

~~PALESTINIAN~~ ~~EDUCATION~~

A Threat to Israel's Security ?

The Israeli Policy of School Closures
in the Occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip
(December 1987 - January 1989)

*The
Jerusalem
Media and
Communication
Centre*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	1
2. The School System in the Occupied Territories	3
3. The Sequence of Closures	4
3.1 West Bank	4
3.2 East Jerusalem	8
3.3 Gaza Strip	10
4. Closure Rationale	13
4.1 An Examination of the Official Explanation	13
4.2 Collective Punishment	15
4.3 A Policy of Enforced Ignorance	17
4.4 An Issue of Asserting Control	18
4.5 Differences in Policy - West Bank and Gaza Strip	20
4.6 Illegality of Closures	21
5. Consequences	22
5.1 Academic Effects	22
5.1.1 Elementary Level (6 - 12 year olds)	23
5.1.2 Preparatory Level (13 - 15 year olds)	24
5.1.3 Secondary Level (15 - 18 year olds)	25
5.1.4 Longterm Effects on Overall Educational Standards	26
5.2 Social Effects	27
5.2.1 Socialisation and Cultural Literacy	28
5.2.2 Response to Authority	30
5.2.3 Motivation to Learn	31
5.2.4 Strain on Teachers and Parents	32
5.3 Economic Effects	34
5.3.1 Teachers	34
5.3.2 Parents	35
5.3.3 Institutions	35
6. Conclusion	37

TABLES

TABLE 1: Grade Levels with Equivalent Student Ages	3
TABLE 2: Percentage of Students in UNRWA, Govt. and Private Schools	4
TABLE 3: Number of West Bank Schools/Students by Grade Level	4
TABLE 4: Number of Gaza Strip Students by Grade Level	11

APPENDIX	41
A1. Area-Wide School Closure Orders - West Bank	41
A2. Individual School Closure Orders - West Bank	42
A3. School Closure Orders - East Jerusalem	43
A4. School Closure Orders - Gaza Strip	44
A5. Closure of UNRWA Schools by Curfew and Military Order - Gaza Strip (Breakdown by Week)	45
A6. Closure of UNRWA Schools by Curfew and Military Order - Gaza Strip (Breakdown by Area)	46
B. Translation of School Closure Orders	47

1. Introduction

Since December 1987 the Israeli military authorities have implemented numerous measures of collective punishment aimed at crushing the Palestinian uprising. Among the most comprehensive and widely implemented of these measures has been interference in Palestinian education, carried out at all levels and in all areas of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It has involved extended and widespread closures of schools and universities, military attacks on schools, the military occupation of schools for use as military headquarters and detention centres, the outlawing of popularly initiated alternative education programmes, and the harassment and detention of numerous educators and students.

In 1988 all educational institutions in the West Bank were closed for nearly eight months of the year, preventing nearly 310,000 school students, and 18,000 university and college students from pursuing their education - an entire population was denied access to any form of formal education.*

There is not one school, college, university or vocational training centre in the West Bank or Gaza Strip that was not ordered closed by the Israeli authorities for at least some period in 1988. At the time of writing (31 Jan 1989) all schools in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, remain inoperative under military order; there is no date set for their re-opening. Individual school closures and curfews continue to daily prevent thousands of students in the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem from attending classes.

This report is the first in a series of reports to describe the situation of education during the uprising. It focuses on the closure of primary and secondary schools in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip by the Israeli authorities between 9 December, 1987 and 31 January, 1989, and the widespread implications of this policy.

The data presented in this report is based primarily on information collected from interviews made with teachers, professors, and students throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip between March 1988 and January 1989. An effort was made to speak with persons with as wide a variety of experience and expertise as possible. Elementary, preparatory, and secondary teachers from government, private, and UNRWA schools, as well as school administrators and professors of higher education were

*All five major universities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were closed for the entire year; there is, at the time of writing, still no indication of when they might be permitted to open. In addition, kindergartens in the West Bank were closed for six months of the year.

interviewed, in addition to students from all levels and all types of schools. All those interviewed were asked to describe their educational experiences throughout the past year and to analyse the consequences of the sanctions which have been imposed against Palestinian education. Additional information was taken from the local press.

For security reasons, most of those interviewed preferred to remain anonymous, and many also requested that their positions and places of employment not be mentioned for fear of repercussions from the military should their identities be discovered. This in itself demonstrates the tight restrictions under which the occupiers have attempted to place education.

In view of the extent to which the school closure policy has disrupted education, this report can be no more than an introduction to the crisis-situation Palestinian education faces today. Although by no means comprehensive, the report presents a selection of experiences of educators and students during the first 14 months of the uprising, and their evaluation of the implications of these experiences. Among the topics discussed are: the scope of the closures, reasons behind the closure policy, and the academic, social, and economic effects of this policy.

2. The School System in the Occupied Territories

The school system in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is based on a four-tiered cycle: kindergarten, for students 5-6 years old; elementary school, a six year programme for students 6-12 years old; preparatory school, a three year programme for students 12-15 years old; and secondary school, a three year programme for students 15-18 years old.

TABLE 1: GRADE LEVELS WITH EQUIVALENT STUDENT AGES

	KG	Elem	Prep	Sec
Age (in years)	5-6	6-12	12-15	15-18
# of yrs/cycle	1	6	3	3

The Jordanian and Egyptian curricula and examination systems established by the administrations preceding the Israeli occupation in 1967 continue to be used in the West Bank and Gaza Strip respectively. The educational programme is subject to Israeli censorship. Actual control of the schools is in the hands of the Israeli-run Civil Administration which is in turn subject to the Israeli military.

There are three types of schools operating in the occupied territories:

Government schools, which became the responsibility of the Israeli government as an occupying power in 1967, are directly run by the Israeli Civil Administration. Government schools provide services at the elementary, preparatory, and secondary levels. It is generally agreed that standards in government schools are lower than in the other two types of schools.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) schools were set up in 1949 to serve the Palestinian refugee population. UNRWA provides schooling for the first nine years (elementary and preparatory levels); it does not provide school services at the secondary level. Like government schools, UNRWA schools are obliged to use the Israeli-censored Jordanian and Egyptian curriculum. The UNRWA curriculum is further subject to the approval of UNESCO educational advisors.

Private schools run by a variety of indigenous and foreign institutions, most with a religious affiliation, provide education at all levels. Private schools provide a predominantly secular education, following the same curriculum as the government schools. However, private schools are less strictly controlled; they are able to add to the basic government

curriculum and have more scope for educational exploration. Because private schools run on a fee-paying basis they generally cater to the wealthier classes. Only private institutions provide education at the kindergarten level.

TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN UNRWA, GOVT, & PRIVATE SCHOOLS

	Government	UNRWA	Private
West Bank+	76%	13%	11%
Gaza Strip	51%	44%	5%

(Figures may be slightly distorted by the inclusion of teachers training colleges.)

+ These figures do not include East Jerusalem. Nor are there separate official figures for East Jerusalem schools available since this area was annexed in 1967 and is treated as part of Israel proper by the Israeli government.

(Source: Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, 1988)

3. The Sequence of Closures

Dates of school closures were gathered from the local press and confirmed, when possible, by school employees. Because of the extent to which the authorities have implemented the policy of school closures, and because there is currently no national infrastructure set up to collect such data on a comprehensive and systematic basis,* the actual number of schools affected by enforced closures may be significantly higher. (See **Appendix A** for lists of school closures documented in the local Arabic and English press and UNRWA attendance records for Gaza schools.)

3.1 West Bank

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF WEST BANK SCHOOLS/STUDENTS BY GRADE LEVEL

	KG	Elem	Prep	Sec	Total
Schools +		611	321	262	1194
Students	18,712	184,703	69,190	36,725	309,300

+Included within figure for number of elementary schools.

(Source: Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, 1988; Jerusalem Post figures, 1988/89)

*For the same reason basic statistics regarding schools in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (eg. number of schools/students) are not fully compiled or readily available. Those figures available are included in tables within the report.

1987/88 Academic Year

3 February: The Office of Education under the Israeli Civil Administration issued an order closing all schools in the West Bank "until further notice". No reason for the closure was given. (See **Appendix B** for translation of military closure orders.) The order was issued just as government schools were slated to start the second semester after the winter vacation. The order affected some 310,000 school-aged children from nearly 1,200 government, UNRWA, and private schools.

9 March: The Military Commander in Judea and Samaria, Brigadier Gabi Over, issued a second order closing "all educational institutions in the Judea and Samaria area" from 9 March until 9 April. Similar orders extended the closure of all West Bank schools from April to the end of May.

23 May: Over 203,000 kindergarten and elementary students returned to classes in 611 schools on 23 May. Almost four months after the first closure order was issued and at the time when West Bank schools are normally completing the second semester, students were permitted to return to school on a gradual basis.

28 May: 321 schools opened for some 69,000 preparatory students.

7 June: 262 schools opened for approximately 36,700 secondary students.

Although schools were permitted to re-open, this did not ensure that all students were able to return to school on a regular basis: those students living in areas under curfew were unable to return to classes, and students held under detention were unable to return to classes. Nonetheless 85% of the secondary students turned out for their first day back to school.¹

9 June: Just two days after secondary classes resumed, sources in the Civil Administration were already threatening to reclose all schools.²

12 June: Military authorities ordered the closure of al-Hussein Bin Ali Secondary Boys school in Hebron, just five days after the re-opening of secondary schools. This policy of individual closures was to continue until the end of the semester.

The policy was implemented in all areas of the West Bank and directed against at least 83 schools. For some schools, individual closure orders resulted in the loss of as much as 30% of the school days in the revised second semester. (This in addition to days lost to area-wide closures.) At the end of June at least seven schools were closed for one month periods. By the beginning of July dozens of schools had been closed for various

lengths of time.

15 June: Within a week of the re-convening of secondary classes, the Israeli military authorities once again shut down all West Bank schools for two days.

27 June: Zahran Hassouna, Director of Education for the Nablus area, announced that the Israeli authorities had informed him of the closure of the 12 secondary government schools and the 19 preparatory government and UNRWA schools in Nablus and its four surrounding refugee camps. The two private secondary schools in Nablus were also closed.³

5 July: All schools were again ordered closed. This time until 8 July.

14 July: All schools in Tulkarem and Qalqilia were ordered closed until the end of the semester, originally scheduled for 15 August. Four of Qalqilia's eight schools and seven of Tulkarem's 19 schools had already been closed by individual military orders at an earlier date. Both schools in the nearby village of Dhannabeh were also ordered closed until the end of the semester.

The imposition of curfews also effectively prevented students in entire areas from going to school. In Tulkarem, for instance, curfew was in effect for almost the entire month of June. According to UNRWA's Field Education Officer for the West Bank, UNRWA school students in Tulkarem were only able to attend classes for six days during the entire second semester due to the imposition of curfew and the 14 July closure.

