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Mubarak Awad

Mubarak Awad is a Palestinian-American psychologist and an advocate of nonviolent resistance.

Contents

Early life and move to the United States

Awad, a Palestinian Christian (a member of the Greek Orthodox Church), was born in 1943 in Jerusalem when it was under the British Mandate.[1] When Awad was five years old, his father was killed during the 1948 Arab–Israeli War and he became a refugee in the Old City of Jerusalem.[1][2] His mother was a pacifist and argued against revenge.[2] He was given the right to Israeli citizenship in 1967 when East Jerusalem was annexed by Israel after the Six-Day War but refused and kept his Jordanian citizenship.[3][4]

Mennonite and Quaker missionaries influenced Awad's views in his youth.[2] In the 1960s he moved to the United States to study at the Mennonite Bluffton University and received a BA in social work and sociology.[2][5] He went on to obtain an MS in education from Saint Francis University and a PhD in psychology from the International Graduate School of Saint Louis University.[1][5][6]

He was granted U.S. citizenship in 1978 and settled in a small town in Ohio.[2][3]

Career

National Youth Advocate Program

Awad was the founder and former president of the National Youth Advocate Program (NYAP) in the United States.[6] The organization developed from the Ohio Youth Advocate Program (OYAP) established by Awad in 1978 with support from the Ohio Youth Commission (now the Department of Youth Services), the state department responsible for

As an offshoot of NYAP, he later founded and directed Youth Advocate Program International, headquartered in Washington, DC.[8] According to the website, "The Youth Advocate Program International, Inc. (YAP International) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. It established its headquarters and advocacy center in Washington, DC in 1996. YAP International's mission is to promote and protect the rights and well-being of the world's youth, giving particular attention to children victimized by conflict, exploitation, and state and personal violence."[9]

Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence

In 1983 Awad returned to Jerusalem and established the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence.[2][10] Before the *intifada*, Awad published papers and lectured on nonviolence as a technique for resisting the Israeli occupation. He wrote that nonviolence could be used as a means of resistance. The Centre also sponsored a number of nonviolent actions during the early months on the first *intifada*. Among the tactics employed was the planting of olive trees on proposed Israeli settlements, asking people not to pay taxes and encouraging people to eat and drink Palestinian products. In the Middle East he is often referred to as the Arab Gandhi due to the similarity between his teachings of the power of nonviolence and those of Mahatma Gandhi in India during the British Raj.[11] He believed these tactics could be used to resist the Israeli military occupation. He also drew upon the methodologies of Gene Sharp's trilogy, *The Politics of Non-Violence*. Using this knowledge and his experience, Awad prepared his own "12-page blueprint for passive resistance in the territories," eventually published in the *Journal of Palestine Studies*.[12] He has translated into Arabic the teachings of Mohatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. In 2015 he asserted that disciplined civil disobedience, involving the tearing up of Israeli ID cards, refusing to obey curfew orders, tearing fences down, and planting trees wherever settlements were being planned were among many non-violent options Palestinian should adopt, standing up for themselves with only their bodies and hearts in order to compel the occupier to "choose what kind of people they are".[13]

Deportation by Israel

In 1987, Awad attempted to renew the residency permit he had been issued in 1967.[3] His application was declined and he was ordered to leave the country when his tourist visa expired.[3] Awad claimed, with strong support from U.S. consular officials, that under international conventions Israel did not have the right to expel him from his place of birth and he refused to leave.[3] The Israeli government stayed the deportation order mainly at the insistence of the U.S.[2] In May 1988, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir ordered Awad arrested and expelled.[3] Officials charged that Awad broke Israeli law by inciting "civil uprising" and helping to write leaflets that advocated civil disobedience that were distributed by the leadership of the First Intifada.[3] No evidence was provided to support the charge and Awad appealed the decision to the Supreme Court.[3] The court ruled that he had forfeited his right to residence status in Israel when he became a U.S. citizen and he was deported in June 1988.[3] U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz's appeal to Shamir to revoke the deportation order was declined.[3] Ian Lustick, professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania, cited the ruling in Awad's case as one of a number of examples that he argues demonstrate that "[t]here has never been an official act that has declared expanded East Jerusalem as having been annexed by the State of Israel."[14]

Nonviolence International

In 1989, Awad founded Nonviolence International, a non-governmental organization in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council.[15] Nonviolence International's stated mission is to promote nonviolent action and seek to reduce the use of violence worldwide.[15]

Academic career

Awad has taught at the American University in Washington, D.C. since the early 1990s.[1][5] He is an Adjunct Professor in the School of International Service where he teaches classes in the theories and methods of nonviolence.[5]