

BEQUEST

OF A MARTYR

THE LAST TESTAMENT OF COMRADE  
JEMAL ALI MARIF EXECUTED AT  
MOSUL CENTRAL PRISON - IRAQ

ON 28 - 1 - 1978



PUBLISHED BY THE K.M.L.L.

SEPTEMBER 1979

## INTRODUCTION :

At 12 p.m. on January 28<sup>th</sup> 1978, JEMAL ALI MARIF, a member of the KURDISTAN MARXIST LENINIST LEAQUE (K.M.L.L.), was hanged at Mosul Central Prison.

An uneventful act in itself in Iraq where thousands of executions of dissidents, political opponents and members of resistance groups have taken place since the present Baathist regime came to power through a military coup d'état in July 1968.

What is remarkable, is that the condemned managed to write and smuggle out of the death cell a bequest to his family and friends a short time before his execution.

A small number of the other victims succeeded in doing in view of the harsh security and secrecy placed by the authorities upon political detainees from the moment of their arrest, throughought their torture, place of detention, and in the majority of cases eventual executions, without recourse to legal procedure.

Reliable figures about the number of apponents liquidated by the present regime is unavailable due to the total censorship, and its utter disregard for world public opinion. Foreign facts finding mission to Iraq have been extremely rare, and then only if "well disposed" towards the regime.

However the greatest factor in the conspiracy of silence about the atrocities committed by the rulers of Iraq remains to be the lack of active interest if not the complacent attitude of the world media. Humanitarian and political organizations, whose fashionable campaigns for human right extends in so far as the economic - political national interest dictates.

Following we print the exact and unedited translation of the original letter. In a clear demonstration of having the courage of one's conviction the condemned writes of his thoughts and feelings to those closest a short while before his death.

We hope to remind the reader of the plight of the Kurds at the hand of the two man Iraqi dictatorship. In modern day affluent europe nationalist and patriotic sentiments are becoming increasingly irrelevant. The Nazi is long past. In Kurdistan it is a very different situation; a whole people are threatened with extinction. It is only through the tenacity and courage of comrades such as the writer of the following bequest that the threat to a nations survival has not become a reality.

YOUR MORAL SUPPORT IS NEEDED

committee

POST-SCRIPT :

Comrade (Hameed Heme Amin), executed in Mosul Central Prison few days after the martyr (Jemal) told his family upon their last visit before his execution:

Jemal walked steadily to the scaffold staring at the executioners. Then with a clear and deliberate voice said to the prison director :

"If a criminal deserving execution, why then don't you hang me publicly at the main square of Mosul, so that Kurds and Arabs alike may take fright and stop opposing your regime. I say that you are the frightened ones by your prisons, torture and executions. You hope to rid yourselves of active opposition. I say you hope in vain, for there is by far too many of us for your gallows."

Then comrade Jemal shouted :

"Long live the Marxist Leninst Leaque"

"Long live the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan".

Then he sang the Kurdish national anthem while the noose was tightened around his neck until he was drooped.

THE TESTAMENT :

To my dear mother, esteemed father, all relatives and friends,  
A communist salute,

*Beloved father, beloved mother,*

May be you will ponder, why ? O son did you let yourself  
into this, and us into grief ?

*Beloved father, beloved mother,*

Do you recall the times I used to mention the possibility  
of my liquidation upon the sacred path, for the sake of this  
soil and our people. Now don't believe that I shall perish.  
Surely with my martyred comrades we'll not die. We are the  
fodder of the fires of our new revolution. Kurdistan is  
thirsty, only blood shall quench its thirst. Today while our  
motherland and people are at their greatest peril, it is  
unbecoming to say "hold on to your hat, son".<sup>x)</sup>  
No beloved mother and father, those whose blood was spilled  
upon the soil of Kurdistan, and executed, were no less than  
your boy. They had mothers and relatives too. With pride  
they did sacrifice themselves for the freedom and salvation  
of Kurdistan.