16 July: The authorities announced that "in response to mounting unrest in West Bank schools" the academic year would be ended on 21 July, a month earlier than had been originally scheduled.⁴ Thus the second semester, which usually extends from February until mid-June, was squeezed into a less than two-month period, which was repeatedly interrupted by several short-term closures on an area-wide basis, and more extensive closures on an individual basis.

21 July: All West Bank schools were required to end their second semester and to register grades evaluating the second semester as though the session had actually been completed.

Elementary, preparatory, and secondary schools were permitted to open for a maximum of 47, 44, 35 school days respectively in the second semester of the 1987/88 academic year. However, educators are quick to point out that schools were not even opened this many days. "They [Israeli authorities] say we opened 23 May," explained one elementary teacher, "but considering all of the individual closure orders, curfews, disturbances, and general

strikes between then and 21 July, they cannot claim we were able to convene even two months' worth of school days."

1988/89 Academic Year (1 September - 31 January)

30 September: Military authorities announced that West Bank schools would not be permitted to open until 15 November. Schools normally open at the beginning of September. Kindergartens, which had previously been included in the comprehensive closure orders, were the only exception to the new order.

15 November: The closure order against all schools was further extended until 1 December.

1 December: Elementary classes began the 1988-89 school year.

11 December: Preparatory students were permitted to return to classes. However, a number of schools were unable to open because they were still occupied by IDF troops, who were using the school premises as military headquarters and barracks. Among them were five schools in the Nablus area,⁵ four in the Hebron area, and one in Tulkarem town.⁶

18 December: Secondary students returned to school.

30 December: All West Bank schools were ordered closed for one week beginning 31 December, just 12 days after secondary students had finally been permitted to attend classes.

5 January: The week-long regional closure was extended until 10 January.

Two school weeks were thus lost, even before highschool classes, other interruptions excluded, convened as many days. At that time many teachers and students were already convinced that the policy of widescale closures as well as individual closures would continue. In addition, individual closure orders, curfews, and military occupation of a number of schools again prevented thousands of students from attending school on a regular basis.

17 January: Amram Mitzna, Officer in Command of the Central Region [West Bank], threatened to close all schools if demonstrations continued. At least 40 schools were closed by military order since the start of the new school year.⁷

18 January: All 47 schools in Jenin, Ramallah, al-Bireh, and Qalqilia were ordered closed from 19-23 January. The Israeli Director of Education for the West Bank said that "only" 75 to 80 schools have been closed in the area and that this was a small number of closures.⁸

19 January: A Civil Administration spokeswoman announced that 89

schools were closed during the past month.⁹

20 January: Military authorities announced the re-closure of all West Bank schools beginning 21 January until authorities determine that a suitable atmosphere for study under "normal circumstances" is established.¹⁰

22 January: Military authorities announced that the 20 January closure order until further notice included kindergartens.

Hence elementary, preparatory, and secondary students have thus far attended a maximum of 43, 35, 29 school days respectively in the 1988/89 academic year. Schools closed by additional area-wide, individual closures, and curfews suffered further reductions in the number of school days.

3.2 East Jerusalem

East Jerusalem, although part of the West Bank, was annexed by Israel in 1967. Since then the East Jerusalem district has been governed by Israeli law rather than military law which is enforced in rest of the West Bank. Consequently orders issued against all West Bank schools have not, in general, included schools in East Jerusalem. However, separate area-wide and individual closure orders have been issued against East Jerusalem schools by both Jerusalem municipality authorities and the city police.

Local educators put the number of schools serving in East Jerusalem at 86, including 48 private schools, 30 government schools, and 8 UNRWA schools.*

1987/88 Academic Year

7 February: Municipality authorities ordered the closure of all government schools. Like schools in the rest of the West Bank, schools remained closed through 22 May, 1988. Some 16,000 students who attend government schools in East Jerusalem were affected.¹¹

Over the same period, all private schools in East Jerusalem closed in a solidarity protest against the closure of all other schools in the West Bank.

*There are no official figures available for East Jerusalem schools; since its annexation of the area in 1967, Israel has treated it as part of Israel proper and thus included such statistics with those of schools inside Israel.

23 May: Classes resumed as in the rest of the West Bank. However, unlike the other schools, Jerusalem schools were permitted to schedule the end of the academic year as they wished.

31 May: Students who live in Sheikh Sa'ad just outside the boundary separating annexed Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank, and who attend Swahreh al-Gharabiyah elementary school, which is located within the Jerusalem boundary, were prevented from reaching their school by Israeli border police. Students lost one and a half school days in this manner.¹²

30 July: Jerusalem schools ended the second semester by the last week in July.

At least seven schools were ordered closed for short term periods during the summer session.

1988/89 Academic Year (1 September - 31 January)

4 September: First and second elementary classes were permitted to begin in government schools. (As in the rest of the West Bank, East Jerusalem schools normally open at the beginning of September.)

12 September: Private schools, not included in the orders which postponed school opening dates, began re-opening on a gradual basis over a one week period.

19 September: Classes commenced for third elementary students in government schools.

27 September: Classes commenced for fourth elementary students in government schools.

5 October: Government school students in the remaining classes (fifth and sixth elementary, preparatory and secondary students) were permitted to return to school over one month behind schedule.

Al-Umah Preparatory School and al-Umah Secondary School remained closed under the West Bank closure orders despite the fact that the schools are within Jerusalem city limits, because the school licenses were issued by West Bank authorities.

30 October: All government schools were ordered closed by police and municipality authorities until 3 November, during the period when the Israeli Knesset elections took place.

Although private schools were not ordered closed during the five-day election period, many students were unable to reach schools because of military restrictions stopping all traffic between

Jerusalem and outlying West Bank towns and villages. As a result most private schools could not hold classes.

1 November: At least 9 schools were ordered closed for periods ranging from several days to one month during the new academic year. Two schools, including a-Rashidiyeh Secondary Boys School, the largest public highschool for boys in the East Jerusalem area, were ordered closed twice.

12 November: All government schools were again closed by the Israeli authorities, this time for a week until 19 November, as a "preventive measure" against activities corresponding to the PNC conference in Algiers.¹³

Again many private schools could not hold classes because of travel restrictions placed on students.

30 November: At least 12 closure orders were issued against individual schools and three schools were closed twice from the beginning of this month.

1 December: A-Rashidiyeh Secondary Boys School was ordered closed for the fourth time since the start of the academic year, on this occasion for an indefinite period.

11 December: Al-Umah Preparatory School was permitted to open for the new academic year with other West Bank preparatory schools.

18 December: Al-Umah Secondary School was permitted to begin the new academic year with other West Bank secondary schools.

Schools began administering mid-year exams at the end of December.

In December and January at least 8 Jerusalem-area schools were ordered closed. According to the local press, the total number of closure orders issued against East Jerusalem schools between 4 September and 31 January thus reached 38. A number of Jerusalem schools remain closed at the time of writing, including a-Rashidiyeh Secondary Boys School, which the Israeli authorities have threatened to close permanently, and al-Umah preparatory and secondary schools, which were closed on 21 July with other West Bank schools.

3.3 Gaza Strip

There are 146 UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip. In addition, local educators report that there are 111 government schools and a handful of private schools.

TABLE 4: NUMBER OF GAZA STRIP STUDENTS BY GRADE LEVEL

	KG	Elem	Prep	Sec	Total
Students	6,940	109,772	39,765	19,379	175,856

(Source: Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, 1988)

The situation in the Gaza Strip differs considerably from that of the West Bank. In general, the occupation authorities in the Gaza Strip have not issued area-wide closure orders, tending instead to target individual schools for closure. The local Arabic and English press reported 36 individual school closure orders from 4 September 1988 to 31 January 1989. Because individual school closures are much more difficult to monitor, the closures in the Gaza Strip have not been as widely noted by the press or the international community.

However, due to the frequent and widespread use of curfews in the Gaza Strip, the military authorities have effectively imposed area-wide school closures without ever issuing specific orders against schools. Thus the interruptions to education inflicted by the Israeli authorities are actually far greater than indicated simply by the number of ordered school closures.

Some students reported that their schools were closed virtually all four months of the second term last year. Educators say that 35% to 50% of the school days were lost during the spring term. Because of this, the school year was extended by three weeks, up to the end of June and exams were administered in July.¹⁴ Nonetheless, this make up period did not compensate for the number of school days lost to many schools. Matriculation exams were administered in July. Political communiques issued by local and national underground groups urged people to aid students in preparing for exams in local communiques¹⁵ but "tens of thousands remained under curfew" as students attempted to prepare for the exams.¹⁶

1988/89 Academic Year (1 September - 31 January)

1 September: Kindergarten and elementary classes started on schedule. The opening of all other schools, which normally takes place at the beginning of September, was delayed by military order.

15 September: Approximately 40,000 preparatory students returned to school in accordance with the delayed date set by the military authorities. However, upon arriving they were informed that the military had further delayed the opening date until 20 September without prior notice.

20 September: Preparatory schools were permitted to open.

1 October: The opening of all secondary schools was postponed from 4 October until an indefinite date.

8 October: The Israeli military ordered the closure of two UNRWA-run elementary schools for five days.

11 October: Secondary schools for over 19,000 students were to re-open nearly five weeks behind schedule.

28 October: Jaffa Secondary School for Boys in Gaza City was able to open for the first time. In actuality, a number of secondary schools were unable to open until the end of October.

2 November: During the past week an average of 59 UNRWA preparatory and elementary schools were closed daily due to curfews, and an additional 10 UNRWA schools were closed by individual military orders. Thus 47% of the UNRWA schools were closed on a daily basis during the past week. (Statistics for compiling such figures are not available from government schools.)

5 November: Jaffa Secondary School for Boys was ordered closed for two months barely one week after opening, following an army raid on the school.* At least twenty other schools were shut by military order since the start of the new academic year.

12 November: The entire Gaza Strip was placed under curfew until 16 November, resulting in the loss of five school days for the Gaza Strip's 175,856 students.

19 November: The comprehensive curfew is lifted but five areas are still under curfew effectively closing 69 UNRWA schools (ie. 47% of all UNRWA schools in Gaza) as well as government schools in the closed areas.

13 December: Military authorities again clamp a curfew on the entire Gaza Strip, effectively shutting its over 250 schools.

27 December: Eight individual schools remain closed by military order. At least 31 have been closed by order since the new academic year.

11 January: Authorities announce their intention to re-open 8 of

*On 31 October soldiers stormed the school, opening fire with tear gas and live ammunition. They then broke into classrooms and beat students, claiming that stones were thrown from the school grounds. Ninety-five students were hospitalised for beating and gunshot wounds. The military subsequently closed the school. (SEE: Al-Quds, 1 Nov, 1988)

the 9 schools currently closed. The seventh, al-Mutanabi Secondary Boys School in Abassan, will remain closed indefinitely. Curfews meanwhile prevented all students from Deir al-Balah and Shati refugee camps from attending classes.

