



1 September 2020

Newsletter No 30

We start this newsletter with a reminder of the Speak up for Palestine Protest

- On the steps of parliament
- Tomorrow - Wednesday September 2nd
- 12 noon

Come if you can! Encourage family and friends to also join! Spread the word!

Break the government's protective cone of silence around Israel



Members of Parliament! Speak up for Palestine!

**END THE OCCUPATION
END THE BLOCKADE OF GAZA**

www.PSNA.nz

**12 noon, Wednesday 2 September,
@ Steps of Parliament. (Bring a mask.)**

The protest will be focusing on issues where New Zealand should be speaking out. These include:

- The outbreak of Covid 19 in the Gaza Strip with the Israeli blockade preventing medical supplies or fuel from entering despite worldwide calls from the
- The continuing Israeli bombing of the Gaza strip (the government has refused to speak out in response to our letter from the last newsletter)
- The purchase of military weapons from Israeli companies Elbit Systems and Roboteam
- The on-going threat from Israel to annex (steal) more Palestinian land

Come along and Speak up for Palestine!

Will the New Zealand government join the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and adopt, what international experts call, its Massively Flawed definition of anti-Semitism?

It seems the government is considering joining the IHRA with its Massively Flawed definition of anti-Semitism. A definition that has been used around the world to shut down Free Speech on Palestine/Israel - See below.

The IHRA champions educational programmes about the holocaust. We support it's work in this area but education about genocide should not consider just one example but must include genocide in places like Rwanda, Cambodia under Pol Pot, Armenia and Bosnia and the Palestinian Nakba.

To outline the issues here is a copy of the letter we have sent to Minister of Justice Andrew Little:

Palestine Solidarity Network Aotearoa

26 August 2020

*Andrew Little
Minister of Justice
Parliament Buildings
Wellington*

a.little@ministers.govt.nz

Kia ora Andrew,

Re International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-semitism

We understand the government is considering adopting the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) definition of anti-semitism.

I'm writing on behalf of the Palestine Solidarity Network Aotearoa which advocates for Palestinian human rights and which is also strongly opposed to racism in all its forms – including anti-Semitism.

Our members have protested against racist spray-painting attacks on Jewish graves and synagogues just as we have marched in support of the Islamic community after the horrific events of March 15 last year.

There are serious problems with the IHRA definition of anti-semitism and we ask that the government reject it. It is used in several US states and some European countries to claim

Palestinian human rights activists are anti-semitic when they call for action against Israel until it complies with international law and United Nations resolutions. The definition is being used in these countries as a weapon to deny free speech and freedom of political action to those standing up for the victims of Israel's brutal military occupation of Palestine and ongoing theft of Palestinian land.

The IHRA definition was always intended as a guideline for researchers, not as a prescriptive description of anti-Semitism. The main drafter of the resolution, Kenneth Stern, has cautioned against its use in resolutions or legislation and is quite emphatic that it must not be misused as appears to be proposed by the government.

Here is what he has to say on the IHRA Wikipedia page:

*"The main drafter of the working definition and its examples, [Kenneth S. Stern](#), **cautioned against the free speech implications of its use** as a legal tool.^[26] He has opposed efforts to enshrine it in legislation^[98] and wrote a letter to members of the US Congress warning that giving the definition legal status would be "unconstitutional and unwise" in December 2016.^[99] In 2011, he co-authored an article about how the 'Working Definition' was being abused in Title VI cases, because it was being employed in an attempt to "restrict academic freedom and punish political speech." In November 2017, Stern explained to the [US House of Representatives](#) that the definition has been abused on various US university campuses. He warned that it could "restrict academic freedom and punish political speech" and questioned whether definitions created by minority groups should be legislatively enshrined, giving as one of several examples.^[26]*

"Imagine a definition designed for Palestinians. If "Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, and denying Israel the right to exist" is antisemitism, then shouldn't "Denying the Palestinian people their right to self-determination, and denying Palestine the right to exist" be anti-Palestinianism? Would they then ask administrators to police and possibly punish campus events by pro-Israel groups who oppose the two state solution, or claim the Palestinian people are a myth?"^[26]

He states that the definition was created "as a tool for data collectors in European countries to identify what to include and exclude from their reports about antisemitism, and to have a common frame of reference so that data might be compared across borders."^[98] He "encouraged the Department of State's first Special Envoy for Antisemitism to promote the definition as an important tool." He used it effectively as the framework for a report on global antisemitism. He added: "approaches to antisemitism that endorse and promote academic freedom are more likely to work, in part because they underscore the academy's goal of increasing knowledge and promoting critical thinking.... approaches that explain academic freedom away or harm it will not only fail, they make the problem worse."^[26]

We do not want the government to "make the problem worse" and adopt a definition which will be used to attack and demonise those who stand up for international law and United Nations resolutions and work hard for Palestinian human rights.