*Dearest father,*

When choosing this path, I was well aware of the diffi-  
culties, hardships and risks, yet realizing that victory  
is an eventuality well at hand, because the people's sons  
are guided in their revolution by the righteous path of  
(Marxism Leninsm). We have planted the seed, and its roots  
is growing ever deep in the soil of the motherland.  
I am aware of what has been sowed and what shall be reaped.

*Beloved father, beloved mother,*

Reason my words as the parents of a revolutionary son,  
it is a privilege to be a martyr of the people, whom I ask  
forgiveness for being unable to serve longer, for not  
finishing the mural I began. The noose of the fascists  
will not let me complete the mural. With my comrades here,  
we are the fuel that fires the revolution for the salvation  
of Kurdistan and so we say :

*Onward marches the caravan of martyres, gallant  
their torch is everlastingly aflame  
They are so valiant, thus we say  
victory is certain and well nigh.*

*Beloved mother, beloved father, dearest sisters, brothers  
and comrades,*

It is true when it is said "life is a pleasure", but do  
you know ? that death becomes the greater pleasure when it  
is a sacrifice for the people. In dying for those living,  
one is creating life in his wake, so one becomes deathless.  
In our death the future generation shall live, not merely  
exist.

*Beloved mother,*

Accept all the sons of the people as your own. For as well  
as being yours I am a son of the people also whom I believe  
shall triumph over the foe, the blood stained and blood  
thirsty invaders.

*I have some requests for you and for relatives, dear brothers  
and sisters :*

1. On no account should you dishearten my comrades, accord  
them all the consideration and be far-sighted with them.  
I know them well, and wish you would also.  
I hope that you look upon ..... like me, he is  
very dear to and close to me, other friends and .....  
must be regarded in the same way. I hope that you will  
not disassociate from my other comrades.

x) A Kurdish proverb equivalent to the English "I am alright  
Jack".

2. Do not attire in black for me, be dignified and ruddy faced when among others. Wailing, sighing and black dresses shall not resurrect me, you oughtn't do that when people die. I want you to remember me every year on the anniversary of my execution. The remembrance should not be in grief by crying or wailing but if possible every one should dress in red. Be elegant and sing patriotic ballads, ballads that shakes the invader's hearts. But on condition that no tears should be shed on this occasion.

3. Take care of (Gulzare), (Shanaze) and (Qalle).\*) I wanted so much to indulge and look after them. I hope that you will not displease them. Regarding Shanaze and Qadere, they must complete their schooling. As for Gulzare, when she marries a compatible suitor it must be of her choice.

4. I hope that you will look after my uncle, Osman's family and children, particularly Mustafa, who I wish will complete his studies. I beg for you specially brothers and sisters, uncle, cousin, all relatives and comrades to absolve me. I have causes you so much suffering and grief while being brought up to be a (Pesh-Merga) in the Red Army of Kurdistan. I hope for your forgiveness.

*Dearest mother and father,*

Try to obtain my body, although the savages forbid it. Those fascists are holding us in close cells and hang us in secret. So far I have seen 16 (sixteen) heroes being hanged. I cannot begin describing to you their heroism as they were led to the scaffold to be hanged, how they put the fascist enemy to shame. This enemy who is ever surprised at the courage of the sons of the Kurdish people. Some of the hirelings even indicate "sorrow for those enlightened" and unconquered heroes.

\*) younger sisters and brother of the writer.

If my body is returned to you<sup>\*)</sup>, bury me besides martyr (Shihab)<sup>†</sup>. If not, then don't be dismayed, I have many memorabilia at home, each of them would remind you of (Jemal).

*My dear ones,*

Know that the enemy's government and their forces are breaking up. That's why they have intensified their executions. Since August (55) of our comrades have been executed in (Abu Graib) and (Mosul) prisons. If one is to be present amongst us, now to watch those lions heading courageously and even humorously to the gallows shouting slogans, one would wish to partake in the "carnival". I would have liked to be among the 12 heroes who were executed a short while back. It is a great privilege for me to be accepted as a martyr by my people, therefore I say :

*Onward marches the caravan of martyres, gallant  
their torch is everlastingly aflame  
They are so valiant, thus we say  
victory is certain and well nigh.*

*Beloved mother,*

Keep my belongings such as photographs and books. Place the photo's in albums. Remember me to my dear friends Sebeehe, Nahi, Shukri, Perweene; they went to so much trouble on my behalf, specially the family of ..... I hope that you and father would go to Haji<sup>‡</sup>. Don't linger and say "Jemal is gone". I request you to help Jameele get married as soon as possible. I really am indebted to you and the others.

