

= Khalil al @-@ Wazir =

Khalil Ibrahim al @-@ Wazir ( Arabic : ????? ??????? , also known by his kunya Abu Jihad ??? ????? ? " father of struggle " ; October 10 , 1935 ? April 16 , 1988 ) was a Palestinian leader and co @-@ founder of the secular nationalist party Fatah . As a top aide of Palestine Liberation Organization ( PLO ) Chairman Yasser Arafat , al @-@ Wazir had considerable influence in Fatah 's military activities , eventually becoming the commander of Fatah 's armed wing al @-@ Assifa .

Al @-@ Wazir became a refugee when his family was expelled from Ramla during the 1948 Arab @-@ Israeli War , and began leading a minor fedayeen force in the Gaza Strip . In the early 1960s he established connections for Fatah with Communist regimes and prominent third @-@ world leaders . He opened Fatah 's first bureau in Algeria . He played an important role in the 1970 ? 71 Black September clashes in Jordan , by supplying besieged Palestinian fighters with weapons and aid . Following the PLO 's defeat by the Jordanian Army , al @-@ Wazir joined the PLO in Lebanon .

Prior to and during Israel 's 1982 invasion of Lebanon , al @-@ Wazir planned numerous attacks inside Israel against both civilian and military targets . He prepared Beirut 's defense against incoming Israeli forces . Nonetheless , the Israeli military prevailed and al @-@ Wazir was exiled from Lebanon with the rest of the Fatah leadership . He settled in Amman for a two @-@ year period and was then exiled to Tunis in 1986 . From his base there , he started to organize youth committees in the Palestinian territories ; these eventually became the backbone of the Palestinian forces in the First Intifada . However , he did not live to command the uprising . On April 16 , 1988 , he was assassinated at his home in Tunis , by Israeli commandos .

= = Early life = =

Khalil al @-@ Wazir was born in 1935 to Muslim parents in the city of Ramla , Palestine , then under British Mandatory rule . His father , Ibrahim al @-@ Wazir , worked as a grocer in the city . Al @-@ Wazir and his family were expelled in July 1948 , along with another 50 @,@ 000 ? 70 @,@ 000 Palestinians from Lydda and Ramla , following Israel 's capture of the area during the 1948 Arab @-@ Israeli War . They settled in the Bureij refugee camp in the Gaza Strip , where al @-@ Wazir attended a secondary school run by UNRWA . While in high school , he began organizing a small group of fedayeen to harass Israelis at military posts near the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula .

In 1954 he came into contact with Yasser Arafat in Gaza ; al @-@ Wazir would become Arafat 's right @-@ hand man later in his life . During his time in Gaza , al @-@ Wazir became a member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood , and was briefly imprisoned for his membership with the organization , as it was prohibited in Egypt . In 1956 , a few months after his release from prison , he received military training in Cairo . He also studied architectural engineering at the University of Alexandria , but he did not graduate . Al @-@ Wazir was detained once again in 1957 for leading raids against Israel and was exiled to Saudi Arabia , finding work as a schoolteacher . He continued to teach after moving to Kuwait in 1959 .

= = Formation of Fatah = =

Al @-@ Wazir used his time in Kuwait to further his ties with Arafat and other fellow Palestinian exiles he had met in Egypt . He and his comrades founded Fatah , a secular Palestinian nationalist guerrilla and political organization , sometime between 1959 ? 60 . He moved to Beirut after being put in charge of editing the newly formed organization 's monthly magazine Filastinuna , Nida ' al @-@ Hayat ( " Our Palestine , the Call to Life " ) , as he was " the only one with a flair for writing . "

He settled in Algeria in 1962 , after a delegation of Fatah leaders , including Arafat and Farouk Kaddoumi , were invited there by Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella . Al @-@ Wazir remained there , opened a Fatah office and military training camp in Algiers and was included in an Algerian @-@ Fatah delegation to Beijing in 1964 . During his visit , he presented Fatah 's ideas to various

leaders of the People 's Republic of China , including premier Zhou Enlai , and thus inaugurated Fatah 's good relationship with China . He also toured other East Asian countries , establishing relations with North Korea and the Viet Cong . Al @-@ Wazir supposedly " charmed Che Guevara " during Guevara 's speech in Algiers . With his guerrilla credentials and his contacts with arms @-@ supplying nations , he was assigned the role of recruiting and training fighters , thus establishing Fatah 's armed wing al @-@ Assifa ( the Storm ) . While in Algiers , he recruited Abu Ali lyad who became his deputy and one of the high @-@ ranking commanders of al @-@ Assifa in Syria and Jordan .

