

Jenin: From An Epic Place to Massacre

Jenin: From An Epic Place to Massacre ***2/4 - 14/4/2002***

"It surpasses imagination and description, " this is how the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General (Terje Larsen) described the atrocity committed by the Israeli occupation forces in Jenin, going beyond anything familiar to humanity.

The actual invasion of Jenin began on the dawn of 2/4/2002, with the Israeli occupation army mobilizing over 20,000 reserve forces, more than 400 tanks, troop carriers, and armored vehicles, in addition to air support and aerial bombardment, using various types of artillery and missiles, as is well known. In response, resistance intensified, transforming into a fierce war that inflicted significant losses on the "Golani" brigade leading the invasion. Facing substantial setbacks, Israeli Chief of Staff (Shaul Mofaz) decided to replace the military commander of the brigade (Colonel "Yonel Strick") with his deputy (Major Didi). However, the new commander faced bitter failure, prompting Sharon to personally take charge of the military operations against the camp, a significant indication of the intensity of resistance and the difficulties faced by the Zionist army and leadership.

Palestinian resistance affirmed that they wouldn't allow the camp to be occupied except over their lifeless bodies and that they wouldn't withdraw, despite being aware of the occupation forces' intention to storm the camp.

The Israeli army failed to penetrate the camp for a full eight days and resorted to intensifying aerial bombardment with bombs and missiles to destroy homes and bury the inhabitants under the rubble as a means to overcome the steadfast resistance. Despite the machinery of war and destruction, Palestinians turned the camp into a real battlefield, a rare arena of exceptional heroism. They skillfully transformed the camp into a large factory for producing explosive devices in the alleys, houses, and camp squares. Everyone planted explosives in every corner, entrance, or alley, even resorting to planting explosive devices on electricity poles and in cars. Houses expected to be entered by Israeli soldiers were rigged with explosives, like the home of the martyr Mahmoud Tawalbeh, where two soldiers were killed, and five others were injured.

French journalist Pierre Baba Rancy, reporting to "France Press, " described what happened in Jenin, saying that on April 14, 2002, Israeli soldiers dug a wide hole in the center of the camp to bury a considerable number of Palestinian victims. He added that the camp's center resembled Berlin in 1945 due to the tremendous scale of destruction.

He stated, "I smelled the odor of corpses, witnessed piles of debris, insects, appalling sanitary conditions, dirty children, women screaming while carrying their children, shortages of drinking water, interruptions in food supplies, and essential milk for children. " He also mentioned seeing completely burned bodies in two different buildings, two bodies under the rubble, and the discovery of 14 bodies under the debris of one of the houses.