\*) It is the practice of the Iraqi authorities not to surrender the body of executed political prisoners to their families, for fear of demonstrations at their burial.

†) Shihab Sheik Nuri, a founder of the (M.L.L.) was executed September 1976.

‡) The pilgrimage to Mecca.

You have deprived yourselves of happiness in order to save me, alas you wasted your money \*) for nothing which I told you not to.

I depart and leave you proud, I have no joy in living after the passing of my heroic comrades. I only wish to be as resilient as they and join our new revolutions caravan of martyres.

I have written this rhyme for my brothers, sisters and comrades, hoping they will memorize it :

*In the feast the joy of love  
entwines with my sure pledge  
I send thee and my Kurdistan  
for one a flutter of lips, to the other my soul.*

The poem following is written on the grim black steel door of my narrow cell in the death ward. I present it to the children and want them to memorize it and remember me by :

*A daring Kurdish worker am I  
struggler of the red army  
A destitute Kurdish toiler am I  
vanguard of the class thus so brisk  
My path, my thought is the revolution  
my border is Mount Hamreene x)  
A Pesh Merga of the protracted struggle  
certainly I'll not diverge from my red quest.*

#### 5. Beloved mother and father,

I request that all of you, sisters, brothers, cousins, aunts, sister in law, and my uncles wife should stick close to and love one another.

The great teacher Lenin says : "A true marxist can be indentified by his closeness to, and accord with his family only then can he bring others into accord".

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\*) The family has sold everything and borrowed heavily to give corrupt government officials money for their son's reprieve.

x) Mount Hamreene, 40 km south of Kirkuk, a natural demographic delimitation point in Kurdistan's border.

I quote this because I wasn't like that to you, but had always aimed to be so and would have, if not for this. You well know how I abhorred discord, so please don't let it befall you.

I hope, dear relatives, young and old, that you follow my ideals, because it is the only way for the salvation of our peoples and the shining days to come.

After my passing, don't break up; be proud, be ruddy cheeked when among people. Don't shed tears because I am a martyr : "don't cry for the martyrs of the motherland.....")".

I want you to think brightly. Osmans due will not perish.x)

Many thanks to those who came to see me and those who will attend my mourning, please don't take exception to those who daren't either.

I have chosen to be hanged in order to save others, and consider it a privilege to have been able to save my comrades from hanging, triumphing over temptation to protect my comrades.=)

I hope that you will not demure and comprehend the dialectics of my anguish, do not be mislead by the talk of the defeatists.

I am right and have followed the straight forward path of Kurdistan's Marxist Leninst.

It is a great privilege to be martyred for the salvation of my people.

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\*) A famous Kurdish ballad sung on the occasion of Newroz.

x) Osman was the uncle of J. and was executed on .....

=) Here he alludes to his wishrending torture.

Following are some of the slogans shouted by the heroes in the death-row when one is taken for execution.

- Long live the (M.L.) League organizer of the Kurdistan working class.
- Your savage torture and dirty gibbets shall not affect the victorious march of our revolution.
- Long live our popular, democratic and patriotic revolution aflame in the mountains of Kurdistan.
- We are sacrificing our bodies and blood for Kurdistan - and told the gallows await us; we are coming.
- (M.L.) is the only path for the attainment of victory.
- Down with rulers of Baghdad, absolute enemies of mankind.
- We shall turn Kurdistan to a graveyard for the greedy invaders.
- We shall join the ranks of Kurdistan's martyrs.
- Fascists, Executioners, dour blood spillers. Don't view ours as roped hostages and chained prisoners. I vow to refuse the blindfold and when you dangle the noose, to offer it my neck.

About 11.45 p.m. a comrade is taken out from the condemned cell to the gallows.

