

Al Faraa

Zionist Torture Factory

After mounting exposure of the horrible conditions at Al Faraa detention center near Nablus, the Israeli army finally opened it to inspection by foreign journalists in early April. For the occasion, Al Faraa had been temporarily «cleaned up»: «From the guided tour and brief conversations with some of the inmates, it was impossible to verify the accuracy of the assertions made in January by the International Commission of Jurists», wrote Edward Walsh of the Washington Post Service (*International Herald Tribune*, April 11). This show enacted by the Israelis, added to the recent hunger strikes in other Zionist jails, highlights the need for further campaigns to expose Zionist torture. The Israeli authorities cannot be allowed to slip off the hook so easily; maltreatment at Al Faraa has been extensively reported and documented. Below is some material we had prepared for our last issue, but were forced to postpone for reasons of space. We think it has added relevance now in view of the Zionist cover-up.

Breaking the morale of youth

The basic point about Al Faraa is that the detainees are youth, sometimes only children. They are picked up on the street at random in connection with demonstrations and stonethrowing, without their parents being informed.

Often they are victims of «preventive» detention, as when the Israeli authorities rounded up over 200 West Bank youth in the week preceding Land Day, hoping to forestall demonstrations. In Al Faraa, they are interrogated by the Israeli army before being turned over to courts in the West Bank. This situation leaves much leeway for abuse, and Al Faraa has been described as a concentration camp and factory for producing confessions. Considering the youth of the detainees and the ugly methods used, Al Faraa is part of the calculated Zionist plan for destroying the younger generation of Palestinians under occupation, for their energy and consciousness will fuel our people's national identity and struggle for years to come.

It is no coincidence that Al Faraa was opened in January 1982, on the recommendation of then Chief of Staff Raphael Eitan. In the same period, the Zionist leadership was putting the finishing touches on the plan to invade Lebanon, destroy the PLO, and thereby break the united will of our people under occupation, to allow for eventual annexation of the occupied territories. The torture in Al Faraa is one aspect of the plan, as is the terror of armed settlers who seek to frighten our people into leaving Palestine. In this perspective, defending the Al Faraa detainees is not only a humanitarian duty, but a necessary support to our

masses' continued resistance to occupation.

In January 1984, the Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners and Detainees in Israeli Jails received two reports from occupied Palestine about conditions in Al Faraa. These reveal an ugly, sophisticated system for breaking down the morale of youthful detainees, relying on collaborators and homosexual rape. Below, we summarize one of the reports:

Al Faraa is divided into two blocks. The first is for newly arrived prisoners. The second is for those who have already been severely tortured, some of whom confessed under the cruelty of the military and intelligence officers. In addition, members of Kahane's fascist Kach party and other ultraright settlers have been invited to join in the harassment of the detainees.

Block 1: «The Stable»

Here there is no access for visitors, lawyers or Red Cross officials. Block 1 is composed of solitary confinement cells, yet three to four detainees are placed in each. Prisoners are forbidden to speak or move about; infractions are immediately punished by beatings. On an average, the prisoner remains here for 18-40 days. Those detainees who resist torture and refuse to confess stay the longest.

In block 1 there are two soldiers and several collaborators. The latter are said to be janitors, but their real duty is harassing the detainees and raping them; they have keys to the cells, allowing them to terrorize the detainees round the

Prisoners' paintings were on display to greet newly liberated comrades in Libya.

