

**ANNEX III – Account of incident written by Karrem Rabie whose apartment was invaded by the Israeli army and all students present were subjected to arbitrary questioning.**

**Name:** Kareem Rabie

**Nationality:** American

**Occupation:** PhD student at City University of New York's Graduate School

**Course of study in Palestine:** Student in PAS Programme in summer 2007.

**Institution:** Birzeit University

**Date of written account:** December 2007

**Account received by:** Right to Education Campaign, Birzeit University

It took place on 31 of July at 2:00 or 2:30 am.

I was in bed what it happened.

I woke up at around 2:00 or 2:30 to the sounds of them banging on the door to the basement apartment, directly under my bedroom. They were pounding on the door and screaming "Army" in Arabic. I woke up and tried to lay still hoping they would go away. I stayed in bed for a while, but it didn't seem like they were leaving so I got up, put on a shirt, and walked to the front of the apartment to wake up Jim. When I walked past the kitchen they saw me through the window (which was ground level), pointed lights at me, yelled, and had me open the door.

When I opened the door, I had my hands up, there were maybe 6 or 8 soldiers crouching behind a ledge pointing machine guns at me. I could see red laser pointers on my chest. One ran up to me and checked me (I was pretty clearly unarmed, being in my underpants and a t-shirt, with my hands up). At this point two took me down the hill to the entrance to the basement apartment, where the other soldiers were. Everyone was dressed as soldiers, and many were wearing face paint. Downstairs I started getting questioned by one of them. He was not wearing face paint and he spoke fluent English and Arabic. In general he was smarter, more polite, clean cut, and together than the others, he definitely seemed like he was in charge in some capacity (he remembered all of our names, he was the one I was taken to, he was the one that allowed me to get dressed, etc.). He spoke to me only in Arabic. I told him that I would prefer English, but he suggested that we speak in Arabic; you know, the same thing they do to us at the airport and checkpoints. He asked me a series of questions about who was in the building, who are neighbors are, who my roommates are, etc. At a certain point I told him that I was cold and wanted to go upstairs to put my pants on and get my passport. There was some confusion, I think, because they found an empty basement apartment and accidentally happened upon four American students instead. So I went back upstairs. Someone yelled at me, I told him the guy downstairs said I could come up and get dressed and he let me in.

Upstairs I found the three roommates sitting around the table, answering questions,

guns pointed at them. I gather that the troops came in, pointed guns around and did a bit of ineffectual searching (they moved the couch a bit, one of them took my Birzeit University I.D. card from my desk). Jim can fill in what happened during that time.

At that point they brought our neighbor downstairs and just generally hassled us, asked the same sorts of questions, etc. All in all I think the whole thing lasted an hour or an hour and a half, but I remember really having no sense of time at during the whole thing.

We felt, of course, horrible. Uncomfortable in our home, and unsafe; feeling like the separation between home and private space had disappeared. For days afterwards, Jim and I talked about this, we pictured their vehicles on our street, them crouching around pointing guns at us. Of course, with time, it goes away and it gets internalized and normalized. Immediately after they left, Jim and I couldn't sleep. We went outside, we paced, we talked, we looked around. Jim saw them arrest three people from the basement apartment next door, and they had been blindfolded. This is the reason why we suspected that they just had the wrong apartment (of course that doesn't do justice to the fact that they go wherever, whenever, for any reason). After they finally left our street we went for a bit of a walk and we saw one of our neighbors, an old woman, and her friend being walked home and chatted. We were very scared.