



## **A Rape, Murder and Perversion of Justice Scandal in Bethlehem, is an outstanding example of the Corruption Which has Spread under Palestinian Authority Rule and of the Oppressive Regime Imposed on Bethlehem Residents by Fatah/Tanzim Thugs**

### **Abstract**

1. One of the documents captured in the PA areas is a **resignation letter** of the Fatah provincial branch committee members in Bethlehem, due to what they call an accumulation of “ugly crimes” and “organizational and social disorder” in which the **Tanzim** is involved and which are increasing in the Bethlehem area. The resignation letter raises accusations of deviations and failures in law enforcement and of a cover-up of deviant and unacceptable actions.
2. The **concrete** reason for the collective resignation: a scandal concerning the murder of a released female prisoner, a Bethlehem Fatah office employee, in March 2001. A **senior activist** of the local **Tanzim** organization, who belongs to the Ta'amra tribe, was involved in the affair. The released prisoner belonged to the local refugee population. After discovering her pregnancy, she complained that the above-mentioned senior Tanzim activist had **raped** her. As a result, she was **murdered** by her own brothers for desecration of her family's honor.
3. The affair came to an end in a way which characterizes the Palestinian justice system: the Tanzim activist was brought before a judge who acquitted him due to lack of evidence. This judge had previously been **bribed** by local Fatah activists, who supported their colleague.
4. **The murder scandal, which was followed by a public protest of Palestinian legal activists and women organizations, once again demonstrates:**
  - a. **The regime of oppression and tyranny** imposed on the local **Bethlehem** population by Fatah/Tanzim thugs (which also reveal the tension between the Ta'amra tribe and the refugee population).
  - b. The **corruption** which has spread in the PA areas under the rule of the terrorist organizations and the security apparatuses subordinate to the Palestinian Authority.

### **Rape, Murder and Perversion of Justice Scandal in Bethlehem**

Background to the captured document

1. During the first half of March 2001, a scandal took place in **Bethlehem** . Two of the following persons were at the center of the scandal
  - a. **Iman Ali Azmi Al-Kadi** : a 27-year-old Bethlehem resident, who belongs to the Ta'amra tribe and is known to be an alcoholic and a drug-addict. Iman was a **senior Tanzim activist** and a close friend of Abdallah Al-Naura ("Abu Hadid"), **one of the Fatah/Tanzim leaders in Bethlehem** .
  - b. **Sa'ada Hamidan** : of the refugee population (her family comes from Malha). She was arrested in 1993 after threatening a border policeman with a knife, who prevented her from entering the Temple Mount (when a men's service was held there). A year later Hamidan was released from jail and served as a clerk in the Fatah Prisoners Affairs Office in Bethlehem.
2. Iman Ali Azmi Al-Kadi had an intimate relationship with Sa'ada Hamidan and **she got pregnant by him** (according to another version – Sa'ada was **raped** by Iman). In any case, she **accused** Iman of **raping** her, possibly in order to force him to marry her.
3. At first there was an attempt to **silence** the affair: an agreement of a legal nature was reached with the family of the raped woman, according to which Al-Kadi married Sa'ada. However, contrary to the agreement, he divorced her a week later (according to another version, Al-Kadi refused to marry Sa'ada). As a result, a scandal arose, whose echoes reverberated throughout the whole Bethlehem area.
4. After Al-Kadi divorced Sa'ada, **she was murdered by her two brothers on 17 March 2001, for desecrating her family's honor**. Her family also wanted to kill Al-Kadi and **accused the Tanzim** of the general moral deterioration in Bethlehem. At the time this affair received much publicity in the Palestinian press: on 21 March 2001, four days after the murder, 13 legal institutions and women organizations from the Bethlehem area published a declaration in the ***Al-Hayat Al-Jadeedah*** newspaper, condemning the murder. This declaration stated that "**the murder of the innocent resident** was carried out as part of **a circle of violence**, by a **murderous group which does not recognize any law** " [namely, **the Tanzim of Bethlehem**]. In the same declaration they called "the relevant authorities" to "objectively and honestly investigate the case in order to uncover the true criminals who stand behind the murder of the resident Hamidan, who was a released prisoner murdered in unusual circumstances."
5. During his interrogation in the police station, Al-Kadi admitted that he had had sexual relations with Hamidan. However, following the investigation, **Kamal Hamid** , the Fatah secretary general in Bethlehem (a member of the Ta'amra tribe) exerted pressure on Abu Zaid (then the Bethlehem police chief), who **changed** the initial version given by Al-Kadi in the police station. This was done in order to erase the "disgrace" uncovered in the **Fatah** and to minimize the damage which may be caused to him personally (Hamidan apparently had sexual relations with several other young men, including Munir Hamid, Kamal Hamid's nephew).

6. Finally, the affair came to an end in a way typical of Palestinian Authority “justice”: Al-Kadi was put on trial, the judge received a bribe from local Fatah activists and Al-Kadi was **acquitted** due to lack of evidence (according to another version, he was sentenced to several months in prison, although, according to Palestinian law, the minimal punishment for rape is three years).
7. As a result of this scandal, which was part of a series of maltreatment and oppression acts against Bethlehem residents, the local Fatah branch activists (refugee camps residents) **resigned**, as described in the captured document. Among those who resigned were prominent figures on the local level: **Issa Karaka** – the head of the Prisoners Club (apparently because Hamidan was a released prisoner), **Nafed Al-Rafa'i** (a member of the Bethlehem municipality) and **Omar Al-Harub** (Director General in the Trade and Industry Ministry). Below please find the resignation document in Arabic and its English translation.
8. A decision was made to hold elections to the regional Fatah branch in order to put an end to the conflict between the Fatah activists in Bethlehem. The elections never took place.

