students pelted the vehicles with rocks.

Later there was a clash in the hospital yard when soldiers fired tear gas and rubber bullets at a group of students and family members gathered to donate blood and wait for word of wounded relatives. The Army said the gathering had disrupted efforts to treat the wounded, while witnesses contended soldiers opened fire without provocation, wounding two persons.

"The soldiers went right up to the door," said Roger Heacock, an American who lectures in history at the university. "They were screaming and cursing and firing their guns. It was something terrifying." The Army spokesmen denied that shots were fired at the hospital or that anyone was wounded there.

Bir Zeit has been closed by Israeli military authorities numerous times in recent years in an attempt to crack down on Palestinian nationalists and PLO supporters there.

A32 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1986

Israelis Kill 2 W. Bank Palestinians

Washington Post
December 5, 1986

What happened at Bir Zeit last week?

It takes no more than 10 minutes in a car to cover the distance between the Bir Zeit campus and the military government headquarters in Ramallah. But it is almost impossible to bridge the gap between the versions of Bir Zeit students and the Israeli officers who shot at the students during last week's demonstration.

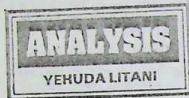
The students claim that the IDF soldiers attacked them brutally, using live bullets almost from the outset, without waiting, as they once used to, for the atmosphere to clear, using hardly any tear-gas or rubber bullets. But now, the students claim, the soldiers shoot to kill, aiming at their hearts. The students who took part in this violent demonstration singled out "an officer, probably a captain, wearing a knitted skullcap who aimed his rifle at heads and hearts."

The students refused to identify themselves because they were afraid of being called in for questioning by the authorities.

I met the officer in question in Ramallah on Wednesday. He lives in one of the nearby settlements. He and another officer who was with him at the demonstration, described the events from their point of view.

"We were caught in an impossible situation. Had we retreated, no Israeli from the nearby settlements would be able to travel on the main road leading west, a road that passes through Bir Zeit. The students were 20 metres away, throwing rocks - not stones - at us, and then iron rods from a construction site.

"It was very dangerous. We first



tried shooting tear-gas grenades at them, and then rubber bullets, but they did not help. They kept attacking with rocks and iron rods. We had to use real bullets in order to protect our lives."

Other soldiers, serving in the same unit as the two officers in Bir Zeit last Thursday, said that "although it was clearly a dangerous situation, the two officers were conspicuous in shooting, and not only towards the demonstrators' thighs."

The two officers deny these charges categorically.

Three days before last week's demonstration, Bir Zeit University published a press release saying that

For the third day in succession, an army checkpoint on the Bir Zeit - Ramallah road, this morning barred students and faculty from entering Bir Zeit University... Bir Zeit University warns that the policy of 'closure by checkpoint' is escalating and poses a serious threat to the university's ability to function..."

The students in the university this week were restless, unable to attend classes, furious at the IDF for killing two of their colleagues and wounding 15. Yesterday, about 50 of the students gathered on the campus, some of them with the stubble of newly-grown beards in memory of the dead, and instead of attending

classes sang nationalist songs for a short time.

"We represent all the Palestinians in the occupied territories and abroad. We all want to get rid of occupation, that is the main reason for our protest, and the brutal way your army handled us in the last week or so," said one student.

"All we want now is to continue our studies without further disturbances and checkpoints. In the long run, we wish you'd leave us alone and let us have our own state," said another student.

"It is only a few PLO activists who incite the others. Most people who live in the territories want peace and quiet," said a senior Defence Ministry official.

"We have absolutely no intention of changing our policy. We will continue with our policy of improving the quality of life of the inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and Gaza," said Shmuel Goren, the coordinator of activities in the territories, on Israel Television this week.

"Leave us alone," said the Palestinian students. "We will continue," said Goren.

Joel Greenberg adds:

Demonstrations continued yesterday in the Gaza Strip, but dropped off sharply in the West Bank.

Dozens of students gathered at entrances to the Maghazi and Bureij refugee camps, burned tires and stoned soldiers.

In Gaza, most shops were closed on the main Omar el-Mukhtar Street, and a partial commercial strike was observed in other areas.

Jewish students from a school in Jerusalem's French Hill neighbourhood threw stones at Arab youths from the nearby Issawia village. An Arab boy, aged 13, was taken to Sha'are Zedek Hospital.

Jerusalem Post

December 12, 1986



WHY ARE OUR TROOPS KILLING PALESTINIAN KIDS ON THE WEST BANK?



