



Arafat and the Dream of Palestine: An Insider's Account

By Bassam Abu Sharif

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Abu Sharif was one of the world's most notorious and dangerous terrorists in the 60's and 70's, acting as "minister of propaganda" for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and as a recruiter for terrorists like Carlos the Jackal. In 1972, a bomb was placed in a book and sent to him, leaving him half-blind, deaf in one ear, and almost fingerless. Finally abandoning the use of violence as a means to achieve his Palestinian nationalist aspirations, he aligned himself with Yasser Arafat, eventually becoming one of his closest advisors.

In this book, Abu Sharif, often alongside Arafat, takes us behind the scenes of all the major events in the Middle East during the last 30 years, from the secret caves in the West Bank where Arafat hid on his way to Jerusalem in 1967 to the peace negotiations in Oslo in 1993. *Arafat and the Dream of Palestine* combines a deeply personal account, informed by Abu Sharif's close relationship with Arafat, with a gripping, profoundly human history of Palestine.

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Editorial Review

Review

“An interesting and useful work.” ?*Counterpunch*

“An interesting and useful work, especially in the West where Tel Aviv's version of events tends to have a greater grip on the popular imagination. A true journalist, Bassam Abu Sharif rarely embellishes the facts of his story, telling it in a straightforward yet compelling manner.” ?*uruknet.info*

About the Author

Bassam Abu Sharif was a senior advisor to the late Yasser Arafat and currently serves as press officer of the PLO. He is the co-author, with former Israeli intelligence officer Uzi Mahnaimi, of *The Best of Enemies* about their roles in Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts. A member of the National Council of Palestine, he divides his time between Amman and Ramallah.

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When the plane hit the ground, it broke into three sections—the tail, the middle and the cockpit, which was completely crushed. Both Captain Darwish and his co-pilot were instantly killed on impact. Arafat quickly ordered everyone to search for the wounded and then to evacuate in case of fire. As the men began leaving the twisted metal carcass of the plane, they were blinded by a violent desert storm awaiting them. Sand was churning all around them, twisting and turning, pushing them along into the howling darkness.

I was working in my office in Tunis when I received a call from a radio operator. He had picked up a distress message from Arafat's plane somewhere over the Libyan desert. I called Colonel Muammar Qaddafi's aide, and asked him for news of the President's plane. He told me they had lost contact. My worst nightmare was confirmed.

I weighed the odds, knowing that every minute was crucial. My most important call was to the White House. I asked to speak to President Carter explaining that it was an urgent matter. I was transferred to the security office and once my identity was confirmed, I was put on hold. A few moments later, Mrs. Carter answered the phone, informing me that the President was asleep. After I had explained what had happened, President Carter was soon on the line. The President informed me that he would do his best and would get back to me in fifteen minutes. Those fifteen minutes felt like a lifetime.

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