

Free Palestine

On 13th Anniversary

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January-February 1978

PLO United, Strong, Confident



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The Palestinian Revolution celebrated its 13th Anniversary in Beirut on January 1, with a morning popular march and a military parade which turned into a huge mass rally attended by George Habash, Secretary-General of the PFLP, Nayef Hawatmeh, Secretary-General of the PDFLP, Abu Jihad, Member of the Fateh Central Committee and by several heads of diplomatic missions and representatives of the Lebanese Nationalist Movement.

After kindling the central torch in the municipal playground, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat delivered a speech which he began by an appraisal of the Lebanese National Movement.

Addressing U.S. President Carter, he emphatically affirmed that 'No one can by-pass the Palestinian Revolution or create an alternative leadership to it.' He said: 'Let Carter, who is now touring the region, voicing his objection to a Palestinian state, definitely know that there would be no stability in the Middle East without a Palestinian state.'

Hailing the Tripoli communique as a 'Counter Current' to compromises and capitulation in

the Arab region, he said it is the only avowed charter which can consolidate national unity.

Arafat then greeted the Palestinians under occupation, who, he said have rallied around the PLO in response to continued attempts to create an alternate Palestinian representation.

He then added: 'The latest joke I heard was from Brezinski who bid the PLO bye-bye, but in turn I say bye-bye U.S. and bye-bye to its interests in the region. There can be no alternate to the PLO other than the Palestinian rifle.'

He finally declared: 'We are not warmongers, all we seek are our rights but in the same way we believe in what late Egyptian President Nasser once said that 'What has been taken by force, by force only is recovered.'

Other rallies and celebrations were held in different Palestinian camps and Lebanese towns. At Bourj Barajneh camp, Samed, the Palestinian workers institution, held a massive rally to honor Palestinian workers. Arafat, who attended the celebration, stressed the importance of creative work in the revolution

and called on Palestinians to produce in the economic, social and cultural fields because the revolutionary struggle is a peoples Movement to create a new progressive society.

At Damour, the people of Tal Zaatar celebrated with a massive march through the streets of the town. Abu Musa, the Palestinian Commander and Fatima Bernawi joined thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese who marched hand in hand. Arafat joined the march and later on addressed the masses and stressed that the people and children of Tal Zaatar symbolize the Arab people's will to continue the struggle until victory and liberation.

The celebrations which continued for a whole week and included rallies for the martyrs attended by hundreds of children of martyrs indicate that the Palestinian people are more determined, more organized and mobilized to continue the struggle against imperialism, Zionism and Arab reactionaries until total victory and liberation.

Arafat: We are not Alone



Palestinian Children March On



Arafat with American Palestinian Delegation

Brothers: Please permit me to extend unanimous and official thanks from the depths of our hearts in the name of our peoples, in the name of our revolution, in the name of all the free men of our Arab nation to Algeria, the continuing revolution, to President Boumediene, the leader of Algeria and the leader of Algeria's revolution, to his militant and struggling brothers of the Council of the Revolution and the government and in the party, to the heroic Algerian people, the people of the 1.5 million martyrs, the people who said words which they are still working for, namely, that the Algerian revolution does not consider itself victorious until it triumphs on the soil of Palestine and on the soil of holy Jerusalem.

In the same way that the Palestinian revolution emerged from the soil of Syria, it finds powerful support and backing and the organic and strategic alliance here in Algeria and here in Libya—Libya the revolution, Libya the ally, Libya the friend—and here in Yemen—the Democratic Yemen, the ally with whom we stand in one trench. We, all of us, comprise this roaring current, this sweeping current. We are not five sides but we are a roaring current, a

sweeping current in our Arab nation. It represents steadfastness. It represents challenge. It represents the will of confrontation. It represents dignity. It represents pride. It rejects any surrender or submission to the logic of imperialism, the logic of Zionism, which is headed by the U.S.

This fortress, this steadfast fortress in Syria, which challenges this machine, this war and Zionist machine, which is supported by imperialism, headed by the United States, this fortress will stand fast and with it the Palestinian revolutionaries will stand fast and with it all the free men of our Arab nation from the ocean to the gulf will stand fast.

We are not alone in the field. With us we have all the free men of the world who love freedom and who love a just peace. And as our statement says: Just peace cannot be just except when it is a pan-Arab peace—I repeat Arab, Arab. From here I say we are not alone. With us we have all those free men in the world. We have with us our friends in the nonaligned countries, in African states, in Islamic states, in Socialist states, headed and led by our friends in the Soviet Union. I do not wish to say more than this, but with my brother President Boumediene we are together and will be side by side until victory, until victory, until victory.

[Speech by PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasser Arafat at the Arab steadfastness and confrontation conference in Algiers, February 4, 1978.]

On the Martyrdom of Said Hammami



London mourns the death of Said Hammami as friends file past his coffin.



Palestinian leadership walking behind the martyr's casket.



Arafat with Said's wife.