16 January: The Head of the Civil Administration in the Gaza Strip threatens to close all schools until the end of the academic year if students organise any further demonstrations.

The imposition of curfews has resulted in the serious disruption of classes for students throughout the Gaza Strip. According to UNRWA records there were only 11 days when all of their 146 elementary and preparatory schools were able to open from September through December (97 total school days) without interference due to curfews and/or closure orders. Six school days were lost to all schools when the entire Gaza Strip was under curfew. An average of 29% of all Gaza Strip UNRWA schools were closed daily during the first four months of the 1988/89 academic year, due largely to curfews. Nuseirat Refugee Camp and Jabalia Refugee Camp/Beit Hanoun were the areas most affected by curfew closures during this period. Curfews together with closure orders in these two areas resulted, on average, in the daily closure of 40% and 36% of all UNRWA schools in each area respectively. In other areas an average of 22-30% of the UNRWA schools were closed daily.

Such figures do not include the loss of schools days suffered by students who were unable to reach schools not within curfewed areas because the areas where they live were under curfew. UNRWA records, however, indicate that attendance rates may be significantly reduced because of students under curfew even when the school itself and a proportion of that school's students are not. Nor do they reflect the loss of class time induced by teacher absence due to curfews in their areas of residence, which prevent them from reaching schools which are not under curfew. The severity of curfew-imposed disruptions on school operations may thus, in actuality, be significantly higher.

4. Closure Rationale

4.1 An Examination of the Official Explanation

The initial order issued by the Officer of Education for the West Bank area, which closed all government, UNRWA and private schools "until further notice" from 4 February 1988, gave no reason for the closure. In subsequent orders the Military Commander for the West Bank, Brigadier Gabi Over, asserted that the closure was necessary "to maintain order and discipline, the general order, and for the security of the Israeli Defence Forces...." (See Appendix B for translations of original orders.)

The Israeli authorities have consistently maintained that schools have been closed on "security grounds", repeatedly claiming that school closure orders have been necessitated by student disturbances which threaten security.

In a warning to East Jerusalem principals, the Jerusalem police and municipality authorities declared that they had done everything possible to prevent students from losing the school year but they would "have no choice but to start closing schools if disturbances continued."¹⁷ Thus the authorities have repeatedly attempted to place the responsibility for the closures on students, claiming that they wish to open schools but cannot do so because the convening of schools poses too great a threat to security.

A number of factors, however, seriously challenge the official line of reasoning and indicate that the closures are, to a large extent, politically motivated.

First, it is questionable that security reasons have necessitated the policy of indiscriminate school closures against all students in the West Bank. During the nine months all West Bank schools were closed no attempt was made to close only those schools allegedly responsible for disturbances. Even after the long closure periods were lifted and West Bank schools were permitted to re-open (in May-July and December 1988), all schools were closed for short-term periods.

One must further ask why the closure policy has been implemented against students of all ages; the meeting of kindergarten and lower elementary school children in classrooms is hardly a threat to the security of the state of Israel. Following the latest comprehensive closure in January 1989, MK Dedi Zucker (Citizens Rights Movement) raised this issue in Knesset where he said there was "no logical security or political reason for the closure of kindergartens" and demanded that measures be taken to ensure that they were re-opened.¹⁸

Neither have the military authorities offered evidence to substantiate their claims that the opening of schools results in an increase in demonstrations. On the contrary, schools were on winter break in January 1988 when demonstrations against the occupation reached new heights and the uprising was first established as a lasting phenomenon; schools were also closed during the massive demonstrations which swept through the West Bank in February.

In actuality, school closures have, in a number of incidents, actually sparked demonstrations and protests. In Qalqilia, for instance, students staged several sit-in protests and demonstrations in response to the closure of their schools

beginning 28 June and escalating into clashes by 14 July 1988.¹⁹ Likewise, following the military's shut down of all West Bank schools 20 January 1989, demonstrations and clashes erupted in Ramallah and other West Bank towns. On several occasions the United National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU), the underground popular leadership which emerged during the early days of the uprising, has called for protests against school closures and students have responded with sit-ins and demonstrations.²⁰ Throughout the past year outbreaks in response to school closures have been reported throughout the West Bank as well as in the Gaza Strip.

At the same time, when schools have been permitted to open, attendance rates have been high -- the large majority of students have been in the classroom, not in the streets, when classes are in session. The UNLU has encouraged students to attend classes during non-strike hours and to pursue their education with diligence.²¹

Furthermore, the authorities have not been consistent in the application of their reasoning: in the Gaza Strip, where confrontations have been at least as extensive as in the West Bank, no comprehensive closure orders have been given.

4.2 Collective Punishment

Contrary to the official explanation, Palestinians argue that the military government's repeated use of school closures against all West Bank schools, without regard for age or incident of disturbances, is meant to punish all students, as well as their families, and Palestinian society collectively, regardless of whether or not opened schools threaten "the security of the state or the IDF". The measure has inevitably had a widespread effect. Over 35% of the West Bank population are students; there is at least one student in almost every West Bank household and most households have many more.

According to Palestinian educators, the closure policy is calculated as a means of collectively punishing the population and coercing them into stopping the uprising. "They want people to suffer and want to put pressure on people to yield," explains one UNRWA official. "They know how much Palestinians value education."

The military has directly responded to such allegations. In an official statement to the Jerusalem Post, the Civil Administration spokesperson said: "I can state quite categorically that there is no such policy. We are not using the closure of schools as a punishment."²²

Yet, in June, military sources explained the two-day closure of

all West Bank schools as a response to the participation of "pupils in several schools" (emphasis added) in past strikes and disturbances.²³ Clearly, Palestinian analysts conclude, the actions of some students are used as a pretext to punish the entire population.

Al-Haq, the West Bank Affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists, concludes in its recent report Israel's War Against Education in the Occupied West Bank (Nov 1988):

The security rationale put forth by the government to justify school closing is neither supported by facts or law. The Israeli government's actions force the conclusion that it is education itself that is targeted and that it is intended as another means... [of] collective punishment...in the hope that the will of the local population fighting for its legitimate rights will be broken.

Outside observers agree. For example, John Pollock, the chairperson of a visiting delegation of educators from the World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP) announced at a press conference that the WCOTP delegation rejected the Israeli argument that the closures were not being implemented as collective punishment. The WCOTP delegation, which spent nine days investigating the situation of education in the territories in light of the prolonged closures, concluded that the closures had done serious damage to education.²⁴

In a statement issued from its headquarters in Vienna in October 1988, UNRWA criticised the IDF closures saying:

Security considerations have been invoked to justify the closure of educational institutions, but the major consequence is that a generation of Palestinian children...are unable to exercise their basic right to education.²⁵

Military authorities have issued a number of statements clearly demonstrating a lack of concern for educational endeavours and confirming that school closures are indeed intended to have specific political effects on the West Bank and Gaza population. In June, Gaza District Civil Administration sources reportedly claimed that "school closures have increasing impact as the date for important year-end examinations approach."²⁶ And in September, the vice military governor of Nablus warned that schools would stay closed as long as the uprising lasts.²⁷

"It is a collective punishment which puts great pressure not only on students but on their families," remarked a teacher from the Ramallah area.

It is an attempt to divide us between those who want to struggle and those who want to study. They don't understand that we will do both.

Another educator summarised:

They [the military] understand that we value education very highly, and they want us to say: enough, the uprising is too costly, we want our education more. It's just one more price they're making us pay for our resistance, like the closure of shops, the travel restrictions, the injuries, the deaths....

4.3 A Policy of Enforced Ignorance

When asked about why Israeli authorities have closed their schools, children throughout the West Bank, as well as the Gaza Strip, consistently respond that Israel wants to keep Palestinians ignorant. One 11-year-old student explained:

They [Israelis] want to make us stupid. They are afraid to allow us to be educated -- they know that education is our most powerful weapon.

"They don't want us to know our history," offered another student.

A secondary school student from Balata Refugee Camp, near Nablus expanded this perception:

They want to make us ignorant. They want to reduce us to being backward and less than them. They know how highly we value our education. We know it's very important -- we want to know about the world and especially about our situation. We want to understand everything. This will help us to formulate the best way to struggle and to communicate our struggle. We don't have guns and weapons. We must use education..."

The outlawing of popular education and the prohibition of home study alternatives further indicate that reasons other than security are behind the school closures. In response to the school closures, people organised home-schooling programmes in coordination with local popular committees throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip over the past year. Students met outdoors or in local homes, mosques, and churches for study sessions with teachers, parents, or older students. These community schools varied considerably in the level of organisation and style from place to place; some taught the entire Jordanian curriculum for students of all ages, while others involved a handful of students who were tutored by a teacher in three or four basic subjects

once a week. Still others experimented with new curriculum specifically designed for Palestinian students (as opposed to the standard Jordanian and Egyptian syllabuses followed in formal schools).

Israeli military authorities responded by declaring all such educational activities as illegal, claiming that they violated the order closing all West Bank educational institutions. In early September 1988 the authorities launched a concentrated campaign against popular education. Soldiers raided study sessions in a number of areas and arrested students and teachers. Even kindergartens were raided on grounds that older children were being taught on the premises.²⁸

Similarly, when private schools in Ramallah implemented home-study programmes to allow students to continue their studies independently, soldiers raided one campus and prevented the handing out of assignments.

Three headmasters of private schools in Ramallah were summoned to military headquarters and forbidden to continue home-study programmes. This was in spite of the fact that schools had made arrangements for parents to pick up the homework instead of the students, to prevent the gathering of students in contravention of the school closure order. Military authorities informed the principals that they wanted "no alternatives".²⁹ And in Bethlehem, the local Civil Administration summoned the heads of local government, private and UNRWA schools to tell them that schools would remain closed and that any teaching outside the schools, for example through popular committees, is illegal.³⁰ Teachers in Jericho were similarly summoned and forbidden to give any private lessons.³¹

4.4 An Issue of Asserting Control

Indeed, many Palestinians contend that the occupation authorities' fear of the establishment of alternatives to Israeli-controlled education was a major incentive behind the eventual re-opening of schools in May/June 1988:- the closure of schools had resulted in too much education. By last spring popular schools were operating effectively in a number of areas throughout the West Bank. Such schools functioned in coordination with local popular committees which had been set up to develop community infrastructures to replace those controlled by the occupation authorities. "They were afraid we would take control of our education," asserted one educational administrator.

Popular education provided the first opportunity for most students and teachers to study and teach materials unbound by the often out of date Israeli-censored Jordanian curriculum which schools are required to follow.

Some further suspect that the 10-day closure beginning 31 December and implemented just following the beginning of the 1988/89 academic year, indicated a new strategy. The same administrator explained:

They are now adapting a policy of short-term openings and closures in an attempt to prevent us from continuing popular education as well as to disrupt education within the standard school system.

