

## Pride

“This [April] issue makes me proud to be a Palestinian. I’m waiting for the day that our people will be free and independent in order to leave a bigger mark on the Arab world and indeed on the whole world.”

I received the comment above from a follower of *This Week in Palestine* who wrote to me when he received the print edition at his home in the United States. Indeed, the sentence “You make us proud of Palestine” is the most frequent comment that we’ve received throughout our long journey. It is quite gratifying to know that we have succeeded in one of our self-imposed mandates, namely, to give Palestinians a sense of dignity and pride in their ancestral homeland, Palestine. The vast majority of the information that we publish, which would make any Palestinian proud, is out there and in abundance; it just needs someone to dig it up and disseminate it. This is what we do.

Possibly the second most frequent comment that we to receive is “TWiP keeps us connected to Palestine.” True, we do not report daily news, but we do cover topics pertinent to the day. Our monthly issues are essentially snapshots of Palestine vis-à-vis our chosen themes. This month’s issue, for instance, is all about Gaza. We investigate the current situation in Gaza, we highlight some of its bright spots – in the midst of the reality of occupation and closures of course. We also pose the question: Where is Gaza heading? I am certain that all Gazans living abroad will particularly appreciate this issue. I expect that local Gazans, too, will value this effort to shed light on their situation. With social media in full force, connecting Palestinians is not only important, it’s necessary as well. A million obstacles are deliberately imposed on Palestinians to fragment them and isolate them from one another – alas, some are self-imposed. So bringing people together is in fact a national need. TWiP’s Gaza issue sends a message to all those who are trying hard to divide the Palestinian people: Your efforts are futile! It also sends the message that there is *one* Palestine (Palestine) and *one* Palestinian People (Palestinian people), irrespective of where they live.

Today is the twelfth day of a hunger strike by around 1,500 out of a total of 6,500 Palestinian prisoners. For the past 12 days, they’ve been living on salt and water. In solidarity with our prisoners, a general strike was called on April 27. Private businesses, schools, banks, and public institutions were all shut. Social media is exploding with support for the prisoners. To be honest, it’s been a while since I’ve seen such unity among Palestinians. I pray that this will continue even after our prisoners succeed in securing their demands for basic human rights from their oppressors. Being a part of this society, we at *This Week in Palestine* pledge our full support to the prisoners’ just demands and call for their freedom in order that they may live with dignity and pride.



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