OFFICIAL PALESTINIAN COMMUNIQUE ON ASSASSINATION OF HAMAMI

An official spokesman for the P.L.O. executive committee and the leadership of the Palestinian Revolution made the following statement:

Hired killers, enemies of the Palestinian people and agents of Zionism and imperialism in a treacherous and cowardly fashion this afternoon shot the Palestinian patriot and militant, Said Hammami, representative of the P.L.O. and Fateh in London.

The P.L.O. Executive Committee and the Central Committee of Fateh today lost a leading militant and son of the Revolution, and an accomplished diplomat who devoted his time and gave his life to service to the cause of the Palestinian people and their armed revolution.

The militant and patriot Said Hammami died the death of a martyr, while steadfastly and bravely doing his patriotic duty in defence of the right of our people to regain their homeland and their rights.

The Palestinian Revolution, which is horrified by this ugly criminal act aimed against one of its people's leading militants will not

stand idly by in the shadow of this crime, no matter who the perpetrators are. The bullets which took the life of the militant Said Hammami will not find their recompense except with the lives of the hired killers, enemies of the Palestinian people and their revolution, and agents of Zionism and imperialism.

The Palestinian revolution, while condemning in the strongest terms this odious and reprehensible crime, stresses that the hands which fired the bullets which killed Said Hammami will not escape punishment. The Palestinian Revolution will pursue the killers and those behind them, whoever they are, for the blood of revolutionaries and militants must not be shed in vain.

The Palestinian Revolution, which is following up its own investigation via the appropriate committees to discover the identity of the hired killers, holds the British Government responsible until the identities of the murderers and those who stand behind them have been revealed.

ARAFAT AT HAMMAMI FUNERAL PROCESSION: PALESTINIAN DECISION REMAINS OUR OWN

The Palestinian and Lebanese masses on

January 8 mourned PLO representative in London, Said Hammami, with an impressive funeral procession in Beirut. The funeral march was headed by Yasser Arafat, along with other Palestinian leaders including Abu Lutf, Abu Jihad, Abu Iyyad, Abul Hol, Zuheir Muhsen and Yasser Abed Rabbo. In a speech he delivered before the crowds, Arafat bitterly attacked the perpetrators of the crime, who he said, directed by Zionist imperialist-American agents, tired to assassinate the independent Palestinian will by murdering Hammami. Addressing those "dwarfs" who killed Hammami, Arafat vowed that the Palestinian decision will remain a revolutionary and firm one: "Let this be clearly understood," he said, "by Begin, Carter and all those who will be meeting in Aswan or in any other place."

The funeral procession then continued to Beirut International Airport, escorted by units of the Palestinian Armed Struggle Command, with Arafat and other Palestinian leaders driving behind the body, which was transported by a vehicle of the Palestinian Red Crescent. At around 3:00 PM a special plane carried the body to Amman for burial.

From London:

Free Palestine Mourns Said

It took no great courage for an armed gunman to enter the office of Said Hammami, and it took even less courage to kill him. Said Hammami was a man who was both privately and publicly opposed to violence. He was at one and the same time a revolutionary and a man of peace. Only a few months before his death, when he was facing criticism from certain Israelis following a speech in which he looked ahead to the day when Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs would live together as citizens of a single state in Palestine. I warned that other visionaries had in the past been termed as seeking 'impractical and unrealistic solutions,' and cited as an example Martin Luther King. Only the future will tell what impact Said Hammami had on the course of bringing about co-existence in Palestine.

I recall a few months after he arrived in London in 1971 discussing with him the hypocrisy of the Israeli government's position in making its often repeated proclamation that its leaders were prepared to go anywhere at any time to talk face to face with leaders. He agreed that *Free Palestine* should challenge the Israelis, and in our editorial of August 1973, under the headline 'Could Israel face talks' the paper asked: 'Would the Israeli Prime Minister sit and talk with the Palestinians? Is Mrs. Meir's alleged sincere search for peace prepared to consider talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation? If Mrs. Meir wants direct talks,

then ultimately these talks would have to be with the Palestinians.'

It was not a challenge to which Mrs. Meir responded!

Facing the Opposition

One of Said Hammami's most controversial acts was to give an interview to the *Jewish Chronicle* in which he called for the co-existence of a West Bank Palestinian state with a Jewish state of Israel. He saw this as a means of providing a transitional period during which a bridge of trust could be created between the two communities. It was not a formula which many Palestinians, or myself, accepted, but it was characteristic of him to challenge established dogmas with unorthodox ideas.

Apart from his interview in the *Jewish Chronicle*, he was also a frequent contributor to *The Times*. No article or interview with Said Hammami ever appeared in *Free Palestine* despite repeated requests during his early months in London. 'I am not here to talk to the converted and the Palestinians,' he replied.

Indeed, often he acted as a missionary — and at public meetings would make straight for the most hostile member of the audience after the meeting had ended to pursue the areas of disagreement on a more personal level.