Statements issued by military authorities throughout the course of the uprising have revealed their concern for maintaining control over education, even in so far as scheduling is concerned. During the Spring of 1988, for example, military spokespersons repeatedly claimed that they were willing to open schools if school administrators guaranteed that students would not participate in demonstrations and protests, and that schools would remain open for full school days. This second condition is significant in light of the fact that the UNLU called upon students and teachers to observe the daily strike beginning at 12:00 noon in solidarity with merchants throughout the occupied territories. Military authorities also demanded that schools open without regard for general strike days declared by the UNLU.

According to Israel Television, military authorities ordered the 10-day closure of all West Bank schools beginning 31 December because of several disturbances and because students had observed a general strike earlier in the week and not attended classes.³² More specifically, Head of the Civil Administration for the West Bank Shaki Erez, explained that the same closure was due to students' failure to follow the programme of the education department.³³

At stake is not 'security' but the ability of Israel to control the Palestinian population in the occupied territories -- unless one understands that 'security' requires the controlling of all decisionmaking down to exactly what hours and what days students should attend classes within the established school system.

The repeated closure of a-Rashidiyeh Secondary Boys School in East Jerusalem exemplifies this. On 1 December 1988 authorities ordered the closure of the school for the fourth time in two months, because students adhered to the UNLU's strike call. The students refused to attend classes after 12:00 noon, thus defying the schedule set by Israeli authorities. The Jerusalem Post reported that

[t]he school conflict bears some resemblance to the struggle between the authorities and East Jerusalem shopkeepers ... over the hours of the commercial strike that the shopkeepers were (and still are) maintaining. (26 Oct, 1988)

In the conflict between authorities and shopkeepers, Israeli Defense Minister Rabin finally conceded that he would no longer follow a policy of forcing shops open to break the strike; shopkeepers now have the right to open and close according to their own schedule rather than that imposed by Israeli authorities.

This has not been the case regarding schools. On 2 January Jerusalem municipality authorities demanded that parents of a-Rashidiyeh students ensure that their children abide by the Israeli-set schedule if they wanted to see their children educated. The authorities threatened to close the a-Rashidiyeh school permanently if parents of the students did not sign guarantees that their children would not participate in demonstrations and that they would attend classes during regular hours.^{3 4}

In this regard, the school closures are an attempt by Israel to reassert its control over the Palestinians in the occupied territories. The extensive losses resulting from barring an entire population from having access to organised education are being used as a means of pressuring the population into denouncing their leadership and abandoning the uprising. The occupation authorities have thus turned education into a battleground.

4.5 Differences in Policy - West Bank and Gaza Strip

The difference in treatment accorded to West Bank and Gaza schools further evidences the use of the closures as collective punishment and attempted coercion.

One educational expert, offered his explanation for this.

Gaza is, first of all, much more densely populated. The authorities believe they have a better chance of controlling the large numbers of people if they can keep at least some of the students in school. There the authorities are waging an economic war. The people are very poor and are more severely affected by economic measures imposed against them. In the West Bank, people are generally better off economically. Thus, the authorities are trying to wage an educational war as well.

Another analyst further pointed out that the two areas are demographically very different. Curfews are imposed more extensively in the Gaza Strip and thus effectively close schools without requiring a separate order. (Thus avoiding potential protest from the international community.) It is much more difficult to impose widespread curfews in the West Bank where

over half of the population live in hundreds of villages spread over a much larger area. Thus, the conclusion is again that the policies are adopted according to what the Israeli authorities feel will be the most effective form of collective punishment; their aim is to coerce the population into renouncing their struggle against the occupation as too costly.

Other analysts claimed that policy differences within the West Bank are also calculated to break the political will of the people. According to their analysis, the difference in treatment between East Jerusalem schools and West Bank schools is designed to create resentments and divisions between different sectors of the population, thereby following the age-old philosophy of divide and rule. A West Bank educator reflected:

They [Israeli authorities] hope that the opening of Jerusalem schools, while other West Bank schools remain closed, will convince Jerusalemites that they do not share the status of residents in the rest of the occupied territories and will thus disengage themselves from the uprising.

4.6 Illegality of Closures

Even if security reasons required the closure of schools, in fact, the extended closure of all West Bank schools is illegal under local laws.

Israeli occupational authorities are required by Jordanian law (Education Law #16) to provide compulsory education for children from first until ninth grade and, further, not to prevent access to schools for those under 16 wishing to attend. Exceptions to this are clearly defined and are not applicable in the case of the current prolonged closures. In its recent report on school closures, the Ramallah-based human rights organization Al-Haq concludes:

After a thorough review of local laws, it is clear that there are no provisions of local law which could possibly provide legal basis for the shutting of educational institutions....Therefore, school closure orders are clearly illegal under local law. ³⁵

The repeated and prolonged closure of schools is also in violation of international laws and conventions. The right to education is established in IV Geneva Convention. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26,1) states that: "Everyone has a right to education....Elementary education shall be compulsory." Other international and regional treaties reaffirm this right. Furthermore, according to the IV Geneva Convention (Article 50), as an occupying power Israel is obliged to provide

primary and secondary education for children.³⁶

The right to education is thus well established as basic human right and it cannot be denied even for reasons of state security or the purposes of maintaining public order. The closure of schools and denial of all forms of educational pursuits as a means of collective punishment, enforcing ignorance, and asserting control over an occupied population are therefore in blatant violation of international law, as well as local laws.

5. Consequences

The closure of schools for periods ranging from one month to an entire academic year has resulted in a wide range of far-reaching consequences on the over 1.5 million Palestinians living in the occupied territories. Virtually the entire population has been directly affected by the closures either as students, who comprise over 35% of the population, as teachers, who comprise one of the largest sectors of professional workers³⁷ or as parents of students.

5.1 Academic Effects

Even short-term breaks in classes can result in major disruption of educational progress which requires a high level of continuity. The first month of school following the resumption of classes after the summer break is regularly dedicated to reviewing information covered and skills developed during the students' previous school year. The repeated and extended closure of schools has denied students any sense of continuity, while at the same time making it impossible for teachers to plan an educational programme which provides continuity for their students.

Beyond continuity, the educational process is of necessity both cumulative and synergetic. Learning progress is not possible if students have not grasped fundamental concepts and mastered certain skills upon which further education is built. The repeated and prolonged disruption of classes has rendered this cumulative learning process quite impossible. Teachers were not even able to complete last year's curriculum. Disruptions without warning have made cohesive lesson planning out of the question. Thus there is no possibility for teaching systematically.

Most educators interviewed in the West Bank estimated that only 60%-75% of the curriculum was covered during the 1987/88 school year. Teachers generally said that the first semester was essentially completed, although many schools never finished administering midyear exams. (Due to the outbreak of the uprising most schools were not operating on a regular basis by the third week of December 1987.) However, few teachers claim that they were able to complete more than 25% of the second semester, most

set the percentage at 10%-15%. Despite the fact that schools in the Gaza Strip were officially open for the second semester, constant disruptions, in the form of curfews, individual closures, strikes, etc., made it impossible for teaching to go on as scheduled. Educators' estimates of the percentage of curriculum covered varies from area to area.

At the same time no provisions were made for review of previous or missed material in the 1988/89 academic year. Government teachers repeatedly point out that there is no time to review since they are expected to complete this year's curriculum without even knowing when or for how long they will be able to teach. While some teachers took the first week of the new school year for review on their own initiative, others were obliged to begin immediately with lessons for the new academic year.

UNRWA schools and private schools have more freedom to reorganise curriculum and adapt schedules. According to the UNRWA education officers in both areas, all UNRWA schools in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip are now operating under contingency programmes which were developed last year to deal with the extraordinary circumstances.

Most private schools have also condensed their curriculum and developed programmes emphasising self-learning in hopes of averting the high losses of last year. Nonetheless, even private school teachers admit that at least one-third of last year's second semester was lost. Some schools have chosen to begin with last year's unfinished lessons and have not yet begun the new year's curriculum. Others have plunged ahead with new curriculum, despite one headmaster's assertion that even those schools which claim to have finished last year's curriculum were not really able to teach it properly.

5.1.1 Elementary Level (6 - 12 year olds)

With regards to curriculum covered, educators are particularly concerned about the effect of long term absence of education for elementary students. According to educational experts, the probability of a return to illiteracy is high through the sixth year in school, and the possibility still remains even after this year. Thus, even if students are allowed to return to school on a regular basis in the future, there is a fear that some students will have to begin from square one again.

A first-grade elementary school teacher with 21 years of teaching experience in UNRWA schools expounded on this general concern.

If I can give a student foundations s/he can learn everything alone. The problem is that we are not being permitted the opportunity to lay even the foundations.

According to this teacher, very few teachers have the experience or expertise necessary to ensure that young students receive the basics required for further educational development under the

present circumstances.

Government school teachers, particularly at the elementary level, complained that they were expected to continue with the curriculum as if last year had been completed. Explaining that everything is linked, particularly in mathematics, English, and Arabic, an elementary teacher in a village near Hebron maintained that "there is no way students can continue without making up what they have missed." Reflecting on the extended period when most of her students, who had little to no access to books, neither studied nor read, she added, "even what they have learned, they've forgotten."

The principal of a private school confirmed fears raised by many elementary educators:

Our first to third grade students are having trouble remembering how to read, they have almost returned to illiteracy.

5.1.2 Preparatory Level (13 - 15 year olds)

Preparatory students, particularly those in the third preparatory class, also face specific problems. If the foundations necessary for literacy and numeracy have been successfully mastered, the greatest difficulties for older students are generally in mathematics and sciences, and, to some extent, languages, where progress is tied to a series of successive concepts and skills upon which all material is built.

UNRWA officials expressed a particular concern for the third preparatory class since UNRWA students wishing to continue their education beyond this level must go to government schools for secondary classes. According to the Field Education Officer for the West Bank, UNRWA schools had to graduate preparatory III students even though they had only completed 50%-60% of the year. Under normal circumstances third year preparatory students sit for matriculation exams in the early Spring before they are promoted to the secondary level. Last year, however, the exams were cancelled by the Jordanian Education Ministry due to the prolonged school closure during second semester of the 1987/88 school year.

Students from Jalazon Refugee Camp who started at secondary government schools in neighbouring areas when schools opened in December 1988 confirmed this concern. No significant adaptations have been made in the curriculum except for those made by teachers on an individual basis. Most classes were moving at a regular pace, without the necessary review or any attempts to condense classroom study and emphasize independent study in response to the situation. These students voice a particular concern about English lessons, with which they found it impossible to keep up. They said that "the teacher moves too

quickly and there is no time to make up what we missed or review what we've forgotten."

Preparatory III students in the West Bank expect that the matriculation exam will be cancelled again this year. In the Gaza Strip, on the other hand, students are expecting to take the Egyptian matriculation exams. "We did not cover all of last year's material," remarked a third preparatory student from an UNRWA school in Gaza City, "and we won't cover as much as we usually would this year, yet we will take the exam on schedule."

