



Of course, you can see very clearly that they are wrong. If Israelis, or any other political or military officials are doing the wrong thing, they have to be criticized. You have to show it, and that's what I hope we have done in our film.

The reason why we have these short commentaries by people like Sharon and Ben Eliezer is that I wanted to reflect the state of nerves in Gaza - that you never know what will happen. That's also why there is no commentary - no one telling you what will happen or what did happen. It just happens like that. You have Sharon in 30 seconds saying something, then you have some other words, and then you go back to the curfew. So I wanted that the film itself gave this constant feeling of occupation. This is how the Palestinians have been living, first as refugees from 1948, and then under Israeli occupation from 1967.

Concerning the echo in the West, of course, it's changing in Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries. The film has been shown in TV in all the Scandinavian countries. I think that after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, things have been changing in Europe for the Palestinian cause. In the US, there is still a long battle to take, because the people just don't know what is happening; they are not informed.

How do you use documents and history as elements in your film?

Our film is quite a personal one. We make one family's story and the Israelis they meet along the way. We do not intend to say that this is the total film on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. What we are trying to show is one family's story. In that, I tried to select the documents and archive material that would show this family's life best. It all has to be reflected from their life and history. When the grandfather is telling the story of 1948, what happened to him, then I have to find pictures and archive material that fit in this story. Sometimes we managed and sometimes we didn't.

Can you tell about the difficulties of filming in occupied Palestine?

Of course, it's difficult, but the Israelis cannot behave towards European or American journalists as they behave towards the Palestinians. After all, they are getting money from the US and a lot of support from Europe. That's why they can't forbid us from filming. Of course, they can, but if you act cleverly, you will find a way to be quicker than them.

So I understand that not all the pictures you show were allowed?

Of course not.

How do you see the masses in front of the camera? Does it show the truth?

We were just trying to film the people as they were. It wasn't necessary to add anything to what was actually happening. You have to stay cool and film what's happening. It's not for me to lean back and say, «This is awful,» because then it won't be a film. That's the hard thing about being a film maker.

You gave a big place to children in your film, and a comparison between the life of the Palestinian Arab and the Jewish children. What does the child Suhail, who was killed, represent in your film?

He is a child who is not allowed to be a child. When he is shot, he is killed as though he was a soldier, not a child. That's the thing with Palestinian children; they're not allowed to be children. When they are talking about Israel and occupation, they speak like grown-ups. There's no time to be children. I think that's cruel, but I don't think the Palestinians can do anything about it. It's the only way the Palestinians can live.

When we saw the film, one of my friends joked that the woman who washed the newborn baby, did so in a very hard way. How do you see this?

It is interesting to see the reaction here, because I think that's the only reaction to the film that was the same here and in Sweden - that people felt pity for the child. When I showed it for other Palestinians, they didn't notice anything; they were maybe laughing a little. I heard someone else surprised that this woman, as a Muslim, did this because it's like a Christian baptism. For my own reaction, I was surprised that it took such a long time, because she was doing it in the most efficient way.

I think it is important in a political film like this to also show something of the life that they try to keep as normal. They have been doing this in Gaza long ago, and they still keep this. It is important to show that they want to keep the Palestinian traditions. In a situation like Gaza today, it is also political to keep these traditions.

Do you see the birth of the new baby as a continuation of Suhail?

I don't know really. You could see it that way, but I saw it more as a protest against what Sharon and Rabin are saying, that they don't want the Palestinians to rule their own life. I saw it as a protest against their slogans of «No talks with the PLO, No Palestinian state, No right to self-determination...»

In the kibbutz, the religious man dances carrying a gun and a baby. What does this represent?

That's what they do. From their view, it's not hard to understand why they have a gun. They have taken Palestinian land in the West Bank and Gaza, so they have to carry guns. Of course, to me it's absurd, because you bring up the children like occupiers from birth. Of course I react against this, as a human being.