

# Politicized Injustice in America Directed against a Palestinian-American Community Leader

By [Stephen Lendman](#) and [Rasmea Yousef Odeh](#)  
Global Research, August 24, 2017

Region: [USA](#)  
Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [Law and Justice](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#)  
In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

*Featured image: Rasmea Odeh (Source: Abayomi Azikiwe)*

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*It's rife in America, thousands incarcerated and abused for political reasons – notably people of color and Muslims, deplorably treated like fifth column threats.*

*Chicago-based Palestinian/American Rasmea Yousef Odeh is a noted community leader, an activist, feminist, educator and champion of human and civil rights, a widely respected figure.*

Born in Palestine, she was victimized by Israeli viciousness, imprisoned unjustly in its gulag from 1969 – 1979, horrifically mistreated, tortured and sexually abused.

Her sentenced was commuted as part of a prisoner release deal. Deported to Lebanon, in 1995 she emigrated to America, becoming a Chicago resident in 2005, continuing her activist work, ongoing for over 40 years.

A founding member of the United States Palestinian Community Network (USPCN) Chicago chapter, the organization earlier called her “a living legend in the eyes of thousands across the world, one of our precious elders.”

In October 2013, she was arrested in Chicago, prosecuted in Detroit, the jurisdiction where she applied for citizenship, wrongfully charged and convicted for unlawful procurement of naturalization – pertaining to allegedly lying on her 1994 immigration application, omitting her lawless arrest and imprisonment in Israel nearly five decades ago.

She committed no crimes. So-called evidence of her involvement in 1969 Jerusalem bombings was based on her confession under torture, given to stop the pain, not for any wrongdoing.

Israel pressed for her prosecution in America. US Muslims are war on terror scapegoats, unjustly vilified and abused.

Judge Gershwin Drain sentenced Odeh to time served, 33 days in 2014, a \$1,000 fine, plus loss of citizenship and deportation to Jordan.

Last Thursday in Detroit federal court, during her sentencing hearing, she recounted her horrific mistreatment, along with conditions under brutal Israeli occupier.

Here's what she said in full, a moving, forthright, factual statement by a glorious woman, deserving high praise, not what she's been put through.

"On this court's platform, I'm standing today to raise my voice on behalf of myself as a Palestinian woman and on behalf of all Palestinian people, whether under occupation, in refugee camps, or scattered in exile across the world," she began.

"Honorable Judge Drain: First, I would like to clarify that my following message is not directed at you personally."

"I am a Palestinian woman who was born into a family that had simple dreams and desires to live in peace and tranquility, far away from bombs, explosions, murder, and displacement."

"But those dreams turned into a nightmare at the hands of the Zionist Haganah gangs whose crimes are hard to imagine. The Zionists committed massacres, killing children and the elderly without any consideration of human values."

"They displaced hundreds of thousands of my people, and killed thousands more, in 1947 and 1948, upon the establishment of the state of Israel."

"They turned us into strangers in our own country, and pushed us into the inhumane conditions of refugee camps inside Palestine and other Arab countries."

"The Israeli goals were not satisfied in 1948, so they pursued the ambitions of Zionism and launched another war in 1967, illegally occupying the rest of Palestine and parts of surrounding Arab countries."

"International law prohibits the following practices, and considers them punishable offenses:

The Israeli occupation of Palestine is a crime. Its use of biological and chemical weapons is a terrorist crime. Demolishing schools, homes, hospitals, clinics, and places of worship is a crime."

"Imprisoning hundreds of political organizers and resisters (including dozens of children) without charge is a crime. Putting up the Apartheid Wall is a crime." killing people is a crime; and collective punishment is a crime!"

"Many countries in this world have struggled to win their independence. International law and all the United Nations conventions state that people have the right to fight for their independence, and to expel the colonizer and the occupier."

"People in the US struggled against British colonialism for their independence, and that is the reason the 4th of July is celebrated. Why are the Palestinians prohibited from struggling for our independence?"

"When Palestinians have fought for our rights over the years, all US administrations have responded by supporting Israeli crimes and brutal aggression, falsely describing Israel's acts as 'self-defense.' "

"At the same time, the US government calls us terrorists by placing all of our

legitimate resistance organizations on its terrorist list!" – because Israel demand it.