5.1.3 Secondary Level (15 - 18 year olds)

Secondary students also faced particular problems due to last year's closures; similar problems have already resurfaced this year. This is especially true for West Bank students in view of the three month delay in the start of the new year and the subsequent re-closure of all schools.

West Bank highschool students in the graduating class regularly sit for the two-part Jordanian matriculation exam, the tawjihi, in December and June. The tawjihi exam is extremely important as successful results are required for entrance into all Arab universities, as well as career placements. Last year, however, West Bank students were unprepared for the examination because of the extended school closure. As a result Jordanian officials cancelled the exams scheduled for June and decided to double the scores from the first part of the exam in order to create complete scores. This put many students at a substantial disadvantage, particularly since the first part of the exam was administered during the first days of the uprising under circumstances which were less than conducive for concentrated study. Teachers reported that many of their brightest students scored much lower on the examination than would have been expected under normal conditions. In addition, a number of students could not take the first part of the exam at all because of disturbances or detention.

In the Gaza Strip 90% of the graduating students took the Egyptian matriculation exam. However, many of them did so after missing months of schooling largely due to closures and curfews during the first six months of the uprising. Many students were thus dependent on self-study or on classes organised outside school in mosques and homes. In addition, students complained that they had neither enough time nor an appropriate environment in which to study.³⁸

This year most teachers, as well as tawjihi students in the West Bank, have little hope that students will be able to sit for the tawjihi exam. Currently the exam is scheduled for July and is to be administered in one sitting rather than in its usual two parts. "It is already mid-January and the tawjihi class has only met two weeks at most," noted one government school teacher prior

to the last indefinite closure.

In the Gaza Strip, there is more certainty that exams will proceed as scheduled. UNRWA officials say they are following the timetable based on the revised curriculum programme. One UNRWA teacher in Gaza City compared the situation in the Gaza Strip with that in the West Bank:

In Gaza there is a certainty that exams will be held. This has not been true in the West Bank. The certainty of exams encourages studying.

By contrast, a tawjihi student from a Nablus government school said that she and her classmates don't know what they need for the exam so they don't know what to study. She was certain that if they take the exam it will surely not be in its entirety. She complains, "No decisions have been made about what will be covered or if we will really take the exam in July or not." The same student adds:

At any rate, I can't cope with all the studies, even though I took a course at a private educational centre during the closure. Most of my classmates weren't able to get such extra help. How are they to cope if I can't?...We didn't even finish half of the second semester last year, so now we don't have the background we need for this year, especially in chemistry and physics.

Secondary students from other areas, some of whom say that they were not able to cover anything of last year's second semester curriculum, are even less optimistic. "We will cover no more than 30% of the material for this year," predicted one highschool student after schools had opened in December 1988. He said that, because of military interference, he and his classmates "don't learn anything in school this year." Another student added, "Teachers are talking about things I have no idea about....there is no time to review. Time is too short."

5.1.4 Longterm Effects on Overall Educational Standards

The extended closures do not only have an effect on this year's students, but also on the longterm standards of education in the territories.

The problem is particularly acute in the West Bank where the Israeli authorities effectively pushed last year's students, who lost virtually 30%-50% of their class time, on to the next year. In July of last year, when the military ordered the re-closure of West Bank schools, the Education Office under the auspices of the military government required schools to submit both the third and fourth quarter grades, as well the second semester and year averages for each student. They thereby made it possible for students to pass on to the next grade, despite the fact that

students had not covered the material required to continue with the next level of studies.

According to local educators, had the Israeli authorities not arranged for the promotion of students in 1987/88, they would have had to face the practical problem of placing some 20,000 extra incoming students (beginning school in 1988/89) in already chronically overcrowded classrooms. Schools, particularly government schools, have neither the physical capacity nor the staff to service twice as many first grade students as last year. The Israeli authorities could not have addressed this problem without incurring considerable financial cost. The authorities' response to this situation reflects the lack of concern they have for educational standards in Palestinian schools.

Moreover, cuts in teaching staff of government schools* have meant added hours and larger classes for many government school teachers. With 45 to 50 students in the average government school class and at least one academic semester lost, teachers cannot be expected to maintain former academic standards.

Government teachers repeatedly emphasised that the government has no concern for educational standards. An elementary teacher pointed out that the government was only concerned with opening the schools; they did not provide for programmes to make up for time lost.

Despite greater opportunities in UNRWA and private schools, educators admit that academic levels, under the best of circumstances, will be affected for the next 10 to 12 years. A headmaster in the south of the West Bank summarised his assessment of the impact of school closures in 1988, saying:

We will face this problem for a long time to come....We are still teaching this year's second grade class, the first grade curriculum. Until this year's first and second grade classes finish the tawjihi class, we will face weaknesses caused by the disruptions of the past two years.

The shutting down of all universities, colleges, and training centres in the West Bank and Gaza for the past year only magnifies the problem by depriving students any access to higher education. If the current situation continues, it will only become more difficult for educators and students to salvage academic standards for this generation. Generations to come will feel the effects of the measures taken against current students.

* See below, section 5.2.4.

5.2 Social Effects

An evaluation of the social effects of the school closures on students and other members of society is made difficult by a number of factors.

First, unlike academics where learning progress is regularly assessed, there are no well-established standards by which to measure such effects or to compare current social phenomenon with previous years.*

Second, responses to the closures observed throughout the past year varied considerably over time as schools opened and closed. The social effects of school closures were largely related to an individual's perception of the possibilities of continuing education at any given time. Thus, for example, the same student might exhibit very different, often conflicting, responses to the school closures at the end of January 1989 than s/he did one month earlier when West Bank schools were still opened. Responses further varied according to regional, local, and personal experiences.

Finally, it is impossible to examine the social effects of school closures in isolation. The uprising has meant an upheaval at the social and political level in all aspects of Palestinian society in the occupied territories. Therefore, many educators emphasised that positive social changes have, to some extent, countered potentially negative effects the closures might otherwise have had. None of the social trends which have emerged over the past year, whether considered positive or negative, can be considered solely a consequence of school closures; the social effects of school closures can only be examined within the larger context of the social and political phenomenon surrounding them.

Because of the complexity of this issue, the initial observations outlined below can be no more than a preliminary examination of potential social effects.

5.2.1 Socialisation and Cultural Literacy

The detrimental effects of prolonged school closures extend far beyond academics. Organised education involves essential processes of socialisation. Students are exposed to important social values and are required to master certain social skills such as listening, communicating and cooperating with peers and elders, respecting others, and defining themselves as members of a group. The school environment allows children to gain a sense of social responsibility. In modern society it has become an

*The establishment of such standards has been hindered by the occupation and the absence of national institutions responsible for carrying out research in this area.

essential means of training youngsters to become responsible members of society.

School also provides a chance for students to find suitable role models in teachers and in older students. This is of particular importance in closed societies where children have little chance to know persons outside their family whom they might aspire to be like.

School further provides a structured environment for children, creating an atmosphere where they can begin to formulate, organise and finally analyse their ideas and observations within a familiar structure. Without school many children lack discipline and healthy authority figures.

Young children especially, noted both teachers and parents, quickly lost the ability to concentrate. Students themselves complained of boredom and an inability to discipline themselves when they were out of school for extended periods. During these times some parents worried that their children did nothing but watch television or play cards; children responded that they had nothing else to do.

The psychological implications are obvious according to a school administrator:

Don't work for two months, and then sit down and try to write a letter, not a serious article or academic paper, just a letter...it's almost impossible to find the motivation or discipline, and we're mature, educated, motivated people. How about a child who is not mature, educated, nor motivated?

The organised structure of schools also helps to provide children with a sense of security essential to healthy child development. In the current situation, which is already significantly unstable, the lack of certainty surrounding schools is likely to exacerbate a child's sense of insecurity and fears, already deeply threatened by the situation around them. One teacher relates how her younger sister was scared to leave the house or go near her school for months after schools had been shut down by the military. The only safe place remaining for this second-grade elementary student was her home. For many students whose homes have been invaded by soldiers, even this does not remain.

In addition, school is often the primary source of social interaction for children. Students in towns and villages where mobility is limited often spend days at home without any opportunity to see friends. Older students, in particular, complained about social isolation.

A college professor and father of three students noted that even

if schools remained opened many students are being shortchanged because there is no time for physical education, music, art courses, or other cultural activities. Class periods for these courses have often been replaced with core course classes now and some schools have dropped such courses altogether. "Cutting out such courses, means cutting out part of our cultural experience," he said with regret. Students thus lose an important means of gaining cultural literacy.

5.2.2 Response to Authority

Many educators were particularly concerned about classroom management because of the children's experience in an increasingly violent environment which encourages aggression and, to some extent, may sanction it. Educators feared that students participating actively in a movement which directly challenges the authority of the occupation forces would lack the discipline to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate authorities. Some teachers noted that they had to struggle with this issue in earlier months of the uprising and preparations were made to deal with the issue when schools re-opened for the 1988/89 academic year. However, educators interviewed were almost universally surprised by the lack of problems they faced in this area.

"We expected behavioural problems," admitted an UNRWA official responsible for the West Bank. "In fact we were scared to death because of the situation. But we were pleasantly surprised by the good behaviour."

Various educators from all areas and sectors agreed:

"Students have passed the stage of disobedience. They understand that education is an investment for the future," confirmed a counterpart in the Gaza Strip.

Even at the elementary level, teachers remarked on the discipline amongst students. "It is clear that students have learned responsibility."

The situation is very different from last year [1987/88 academic year] when students just wanted to strike and break order -- even school order...,

a private school principal in the south of the West Bank noted. He added:

Students see teachers as allies and thus they have a very high respect for their teachers. They see that their teachers are refugees too, that they too are arrested, placed under curfew, etc.

At the same time, teachers and administrators also agreed that students' notions of authority and obedience have nonetheless changed. According to an educational supervisor, students

recognise and respect the authority of teachers because they see the value of education. If however, they are asked to do something which contradicts students' sense of what is right (eg. following the recommendations of the UNLU) teachers or parents will find that their authority, though respected, is not necessarily final; it does not exclude the possibility that students will make independent decisions based on their recognition of other authorities.

This is particularly apparent with regards to class scheduling. In some areas students have dictated that classes, even in government schools where the Israeli authorities are in charge of setting hours, will end at 12:00 noon in accordance with the daily strike called by the UNLU. Throughout the Gaza Strip and in many areas of the West Bank, student attendance on general strike days, is nil. This is true even of UNRWA and government schools where teachers are required to report to school on strike days.

Secondary students from a northern West Bank town described how teachers tried to convince them to attend school.

Some of our teachers are scared to follow the UNLU. Once a teacher tried to talk us out of striking. We disagreed with her and held a long discussion. In the end she could say nothing.

Such discussions were a rarity in the traditional authoritarian classrooms typical of schools in the occupied territories prior to the uprising; they reflect a significant change in students' understanding of authority and their own responsibilities.

