

Keep It Up, Ahed Tamimi

Now it must be said to her, days before her scheduled release after eight months in prison: It was worth it. Keep up the resistance to the Israeli occupation

Gideon Levy

[Haaretz Jul 25, 2018 10:19 PM](#)

On Sunday you're supposed to get out of prison, finally, together with your mother. But maybe it's better not to open one's mouth to the devil; the Shin Bet might issue an administrative arrest order against you. After all, only a few weeks ago the [Shin Bet](#) determined that you are still "potentially dangerous" – but we can hope that in three days you and your mother will once again be free at home.

We can also hope that the potential danger you presented did not abate during your months in prison, since winter; that you're still dangerous to the occupation, that you won't stop resisting in your way. As far as I know your family, whom Israeli propaganda calls a "family of terror," and a "family of murderers," I know that there's no chance of that happening. Your spirit will not falter. Your "danger" will not dissipate.

You and your mother were in prison for eight months, although you had done nothing wrong except exhibit natural, justified resistance to the occupation, which invaded your yard. You struck an armed and body-armored soldier with your bare hands, as much as a 16-year-old girl can strike an armed, body-armored soldier, and your mother filmed it. That was your crime. In the occupation, only soldiers are allowed to strike. You did what any brave person living under occupation would do – you slapped him. The occupation has more than that coming to it.

This happened after soldiers shot your 15-year-old cousin, [Mohammed Tamimi](#), in the head, up the street from your house, leaving him with only half a skull. You should know that they arrested him again since then, despite his disability, and released him. Your brother was also arrested since then, and released.

[Nabi Saleh](#) is waiting for its daughters. Bassem is waiting for Nariman and Ahed. There are also Israelis waiting for their release. Last week another case was uncovered of resistance to the occupation forces: Young men threw stones at the Border Police and injured a policewoman, who was taken to the hospital.

A stone can kill and there's a new, harsher policy against stone-throwers. Three young men were arrested, but they were released in a flash. They are settlers from Yitzhar. Ahed injured no one, and spent eight months in prison. No, there's no apartheid in the territories.

Ahed will be released on Sunday to a new reality. She has become an icon. While she was in jail, Gaza rose up and paid with the lives of 160 of its inhabitants, shot to death by Israeli snipers. Dozens of others remain disabled, some because Israel denied them proper medical care.

While Ahed was in prison, the West Bank sank into its summer torpor, busy with internal rifts and disputes. The West Bank needs Ahed. The resistance needs Ahed. Not that one girl can change the world, but Ahed's generation needs to be the next generation of the resistance. Its predecessor is lost; its children killed, wounded, arrested, in despair, tired, exiled or joined the bourgeoisie.

Yes, one can be an Israeli and support the Palestinians who resist the occupation, like Ahed Tamimi, and wish them success. In fact, one must do so. With her bare hands and impressive appearance, Ahed is the hope for the future, the inspiration to others. The Shin Bet opposed her early release, saying: "Her statements show her extreme ideology and, given the security situation shows the potential danger of

her early release.” Months have gone by, and it is hoped that the Shin Bet believes Ahd has changed her ideology thanks to her additional months in jail. Otherwise she won’t be released.

But the Shin Bet also knows that except for the sake of abuse, revenge, satisfying Israeli public opinion and a desperate attempt at suppression by force, there is no justification for the continued imprisonment of this poster girl from Nabi Saleh. The Shin Bet knows that her “extreme” ideology is the ideology of everyone living under the occupation.

Now it must be said to Ahd: It was worth it. Keep it up, Ahd. Keep up the resistance to the occupation. Keep up the protests every Friday of your courageous village. Keep on “inciting” – decrying the occupation and documenting its crimes. Keep on slapping him, if he invades your yard again, or shoots your young cousin in the head.

Gideon Levy

Haaretz Correspondent