

Arrests

According to the IDF Spokesperson, from the beginning of the Gulf war up until February 12, 1991, 3,647 persons were arrested, 3,005 in the West Bank, and 642 in the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank alone, 1,714 persons were arrested for breaking the curfew.

Among those arrested are a number of individuals held under administrative detention (arrest without trial). As a result of the closure and the consequent difficulties in obtaining information from the territories, it is not possible to know the exact number of administrative detainees. The best-known among the administrative detainees is Dr. Sari Nusseibah, a lecturer of philosophy accused of passing security-related information to "an official Iraqi figure." Dr. Nusseibah, like other Palestinian leaders under administrative detention, was not tried in a court of law, because the military authorities claimed that they did not want to disclose information relating to their activities.

Hundreds of persons arrested for violating the curfew were tried in "quick courts," and without legal representation. The large majority pleaded guilty and were fined between NIS 500 and NIS 1,000 (between \$250 and \$500). (The average monthly wage received by Palestinian workers is approximately NIS 1,000 (\$500)). It should be noted that a substantial portion of those arrested and fined were unable to pay the sum, and remained in custody. Others, who did not confess, were sentenced to jail terms. A large percentage of those fined could not afford to pay, and therefore remained in detention. Attorney Mona Rishmawi reported to **B'Tselem** that in certain cases, detainees unable to pay fines of NIS 50 were forced to spend 50 days in detention. Others, unable to pay a fine of NIS 800, will be held for only 40 days in lieu of payment. In Gaza, on the other hand, the fines are higher but their payment can be postponed.

West Bank lawyers declared a strike at the beginning of the Gulf war, announcing that they would not appear in the "quick trials", since they were unwilling to participate in a mere facade of justice. As a result of the curfew, families without a telephone are unable to contact a lawyer, and lawyers are unable to summon witnesses or to examine files. Consequently, most "quick trials" are held in the West Bank without attorneys in attendance.