A first-grade teacher explained how he places the importance of education within the framework of the current struggle. He says that when students understand that their education will help them to overthrow the occupation they are quick to recognise his authority in the classroom.

5.2.3 Motivation to Learn

The fear that extended closures and repeated interruptions would discourage motivation to learn or to achieve even short-term goals also dissipated to a great extent when schools opened for the 1988/89 year. Teachers optimistically noted that students were more highly motivated than ever when they were allowed to attend school. Students confirmed this.

A preparatory student from the Gaza Strip described the difference between this year and last year:

Last year we didn't study, often we never entered school. Our school was closed for four months. This year we come all the time except when there are strikes or curfews. Now when we come to school we come to study.

Throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip schools reported that on normal days school attendance is between 95%-100%. This is true of government, UNRWA, and private schools.

Educators pointed out that students are motivated, not only because they realise how much they have lost, but because there is political incentive as well; they are aware that acquiring an education is a means of resisting the occupation and of preparing for a future Palestinian state. The realisation that the occupational authorities do not want them to be educated, makes education all the more desirable. This realisation has encouraged students to work more on their own and to make extra efforts to make up work for missed classes.

At the same time it is clear that this motivation is largely contingent on the students' sense that they will be able to continue their studies. Students who have lost added school days due to curfews and individual school closures, or who have been repeatedly harassed by military authorities in or en route to school, as well as students who believe that schools will again be closed and do not see any other opportunities for pursuing studies, show signs of motivation loss due to frustration.

A secondary student from a West Bank refugee camp, for instance, said in mid-December 1988 that he was sure the military would continue to close schools. A top student in his class, he once planned to study medicine, but he has now lost hope that he will be able to carry through with his plans because of the continued interruptions in his education caused by the Israeli measures against Palestinian schools.

A sense of frustration is also high among secondary students who feel that there is not enough time to learn what they have missed. "I love school," explains a secondary student in her final year, "but now I'm scared and tense every time I go to school -- I keep wondering how I'll ever be ready for the tawjihi."

"Students want to learn, but it is so difficult because of the situation. So many do not expect to continue," explained one West Bank teacher. Initially, the latest indefinite closure of West Bank schools (January 1989) appears to have fed such frustrations and dampened an optimism expressed by many when classes were in session in December 1988.

5.2.4 Strain on Teachers and Parents

Teachers and school administrators face a number of similar emotional and psychological strains. They are required to adapt curriculum and teaching methods to a very difficult situation.

Many teachers feel that it is impossible for them to live up to their responsibilities as educators. "It is a teacher's responsibility to operate with the understanding that all children are capable," said a troubled elementary school teacher, who painfully admitted that he expected 30%-50% of the elementary school students to fail in their studies under current circumstances.

It is difficult for teachers to plan when they are uncertain when schools might open or close. This is particularly true of government school teachers who have no means of coordinating adaptations in the curriculum and receive no professional support for efforts to find more effective ways for educating within the current crisis.

Cuts in staff, particularly in government schools, but in private schools as well, have meant added periods and overscheduling for teachers. Part-time government teachers are being given extra class periods without receiving extra pay. In one private school some teachers reported that they were teaching over 30 class periods a week without overtime pay, when the normal fulltime schedule averages 24 to 28 class periods per week.

The situation is further exacerbated by the conditions under which teachers must now teach. In addition to the pressures and problems resulting from extended and repeated closures, teachers must reckon with how to teach under constant distraction, and often the very real threat of danger.

You can't expect students to study normally in this situation. They are nervous. They are scared. You can't expect them to finish their homework at night when tear gas or soldiers invade their homes,

said a Gazan education administrator when questioned about the school situation there.

"A child lives with events more than school activities now," commented an elementary school teacher. "If there is any distraction students immediately lose their concentration."

Yet, when the new academic year started, the majority of educators expressed the same high motivation and enthusiasm for continued pursuit of studies that their students did. "Last year was very difficult. It was a new situation. It was exhausting because we weren't used to it," said a teacher's representative for government schools in the West Bank in December 1988.

But now teachers are more motivated. We are better prepared. We are enthusiastic like the students. We are accustomed to the situation and we are ready to continue with everything. Recent political events have given us further encouragement

and incentive; we have seen successes.

The extent to which the 20 January 1989 closure order will effect such optimism remains to be seen.

School closures have also meant serious disruption of family life for many households. Child care is a major problem for families in which both parents work, or one parent is imprisoned, abroad, or otherwise not present. Parents must also deal with increased demands from children, both in terms of time and emotional energy. Parents point out that they are the ones who must deal most immediately with the losses children experience due to the school closures. In traditionally large families, the stress is often exacerbated by many people confined to close quarters, particularly in the refugee camps. In households where five, eight, ten people may share one room, it is not difficult to imagine how tensions might be compounded when families are in constant company of each other. A houseful of bored children does little to relieve an already tense situation.

5.3 Economic Effects

The extended closure of schools has also had a number of serious economic consequences.*

5.3.1 Teachers

Some 8,000 West Bank government school teachers were twice (15 April to 23 May; 6 October to 3 December) placed on mandatory unpaid vacation by the military authorities in 1988. (Roughly 78% of all West Bank schools are government schools.) Thus, during April and May, and ~~October~~^{-50%} and ~~November~~^{-0%} they received only 50% of their monthly salaries. This year government teachers and administrators were again informed that they were on unpaid vacation beginning 21 January until further notice, after the re-closure of all schools in the area. It should be noted that the average salary for government school teachers in the West Bank is NIS650 (roughly one-third of the average salary earned by government teachers inside Israel).

In addition at least 1,200 teachers with annual contracts did not receive new contracts for the 1988/89 academic year. More than 150 teachers who have been detained during the uprising have lost their jobs, whether or not they were released in time to resume their positions when schools re-opened. Other teachers

*These consequences are particularly difficult in light of the fact that the economic situation in the occupied territories has reached crisis proportions in recent months; residents have suffered a 50% decline in the standard of living. (SEE A1-Quds, 8 Feb, 1989.)

were forced into early retirement without severance benefits.³⁹

Furthermore, new teaching positions, usually opened annually, have not been created for the current academic year. According to a Ramallah government teacher active in a teachers trade union, 30 new teaching positions are regularly introduced in the Ramallah area each year. This year none were introduced and 20 positions were cancelled. Those filling the vacancies with added teaching hours have not received added compensation.

Private schools in the West Bank (approximately 11% of all West Bank schools) have also reduced teacher salaries in order to alleviate financial crises resulting from their inability to collect school fees during the school closures. Many private institutions depend heavily on student fees to meet operating costs. Students cannot be expected to pay full tuition when classes are not being held, particularly when the current situation has resulted in economic difficulties for many families. As a result private schools have cut staff salaries between 20%-50%. Some schools have also cut overtime hours, and dismissed part-time and even full-time faculty and staff members despite contract obligations.

5.3.2 Parents

Parents too have suffered financially from the school closures. Working parents have had to seek child care for their young children or cut back on working hours. Some of the few with the financial means have paid for private lessons; in some instances, parents have chosen to pay considerable costs to send their children to Jerusalem schools or abroad simply to continue their children's education.

5.3.3 Institutions

Despite salary cuts, some private West Bank institutions, still face severe financial crises. The problem has been exacerbated by loss of students who enrolled in Jerusalem schools in hopes of continuing studies there, or who have travelled to the United States, Europe, Jordan or other Arab countries in order to continue their studies. Thus even if schools remain open and students pay fees again, the sometimes severe drop in enrollment will mean a significant decrease in tuition income.

Educational institutions have also been forced to divert energies into emergency fundraising abroad. It even appears that some schools will be forced to cut back on their educational programmes. Last Spring the century-old Friends Girls School in Ramallah, which has been a leading education institution in the community since its founding, and its partner school for boys were forced to consider closing their doors permanently as they struggled to meet operating costs and salary contracts.

Restrictions on the movement of money, greatly reducing the

amount of money which can be brought into the territories, have also affected efforts by private schools to bring in money to cover their expenses.⁴⁰

6. Conclusion

Israeli authorities have closed schools in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip on a prolonged and repeated basis during the uprising. The military government together with Jerusalem police and municipality authorities have effected the closures through area-wide closure orders, individual school closure orders, and the frequent and extensive imposition of curfews.

The authorities claim that the school closures are in the interests of public order and security. This is contradicted by the continued indiscriminate closure of all schools to students of all ages while there is no evidence that the closure of schools leads to a reduction in demonstrations.

All Palestinian teachers and pupils interviewed felt that the Israeli policy was one of collective punishment. International observers have supported this view.

Israeli policy appears to be directed towards asserting control over the students and enforcing ignorance upon them as a punishment for the uprising. This war on education is aimed at regaining control of the occupied territories by escalating the cost of the uprising to levels higher than people might be willing to pay. In this Israel is not fulfilling its legal obligations to provide education as an occupying power.

Israeli claims are most clearly contradicted by their banning of popular education. The ban appears to be an attempt to gain general control over the population, and specifically to prevent initiatives in alternative education. No credible argument has been advanced by the authorities to explain this ban.

The school closures have resulted in severe academic losses. In the West Bank students have already lost a whole academic year and an entire class of students has not been able to sit for their matriculation exams. The indefinite closure of all schools continues. Constant and extended interruptions in the educational programme have seriously disrupted learning processes, particularly for elementary school pupils. All educators agree that there will be a long term crisis in school education. Many years will be required to retrieve lost ground and the consequences will potentially extend to future generations of students.

The long-term social effects of the closures are not yet fully clear. Parents and educators are concerned about the potential loss of vital socialisation processes which equip children to function effectively and responsibly in society. They are further concerned about psychological effects resulting from the loss of the structured environment schools offer children and the

uncertainty and lack of security which has replaced it. At the same time educators point out that fears held concerning students' rejection of authority and loss of motivation have proved to be largely unfounded. This appears to be a result of concurrent social and political changes during the uprising, which have encouraged independent decisionmaking and the motivation to learn within the context of the struggle against the occupation.

Teachers and parents have also suffered psychological stress as a result of the closures. Teachers feel incapable of fulfilling their responsibilities. Parents are forced to cope with the losses children experience without schooling.

Finally, teachers, parents, and educational institutions have suffered economically due to the school closures. West Bank government school teachers, in particular, have sustained severe reductions in their salaries.

In short, the policy of school closures has severely taxed Palestinian society not only in the academic sphere, but in the social, cultural, and economic spheres. The policy has punished all sectors of society -- students, parents, and teachers-- indiscriminately. Despite, or because of this, Israel continues to implement the policy in complete disregard for the internationally recognised right of every individual to education.

