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In his last ever video clip, 23-year-old Zoheir of Nablus is wearing a military-green coat while speaking to the camera in a voice that sounds surprisingly calm, and his tension is reflected mainly in the long breaths he takes now and then. One can also see a deep abrasion near his left eye.

“I was connected with the army [Shin Bet] [by means of] a gay sex video of me and someone else from the town,” he says. “The one I slept with, was the one who recruited me and works with the army.”

Zoheir explains how the [Shin Bet blackmailed him](#), threatening to expose his sexual identity and forced him to report on the movements of armed Palestinians, who were later assassinated by Israeli forces. His confession was released on Monday by Lion’s Den activists from Nablus, who claim they executed him for cooperating with Israel.

Another clip shows Zoheir in the same green coat, lying in his own blood, lifeless.

Israel made Zoheir fair game, and is responsible for his death no less than those who killed him. Blackmailing and extorting innocent members of the LGBTQ community is a common practice of the Israeli security services. They don’t restrict it to LGBTQ members of course and use it on anyone whose vulnerability can be exploited to force them to do things against their conscience and put their lives at risk, including sick people who depend on Israel for permits to get treatment abroad and people in economic difficulty.

- [The tragedy of queer Palestinians, now on stage](#)
- [Israel must offer asylum to gay Palestinians](#)
- [Israel is hurtling toward dictatorship, previous Shin Bet chief warns](#)

“Every case in which they can snare an innocent person, who can be extorted in exchange for information or can be recruited as a collaborator, is gold for us,” said N., one of the 43 graduates of unit 8200, who refused to report for reserve duty in 2014 following these atrocities.

For a dark institute undeterred by the most heinous tactics, [the fragile status of Palestinian LGBTQ](#) people is a gold mine. “In the training course they study and learn by heart various words for gay in Arabic,” N. said. The goal is to trace in wiretapping the slightest hint of a random person’s sexuality and use it against them. Then the most moral army in the world will ruin that person’s life, only because he’s gay. This practice also makes every LGBTQ person in the territories seen as a potential collaborator making the already persecuted community’s situation even worse.

Israel boasts of being an LGBTQ-friendly place, and even likes to flaunt its treatment of the gay community as proof of its superiority over its neighbors. But at the same time it doesn’t hesitate to threaten Palestinian LGBTQ people with violence and force them to do as it wishes. This is not only a homophobic hate crime – the International Court in The Hague’s constitution defines “compelling the nationals of the hostile party to take part in the operations of war directed against their own country” a war crime.

Zoheir’s appalling death reminds us again that Israeli democracy, whose soul we are now fighting for, is a democracy for Jews only. This failure is especially reflected in former [Shin Bet](#)

[officers joining the protests](#) against the regime coup – including former chiefs Nadav Argaman, Ami Ayalon, Yuval Diskin and Carmi Gilon. The men who practiced dictatorial methods and extorted frightened LGBTQ people are now giving passionate speeches about liberty and equality.

Instead of listening to the top brass of the institution of darkness, it would be better to internalize the message of those who come to demonstrations with Palestinian flags: a state that treats people as means to its ends, and has the blood of innocent people on its hands, will never be a true democracy.

SOURCE:

<https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2023-04-12/ty-article-opinion/.highlight/israels-shin-bet-called-him-fair-game-because-hes-gay/00000187-7613-d484-edef-f697b3cd0000>