= = = Syria and post @-@ Six @-@ Day War = = =

Al @-@ Wazir and the Fatah leadership settled in Damascus , Syria in 1965 , in order take advantage of the large number of Palestine Liberation Army ( PLA ) members there . On May 9 , 1966 , he and Arafat were detained by Syrian police loyal to air marshal Hafez al @-@ Assad after an incident where a pro @-@ Syrian Palestinian leader , Yusuf Orabi was thrown out of the window of a three @-@ story building and killed . Al @-@ Wazir and Arafat were either considering uniting Fatah with Orabi 's faction ? the Revolutionary Front for the Liberation of Palestine ? or winning Orabi 's support against Arafat 's rivals within the Fatah leadership . An argument occurred , eventually leading to Orabi 's murder ; however , al @-@ Wazir and Arafat had already left the scene shortly before the incident . According to Aburish , Orabi and Assad were " close friends " and Assad appointed a panel to investigate what happened . The panel found both Arafat and al @-@ Wazir guilty , but Salah Jadid , then Deputy Secretary @-@ General of the President of Syria , pardoned them .

After the defeat of a coalition of Arab states in the 1967 Six @-@ Day War , major Palestinian guerrilla organizations that participated in the war or were sponsored by any of the involved Arab states , such as the Arab Nationalist Movement led by George Habash and the Palestine Liberation Army of Ahmad Shukeiri , lost considerable influence among the Palestinian population . This made Fatah the dominant faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization ( PLO ) . They gained 33 of 105 seats in the Palestinian National Council ( PNC ) ( the most seats allocated to any guerrilla group ) , thus strengthening al @-@ Wazir 's position . During the Battle of Karameh , in March 1968 , he and Salah Khalaf held important command positions among Fatah fighters against the Israeli Defense Forces ( IDF ) , which developed his credentials as a military strategist . This eventually led to him staking command of al @-@ Assifa , holding major positions in the PNC , and the Supreme Military Council of the PLO . He was also put in charge of guerrilla warfare operations in both the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel proper .

= = Black September and the Lebanon War = =

During the Black September clashes in Jordan , al @-@ Wazir supplied the encircled Palestinian forces in Jerash and Ajlun with arms and aid , but the conflict was decided in Jordan 's favor . After Arafat and thousands of Fatah fighters retreated to Lebanon , al @-@ Wazir negotiated an agreement between King Hussein and the PLO 's leading organizer , calling for better Palestinian conduct in Jordan . Then , along with the other PLO leaders , he relocated to Beirut .

Al @-@ Wazir did not play a major role in the Lebanese Civil War ; he confined himself primarily to strengthening the Lebanese National Movement , the PLO 's main ally in the conflict . During the fall of the Tel al @-@ Zaatar camp to the Lebanese Front , al @-@ Wazir blamed himself for not organizing a rescue effort .

During his time in Lebanon , al @-@ Wazir was responsible for coordinating high @-@ profile operations . He allegedly planned the Savoy Operation in 1975 , in which eight Fatah militants raided and took hostages in the Savoy hotel in Tel Aviv , killing eight of them , as well as three Israeli soldiers . The Coastal Road massacre , in March 1978 , was also planned by al @-@ Wazir . In this attack , six Fatah members hijacked a bus and killed 35 Israeli civilians .

When Israel besieged Beirut in 1982 , al @-@ Wazir , disagreed with the PLO 's leftist members

and Salah Khalaf ; he proposed that the PLO pull out of Beirut . Nevertheless , al @-@ Wazir and his aide Abu al @-@ Walid planned Beirut 's defense and helped direct PLO forces against the IDF . PLO forces were eventually defeated and then expelled from Lebanon , with most of the leadership relocating to Tunis , although al @-@ Wazir and 264 other PLO members were received by King Hussein of Jordan .

= = Establishing a movement in the Palestinian territories = =

Dissatisfied at the decisive defeat of Palestinian forces during the 1982 Lebanon War , al @-@ Wazir concentrated on establishing a solid Fatah base in the Palestinian territories . In 1982 , he began to sponsor youth committees in the territories . These organizations would grow and initiate the First Intifada in December 1987 ( the word Intifada in Arabic , literally translated as " shaking off " , is generally used to describe an uprising or revolt ) .

