

Pirates Attack Prison in Jericho

The introduction to this aggression shall not be missed, although I challenge this as a sufficient reason for the attack: The convicted four murderers of an Israeli minister (in revenge for Ahmed Sa'adat's predecessor as secretary of the PFLP, victim of an Israeli state murder) were kept in jail in Jericho under international 'monitoring' by American and British monitors. With them in the prison was their alleged (but never convicted) hind man, even Sa'adat, who had, however, been elected to the Palestinian Parliament 6 weeks ago. The Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, had mentioned the possibility of letting him free, provided the PFLP would take the responsibility for his life (given the Israeli practice of extra-judicial assassinations in the Territories). A sixth 'most wanted' man was Arafat's finance man, Fuad Shubeiki, accused of smuggling weapons.

A more appropriate reason is the coming Israeli election in two weeks time. Prime Minister Olmert must show a worthy successor to ailing war criminal Ariel Sharon and also on this day, March 14, 2006, demonstrated his will not to give up the big areas, stolen by settlers in the West Bank by an election speech in the biggest of them, Ariel.

In the morning, Israeli forces entered Jericho with demolition-bulldozers. They attacked the prison both from the air and by tanks and set it into flames. Bulldozers started to destroy the compound. The British and American observers left 10 minutes before the attack [1], to be compared to the Dutch protection of the inhabitants of Srebrenica. At least one Palestinian guard and two prisoners were killed and 18 wounded by the action, 327 were taken prisoners, including 71 prisoners from the jail. The pirates proudly reported that they had no casualties. Colonel Motti Almoz, in charge of the action, said: "The objective is to arrest them, but there are no negotiations. Either they come out or they will be killed" [2]. The prisoners who came out were forced to undress, had their hands fixed at the back, were blindfolded and taken away on trucks. The main targets surrendered shortly after darkness after having first claimed not wanting to give up; they changed their mind as the building threatened to collapse above their head.

In an early comment, the Washington Post declared that this "was among the most aggressive Israeli incursions into a Palestinian town in months" and related the event to the coming elections in Israel [3]. More sharply, the British MP George Galloway stated: "This is not only a major act of aggression by the Israeli state ... It also represents an unforgivable betrayal by the British government, which has abandoned the prisoners to their fate" [4]. Abbas stated: "What happened is an ugly crime which cannot be forgiven and a humiliation for the Palestinian people and a violation of all the agreements." Israel said that the operation was prompted by the withdrawal of the international monitors to which Abbas added: "They left at 9:20 A.M., and the Israelis came in at 9:30 a.m." [5].



1941 – what have we learned since then?

Qatar announced a resolution in the Security Council to which the US (as usual) threatened with veto. Beyond the three Palestinians killed in this illegal action, there is also a destroyed prison. Again, you will see some who destroys and someone else, who silently pay – guess whom ... The fate of the other, around 200 prisoners taken by the pirate's illegal action is currently [17.3.] unknown.

March 15, 2006 – the day after

1 <http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/8F1D3402-082D-41DA-B3A3-863947BB2DA7.htm>

2 <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/694059.html>

3 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/03/14/AR2006031400477.html>

4 http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/george_galloway/2006/03/israeli_aggression_british_bet.html

5 <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/694564.html>

Later recognitions

Still, one month later, the end of the odyssey remains undisclosed. You can argue, that something would have emerged if not all guards had been returned rather fast – but can you really be sure in an area, where the Israeli control the sympathy of large parts of the World presses? I am trying to discover some of this aspect.

The cause of action was that the PFLP leader, Ahmed Sa'adat, who had been elected to the Palestinian parliament, was considered to be released, if the PFLP would take the responsibility for his security in light of an almost certain attempt from the Israelis of targeted assassination. On this basis, the message from April 26 must surprise: Attorney General Menachem Mazuz decided not to try him for involvement in the assassination of late tourism minister Rehavam Zeevi [6]. There was not sufficient evidence available. Instead, he would be tried for 'minor offences.' So when will the Israelis pay for their destruction in Jericho?

On December 26, 2008 it was reported [7] that Sa'adat was convinced to 30 years in Israeli prison for the murder of Zeevi (for which he was previously acquitted). The murder of an Israeli politician is such a huge crime that even innocence is no excuse.

6 <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/709871.html>

7 <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1050129.html>