

free ALL the DETAINEEES!

A Palestinian man is picked up by police and held in jail without announced charges, subject to beatings and mistreatment. Efforts to have him released in a timely manner fail—the government holding him refuses even to release his name. News of his arrest and treatment relies on the community networks of which he was a part before his arrest. In violation of all standards of due process of law, hearings and evidence are kept secret. Thousands of others receive the same treatment, disappeared into a network of jails, their identities kept secret, remaining unavailable to their communities. Some have not been heard from since their disappearance.



targeted for detention because of their political work. Arrested for minor visa violations—those that were, in the past, handled through quick hearings and small fines—the detainees are imprisoned, their names kept secret, any further charges against them undisclosed, moved around from location to location, their hearings held in closed chambers. These detentions have been the latest step in the systematic denial of rights to immigrants. For years, immigrants suffered the danger of secret evidence prosecutions—trials in which they could not see the evidence against which they were supposed to defend themselves. Now, immigrants suffer the danger of entirely secret proceedings, isolating them

from their families and communities and deporting them without any standard of due process of law. The treatment of the detainees is a fundamental injustice—we must demand their freedom and their rights to due process.

It may sound like the notorious “administrative detention” used to deny Palestinians their rights in Israel, keeping them behind bars without charges or cause. It may sound like the disappearances of Argentina, of Guatemala and El Salvador. It is, however, the United States—for thousands of Arab Americans and other immigrants. In violation of all standards of due process and publicly responsive justice, the Department of Justice and the Immigration and Naturalization Service have sought to expand their ever-increasing powers of secret detentions, secret trials and secret deportations. It is a precedent that threatens not only our immigrant population, but all Americans—our government is seeking to destroy its own standards of due process of law, in favor of an arbitrary practice of detention, justified under the rubric of “counterterrorism”.

When immigrants’ rights are in danger, all of our rights are in danger. From Farouk Abdel-Muhti to Jaoudat Abouazza to Amer Jubran, Palestinian activists have repeatedly been

As we have seen in the cases of American citizens detained as “enemy combatants” and not heard from since, American citizens’ lives and freedoms are also at risk from those who would suppress civil liberties. Immigrants—and specifically Arab American, South Asian and Muslim immigrants—are on the first line of those attacked, and the rest of us follow behind them. The INS has a track record of political prosecution—and persecution—of immigrants; the detentions have been removing leaders, activists and organizers from our communities. We will not be silent! Our immigrant communities are the very communities that form the fabric of our nation—and now, they are facing prosecution for daring to be voices of conscience about their own homelands. We will not accept “administrative detention” in our country. This is NOT, and will NOT BE, a land under military occupation. Free all the detainees!

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