OUR SOLDIERS ARE DEFENDING THEMSELVES AGAINST ROCK-THROWING NOBS



BUT THESE ARE SCHOOL CHILDREN! THEY AREN'T PLO GUERRILLAS!



AND THEY WON'T BE



Even in Paris where hundreds of thousands—not dozens—of student demonstrators clogged the streets this week, police did not use live ammunition.

In response to this wanton brutality (against Palestinian students), the world does little. Israel boasted this week that an country has lodged an official complaint about the killings. World leaders, including Arab rulers, are only paying lip service to Palestinian suffering.

Editorial, Al Fair, December 12, 1986

Birzeit University is eight miles north of Jerusalem. As the intellectual center of Palestinian nationalism in the Occupied Territories, the university is regarded with ceaseless suspicion by the military authorities. From time to time, actions are taken to keep the students and faculty in their place, as used to be said of blacks in the South. One such action is the roadblock. At rush hour in the morning, as students and faculty members are on their way to class, they are stopped at a military checkpoint on the only road to the university. Slowly, meticulously, Israeli soldiers examine identification cards. The roadblocks can last a long time, sometimes so long that class schedules are thoroughly disrupted. The university administrators speak of "closure by roadblock," and they claim that in the 1985-86 academic year, 36 days were lost because of this tactic by the military authorities.

Why do the Israelis do it? For one thing, as was noted, they do it to remind the Palestinians that they have the power to do it. That the Israelis are in total charge whenever they want to be. Another reason is to break up in advance what they believe are going to be imminent political gatherings on campus. As Albert Aghazarian, Bir Zeit's public relations director, told the Palestinian newspaper *Al Fair*: "On their calendar, they [the authorities] have special days marked in red which indicate special Palestinian occasions. Whenever the military authorities get reports that students are doing something, or when the authorities think that the students are thinking of doing something, the answer has been: erect a roadblock."

For whatever reason, the Israelis were using roadblocks with special frequency

began October 10. Until December 4, the day of the killings at Birzeit University, 11 roadblocks had been set up. Five of them had caused such delays that all classes at the university were suspended on those days.

(The Army has sometimes, by way of punishment, officially closed Birzeit and other universities in the Occupied Territories, but that has led to a certain amount of international protest. The roadblocks, on the other hand, dislocate the university at less cost to Israel's image.)

Around eight o'clock on the morning of December 4, a military checkpoint was in place on the road from the town of Ramallah to Birzeit University. Buses full of students were stopped, the students ordered off, and the buses sent back to Ramallah. Students and faculty members in private cars were lined up on the side of the road. Soon there was a long line of stopped cars that was getting longer.

Students asked if they could walk to the university. No, said the soldiers. Suddenly, spontaneously, some 40 teachers and students sat down in the road in protest against this harassment and humiliation by the occupation authorities. The demonstrators were commanded to get back into their cars and were given three minutes to leave the area. They couldn't have left the area if they'd wanted to because of all the other backed-up cars in their way. The soldiers, calling for reinforcements, prepared to use tear gas to disperse these nonviolent demonstrators. At this point, Dr. Salah Abdul Jawad Salah, a political science professor at Birzeit, stood in front of the demonstrators and told them not to retaliate, no matter what the Israelis did. The demonstration, if it was to have a durable effect, must remain nonviolent.

At this point, Dr. Salah Abdul Jawad Salah, a political science professor at Birzeit, stood in front of the demonstrators and told them not to retaliate, no matter what the Israelis did. The demonstration, if it was to have a durable effect, must remain nonviolent. Dr. Salah Abdul Jawad Salah, director of the Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence, said that Professor Salah had been coming to the center in recent months to learn and discuss nonviolent strategies.

The Israeli soldiers reacted to this peacekeeper by beating him all over his body and then dragging him to an army jeep. He was later arrested, and his trial began. A dangerous agitator was set for later in December. Will any American Jewish organizations dedicated to universal rights protest on his behalf? Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin?

Meanwhile, at the roadblock, a student did not heed the professor's advice and threw a stone. He was killed in tear gas, the

Palestinians were driven from the checkpoint and had to find their way back to Ramallah.

Some three hours later, angry students from the Birzeit campus were building their own barricade of stones against the occupiers. Israeli troops advanced on them, first with tear gas, then with rubber bullets, and finally with the real stuff.

The commander said later that the soldiers had to use live ammunition to save their lives. Palestinian eyes said the soldiers' lives were never in danger. In any case, the standing order to Israeli soldiers was to shoot at the legs of threatening demonstrators.

Five people were shot. Two in the legs, the others in the chest or the stomach. Two of the last three died. Both were students. Both were 22 years old.

