



Arafat: From Defender to Dictator

Said K. Aburish

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In this meticulously researched and iconoclastic work, Said Aburish, the internationally respected Palestinian political analyst and writer, turns the popular western perception of Yasser Arafat upside-down. Far from being the benign heroic freedom fighter who has kept the hopes of his displaced people alive, Arafat is revealed as a narrow-minded operator, out of touch with reality, whose personal ambitions and lack of understanding of democratic principles have made him a deterrent to real peace in the Middle East.

Aburish exposes the unsound foundations of Arafat's leadership, and shows that his PLO has never been a revolutionary movement; rather Arafat and the PLO have always represented an elite group of Palestinian families who have grown ever more rich. Moreover, Aburish has discovered from hitherto silent but impeccable sources that since 1963, when Arafat first established contact with the CIA in Beirut, the PLO has conducted a secret dialogue with the US, amounting to a betrayal of its people- in effect an agreement to avoid military or economic confrontation with Israel.

Aburish goes on to demonstrate that, in his current role as President of the Palestinian Authority, Arafat has created one of the ugliest expressions of absolute dictatorship, even by Middle Eastern standards, in the world today. He concludes with a stimulating analysis of the likely future for Palestine and of the crucial world implications.

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