Making the Point

The skills of diplomacy which Said Hammami mastered were very evident when



Free Palestine mourns the death of Said Hammami, colleague and friend. The Editorial Board sends its sincere condolences to his widow Khalida and his children Rasha and Mosa'ab.

he visited the Liberal Party Assembly in Scarborough in 1975. It was planned that after the opening address by the President Mrs. Margaret Wingfield, an attempt would be made to suspend Standing Orders to permit him to address the Assembly. He sat in the hall and listened to Mrs. Wingfield's long and tedious oration during which she called for power-sharing in Northern Ireland. Afterwards, despite a rousing speech by Christopher Mayhew, the assembly narrowly backed the Party Executive in opposing the proposal.

Angry Young Liberals and others stormed from the hall and insisted that Said Hammami should address them from the steps of the conference center. The Liberal establishment were left without most of the journalists

(continued on page 7)

Palestine Human Rights Campaign Appeal:

Defend Sami Ismail

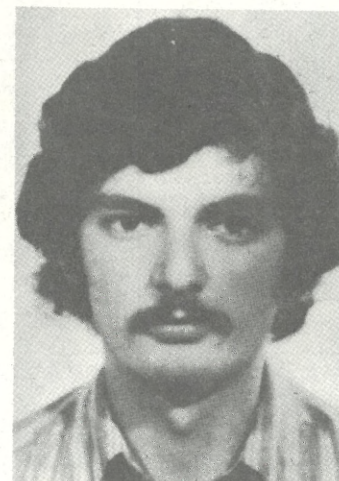
On December 21, 1977, Sami Esmail, a New York-born U.S. citizen of Palestinian origin, was arrested upon his arrival at Israel's Ben Gurion airport. A graduate student and teaching assistant at Michigan State University, Sami was on his way to visit his dying father in the occupied West Bank. It was not until December 23 that his family was to learn of his arrest.

U.S. consular officials visited Sami at the Petakh-Tikva prison on December 25, and reported to Sami's brother Basim that his hair had been pulled and that he had been repeatedly punched, but was "otherwise all right." Basim Esmail and Sami's lawyer Felicia Langer were not able to see Sami until December 28, after he had been taken to see his father, who had lapsed into unconsciousness. Sami told them of seven days of physical and psychological torture at the hands of his Israeli interrogators, which had led him to consider suicide: having his hair pulled repeatedly; being punched repeatedly in the stomach and chest; being spat upon while forced to carry a heavy chair over his head for long periods of time; being forced to stand naked while being threatened with bodily harm; being denied more than two consecutive hours of sleep in seven days; and being interrogated by three different groups of interrogators for up to twenty four hours. These

are all forms of torture that are painful but leave no marks.

During his interrogation Sami was accused of being on a "mission" for an "illegal organization," a charge that he flatly denies. He did, however, finally sign a statement in Hebrew—a language that he does not understand—in order to stop the torture. On January 3, Bernard Munger, representative of the International Red Cross, was denied access to visit Sami. On the 6th Sami was charged, in a secret hearing, with belonging to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), being an explosives expert, and receiving "terrorist training" in Libya in August, 1976. Sami denies all these charges.

Due to international pressure, Sami's trial is now to be open, rather than closed as was originally intended. Attorney Langer has requested that Mark Davidson, an employee of the U.S. Consulate in Tel Aviv who took the first official statement from Sami regarding his torture, be a witness at the trial. As he is an important witness, and State Department permission is necessary before he can testify, we must insist that he be allowed to do so. Furthermore, Israel Shahak, Chairperson of the Israel League for Human and Civil Rights, has informed us that the "confession" in Hebrew that Sami signed can be used as legal evidence against him in the Israeli courts. His case remains serious, but we can help.



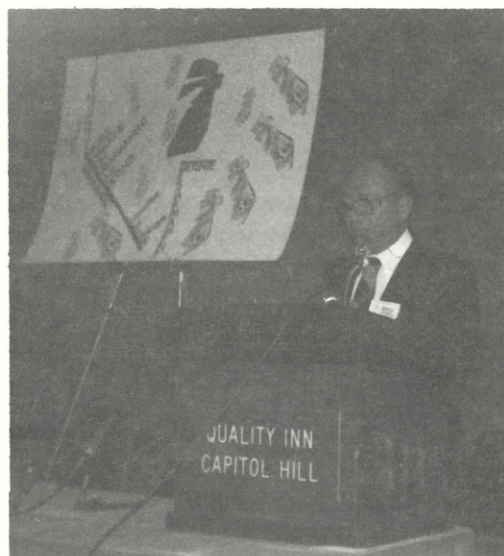
We urge you to write letters protesting Sami's torture and demanding his immediate release to the addresses listed below. It is of special importance that you urge the State Department to make a formal protest to the Israeli government for its inhuman treatment of Sami, and to permit Mr. Davidson to testify at Sami's trial.

WRITE:

1. your Senators and Congressperson
2. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance
Department of State, D.C. 20520
3. Ms. Pat Derian
Human Rights Office
Department of State, D.C. 20520

SEND COPIES TO:
PHRC National Office
1322, 18th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

State Department Denies PLO Representative Right to Address World Peace Council Meeting in Washington, D.C.



Khaled Muhidden addresses Conference.