The Intifada began as an uprising of Palestinian youth against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip . On June 7 , 1986 , about a year before the Intifada started , al @-@ Wazir was deported from Amman to Baghdad , eventually moving to Tunisia days after King Hussein declared that efforts in establishing a joint strategy for the Israeli @-@ Palestinian conflict between Jordan and the PLO were over .

The first stage of the Intifada was a response to an incident at the Erez checkpoint , where an Israeli military vehicle hit a group of Palestinian laborers , killing four of them . However , within weeks , following persistent requests by al @-@ Wazir , the PLO attempted to direct the uprising , which lasted until 1991 , or 1993 , according to various authorities . Al @-@ Wazir had been assigned by Arafat the responsibility of the Palestinian territories within the PLO command . According to author Said Aburish , he had " impressive knowledge of local conditions " in the Israeli @-@ occupied territories , apparently knowing " every village , school , and large family in Gaza and the West Bank " . He provided the uprising with financial backing and logistical support , thus becoming its " brain in exile . " Al @-@ Wazir activated every cell he had set up in the territories since the late 1970s in an effort to militarily back the stone @-@ throwers who formed the backbone of the Palestinian revolt . He also used the opportunity to reform the PLO . According to author Yezid Sayigh , al @-@ Wazir believed that the Intifada should not have been sacrificed to Arafat solely for use as a diplomatic or political tool .

= = Assassination = =

Al @-@ Wazir was assassinated in his home in Tunis at 2 a.m. UTC on April 16 , 1988 at the age of 52 . He was shot at close range multiple times in the presence of his wife and son Nidal . Al @-@ Wazir was assassinated by an Israeli commando team , reportedly ferried from Israel by boat , aided ashore by Mossad intelligence operatives , and using the IDs of Lebanese fisherman who had been kidnapped to gain access to the PLO compound . Israel accused al @-@ Wazir of escalating the violence of the Intifada , which was ongoing at the time of his assassination . Specifically , he was believed to be the architect of the triple bomb attack at a shopping mall . He was buried in the Yarmouk refugee camp in Damascus on April 21 ; Arafat led the funeral procession .

In 1997 , the Maariv newspaper reported on the assassination of al @-@ Wazir . The report claimed that Ehud Barak led a seaborne command center on a navy missile boat off the shore of Tunis that oversaw al @-@ Wazir 's assassination . Up until 1 November 2012 , Israel however did not take official responsibility for his killing and government spokesman Moshe Fogel and aides to Barak declined to comment on the issue . According to the report , Barak , who was then a deputy military chief , coordinated the planning by the Mossad , as well as the army 's intelligence branch , the air force , navy and the elite Sayeret Matkal commando unit . Mossad intelligence agents watched al @-@ Wazir 's home for months before the raid . The Washington Post reported on 21 April that the Israeli cabinet approved al @-@ Wazir 's assassination on 13 April and that it was coordinated between the Mossad and the IDF .

In 2013 , Israel unofficially confirmed that it was responsible for his assassination , after an

interview by Israeli correspondent Ronen Bergman of Nahum Lev , the Sayeret Matkal officer who led the raid , was cleared for publication - its release had been blocked by military censors for more than a decade . In that interview , Lev gave Bergman a detailed account of the operation .

The United States Department of State condemned his killing as an " act of political assassination " , and the UN Security Council approved Resolution 611 condemning " the aggression perpetrated against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Tunisia " , without specifically mentioning Israel .

= = Personal life = =

Al @-@ Wazir married his cousin Intissar al @-@ Wazir in 1962 and had five children with her . They had three sons , named Jihad , Bassem and Nidal , and two daughters , named Iman and Hanan al @-@ Wazir . Intissar and her children returned to Gaza following the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO and in 1996 she became the first female minister in the Palestinian National Authority . His son Jihad al @-@ Wazir is currently the Governor of the Palestinian Monetary Authority .

After Hamas ' takeover of the Gaza Strip in 2007 , looters raided al @-@ Wazir 's home , reportedly stealing his personal belongings . Intissar al @-@ Wazir said that the looting " occurred in broad daylight and under the watchful eye of Hamas militiamen . "