### **Translation of Captured Document**

#### **The Palestinian National Liberation Movement**

#### **Fatah**

#### **The Bethlehem District Branch**

To brother Faisal Hussein

With greetings of the Homeland

[In the Bethlehem district] a series of ugly crimes [was carried out], the last one of which was the sacrifice of the sister, the released prisoner **Sa'ada Hamidan** from Bethlehem, on **17 March 2001**. [All these] **point to a grave situation and organizational and social disorder**, which are growing in the Bethlehem district, and to the fact that the **Tanzim** is connected to this crime [against Sa'ada Hamidan]. We, as the Bethlehem District Branch committee members, consider ourselves responsible for this event due to our membership in the branch, although we were not involved in it.

Seeing the grave mistakes carried out in the name of the Tanzim and which are carried out under its slogans and in its name, our staying [in the Fatah] will not provide a legitimate and legal cover-up for this crime, which may hurt our society, its values and goals. We therefore **relinquish** our membership in the [Fatah's] Bethlehem District Branch committee due to the **numerous deviations and failures in law enforcement and justice, and due to the cover-up of actions which are completely unacceptable to us.**

Out of responsibility and concern for the movement which must continue heading [the Palestinian people] and out of concern for the sanctity of the Al-Aqsa Intifada we call all the movement

frameworks to **take the responsibility** for correcting this declining organizational situation. We emphasize that we will remain loyal soldiers of our great movement until the implementation of our great goals under the leadership of the brother, the symbol Abu-Amar [Yasser Arafat].

May you be a support and a leader for our people.

**Signatures** [the Fatah Bethlehem branch members]:

Ali Al-Mashni	Khaula Al-Azrak
Hanan Al-Isha	Nafed Al-Rafa'i
Aref Darwish	Omar Al-Harub
Samir Atta	Naim Id
Issa Karaka	

Copies:

Brothers the Fatah Central Committee members  
Brothers the Palestinian Arena members  
Brothers in the Supreme Movement Committee  
Brothers the Fatah members in the Legislative Council  
Secretary General and members of the Revolutionary Council  
The Fatah District Branch members in Bethlehem

Notes:

There is a reference number 3719/1 at the top of the page.  
There is a seal on the document, whose translation is as follows:

The Faisal Hussein Bureau  
The Orient House  
Jerusalem  
Incoming mail 0134/017  
2 April 2001



Page No.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

جريدة التحرير الوطني الفلسطيني

Palestinian National Liberation Movement  
(Fatah)  
Bathlehem, England.



(فتح)  
ليم بيت لحم

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الجمعية العامة فيصل الحسيني  
تعبئة الوطن وسعد

على ضوء مجموعة من الحوادث المشعة ، وأخرها كانت الضربة الأليمة للأسيرة المحرومة مسالمة صبيحان /  
لحم ، ووجود حالة تظلمية من حرق في هذه الحريمة أيضاً فالصناديق في لجنة إقليم بيت لحم ، نجد أن أساسنا  
مسؤولين عما جرى بصفقات أسفاه في هذا الإقليم وهم عدم علاجنا بهذه القضية .  
وإذا ما تحدثت من أعضاء خطورة تركهم باسم التنظيم وتمت شعاراته ومسيرته . ونحن لا يقبلون وجودنا  
يشكل خطراً لنا جميعاً ولقضايا أبناء المدينة رابعها نفس مجتمعنا وتيننا واعدائنا لذا فليكننا نتمسك من كبحه  
لجنة إقليم بيت لحم أمام حالة واسعة من الشكايات والفصول في تحقيق التوازن والمعادلة والتستر على أعمال  
لا تملك لها إنساناً .  
إننا ومن مواقع المسؤولية والحرص على ريادة حركتنا وقضية الكفاح الفلسطيني ندعو كافة الأقطار العربية  
في تحمل مسؤولياتها في تسمية التوزيع التنظيمي المتوزع .  
مؤكدين أننا سنلبي جازماً أولياءنا لمؤكثنا المتظلمة حتى تحقيق أهدافنا العظيمة وتمت بحمد الله الأيم برسول الله  
صلى الله عليه وسلم .

وجمعة لتعبئة مسالمة صبيحان /  
خبرناكم بالضرورة

ناقدان  
عمر الحروب  
ليلى عيسى

الموقعون:  
عبد المنعم  
سأته العنة  
رفعت  
محمد عيسى  
يوسف عيسى

مكتب لوجستيات التحرير الوطني  
البيروت  
رقم الهاتف: 5179104  
التاريخ: / /

مسألة إلى .  
الأمانة العامة .  
الأمانة العامة ، في العاصمة الفلسطينية .  
الأمانة العامة ، في اللجنة المركزية العليا .  
الأمانة العامة ، في المجلس الوطني الفلسطيني .  
بين عدد أعضاء المجلس القومي .  
علاء الإقليم في بيت لحم .