1. Jerusalem Post, 7 June, 1988.
2. Ibid. 10 June, 1988.
3. Al-Quds, 28 June, 1988.
4. Jerusalem Post, 17 July, 1988.
5. An-Nahar, 13 Dec, 1988.
6. Attalia Weekly, 15 Dec, 1989.
7. A-Sha'ab, 18 Jan, 1989.
8. Attalia Weekly, 19 Jan, 1989.
9. Jerusalem Post, 20 Jan, 1989.
10. Al-Quds, 21 Jan, 1989.
11. Al-Haq, Nov 1988, Israel's War Against Education in the Occupied West Bank.
12. In Jerusalem (Jerusalem Post supplement), 10 June, 1988.
13. Al-Quds, 10 Nov, 1988.
14. op cit., Al-Haq, Nov. 1988.
15. SEE for example: UNLU Communique #18, 22 May, 1988; UNLU Communique #22, 21 July, 1988.
16. Jerusalem Post, 28 June, 1988.
17. Ibid. 20 June, 1988.
18. An-Nahar, 25 Jan, 1989.
19. Jerusalem Post, 28 June, 3 July, and 14 July, 1988.
20. SEE for example: UNLU Communique #16, 13 May, 1988.
21. SEE for example: UNLU Communique #20, 22 June, 1988.
22. Jerusalem Post Magazine, 25 Nov, 1988.
23. Jerusalem Post, 15 June, 1988.
24. Ibid. 13 Dec, 1988.
25. Ibid. 12 Oct, 1988.

26. Ibid. 20 June, 1988.
27. An-Nahar, 14 Sep, 1988.
28. Al-Quds, 7 Sep, 1988; JMCC, 3-10 Sep, 1988, "Weekly Report".
29. General Federation of Employees in the Education Sectors in the Occupied Territories (GFEES), 14 Dec, 1988, "Palestinian Teachers Day - 14 December."
30. Al-Quds, 17 Sep, 1988.
31. A-Sha'ab, 17 Sep, 1988.
32. Israel Television, 30 Dec, 1988, Arabic Evening News.
33. Attalia Weekly, 5 Jan, 1989.
34. Al Quds, 3 Jan, 1989.
35. op cit. Al-Haq, Nov 1988.

36. Ibid.
37. Sarah Graham-Brown, 1984, Education, Repression, and Liberation: Palestinians. United Kingdom: World University Press.
38. SEE: Jerusalem Post, 5 July, 1988.
39. Ibid. GFEES, 14 Dec, 1988.
40. Ibid.

APPENDIX A1:

AREA-WIDE SCHOOL CLOSURES BY MILITARY ORDER - WEST BANK

I. Second Semester 1987/88 Academic Year

Date of Closure	Until	Area Affected	# of Schools
02/04	05/23	all WB kg and elem schools*	611
02/04	05/28	all WB preparatory schools*	321
02/04	06/07	all WB secondary schools*	262
06/15	6/17	all WB schools	1194
06/26	06/30	all prep schools in Nablus	14
06/27	07/02	all sec schools in Nablus	19
07/05	07/08	all WB schools	1194
07/14	08/15+	all Tulkarem schools	19
07/14	08/15+	all Dhanabeh schools	2
07/14	08/15+	all Qalqilia schools	8
07/21	08/15+	all WB schools	1194

Total # of school days in revised 2nd term (05/23 - 08/15): 73
 Total # of days lost to all kindergarten & elem schools: 26
 Total # of days lost to all preparatory schools: 29
 Total # of days lost to all secondary schools: 38

II. 1 September - 31 January, 1988/89 Academic Year

Date of Closure	Until	Area Affected	# of Schools
09/01	10/01	all WB kindergartens	
09/01	12/01	all WB elementary schools*	(611)
09/01	12/11	all WB preparatory schools*	321
09/01	12/18	all WB secondary schools*	262
12/31	01/10	all WB schools	1194
01/19	01/23	all Ramallah, al-Bireh, Jenin, and Qalqilia schools	47
01/21	-	all WB schools	1194

Total # of school days 1 September '88 - 31 January '89: 131
 Total # of days lost to all kindergartens: 35
 Total # of days lost to all elementary schools: 88
 Total # of days lost to all preparatory schools: 96
 Total # of days lost to all secondary schools: 102

A series of orders were issued during this time.
 Original date for ending extended 1987/88 academic year.
 Indefinite closure
 (Fridays are not included in totals as schools generally close.)

SOURCE: Local Arabic and English press

APPENDIX A2:

INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL CLOSURES BY MILITARY ORDER - WEST BANK
(2nd Semester, 1987/88 Academic Year: 23 May - 21 July+)

Date of Closure	Name of School	Source
06/12 ?	al-Hussein Bin Ali (Hebron)	J. Post, 06/13
06/18 ?	al-Khader Girls (al-Khader)	J. Post, 06/19
06/19 ?	Toubas school (Toubas)	J. Post, 06/20
06/19 ?	Ein Sultan/UNRWA (Jericho)	J. Post, 06/20
06/21 06/23	Nablus Prep A Boys/UNRWA (Nablus)	Al-Quds, 06/22
06/21 ~	Bethlehem Sec Girls (Bethlehem)	Al-Quds, 06/22
06/21 06/28	al-Amari Prep (al-Amari RC)	An-Nahar, 06/28
06/25 ~	al-Khader Sec Boys (al-Khader)	Al-Quds, 06/26
06/25 ~	al-Khader Sec Girls (al-Khader)	Al-Quds, 06/26
06/25 06/27	Nablus Prep A Boys/UNRWA (Nablus)	Al-Ittihad, 06/26
06/25 06/27	Nablus Prep A Girls/UNRWA (Nablus)	Al Ittihad, 06/26
06/25 06/27	al-Amira Boys & Girls Prep (Nablus)	Al-Ittihad, 06/26
06/26 07/01	Halhoul Sec Girls (Halhoul)	A-Sha'ab, 06/29
06/26 07/01	al-Umma Boys School (Beit Hanina)	A-Sha'ab, 06/29
06/27 ~	Qalqilia Prep Boys/UNRWA (Qalqilia)	Al-Quds, 06/26
06/26 06/30	all 19 Nablus prep schools*	A-Sha'ab, 06/27
06/27 07/02	all 14 Nablus sec schools*	A-Sha'ab, 06/28
06/27 07/27	al-Hussein Bin Ali Sec Boys (Hebron)	Al-Quds, 06/28
06/27 07/27	al-Khader Boys (al-Khader)	Al-Quds, 06/28
06/27 07/27	al-Khader Girls (al-Khader)	Al-Quds, 06/28
06/27 07/27	al-Lutheria Prep (Beit Sahour)	Al-Quds, 06/28
06/27 07/27	Beit Sahour Sec (Beit Sahour)	Al-Quds, 06/28
06/27 07/29	Ramallah Prep Boys/UNRWA (Ramallah)	A-Sha'ab, 06/28
06/28 07/28	a-Salam Prep (Qalqilia)	Al-Quds, 06/29
06/29 07/06	Marwan Bin Abd al-Malek Sec (Jericho)	Al-Quds, 06/30
06/29 07/01	al-Hashimiah Sec (al-Bireh)	Al-Quds, 06/30
06/29 07/06	Na'eleen Sec Boys (Na'eleen)	A-Sha'ab, 06/30
06/29 07/06	Na'eleen Prep Girls (Na'eleen)	A-Sha'ab, 06/30
06/30 07/02	a-Sa'oudiah Sec (Qalqilia)	A-Sha'ab, 06/30
07/02 ?	Bethlehem school (Bethlehem)	J. Post, 07/03
07/11 08/15+	Tulkarem RC Prep/UNRWA (Tulkarem)	Al-Quds, 07/13
07/11 08/15+	Jamal Abd a-Nasser Girls (Tulkarem)	Al-Quds, 07/13
07/11 08/15+	al-Adawiah (Tulkarem)	Al-Quds, 07/13
07/11 08/15+	al-Fadaliah Boys (Tulkarem)	Al-Quds, 07/13
07/11 08/15+	Qalqilia Sec Girls (Qalqilia)	Al-Quds, 07/13
07/11 08/15+	a-Sa'oudiah Sec Boys (Qalqilia)	Al-Quds, 07/13
07/11 08/15+	a-Shemah Sec Girls (Qalqilia)	Al-Quds, 07/13
07/11 08/15+	al-Bireh al-Jadeedah (al-Bireh)	A-Sha'ab, 07/12
07/12 08/15+	Artas Sec (Artas)	Al-Quds, 07/13
07/14 08/15+	all 19 Tulkarem schools*	Al-Quds, 07/15
07/14 08/15+	all 2 Dhanabeh schools	Al-Quds, 07/15
07/14 08/15+	Qalqilia Prep Boys/UNRWA (Qalqilia)	Al-Quds, 07/15
07/14 08/15+	Qalqilia Prep Girls/UNRWA (Qalqilia)	Al-Quds, 07/15
07/14 08/15+	Qalqilia Elem Girls (Qalqilia)	Al-Quds, 07/15
07/14 08/15+	al-Morabetoun Elem (Qalqilia)	Al-Quds, 07/15
07/14 08/15+	all 8 Qalqilia schools*	J. Post, 07/15
07/16 ~	Kalandia Prep Girls (Kalandia RC)	Al-Quds, 07/17
07/17 ?	Nur Shams RC/UNRWA (Nur Shams RC)	J. Post, 07/18

NUMBER OF CLOSURE ORDERS RECORDED:

48

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS AFFECTED:

83

* The original date for ending the extended 1987/8 academic year was 08/15, however it was changed to 07/21 by military order.

* A number of these schools were already shut by earlier orders.

