

Free Nasser Nawajah

For the past several days, Palestinian activist Nasser Nawajah has been held captive by Israeli Occupation Forces. Already thoroughly discredited, the illegitimate and politically-motivated arrest of Nawajah has proven that the so-called Israeli legal system can in fact sink to new lows. Cloaked under a veil of secrecy and without any semblance of due process, his current confinement should be regarded as nothing short of an outright kidnapping.

From its very beginning, Nawajah's abduction coincided with a sweeping gag order put in place by the Israeli state, which prohibited any public discussion of the details and barred the Israeli media from publishing reports on the proceedings. Nevertheless, once the ban was lifted, it became clear that he had been shuffled back and forth between civilian and military courts, while being repeatedly denied access to legal representation. In this Kafkaesque charade, Nawajah was presented with an unconditional release by a civilian magistrate, only to then be immediately subjected to a military show-trial that effectively overturned the previous ruling.

In its bizarre twists and turns, this farce largely reflects the sheer absurdity of the allegation itself. Taking their inspiration from the Planned Parenthood scandal engineered by Christian fundamentalists in the United States, the Israeli far-right managed to air a clearly doctored video about anti-occupation activists on a nighttime news tabloid. The climate of panic that ensued prompted the Israeli state to issue what is perhaps its most hypocritical accusation. Given Israel's well-documented history of colonial violence, it has had the audacity to charge Nawajah with indirectly participating in the harm of another Palestinian based entirely on falsified video evidence. Yet underneath this thin web of very poorly strewn together lies, it is blatantly apparent that Nasser Nawajah's only crime was that he was born a Palestinian and has selflessly devoted his life to obtaining freedom and justice for his people.

The persecution of Nawajah is all too consistent with the brutal and merciless logic of the Israeli occupation, which in the past year has imprisoned more than a thousand Palestinians without trial. However, what is striking about the extra-judicial measures leveled against Nawajah is that they occur within the context of a wave of repression aimed at both Israeli left-wing and human-rights organizations as well. In the past few weeks, two Israeli activists were also arrested upon being implicated in the same ridiculous hoax that the extreme-nationalists used in order to frame Nawajah. In what is now a full-scale witch-hunt, the Jerusalem office of B'tselem, a humanitarian NGO in which Najawah works as a field-researcher, was set ablaze by a reactionary mob. Taken together, what these events show is that the imperialist foundation of Israeli democracy has finally reverberated back on itself. As the Israeli state becomes ever more inclined to openly carry out the bidding of murderous, para-state settlers and religious fundamentalists, fascist totalitarianism increasingly consolidates on the other side of the 1948 borders.

Without a doubt, this campaign of fear and terror has one obvious objective: to forcibly silence resistance to the occupation everywhere and anywhere it might emerge. For this reason, it is important to raise our voices to express our solidarity with Nasser Nawajah. We at the Brooklyn-Palestine Alliance demand his immediate release.

Freedom for Nasser Nawajah!

Freedom for all Palestinian Prisoners!

End the Israeli Occupation!