A 24-year-old student, Aman, afraid to give her last name, told *The Washington Post* (December 5):

"Then they [the soldiers] were throwing tear gas. Then some people started shouting. Then [the soldiers] started shooting in the air and then they started shooting everywhere. They didn't care where they hit us."

In a December 12 front page story in *The Jerusalem Post* by reporter-editor Yehuda Litani, one of the most respected journalists in Israel, a number of Palestinian students claim that the Israeli Defense Force had changed its approach to handling disturbances (including those created by the IDF itself). The soldiers used to depend on tear gas or rubber bullets, but now some shoot to kill.

The students added that they had seen one soldier in particular, probably an officer, aiming his rifle "at heads and hearts." He was wearing a knitted skull cap. Litani found the officer, who lives in a Jewish settlement near Ramallah. He said that his life had been in danger, and so he used live bullets.

But Litani found two other soldiers from the same unit who told him that "although it was clearly a dangerous situation," there were two officers who "were conspicuous in their shootings, and not only towards the demonstrators' thugs."

For some years a number of IDF commanders have been worried about the increasing brutalization of some of the Palestinian soldiers on duty in the occupation territories. When the occupation began in 1967, the soldiers of the imperial power see the subjugated natives less and less as human beings and more and more as lower forms of life that are not worth much. As this attitude grows, the soldiers themselves take on the characteristics of certain lower forms of life.

During the next few days, as protests against the killings of the two students swept through the Occupied Territories, a 14-year-old Palestinian boy was arrested and killed by Israeli soldiers. He was killed by throwing rocks at the military patrol. He had his friends had been told

to desert. When they did not, said a spokesman for the Army, "shots were fired over their heads and then finally at their feet."

"He must have been an extremely short boy." Three days later, a 12-year-old Palestinian boy was shot in the head and killed. This menace to the state, it turns out, was probably killed by an Israeli settler, riding in a car with soldiers as they passed a demonstration at a refugee camp. The demonstrators were schoolboys, every one a Palestinian nationalist for which all due credit goes to the IDF.

Not only were there demonstrations and commercial strikes in the Occupied Territories after the killings, but protest rallies were also held at four universities in Israel. In some of these demonstrations, Palestinian and Jewish students joined in shared anger.

At Hebrew University in Tel Aviv one of the speakers was the venerable, passionate Israeli academic Yeshayahu Leibowitz. For years, Leibowitz—who is an Orthodox Jew—has been warning that Israel must stop keeping the Occupied Territories, it will lose its moral fiber and its claim to being a democracy.

During the protest rally, Leibowitz told the crowd: "Whoever supports occupation agrees to bloodshed. The bloodshed will stop too when the occupation ends." A group of right-wing Jewish students joined into Leibowitz's speech, hoisting and chanting: "The people of Israel live!"

"The old man looked at them and said, 'If you remain this way, they will not live much longer.'"

A degree of calm has temporarily returned to the Occupied Territories; but everyone—soldiers, students, shopkeepers, peasants—knows that next week or next month, another corpse will be buried at midnight under a heavy IDF guard in the Occupied Territories. The authorities fiercely try to prevent large daylight funerals for those killed by their soldiers, for such funerals can easily—as in South Africa—be transformed into demonstrations. When the IDF is being directed, however, only a few immediate family members are allowed to mourn in the darkness.

Will there be any changes in the occupation policy after the killings at Birzeit University and the summary closings of the lives of the 14-year-old and 12-year-old?

"It is only a few PLO activists who incite the others," a senior Defense Ministry official told *The Jerusalem Post*. "Most people who live in the territories want peace and quiet."

And on television, Shmuel Cohen, coordinator of activities in the territories, engaged in the newswalk of occupiers from time immemorial: "We have absolutely no intention of changing our policy. We will continue with our policy of improving the quality of life of the inhabitants of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza."

Indeed, nothing has changed, and that was the focus of a first rate report in *The Washington Post* by Glenn Frankel who, as usual, has cut deeper than Thomas Friedman of the *Times*. There is a state of depression among many of the Palestinian students. One of them, Raja Zeidan, an undergraduate majoring in English, tells Frankel: "In France, when a student gets killed, the whole government is near collapse. Here four can die and it is the same nothing."

And Nabeel Nabha, an assistant professor of biochemistry, says of the student diet: "They are like someone who has been hit in the head. They don't know what to do."

Dr. Salah Abdul Jawad Salah can tell them that too. Do study and practice or be damned, disorganized nonviolence. Learn it and do it until you are far more powerful and strong than the iron-fisted occupiers with holes in their skulls.