"I wonder how the US or any other country would respond if they were invaded by a foreign force? If people in the US were to defend themselves, would they be considered terrorists, and would their resistance organizations be placed on a terrorist list?"

"I am sure that they would have the full right to protect their country, just as my people should have the right to protect our country."

"The Arms Export Control Act of 1976 prohibits the US from exporting arms in situations where such arms would 'aid in the development of weapons of mass destruction (or) increase the possibility of outbreak or escalation of conflict...', and also prohibits use of such arms against civilians and innocents."

Thus, the US government or any US company violates the law if it exports weapons to a state or group that uses them in this way."

"The reality is that the US, as Israel's patron, violates its own laws by supporting Zionist aggression. That means the US is also guilty of crimes against the Palestinians."

"This country's military, political, economic, and diplomatic support allows Israel to continue its colonization and military occupation of Palestine, and to commit crimes prohibited by international law and US law."

"That is why we organize for Palestinian rights in the US, because it is this government that must also be held responsible for Israel's state terrorism against my people."

"We, the Palestinians, have been struggling against oppression for one hundred years, ever since the British Balfour Declaration promised the world that it would support the colonization of our country. And for almost 70 years, the manufactured state of Israel has been doing the bidding of the powerful British and US empires."

"This Israel has no right to exist as a racist state of white settler colonialists, just like South Africa had no right to exist as the racist, Apartheid state it was."

"This Israel represents nothing but violence and ethnic cleansing against my people."

"Many years of negotiations for a political settlement have been a huge failure, because Israel continuously demands recognition as a Jewish state, which goes against all notions of equality and democracy; and because it wants to liquidate all the rights of the Palestinians, including our rights to return, self-determination, equality, and political independence."

"Each Israeli government moves more and more to the extreme right, and Netanyahu's is the worst of them, launching three horrible wars on Gaza."

"It destroyed homes, schools, health clinics, and our infrastructure as a whole, killing thousands, and finally imposing a siege on the entire Gaza Strip."

"Recently, Israel installed metal detectors and security cameras at the entrance to the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, prompting weeks of massive protests. Three Palestinians were killed, and a thousand injured, before Israel was forced by our mass movement to remove the barriers."

"At the same time, Israeli laws that discriminate against Palestinians in Jerusalem, as well as settler violence against Palestinians in Jerusalem and the West Bank, are official policies meant to force more and more Palestinians out of our country, and to consolidate Israeli control over Greater Jerusalem. It is quite clear that many, if not most, Israelis do not want Palestinians around at all."

"I personally experienced a harsh, unstable, and terror-filled life in Palestine, like all my people under occupation. I was pushed off my land two separate times."

My family home was destroyed twice, and my young sister was killed by the trauma of war. I was a political prisoner who was brutally tortured and raped by Israeli soldiers and prison authorities, and was almost killed more than once."

"I continue to be terrified of the future for myself and my people. I can still almost feel the accelerated pounding of the people's hearts while they are running to find shelter, the horrific screaming of the children, the moans of the people under the rubble of their homes, and the sounds of them dying from bombs, missiles, and bullets."

"My people have the right to struggle to rid ourselves of the Israeli occupation of our country. The US government must stop disavowing our rights, and stop working with the Israelis to prosecute activists and organizers here."

"Most of the people and governments in the rest of the world are with us. Millions of people are supporting the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement."

"Black-Palestinian unity and solidarity is at its absolute height in the US, because both peoples recognize that the racist nature of the US government and the racist nature of Israel are the same."

"When I saw those white racists marching in Virginia, all I could think of was the white settlers in Israel burning Palestinian children to death or marching to attack my people in Jerusalem."

"Many of the social justice forces – from the Women's March, the Movement for Black Lives, and anti-occupation and anti-Zionist American Jews, to immigrant rights, anti-torture, and civil liberties organizations – that supported my defense campaign did it not only because they support me as a survivor of torture and injustice, but also because they support the much more important cause of the liberation of all of Palestine – a democratic, secular Palestine for all."

A powerful statement by a glorious woman about to be wrongfully deported to an uncertain fate in Jordan – because Israel wants her persecution, pain and suffering continued, no other reason.

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