The State Department, in clear violation of the right of free speech, once more denied PLO representative at the United Nations

Zuhdi Tarazi the right to address the World Peace Council meeting in Washington, D.C. The Council, sponsoring a conference on "Disarmament and Detente" had invited Tarazi to deliver a greeting message on January 26, 1978, but the State Department denied him the permit to travel to Washington, D.C.

At the meeting, Egyptian Parliament member Khaled Muhidden expressed the Council's position by stressing that the PLO is the representative of the Palestinian people and that only the Palestinians can determine who represents them. He called for recognition of the right to self-determination and national independence for the Palestinians and stressed that peace cannot be achieved in the Middle East without recognizing these rights and solving the Palestinian problem which is the core of the conflict. He said disarmament and detente are meaningless if we cannot achieve peace in the Middle East and called on the two super powers to work for a real and lasting peace in the area based on principles outlined by the United Nations.

The Conference issued a Peace Proclamation which said that "great victories have been won through the struggles of the people. The flag of freedom and progress flies over scores of lands which were enslaved only yesterday. Peace has triumphed in many lands against the most brutal aggressions of our times." It proclaimed "full support for the efforts of the United Nations, of the governments, political parties and organizations dedicated to peace, of the peoples, to end the arms race, to ban all nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, to adopt effective measures for the reduction of arms and to move towards general and complete disarmament." It concluded by stressing that "a new world can be built. Hunger and poverty can be banished. Fascism, racism, discrimination can be ended for all times. Independence and equality for all peoples can be ensured. The peoples can be assured their sacred right to live without fear." The proclamation did not, however, mention anything about the Middle East or Palestinian question.



Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee made his yearly address to the Palestinian and Arab masses on the 13th anniversary of the launching of the Palestinian Revolution. Following is the text of his message:

"Another year in the life of our Revolution has gone by, with all it has borne in the way of surprises, challenges, confrontation and steadfastness. The Revolution is now entering its 14th year through history's widest doors; with its head held high in dignity; after 13 blazing stars in the skies of Palestine and the Arab world, bearing the aspirations of our people, of the Arab nation, and of all free and honest man in the world; and telling the whole world that we are advancing into the future, heading for our homeland however high the price and the sacrifices.

"For in spite of all the plots and the conspirators, this Revolution was capable of legendary steadfastness and confrontation, of proud defiance, of political and military storms on all levels and fronts; and is today stronger and more determined than it ever was in the past.

"The year which has ended, the year of confrontation and challenge, which witnessed the eruption of the Arab political volcano, brought about a series of consecutive explosions which aimed to blast apart the Palestinian Revolution — the difficult factor in the Middle East equation — in order to clear the way for the ugly conspiracy by removing the firm reality of the Palestinian revolutionary presence from this equation."

"For the lines of this conspiracy are carefully and expertly drawn to tame, contain and abort this great procession and its deep-seeded, long-term effects on the Palestinian and Arab arenas and on the world as a whole. For all these reasons, our cause is the cause of the Palestinian and Arab individual, as well as the

Arafat:

1978 Year of Revolutionary Decision

cause of humanity in our contemporary world.

"Our revolutionaries in their trenches inside and outside the occupied homeland correctly understand these basic truths and realities, they understand the justice of their cause and the historical inevitability of its victory. They also understand, through their persistent struggle, that they are building a new dawn in this region, which differs from other regions geographically because of its vital central position, and because of its strategic dimensions for the Arabs and the world. All of this is in addition to the tremendous riches of its soil, most important of which is oil, the blood flowing into the arteries of a world tired by economic, military, psychological and spiritual crises, which will last at least until the end of this century..."

"In view of all this, no one in this Arab region should feel safe from the dangers of this phase or assume that he is distant from the epicenter of explosions.

"Therefore, you revolutionaries and heroes should know that every battle you have fought in this tumultuous situation has had more than one meaning for the future of struggle in this region, and of the plots of the imperialist—Zionist alliance sponsored by the USA, which strives to include this area in its permanent sphere of influence..."

"In this context, the meanings and the struggle will be crystallized and revolutionary selection will take place; in the vastness of these events, it will be decided whose will shall be victorious in this region.

"Our enemies have unmasked their ugly faces and their dangerous ambitions: for they want this region to be a sphere of influence and a new slave market.

"But we—the Arab Nation—want it to be a land liberated from all forms of oppression and military, economic and political occupation.

"Under the leadership of the USA, they are manoeuvring to create a variety of Bantustans, not only in the West Bank and Gaza, as proposed by this arrogant terrorist Begin, but in all parts of the Arab Nation. For, though the names and types vary, this remains a new mode of the old occupation of our region. Its aim is that they may have more policemen and police stations in the region, by the side of their Israeli policeman, to protect their vital interests in this strategically and economically important part of our land, which is Arab in origin and in roots.