For example, the City Council in Munich, Germany, has used the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism to condemn Palestinian activists calling for BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) against Israel and have denied the use of city council facilities to Palestinian human rights organisations.

Palestinian activists here in New Zealand have already faced attempts by pro-Israeli groups to deny them access to facilities for meetings and events and last year a local

school faced a determined attempt to stop me speaking after I had been invited to do so with students at a lunchtime meeting using baseless claims that I was anti-Semitic. These pressures will increase dramatically if the IHRA definition is adopted by the government.

Meanwhile Jewish groups in New Zealand and around the world have spoken out strongly against the misuse of the IHRA definition and in 2018 over 40 Jewish groups expressed their support for BDS and attacked attempts to equate calls for boycotts of Israel with anti-Semitism.

An open letter from these Jewish groups said in part:

“As social justice organizations from around the world, we write this letter with growing alarm regarding the targeting of organizations that support Palestinian rights in general and the nonviolent Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions ([BDS](#)) movement, in particular. These attacks too often take the form of cynical and false accusations of antisemitism that dangerously conflate anti-Jewish racism with opposition to Israel’s policies and system of occupation and apartheid”

Similar sentiments have come from Nobel Peace Prize winner and South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu who says the world should call out Israeli policies towards Palestinians as “apartheid” and implement a boycott of Israel.

New Zealand has a proud history of standing up in support of the struggle against South African apartheid and we must do the same against Israeli apartheid.

It would be tragic if, on the back of the horrific events of March 15 last year, the government adopted the IHRA definition which will be used to deny freedom of speech to members of the Islamic community in New Zealand, some of whom are Palestinians, when they speak out against Israeli apartheid.

It would be a dark day for democracy, free speech and human rights if the government were to adopt this definition. It would put the government on the wrong side of history. We look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Ngā mihi mahana.

*Nā,
John Minto
National Chair
PSNA
0220850161
johnminto@orcon.net.nz*

Letter writing for Palestine – improve your skills

This is an online training Writing great letters to the editor with Maher Mughrabi
Monday 14 Sept, 5.30-6.30pm online

Maher was the former features editor at The Age in Australia and this training session will help anyone wanting to write to the media in support of the Palestinian struggle.

Register [here](#).

Election pledges for all parliamentary candidates

These will be sent out to all candidates when nominations close on 18 September.

Keep watching this space!

**St Columba
Centre**

40 Vermont St
Ponsonby
Auckland

7pm

**Thursday 8th
October**

A koha towards costs
will be appreciated.



The David Wakim Memorial Lecture 2020



John Minto

Telling Lies about Palestine

Many lies are told about Palestine by pro-Israeli lobby groups. John will talk about these and how claims of anti-semitism are used to deflect criticism of the Israel's brutal military occupation of Palestinian land and the blockade of Gaza.

John will also talk about the future direction and way forward for the Palestine Solidarity Movement.

John Minto is a political activist, who is well known for taking a leading role in the anti-apartheid movement and the Springbok tour protests in New Zealand in 1981. He is involved in many social justice campaigns. Currently, John is the convener of the Christchurch Progressive Network and the National Chair of the Palestine Solidarity Network Aotearoa.

The Memorial Lecture commemorates the life and work of David Wakim, first national president of Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand who died on the 2nd October 2005.

Boycott Hewlett-Packard! Don't buy HP!

If you haven't had a chance to read through this information about Hewlett Packard, then please do so. We will begin building a national campaign against Hewlett-Packard shortly so get yourself up to date and ready to act!

The online HP campaign page is here: <https://bdsaustralia.net.au/campaigns/dont-buy-hp-products/>

And the online petition is here: <https://bdsaustralia.good.do/boycotthp/individualpledge/>

Dances with Death

**NEW TITLE
INFORMATION**

PUBLICATION DETAILS

Format: Paperback

150 pp, 148mm by 210mm

ISBN: 978-0-473-50605-6

\$25 SOR, trade discounts
available

RELEASE: March 2020

TUMA HAZOU, AUTHOR



When he joined the BBC Arabic Service in London in 1957, at 22, Tuma was the youngest announcer at the BBC.

Dances with Death

Perilous Encounters Reporting on Hostilities in the Turbulent Middle East

A remarkable insight into Middle East affairs and events through the eyes of an accomplished journalist with 40 years experience in the media.

Author Tuma Hazou attributes the ongoing turmoil in the Middle East to the 1917 Balfour Declaration committing Britain to create a 'national home' for Jews in Palestine, at the expense of the Muslim and Christian indigenous majority. The subsequent shambolic Jewish-Arab conflict culminated in establishing Israel in 1948 and the defeat by young Israel of six Arab armies.

