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"Mayors Meet in Ramallah", Clipping, 13 January 1981

Printed in English, this document shows a clipping of a news press article by Journalist Sam'an Bshara during the return of the 3 mayors who had attempted assassinations, where they met at the Inash Al-Usra Center for the first time after the event on 13 January 1981. The photograph shows Bassam Shakaa, Karim Khalaf and Ibrahim at-Tawil who are the mayors of Nablus, Ramallah and Albireh. This event shows respect and appreciation to them for their struggle, where the president of the association, Samiha Khalil al-Qabaj known as Um Khalil, gave a speech with the presence of many personalities and delegations. The event also included the Hebron deported Mayor's wife Yousra Qawasmeh, the Halhul Mayor's wife Nahid Milhem and others.

Mayors Meet in Ramallah

By SAMAN BISHARA

On January 13 the In'ash Al-Usra (Preservation of the Family) society of El-Bireh held a luncheon to honor mayors Bassam Shaka'a of Nablus, Karim Khalaf of Ramallah, and Ibrahim Tawil of El-Bireh — the three targets in last June's car bomb assassination attempts. It was the first time that Shaka'a and Khalaf met after their return

to the West Bank a fortnight ago. The party was also attended by other national figures not under town arrest, and the wives of the deported mayors of Hebron and Halhoul, Mrs. Yusra Kawasme and Mrs. Nihad Mhem, in addition to delegations representing national institutions and women's associations.

The mayors were met by

a huge crowd which had gathered in front of the building to shout greetings and sing national songs. The ceremony was opened by Mrs. A. Ad, the director of the festivities, who welcomed the mayors and praised the "steadfastness" of the occupied territories' residents. Samiha Khalil, president of In'ash Al-Usra society, congratulated the mayors on

their return home, "alive and full of energy among their own people." In her speech Um Khalil confirmed that "the limbs which were cut (during the assassination attempt) rang the bells of danger and strengthened the people's readiness to confront the difficulties."

The society's student members presented a tableaux of national songs and dances (dabka).

In his address to the gathering Mayor Karim Khalaf spoke about the Palestinian people's struggle inside and outside the occupied territories, and assured that this struggle "will bring about miracles and will achieve victory for certain." He said: "They tried to frighten us, but here we are back to carry on with the struggle with more strength and determination than before."

Bassam Shaka'a confirmed that the "united Palestinian struggle will lead to victory" and that all "conspiracies will crash on the rock of this struggle." In a strong message about the assassination attempts, he said, "Let the enemies know that they are not going to kill this people if they kill Karim, Bassam, and Ibrahim."

Israeli sources have insinuated that the Ramallah festivities for the mayors was

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Mayor Ibrahim Tawil, Karim Khalaf and Bassam Shaka'a in Ramallah, together for the first time after the June assassination attempts.

Mayors

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actually a resumption of activities of the National Guidance Committee. (NGC) Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv reported on January 15 that high level security sources are planning to warn the Nablus and Ramallah mayors not to try to revive the activities of the NGC, and not to partake in any political activity. Ma'ariv ended its report by saying that the statements of the two mayors and their political intentions led to making consultations on a high level, and it was agreed basically to apply the 'iron fist policy' decisions on Khalaf and Shaka'a.

In writing about Shaka'a's activities the Jerusalem Post warned "the Israeli military government feels he has not 'crossed any red line' so far and has not initiated any contact with him."

prisoners in Nafha sent their greetings.

SETTLERS HIT

GAZA. — Three settlers from Shabat Zion were injured, one seriously, when a bomb was thrown at their car passing near Gaza.

CELL CLAIMED

HEBRON. — An alleged Palestinian military cell was exposed by the Israeli authorities. Weapons and explosives were found.

OH, BY THE WAY...

TULKARM. — Mayor of Tulkarm Hilmi Hanoun met with the military governor to discuss a municipal council decision to increase electricity output. During the meeting the military governor informed the mayor that the authorities intend to take control of the vital road which links the city with Tulkarm refugee camp. Hanoun strongly protested and accused the authorities of trying to separate the town from the camp.

ARABS INSIDE

NAZARETH. — The chairman of Arab Local Councils at a conference held in Nazareth demanded that the Israeli authorities cease the demolition of Arab homes, supply extra classrooms in schools and add appropriate subjects to the curriculum for Arab students.

RULE OF LAW

JERUSALEM. — A delegation of Palestinian Arabs will leave for Amman today to participate in a discussion on the legal

be responsible for the killing of two suspected collaborators.

STRIKERS PLEDGE

NABLUS. — The general committee for government teachers in the West Bank met yesterday and agreed to continue their strike until their demands are met.

FAMILY AFFAIR

Members of the Milhem family called upon Shaka'a and Khalaf to congratulate them upon their return home. Both mayors accepted an invitation to dine in Halhoul.

NO OLIVES

TULKARM. — Olive farmers have complained against the stoppage of the distribution of olive plants for which they had prepared the ground. They protested to the Israeli department of agriculture.

SHAKA'A

NABLUS. — Mayor Shaka'a visited the local generating plant, his first official business activity since returning to Nablus. He also visited the Bassam Al Shaka'a School in Balata refugee camp to witness the last stages of its construction.

JOINT COMMITTEE SUPPORTS JEC

JERUSALEM. — Anwar Musseibeh, chairman of the executive board of the Jerusalem District Electricity Company, said that they did not intend taking their case to the International Court of Justice

West Bank. The plans include proposals for the establishment of 10 new settlements.

ON THE LINE

NABLUS. — Telephone workers are having consultations in the West Bank to discuss a wage increase. If necessary, they will strike in order to get a reasonable raise.

sels on January 28. The conference will be attended by representatives of non-aligned countries, the socialist bloc, Islamic countries and progressive liberation movements. Mayors Shaka'a, Khalaf and lawyer Felicia Langer will also speak at the conference.



Inflation: Israel's inflation rate was the highest in the world last year at 132 percent. Experts estimate that this year it could touch 200 percent. In the four year life of the Likud government prices have risen by 650 percent.

Cartoon by Suleiman Manouk

Jan. 12, 1981

ELECTRIC SIT-IN

JERUSALEM. — Delegations from the West Bank held sit-ins at office branches of the Jerusalem District Electricity Company from 10 a.m. to noon to express their support for the Arab enterprise in face of the impending Israeli takeover.

PFLP-GC

Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv reported that the military court in Nablus sentenced Mufic Nofal from Deir Shams, Jenin, to 8 years imprisonment. He was accused of membership in Popular Front General Command and providing it

Government

The government schools teachers in the West Bank who started an escalating strike