~ Closed indefinitely

? Date of closure/re-opening not recorded

SOURCE: Local Arabic and English press

APPENDIX A3:

SCHOOL CLOSURE ORDERS - EAST JERUSALEM
(September 1988 - January 1989)

Date of Closure	Until	Name of School	Source
09/04	09/19	all govt elem 3 classes	JMCC report
09/04	09/27	all govt elem 4 classes	JMCC report
09/04	10/05	all govt elem 5-6, prep, sec classes	J. Post, 10/05
09/07	09/14	a-Nithamiyah Girls (Beit Hanina)	Al-Quds, 09/28
10/15	10/22	Dar al-Aytam al-Islamiyah Elem	JMCC report
10/17	10/24	a-Sina'yah Sec (al-Yateem al-Arabi)	Al-Quds, 10/18
10/17	10/27	Dar al-Fatah al-Laji'a A	Al-Quds, 10/18
10/17	11/17	Dar al-Aytam al-Islamiyah a-Sina'yeh	Al-Quds, 10/18
10/17	~	a-Rashidiyah Sec Boys	Al-Quds, 10/18
10/18	10/28	Dar a-Tefl al-Arabi	JMCC report
10/21	11/04	Dar al-Aytam a-Thouri Prep	Al-Quds, 10/22
10/25	01/11	a-Rashidiyah Sec Boys	Al-Quds, 10/26
10/30	11/19	a-Sawahri al-Gharabiyeh Prep Girls	JMCC report
10/30	11/03	all government schools	Al-Ittihad, 10/30
10/31	11/20	a-Nithamiyah Sec Girls (Beit Hanina)	Al-Quds, 11/01
11/07	11/27	Dar al-Awlad	Al-Quds, 11/08
11/07	11/27	Dar al-Fatah al-Laji'a A	Al-Quds, 11/08
11/07	11/21	a-Sinayah (al-Yateem al-Arabi)	Al-Quds, 11/08
11/08	11/20	Dar al-Tefl al-Arabi	JMCC report
11/08	11/20	Dar al-Fatah al-Laji'a A	JMCC report
11/08	11/20	Dar al-Yateem al-Arabi	JMCC report
11/08	11/20	Jama'iyat Shab'at al-Muslimat	JMCC report
11/08	11/21	a-Sinayah Sec (Int'l Lutheran Union)	Al-Quds, 11/09
11/12	11/19	all government schools	JMCC report
11/12	11/19	al-Ma'muniyyeh Sec Girls	JMCC report
11/12	11/19	a-Rashidiyah Sec Boys	JMCC report
11/12	11/19	Dar a-Tefl al-Arabi	JMCC report
12/01	~	a-Rashidiyah Sec Boys	Al-Quds, 12/01
12/13	12/19	a-Tor Prep Girls	Al-Quds, 12/13
12/13	12/19	a-Tor Prep Boys	Al-Quds, 12/13
12/13	12/19	Shu'afat Sec Girls	Al-Quds, 12/13
12/30	01/02	Shu'afat Boys	Al-Quds, 12/30
01/07	01/09	Shu'afat Sec Boys	A-Sha'ab, 01/24
01/07	01/21	Shu'afat Prep Boys	A-Sha'ab, 01/24
01/17	02/16	Dar al-Aytam al-Islamiyah Sec Boys	Al-Ittihad, 01/18
01/17	01/20	Shu'afat Prep Girls	J. Post, 01/18
01/24	02/06	Shu'afat Prep Girls	J. Post, 01/24
01/24	02/06	Shu'afat Sec Boys	J. Post, 01/24

NUMBER OF CLOSURE ORDERS RECORDED: 38
 NUMBER OF SCHOOLS AFFECTED: 25+

† Closed indefinitely
 + Number of schools affected by municipality-ordered delay
 in opening of schools and 2 area-wide closure orders not included.

SOURCE: Local Arabic and English press

APPENDIX A4:

SCHOOL CLOSURE ORDERS - GAZA STRIP
(September 1988 - January 1989)

Date of Closure	Until	Name of School	Source
09/01	09/20	all preparatory schools	Al-Quds, 09/29
09/01	10/11	all secondary schools	A-Sha'ab
10/08	10/15	Deir al-Balah El C Coed/UNRWA (Deir al-Balah)	UNRWA
10/08	10/15	Deir al-Balah El D Coed/UNRWA (Deir al-Balah)	UNRWA
10/17	~	al-Furat Sec Boys (a-Sheja'iyeh, Gaza)	Al-Quds, 10/18
10/19	12/20	Rafah Prep A boys/UNRWA (Rafah)	UNRWA
10/19	12/20	Rafah Prep B Boys/UNRWA (Rafah)	UNRWA
10/26	11/22	Khan Younis El B Girls/UNRWA (Khan Younis)	UNRWA
10/26	11/22	Khan Younis El C Girls/UNRWA (Khan Younis)	UNRWA
10/26	11/22	Khan Younis El E Girls/UNRWA (Khan Younis)	UNRWA
10/27	12/21	New Gaza Prep Boys/UNRWA (Gaza)	UNRWA
10/27	12/21	New Gaza El A Boys/UNRWA (Gaza)	UNRWA
10/27	12/21	New Gaza El B Boys/UNRWA (Gaza)	UNRWA
10/29	11/05	Rafah El D Girls/UNRWA (Tel a-Sultan, Rafah)	UNRWA
10/29	11/05	Rafah El E Girls/UNRWA (Tel a-Sultan, Rafah)	UNRWA
11/05	01/05	Jaffa Sec Boys (Gaza)	Al-Quds, 11/06
11/05	01/05	Jaffa Prep Boys (Gaza)	Al-Quds, 11/06
11/25	~	Bir a-Sab'a Sec Boys (Rafah)	Al-Quds, 11/26
11/30	12/26	Beit Hanoun Prep Boys/UNRWA (Beit Hanoun)	UNRWA
12/01	~	Beit Hanoun Sec Boys (Beit Hanoun)	Al-Quds, 12/02
12/04	12/05	Ibn Rashid El Boys/UNRWA (Jabalia/Beit Hanoun)	UNRWA
12/05	~	a-Rafidain Sec Girls (Sheikh Radwan, Gaza)	Al-Quds, 12/05
12/05	12/24*	a-Sama'our Sec Boys (Tel a-Sultan, Rafah)	Al-Quds, 12/22
?	12/24*	Khaled Bin al-Walid Sec Girls (Nuseirat)	A-Sha'ab, 12/06
?	01/11*	Khaled Bin al-Walid Sec Boys (Nuseirat)	A-Sha'ab, 12/06
?	12/24*	al-Manfalouti Sec Boys (Deir al-Balah)	A-Sha'ab, 12/06
?	01/11*	al-Furat Prep Boys (a-Sheja'iyeh, Gaza)	A-Sha'ab, 12/06
12/?	12/22	al-Farabi School (Gaza)	Al-Quds, 12/22
12/08	01/11*	Salah a-Deen Prep Boys/UNRWA (Gaza/Shati)	UNRWA
12/12	~	al-Mutanabi Sec Boys (Beni Suheila)	JMCC report
12/24	01/11*	Falastin Sec Boys (Rimal, Gaza)	JMCC report
12/24	01/11*	Ibn Sina Sec Boys (Shati)	JMCC report
12/24	01/11*	Ibn Sina Prep Boys (Shati)	JMCC report
12/27	01/11*	Bir a-Saba' Sec (Rafah)	Al-Quds, 12/27
01/25	01/30	al-Furat Prep (a-Sheja'iyeh, Gaza)	Al-Fajr, 01/31
01/25	~	al-Furat Sec (a-Sheja'iyeh, Gaza)	Al-Fajr, 01/31

NUMBER OF CLOSURE ORDERS RECORDED: 36
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS AFFECTED: 31+

? Date of closure/re-opening not reported
~ Closed indefinitely
* Slated to re-open (re-opening not confirmed)
+ Number of schools affected by military-ordered delays in the opening of preparatory and secondary schools not included

SOURCE: Local Arabic and English press

APPENDIX A5:

CLOSURE OF UNRWA SCHOOLS BY CURFEW & MILITARY ORDER - GAZA STRIP
 BREAKDOWN BY WEEK
 (1 September - 28 December 1988)

Week	Total Curfew* Closures	Total Mil Order Closures	Combined Total Closures	% of Total Schools Closed/day
1 Sep - 7 Sep	0	252	252	29
8 Sep - 14 Sep	86	252	338	38
15 Sep - 21 Sep	87	168	255	29
22 Sep - 28 Sep	125	0	125	14
29 Sep - 5 Oct	136	0	136	15
6 Oct - 12 Oct	149	10	159	18
13 Oct - 19 Oct	133	4	137	16
20 Oct - 26 Oct	114	15	129	15
27 Oct - 2 Nov	353	58	411	47
3 Nov - 9 Nov	158	50	208	24
10 Nov - 16 Nov	748	48	796	91
17 Nov - 23 Nov	92	42	134	15
24 Nov - 30 Nov	294	31	325	37
1 Dec - 7 Dec	71	37	108	12
8 Dec - 14 Dec	376	42	418	48
15 Dec - 21 Dec	188	35	223	26
22 Dec - 28 Dec	85	9	94	11

Totals:	3195	1053	4248	29
WEEKLY AVERAGE:	188	62	250	29

1 closure = 1 school closed for 1 day

*Total curfew closures do not include schools under curfew which were also closed by military order; these schools are counted only under military order closures to avoid repetition.

SOURCE: Statistics compiled from UNRWA attendance records for its 42 preparatory and 104 secondary schools in the Gaza Strip. These figures do not include unclear or missing records (5 days) and therefore reflect the minimum number of closures. Actual figures may be slightly higher.

APPENDIX A6:
 CLOSURE OF UNRWA SCHOOLS BY CURFEW & MILITARY ORDER - GAZA STRIP
 BREAKDOWN BY AREA
 (1 September - 28 December 1988)

Area S	Total # of Schools+	Total Curfew Closures*	Total Mil Order Closures	Combined Total Closures	Average # Schools Closed/week	% of School Closed/week
Rafah	25	488	230	718	42	28
Khan Younis	27	454	165	619	36	23
Deir al-Balah	8	204	44	248	15	30
Maghazi	6	102	32	134	8	22
Nuseirat	12	424	64	488	29	40
Bureij	8	194	32	226	13	28
Gaza & Shati	37	635	335	970	57	26
Jabalia & Beit Hanoun	23	694	151	845	50	36

Totals:	146	3195	1053	4248	250	29

1 closure = 1 school closed for 1 day

+ Gaza schools run on morning/afternoon shifts, thus 2 schools may
 may use one building.

* Total curfew closures do not include schools under curfew
 also closed by military order; these schools are counted only
 under military order closures to avoid repetition.

SOURCE: Statistics compiled from UNRWA attendance records for
 its 42 preparatory and 104 ~~secondary~~ ^{primary} schools in the Gaza Strip.
 These figures do not include unclear or missing records (5 days)
 and therefore reflect the minimum number of closures. Actual
 figures may be slightly higher.

APPENDIX B:

SAMPLE TRANSLATIONS OF ORDERS CLOSING ALL WEST BANK SCHOOLS

I. First order closing all schools in Ramallah district. Similar orders were issued in the other West Bank districts.

In the name of God, the Merciful and the Compassionate

The Civil Administration for the Areas of Judea and Samaria
Office of the Director of the Education Department, Ramallah
District

Number: 49/91/118

Date: 3 February 1988

To: The Respected Principals of the governmental, UNRWA, and
private schools

Subject: Closure of Schools

Greetings,

The schools of this district will close until further notice
as of the morning of Thursday 4 February 1988.

With respect,
(Signature)
The Director of Education

II. First order extending the initial closure of all West Bank
schools and giving definitive dates for the closure. This order
was followed by other orders further extending the general
closure.

Israeli Defense Force
20 Adar 5748 (9 March)
Order regarding security regulations
Judea and Samaria (Number: 378)
5730-1970

CLOSURE ORDER

According to the powers vested in me in accordance with
Article 91 (A) (2) of the order regarding Security Regulations
(Judea and Samaria) (No. 378) 5730-1970, and as I believe that
such an order is needed to maintain order and discipline, the
general order, and for the security of the Israeli Defense Force,
I hereby order that all educational institutions in the Judea and
Samaria are to be closed effective from 9 March 1988 until 9
April 1988 without exception.

Responsible officials of the above educational institutions
are requested to close them, not to administer them, and to keep
them closed during the above mentioned period.