"Therefore, our clear and principled stand of opposition, as we take into consideration the weight of Egypt and its people in this struggle of destiny with President Sadat as regards his visit to our beloved Jerusalem and our usurped land, the ensuing dangerous long-term repercussions on the Arab situation as a whole, and the destructive imprints it left on the essence of the Arab-Zionist-Imperialist conflict in this region. This touches the vital interests not only of our generation, but of future ones,

something which it is not our right to do in the face of this expansionist Zionist ideology which dreams of Jerusalem as the capital of the kingdom of greater Israel.

"But let those near and far, and those who distort truths and history under the cover of the joint power of the US and Israel, let them all understand that such false ideas cannot be imposed on our Arab Nation, which is capable of correcting the course of history as it has done over the ages, in order that this land may remain for its people, those who hold the right, a right that cannot be snatched away by any power, however great it may become at some stage in time.

"Comrades-in-arms, the situation is critical, the conspiracy huge and complex and the enemies numerous; but let the whole world know that this Palestinian Revolution and this Arab Nation are able to confront, defy and remain steadfast. This was the basic meaning of the Tripoli Summit of Steadfastness and Confrontation because it represented a program of committed action towards the goals of the Arab Nation and against all the plots concocted by Zionism..."

"From this revolutionary committed starting point and this militant program, Palestinian revolutionaries move as a vanguard in the civilized procession of the Arab Nation; and our militant people under occupation sacrifice in the face of the most vicious forms of neo-colonialism imposed on us by imperialism and racist Zionism. And in the same vein, came the courageous stand which proved that our people in occupied Palestine are fully capable of confronting the conspiracy in the face of all the temptations intended to split their ranks. This people nevertheless remained proud in their struggle, holding together in their ideology and strong in their struggle, attached to their Revolution, registering in the annals of history that this land is Arab and will remain so. They also recorded the fact that so many conquests were crushed against the walls of Jerusalem, and in Marj Debeq, Ain Jalout, Hittin and Yarmouk, smashing the dreams of empires, while the land remained in all its greatness, watered by the sweat and blood of its peoples and the wounds of its militants and prisoners; for in this land lie the bones of our ancestors, and there also our grandchildren will be buried.

"However hard and bitter the path, victory is near with patience. The enemy intention is to falsify your will, for you are the difficult and basic factor in the Middle East equation. We are a giant Revolution, which grasps the details of the Arab and international situation with all its short and long-range dimensions. Militants like you are needed: for the ultimate solution will only come with you and through you; and their capitulationist peace will pass only over the bodies of our martyrs.

"This is stark truth, so be aware and be vigilant and grip your guns more tightly,



because from their barrels will emerge the answer to all capitulationist solutions, as well as the peace we look forward to; under their shadow the olive trees in our liberated land will grow tall.

"...We are not war-mongers or spreaders of devastation; all we seek are our rights; we are a people which was unjustly and deliberately oppressed and expelled from its land through an international imperialist-Zionist conspiracy. Were we today to judge it according to international standards, we would find that the US, the leader of the conspiracy, should be the one to pay its price before us. Indeed it is the farce of modern times and the lie of the 20th century. Thus we are determined to confront it for the sake of our children, for their future, and to preserve our rights. And we are not alone in this conflict. Together with us are freedom-loving and peace-loving peoples, and many friends in Socialist, Non-Aligned, Islamic, African and Latin American countries. Because they are all conscious of the striking injustice to which our people was and is still subjected, and are all aware that what is taking place leaves dangerous and immediate repercussions on our region and all those involved with this region.

"International resolutions are the best proof of this stand of support. These valuable and reliable stands give us further firmness and strength in our militant march to eliminate injustice, liberate our homeland, return to our homes, and establish our independent state on our Palestinian national soil. This is a right and a reality recognized by all international charters and laws.

"In the name of those militants and of the

Palestinian revolutionaries we strongly and openly declare that no definitive solution will pass at the expense of our Palestinian people and its inalienable national rights.

"These rights cannot be defined by agents or protected by mercenaries who are chosen as puppets and alternatives: some of them are rotten personalities worn out in the diverse roles they have played for this or that state. Each one of these puppets acts according to his respective conspiratorial role and to his size, and appears on the stage of conspiracy exactly at this present time. But all this is to no avail.

"That is the way it was in the march of the Algerian Revolution, of the Vietnamese Revolution and in all revolutions. They have won at the end just as the militants and revolutionaries of the PLO will win at the end.

"Let Begin announce his plans from occupied Palestine or from Egypt; and let Peres voice his opinions and let all the fanatic Israeli parties put forth various slogans and phrases. The truth will remain the truth. The land of Palestine is not a land without owners, and the people of Palestine are not a commercial article to be bought and sold at the bargaining table. Our people lead a giant revolution, one of the greatest in contemporary history. Our people have turned from refugees into revolutionaries and from numbers on ration cards neglected in the UNRWA files into the chief and the most difficult factor in the Middle East equation. This people does not flinch at a threat nor is it terrified by a conspiracy, nor intimidated by difficulties encountered along its path.

"This people has lived in with hardships and is able to subdue them and even tame them in favour of its principles and set goals. This people is able to continue on its revolutionary

path, illuminating it with torches for our future generations, torches which we have kindled and carried along with free brethren in Lebanon, in every corner of the Arab Nation and all over the world, directing our attention to a common goal and a common destiny...

