

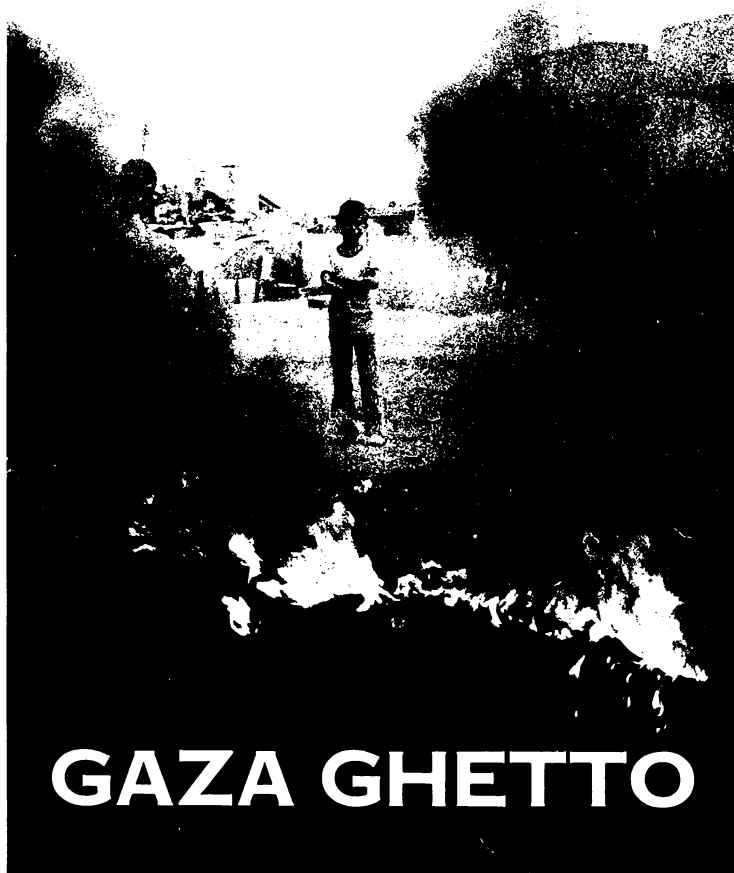
Portrait of a Palestinian Family 1948-84
A documentary film by PeÅ Holmquist, Joan Mandell, Pierre Björklund

In 1948, the 20 year old Palestinian Abu el Adel fled together with his family, as Israeli troops advanced on their home village, Dimra. Their flight led them to the Jabalia refugee camp in Gaza, occupied by Israel since 1967. Today, Abu el Adel passes the ruins of Dimra every morning on his way to Tel Aviv's «slave market», an illegal labor market where Israeli companies hire Palestinian day laborers. On the land of what was once Abu el Adel's neighboring village, the current Israeli Minister of Trade and Industry, General Ariel Sharon, is now the proud owner of a flourishing farm. In the film he also explains why he blew up large sections of Jabalia camp in the early 1970s. For Abu el Adel, his daughter Itidhal, her husband Mustafa, their oldest daughter Ra'ida and their six other children, life in Jabalia camp is characterized by total insecurity - the destruction of houses, curfews and killings at demonstrations. We follow them both in joy - the birth of Mukhless - and in sorrow - the grandmother's funeral.

In the film we also meet General Ben Eliezer, responsible for Israel's occupation policy; Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin from the Mapai (Labor) Party; and Reuven Rosenblatt, director of Israeli settlements in Gaza. Saved from the Auschwitz concentration camp in 1945 by Folke Bernadotte, Rosenblatt is now in charge of evicting Palestinian refugees who live too close to Jewish settlements. We also meet Israeli soldiers in uniform who express their doubts about the occupation.

The film was shot during a two-year period under extremely difficult conditions; the work of the film team more resembled agent activity than journalism.

GAZA GHETTO is an 82 minute, 16 mm, color, optical sound film, English version, subtitles; it is also available in



video. For information on obtaining the film contact:
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Filming Under Occupation

This year's Damascus International Film Festival included several films about Palestine. Among them was «GAZA GHETTO» which follows the daily life and experience of a Palestinian family in Jabalia camp in the occupied Gaza Strip. This film succeeds in portraying with equal vividness the two opposing aspects of this reality: We see the brutality of the occupation, but also the dignity and strength of the Palestinians, their love of their land and their persistence in carrying on their lives and traditions despite this. When «GAZA GHETTO» was being shown in the film festival, we had the chance to interview one of the film makers, PeÅ Holmquist.

What was your aim in making this film?

I want to describe what is life under occupation for a normal family, because in Europe and the United States, there hasn't been what you could call a war for a long time. Although the European states and the US are making war in other places, the people there haven't had a war on their own territory for a long time. I want to show what it is to live under occu-

pation when you can't control anything and you don't know what will happen the next day. That's the role of the film.

The film is interspersed with statements by Israeli officials. How did you see their explanations for the crimes committed against the Palestinians, and how will these be heard in the West?