



A concert (top) given with members of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra for the Israeli armed forces, Be'er Sheva, November 20, 1948, during the systematic expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians from their homes (bottom).



“The musicians of the orchestra are priceless cultural emissaries for Israel...” -David A. Hirsch, Board President, American Friends of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra



**THE ISRAEL
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA**

MUSIC DIRECTOR: ZUBIN MEHTA



**Orchestrating Music for
Ethnic Cleansing and
Apartheid since 1948**

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO) **Whitewashes Israel's Oppression of Palestinians**

In 2006, the Israeli government launched a public relations initiative called "Brand Israel," which seeks to use art and music to distract from Israel's human rights violations. According to Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by sending Israeli artists and musicians abroad, "you show Israel's prettier face, so we are not thought of purely in the context of war."

14% of the IPO budget comes from Israel's government.

The IPO website aptly notes that the Orchestra serves as "Israel's musical ambassador throughout the country and the world." American Friends of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra calls the IPO "Israel's finest cultural emissary" and notes that "[t]he goodwill created by these tours ... is of enormous value to the State of Israel." This cynical use of art and music serves to obscure Israel's military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, home demolitions in Jerusalem, kidnappings, bombings, multiple forms of collective punishment, and countless other grave abuses.

The IPO has done nothing to distance itself from the Brand Israel campaign, nor has it ever made a public statement against the oppression of the Palestinian people. On the contrary, the orchestra proudly touts its special concerts for Israeli soldiers.

Furthermore, the IPO's involvement in Israeli militarism is nothing new. In 1948, when 750,000 Palestinian people were forced out of their homes, the orchestra "traveled in armored cars ... raising the morale of civilians and soldiers alike." In 1967, as Israel was occupying the parts of Palestine they did not occupy in 1948, "Zubin Mehta arrived in a plane full of ammunition from Europe." In further support for the Israeli occupation beyond even the borders of historic Palestine, the IPO's website notes that during war, "the orchestra continued to perform before IDF soldiers from the Golan Heights to Sinai".

"It is much more than just an orchestra. It is a symbol of a country... It is the cultural ambassador of Israel."

-Violinist Julian Rachlin who regularly tours with the IPO

Supporting this attempt to hide the Israeli government's crimes against humanity runs counter to our values of justice and equality. In 2005, over 170 Palestinian civil society organizations called for a campaign of Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) against complicit Israeli institutions until Israel ceases its violation of Palestinian rights and respects international law. This boycott, modeled on the boycott of apartheid South Africa, will continue until Israel ends its military occupation of Palestinian and Syrian land, grants equal rights to Palestinian citizens of Israel, and respects the right of refugees to return to their homes and properties.

Learn more at www.adalahny.org