"Thus it is inevitable to look at the events in South Lebanon and at the courageous, bold, patient and perseverant stand of the southerners before the other vicious facet of the conspiracy. In the name of the Palestinian Revolution and people, I note with all appreciation and loyalty the courageous stand of the people of South Lebanon in spite of daily suffering. I salute all militants and nationalists there, and I say we have a duty there: an Arab, nationalist and patriot mission which we cannot ignore.

"National unity is our sustenance and our strength, and therefore we should reinforce and consolidate it. In his vicious battle with us, the enemy makes no differentiation and bullets fired at us do not discriminate between us. Let us join ranks and become united. The enemy has uncovered all its cards. Shall we continue to quarrel over the imaginary bear skin? Has not President Carter revealed the entire plot? Has not Begin unfolded his expansionist dreams? Aren't we watching the conspiratorial moves of the puppets and alternatives?

"I call upon you for further determination; let all hands be raised united and let us escalate our military struggle against the Zionist enemy, for the required unity is itself the essence of this national goal.

"Comrades of the long march, in our 14th year, the year of revolutionary and decisive decision, let us be full of confidence. With firm steps, let us head towards victory."

American Palestinian Delegation in Beirut:

Solidarity with PLO and Palestinian Revolution



Palestinian delegation at Press Conference.



From U.S.: Palestinian solidarity.

A delegation of Palestinian leaders and representatives of Palestinian organizations in the U.S. visited Beirut in the first week of January and joined the celebrations of the 15th anniversary of the Palestinian revolution. Amid cheers the group marched at the popular parade raising banners that expressed support of the Palestinian community in the U.S. for the PLO and its leadership and saluting the freedom fighters and calling for closer unity of the Palestinian Movement. Palestinian children and marchers greeted the delegation with hugs and felt the emotions of reunion with Palestinian representatives from overseas.

The delegation toured Palestinian camps, visited hospitals, clinics, schools and factories and saw the great work done at new Palestinian institutions. They attended cultural festivals and joined the children of martyrs in songs and solidarity and expressed the determination of the Palestinian community in the U.S. to support the children's schools and hospitals to enable them to enjoy a better life.

The delegation visited camps and towns in South Lebanon and saw the massive destruction as a result of Israeli bombardment. At the village of Aziyah the delegation saw the total destruction of the village and was informed that some families were still buried under the rubble. In the South, whole villages were destroyed and left

totally empty as a result of Israeli shelling and aerial attacks. The group met with a number of Palestinian leaders including Yasser Arafat who sent a special message to the Palestinian community in the U.S. urging it to increase its work and support for the PLO and the Palestinian people in Lebanon and the occupied territories. He stressed the need for friendly ties with the American people and especially their progressive and peace organizations and urged the Palestinian representatives to oppose Zionism and imperialism and to rally around the Palestinian revolution which is more determined at this stage to hold on to its guns and to fight for liberation and victory.

The Palestinian delegation concluded its visit with a Press conference attended by Arab and western reporters and stressed the full support of the Palestinian community in the U.S. to the PLO, as the sole and legitimate representative of Palestinians everywhere. The statement condemned Carter's policies that oppose human rights for the Palestinians, and continue to deny the Palestinians the right to self-determination and national independence. The group pledged, however, to continue its work in the U.S. for rallying more support for the PLO and fighting Zionist propaganda that attempts to distort the just Palestinian struggle.

Tal Zaatar Was The Hill of Thyme

by Fawaz Turki

It was when the prickly pear tree went mad with the twenty nine year itch. That's where it started. British soldiers tap danced on the roof with their guns, and Jewish settlers haunted the dawn, the rivers and the lazy, rich fields with their yellowed out birth certificates from two centuries before. The next day I was eight years old but there was no time to celebrate because I had no childhood to speak of. I carried jugs of water from the well, one in each hand, down the dirt track, leading to our house in the village. When I came close to the stone steps, I was tired. I set the jugs between my legs and sat down to rest. Everything is made of stone here in our village and in all the other villages. Stone scrubbed white with the sun and the flesh of memory. Carved out of the outlying mountains to build houses reclining in sensual positions, as if to make love with the stars. As I hugged the two jugs of water between my legs I said this is my last trip to the well, but I am too young to cry or pour acid on their guns and their birth certificates as they tap danced on our roofs and haunted our dream. I will wait till I have accumulated a past before I could write a biography of their symbols.

In the Arab world there are loud complaints. Of course. Our voices reach out to touch the sky, and its owner, for tough argument—long slender hands reaching out, along the coast road, seeking refuge. Songs of sorrow are still lyrics of a Palestinian place we left behind. I say to the world's children: "You don't know the demon of my life." From now on I will carry an arrested past on my shoulders, paperclipped to my name. From now on I am a memo, in somebody's in-tray, at the United Nations. A kind of hysteria of the soul that will take twenty years to show its face. When it does, I will then be lying astride the Arab world, my memory-stained fingers digging into its thighs, and I will be crying between its legs of a passion I have long suppressed.