Tuma Hazou highlights also the events leading to the 1967 June war, with pre-emptive strikes by Israel against Syria, Egypt and Jordan.

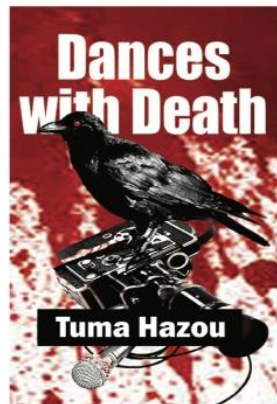
He relates the agonising loss of a colleague when fighting flares up in Jerusalem between the Israelis and the Jordanians.

On yet another fateful day, he goes through 3 'dances with death' during repeated Israeli air raids on Jordan in August 1968. His chilling eye-witness account of the harrowing raids is included in a United Nations Security Council record of the raids, cited in Addendum 2.

The book's addendums add intriguing substance to Tuma Hazou's narrative, such as his wife's role in circumventing a Jordanian law preventing her Kiwi friend Christine from marrying a high-ranking officer who ends up, for only 10 days, as Jordan's Prime Minister at the start of Jordan's 1970 September civil war.

The author reviews what led to the civil war between King Hussein's Jordanian army and the Palestinian guerrillas after a 'leftist' guerrilla faction hijacked a number of civilian planes, forcing them to land in the Jordanian desert before blowing them up. While covering that gruesome 8-day civil war, Tuma was incredibly spared being blown up when he drove over 4 anti-tank mines.

Relocating in 1967 to Amman, in Jordan, the author worked as a radio programmes producer and freelance journalist contributing Middle East coverage to UPI, BBC, NBC TV & Radio News and later as both cameraman and radio reporter with ABC TV & Radio News of New York. He also acted as media advisor to Prince Hassan of Jordan. In 1990 Tuma joined UNICEF as Director of Information for the Middle East and North Africa, working there until 1997 when he took early retirement and settled with his Kiwi wife in New Zealand.



"Written without rancour, Tuma Hazou's account of his war-time reporting experiences is an engaging, authentic and rare Palestinian account of recent Middle East events, and of nerve-racking personal trauma".

—Janfrie Wakim, NZ Human Rights Activist



King Hussein and Tuma Hazou in 1968, meeting on top of a captured Israeli tank.

This is just one of several illustrations that adorn the book.

"In this book I recount my many 'brushes with death' reporting on hostilities in the turbulent Middle East. The on-going conflicts and upheavals in the region have their roots in the infamous 1917 British Balfour Declaration committing Britain to set up in Palestine a national state for the Jews, ignoring the Muslim and Christian majority population.

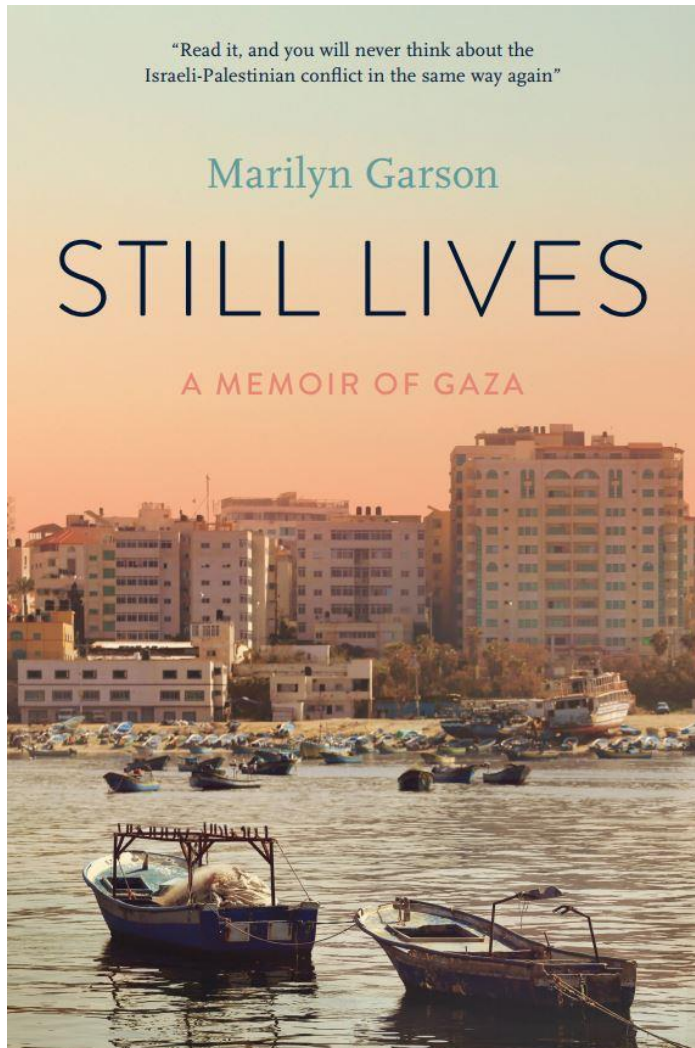
The book ends with an overview of the prevailing dire consequences of the 1967 June War. Addendums to the book add further substance to the personal traumatic narrative and related historical facts"

