

health insurance the children of residents are not able to receive medical treatment at national health clinics, and they therefore require private doctors and hospitals, an expense that numerous families, especially in East Jerusalem, are not able to afford. When the issue at stake is the quality of life and health of children, HaMoked expects that the treatment would be faster.

An additional subject area connected to National Insurance is the passage of information between it and the Ministry of the Interior. Due to the meticulous examinations of National Insurance, the receipt of children's allowances is an important indication for the Ministry of the Interior that the center of life for a family is Jerusalem. Often the Ministry of the Interior "advises" HaMoked to direct a family to the Institute of National Insurance to demand child allowances. However, the connection does not end here. In one instance a clerk from National Insurance requested that HaMoked direct a woman to the Ministry of the Interior to bring a certificate concerning her status in Israel. As previously noted, there is no direct connection between the status of a person according to the Ministry of the Interior and his or her eligibility for national insurance. After several weeks, HaMoked received notification from the Ministry of the Interior that the residency of the woman had expired and that she must return her identity card. It is clear in this instance that the clerk from National Insurance acted as a tool for the Ministry of the Interior in order to send the woman to the office so there they would confiscate her identity card.

The extent of work and information connections between the Ministry of the Interior and National Insurance is not known, and the legality of these connections is in doubt.

Closure

It has already been noted that the closure makes the issue of responding to requests for family reunification even more critical than in the past. In fact, the West Bank and Gaza Strip were declared closed military zones already on 2 July 1967, although until the 1990's the entrance of Palestinians to Jerusalem (and to Israel, apart from the city of Eilat) was permitted by a general exit permit (number 5, Judea and Samari, 1972). The prevention of entrance into Israel was done on an individual basis. As of the Gulf War the trend has changed, with various ups and downs. On 10 February 1991 the general exit permit was suspended. The closure became the rule and the exit to Israel was permitted on the basis of personal permits and occasionally on the basis of belonging to certain groups (such as males over the age of 50, for a short period and women, who in certain periods did not require individual permits to enter Israel.). An additional tightening of the closure occurred when, on 30.3.93, all of the exit permits issued since 1991 were cancelled. Since then there have been ups and downs in the severity of the closure. Occasionally, owing to an attack, all of the permits to exit into Israel were suspended (the expression "suspended" in this case means "cancelled until further notice").

After the suspension ("imposition of a closure" in the words of the media, as if a closure had not previously existed), a gradual process of slowly easing up on the closure and awarding new permits began-until the next suspension. Despite the various ups and downs, the overall trend over time was to tighten the closure.

One of the criteria for receiving a permit to enter Israel was that of "divided families." In the divided families directive, periodic entrance permits to Israel, including overnight stays, were given to residents of the territories who were married to residents of Israel. The procedure occasionally changed- in the beginning, residents were required to submit documents attesting to the center of their life in Israel, similar to those required by the Ministry of the Interior. As of May 1995, this permit was given on the basis of a certificate from the Ministry of the Interior that the FARE request is in their care.

Since the "imposition of the closure," (in other words, making the closure total) at the end of February this year, the divided families procedure has yet to be renewed. Family members who are residents of the territories are prevented from entering Jerusalem and in other words, the families have been divided since February 1996.

Confiscation of Identification Cards

Parallel with the change of policy in the beginning of 1994 was a wave of confiscations of identification cards from residents of East Jerusalem whom the Ministry of the Interior decided had moved the center of their life from the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem. It must be noted that the Ministry of the Interior had implemented, since March 1994, a passive policy in this regard, a sort of spider waiting for its prey; one who arrives at the office of the Ministry of the Interior in East Jerusalem to receive various services is liable to find him or herself without an identification card, which means that the person is erased from the population registry of Israeli residents.

Among those who lost their residency are many of the same women whose family reunification requests submitted years ago on behalf of their husbands have yet to be answered. These women turned to the Ministry of the Interior to inquire as to the status of these pending requests and found themselves suddenly without identification cards or residency. The Ministry of the Interior refuses to publicize the number of persons whose identity cards were taken away or who were erased since 1994 from the population registry.

Many factors, whose source is the continued policy in East Jerusalem, indeed brought many women to (in the words of the Ministry of the Interior) "follow their husbands." These factors, already mentioned, include a refusal to permit new building or programs for neighborhoods in East Jerusalem, the policy which discriminated on the basis of gender in the matter of family reunification which was practiced until 1994 and more. It is unknown today what length of residing outside the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem results in a decision by the Ministry of the Interior to negate the residency. For those who return to live in Jerusalem, it is