The Arab world has not involved itself in the summer, the last song of pain from the Basta; it has not been on the pill. All that time, Palestinian children clutched at heaven, debating its king, with white brittle hands. The Arab world littered its belly with talk of a return trip to the Jahilliah and the thought of a telephone call to Saladin.

And so it got pregnant with my child.

I wait for it to be born. All day long I wander to placeless places I was driven to go to, not wanted to be in. And with me always, at the end of the day, the smell of bullet wounds on bone and scorching fire on earth. Like salt in the sea. Only the fish in it are thirsty.

The day the child was born, I said from now on I will no longer have to pound my hands on their door.

The child came out of the damp insides of the Arab world's belly, where it had been for twenty years. It was dragged out, kicking. I slapped her alive. She was a girl, soon to have long, jet-black hair. When she turned two in September, she had already travelled to the world's edge. Along the edge of its



dream, where it bled.

Someone wrote a document inksmudged with flowery words: Don't pre-empt our tomorrow. You don't need a dream. You declare your own form of being. Words are enough. Dreams are fragile creatures. With dreams you are rich, and someone will lie in wait for you. A scream will trap you in its vortex.

Everybody leafed through Webster's dictionary and the poetry of Abu Alaa el Maari. It says here they said: Dreams are dead. The plague has claimed the lives of all dreams. You see? And compassion is dead. And soon, before the child is old enough to understand the pungence of nameless pain, all the birds in the Arab world will be dead. Extinct like dreams. You want to know why? Because people have been eating them, that's why. Dummy. A lot of people are dead. Colonialism and imperialism are dead. Zionism and racism are dead. Izz el Deen el Kassam is dead. Pan you know what is dead. They are doing the last rights on labor unionism. Soon fallafel sandwiches will be dead. All the other isms are dead. And as far as style is concerned, that is already dead and buried. Clean snow and eight hour days and free education and health care are dead from the waist down. Private diaries that no one monitors are dead. Plans to liberate Palestine will kill you and plans to think about literating Palestine will kill you and plans not to think about liberating Palestine will kill you just as dead as plans to plan not to plan. And if a prince does not kill you in your sleep, a walk through an immigration check point anywhere in the world, with your stateless travel document, will. The idea of telling them your name your malaise your identity your sense of worth is dead just as surely as drinking by yourself at night, listening to Dabki tunes, is dead is dead is dead. So what do you need dreams for. Hey? Hey, where do you think you're going. Come back here. Come back.

In September, I go for a walk with the child on the east bank of our ancient river. When it gets dark I cannot tell whether I am her or me. When it is all over, we both turn into someone else. Together. In September even the dumb rocks bled.

I run barefoot in the streets of the Arab world. The air is heavy. The rivers stink of the waters' incantations for the dead. And grown men play the slot machines. I thought I could never tell my story without all the listeners crying at least once. But no one did. I wondered why. Why do we go on in our world when people cry watching a movie on their television screen but will not chain themselves to the doors of their houses upon hearing the news from the east bank of our ancient river. Or feel cold when it rained bombs.

I leave the child to grow up by itself as a beggar from the killing zone. In Lebanon where the spider web from our colonial past had glued its sticky fingers to the land. Heaven is full of children who died in September. Every winter they fall to the ground.

In the United States, I say I am twenty five hundred years old. That is why I speak English with a mocking voice. Americans have endured the ultimate in pain. When I ask them why, they say our homes have gone to superhighways and MacHales Navy is no longer being shown even in reruns.

It is like thin ice here. In this country. If you dig deep with your feet or roots or mind or vision, you sink like a stone. Except for the salt smells drifting from the ghettos. Where black children fall on their heads reaching after the one remaining rotten apple on the tree.

I wander around America' throwing off thick heat.

Hey, don't do that, do you hear? Don't throw off thick heat around here. Don't make waves. When I knew J. O. at home, he had wanted to be Hannibal scaling the mountains, smashing the obstacles in his way, including the communities of flowers, to Return. In the United States, and for twelve years, he listened to Walter every night and did not throw off thick heat, till his own questions about himself no longer startled anyone. Palestine was still rhythm and vision was still song, but neither was music. One night J.O. wanted to flee the panic of his identity in New York and he stood downtown, shouting inflamed rhetoric in a hoarse voice. At the neon lights. Pleading to be lost in whispers, in a shared nakedness, in a distant refugee camp or a narrow street of instant forgetfulness. But night in downtown New York was not seduced by the inertia of J.O. Measuring the distance between them, the night clutched him by the throat. And he heard the echo—long after the voice of his ownhood had been forgotten.

Listen. In the end this is how it will be. Will it be high noon when I return. Not in broken grief, calling out in all directions. Not the way I left. I am too abused by time.

The time of Tell Zaatar.