Books can be ordered directly from the author at gandthazou@gmail.com

Still Lives – Marilyn Garson

Canadian-Kiwi Marilyn writes of her experiences working in GAZA under the Israeli blockade from 2011 to 2015. This is a book which brings to life the horrific brutality of the 2014 Israeli invasion of Gaza which left over 300 killed – including over 500 children. Marilyn documented her experiences as she worked through this horror.

It is a MUST READ.



You can purchase this from your local bookshop or order your eBook [here](#) or order a physical copy at www.marilyngarson.com

Merchandise for Sale

T shirt Free Palestine End Israeli Occupation medium size only \$22



Kaffiyeh 110 x 110 \$44 + postage



For any of these email bronwensummers@gmail.com or phone 03 55 00 132 txt 0220850161
Alternatively, you can buy merchandise including T-shirts from our website
<http://www.palestinesolidaritynz.net/shop.html>

Are you able to donate a cup of coffee a month to the campaign?

We will need some serious money to make our campaign as effective as possible. For example, we will need somewhere in the vicinity of \$25,000 to bring speakers to New Zealand over the next year and organise large public meetings to help spread the message.

You can help. Are you able to donate a cup of coffee a month to the campaign? In other words, **can you afford to make an automatic payment of \$5 per month to support the Palestinian struggle?** (If you can afford more that would be great!)

Our account details are:

Account name: Palestine Solidarity Network

Account number: 38-9015-0849542-00

Or Pay Pal account: admin@palestinesolidaritynz.net

We are happy to provide a receipt upon request (*however, we are not a registered charity so this is not tax-deductible*)

More ways you can get involved

- Forward this Newsletter – If you know people who may be interested in this movement, please forward this Newsletter to them.
- Join in local activities in your area monthly Rallies - In Auckland at 2.00 pm on the first Saturday of every month. Please consider doing the same in your community. Contact Secretary@PSNA.nz if you would like to know where and how to get Flags and Banners
- Help set up a Students for Justice in Palestine groups on your campus
- Tell Your MP your opinions on Divestment and Sanctions of Israel.
- Write Letters to Newspapers – Call Talkback Radio
- Keep in touch with the campaign on social media
 - ❖ Palestine Solidarity Network Aotearoa (PSNA) website: www.PSNA.nz
 - ❖ PSNA Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/671376706283605/
 - ❖ PSNA email: Secretary@PSNA.nz
- The Palestine Human Rights Campaign produces the *In Occupied Palestine* newsletter. It is a regular daily newsletter on the daily situation in

Palestine, compiled by Leslie Bravery and emailed to subscribers. If you would also like to become a subscriber, please contact Leslie at “sumud1 @ outlook. com” (remove the spaces to use as an email address) for further information.

- Keep Updated on our Facebook pages and websites (listed below)
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Regional and Affiliates

Regional

Bay of Islands	PSNA Bay of Islands	email
Whangarei	PSNA Whangarei	Facebook
Auckland	PSNA Auckland – Tamaki Makaurau	Website
Hamilton	Palestine Human Rights Campaign Waikato	Facebook
Tauranga	Tauranga Moana 4 Palestine	Facebook
Napier/Hastings	Aotearoa Standing with Palestine	Facebook
Palmerston North	PSNA Palmerston North	email
New Plymouth	PSNA New Plymouth	email
Wellington	Wellington Palestine	Website
Nelson	Te Tau Ihu (Nelson) Palestine	Facebook
Christchurch	PSNA Christchurch	Facebook
Dunedin	Dunedin for Justice in Palestine	Facebook
Invercargill	PSNA Invercargill	email

Affiliates

- [Boycott Divestment and Sanctions NZ](#)
- [Kia Ora Gaza](#)
- [Letters for Palestine](#)
- [Auckland Peace Action](#)
- [Global Peace and Justice Auckland](#)
- [Preserved Identity \(Palestinian products\)](#)
- [Auckland Uni– Students for Justice in Palestine](#)
- [Massey Uni- Students for Justice in Palestine](#)