Tell Zaatar was the Hill of Thyme. Tell Zaatar was crazed by thirst. Yet water lived on the edge of a world, on the edge of continents on the edge of cities on the edge of hills. Except the Hill of Thyme, home to 30,000 Palestinians; and for close to three score years, home to the white morning light. And some crazy shadows. Home to a people living there in a kind of silent orgy of intricate sounds. The Hill stood off the city, reclining detachedly from it, as if to make the statement that it is in the Arab world, but not of it. And the years sped, one after the other, to hug one another, body and soul, like erotic grapes of sorrow. What stood between the Hill and the world, all this time, was the Hill's knife and the world's silence. The Hill's weapon, though, was a mere shrivelled up memory of an aggregate of Palestinian childhoods. And these were silhouetted against the walls of the mudhouses, proclaiming a formality of their own. A separateness of tone. A kind of absurd purity.

(Continued next issue)



Torture, Cruel Treatment and Arbitrary Arrests in Israel



Inhuman treatment.

Finally, the State Department has acknowledged the existence of Israeli violations of human rights in the occupied territories. The Department's report released in February 1978 mentioned torture, cruel and inhuman treatment, arbitrary arrest or imprisonment, denial of fair public trial, invasion of homes, and violations of civil and political liberties.

Following are some excerpts from the report: "There are documented reports of the use of extreme physical and psychological pressures during interrogation, and instances of brutality by individual interrogators cannot be ruled out."

"There have been instances in which Israeli troops, usually inexperienced reservists, used excessive force in quelling demonstrations and restoring order."

"In contravention of the fourth Geneva Convention, occupation authorities have selectively expelled residents of the West Bank and Gaza. Other individuals convicted of or suspected of terrorism have had their homes demolished or sealed up and their families displaced, thereby inflicting a type of collective punishment."

"As of July 1977, there were about 3,100 non-Israeli citizen Arabs under arrest or in prison in Israel proper, most of whom were residents of the occupied territories. About 20 percent are under administrative detention. Under the fourth Geneva Convention, this

practice is not permissible beyond one year from the "general close of military operations." [Israeli] military commanders are authorized to order administrative detention without trial of any person on security grounds for up to six months. Such detention can be administratively extended indefinitely."

"Under standing emergency regulations, military authorities may enter private homes and institutions in pursuit of security objectives as they see fit. This has occurred frequently, sometimes resulting in damage to property and injury to inhabitants."

"Freedom of expression and freedom of assembly are restricted by Israeli interpretation of security requirements. The West Bank Press is subject to censorship."

"...There are restrictions on the travel of individuals for political reasons."

"Amnesty International issued a report which described accounts of several cases of mistreatment [of prisoners and detainees] it had received. Its recommendation of a formal inquiry with international participation was rejected by Israel."

After all this, the U.S. government continues to supply Israel with massive quantities of weapons and financial aid. It also votes against condemning Israel at the United Nations for these acts. When will the Carter administration apply its 'human rights' slogan to Israel?

Free Palestine Mourns Said (cont'd. from p. 2)

covering the conference, while he thanked the Young Liberals for their support and pointed out that the PLO programme was also about power-sharing, not in Northern Ireland but in Palestine. It was a forceful way of making a point to the Liberals.

It would appear to be a further example of Mr. Thorpe's total misjudgement of character for which he has established a reputation almost as great as Said Hammami's for his work for peace in Palestine.

In Defence of a Vision

Much has been written on the subject of Said Hammami's meetings with Israeli personalities. Of course the PLO has for years advocated a solution based on a secular and democratic state in Palestine, providing citizenship for both Israeli Jews who wish to remain under such a system, and for the Palstinians. The criteria upon which Mr. Hammami based his decision to talk to an Israeli was that the person should recognise the PLO, and the right of the Palstinians to self-determination.

The last public occasion at which Mr. Hammami sat with Israelis to discuss the future of Palestine was the London seminar held last Autumn. Although the PLO official advocated a process towards co-existence which many did not accept, the concept of a West Bank state emerging out of the present trends is widely accepted — albeit as a transitional period before Palestine is wholly united.

It should not be allowed to pass without note, especially by his critics — many of whom based their judgement on second hand reports and gossip — that at the seminar Mr. Hammami vigorously defended the unitary concept of a state in Palestine. Although he differed from those who believe that a military strategy is the best and only course, in the midst of many participants whose *final* goals is a West Bank state. Said Hammami revived and staunchly defended what he called a vision: the secular democratic state officially proposed by the PLO, and one presumes in recognising the PLO, endorsed by many governments.

Books Available from Free Palestine

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32

Arriving in Israel to see his dying father, the American Sami Esmail was abruptly arrested at the airport on December 21, 1977, held incommunicado, and brutally interrogated until forced to sign a confession in a language he did not know. Under outside pressure, the authorities allowed him to attend his father's funeral—bound hand and foot.

Sami remains in jail.
The International Red Cross representative has been denied the right to see him. The charges against him are inconsistent and unsubstantiated.

YOU CAN HELP

Do not let Sami be made a scapegoat for the real or imagined crimes of others.

BRING SAMI HOME

For more information contact:
**National Committee for the Defense
of the Human Rights of Sami Esmail.**
c/o Peace Education Center
1118 South Harrison
East Lansing, Michigan 48823.
Phone (517) 372-6667



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