We commence to shout slogans and bid him farewell and say :

*Forward Heroes we shall follow.*

When he is drooped from the scaffold we shout :

*These are your deeds cowardly fascists.*

We repeat this for some minutes then we say :

*The tree of liberty blossoms not unless watered with blood.*

*Freedom never shall be without sacrifice. (\**

FINALLY GOD BE WITH YOU

Forward under the red banner of our new revolution.....

YOUR MARTYRED SON

JEMAL RESH

\*) A famous poetry by the Kurdish writer Ibrahim Ahmed.



## THE KURDISTAN MARXIST LENINIST LEAGUE

Towards the end of last decade, the position of the left in Iraq generally and Kurdistan particularly, was in great disarray.

The Iraqi Communist Party (I.C.P.), one of the oldest and best organized in the middle-east, has had been weakened. Not only through ruthless persecution by the oil monopolies -backed military dictatorships, but mainly through interval strife and conflict within.

The faction advocating revolutionary armed struggle (I.C.P. Central Command) had split away from the main (I.C.P. Central Committee). The failure of the communists in adopting a consistent policy and to formulate a clear strategy regarding the Kurdish national movement. Their rather vapid response to nationalist aspirations manifested in the early sixties by the start of the Kurdish revolution, had caused a marked decline in their base support in Kurdistan.

The Kurdistan Democratic Party (K.D.P.) which had led the Kurdish revolution, had by the mid sixties split to the (polit-bureau faction) and a (Barzani appointed K.D.P.). The hostilities and conflicts between both sides led to the erosion of the substantial mandate, the marxists and left wing intelligencia had over the Party. Subsequently the rise of the compromising and opportunistic bourgeois in the first faction, which ultimately dissolved after 1970, and the ascendancy and final take over of feudalists and right-wing elements in the latter.

After the conclusion of the 11th March 1970 agreement between Barzani and the Iraqi fascist regime, a temporary and missed gain, in the final analysis, for the heroic struggle and toil of nine years by the Kurdish masses in Iraq.

The realization, within the marxists ranks of the inability of the Barzani feudal leadership to guide the national movement towards ultimate victory, the inability of the corrupt K.D.P. to evolve even to a nationalist Bourgeois Party, and the earlier mentioned failure of the (I.C.P.) to assume an active role in the direction and leadership of the just

Kurdish struggle, created the circumstances for the founding of the first Kurdistan Marxist Leninist study group. It was to ponder upon, analyse and study the prospects for a genuine (M.L.) movement, to exchange experiences and views upon the worlds liberation movements to which the Kurdish struggle had been isolated from, and finally to create the true basis for scientific socialism whithin the Kurdish society.

It was decided from the outset not to form a party, issue manifestos or engage in slanging matches with the many "vanguard" parties, ., to concentrate activities upon contact study and dialogue within small circles, and to expand those circles cautiously throughout Kurdistan, ., in the utmost secrecy to avoid the Baathist ruthless persecution on the one hand, and Barzani's Prying Parastin (security machine) on the other. Thus gradually and steadily the KOMELE (the league) was born.

The collapse of the Kurdish revolt overnight in March 1975 and the surrender of its feudal leadership at the instigation of its "allies" the Americans and the Shah of Iran, and the subsequent holocaust perpetrated by the "victorious" Baathist racist regime against the defenceless Kurds, from mass deportation, imprisonment, torture and large scale executions, added incentive to the determined (K.M.L.L.) which had long before forecasted the tragic events. It quickly rose to the challenge by speedily using its secret widespread study groups to instigate defiance, link-up the unorganized abandoned masses, offering a glimmer of hope at the darkest hour, when a whole nation wept in silence and disbelief.

The (K.M.L.L.) was instrumental in the organization and establishment of the (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan) P.U.K., formed by the Kurdish socialist movement. The (K.M.L.L.) and a broad spectrum of nationalists and patriots who rejected defeat and wanted to carry the struggle under the (P.U.K.)'s umbrella. Towards the end of 1976 the first actions by the K.M.L.L. partisans took place against the fascist forces after establishing strong bases in the countryside.



The revolution was aflame once more in Kurdistan, the Baathists forces started terrorizing the masses on an unprecedented scale, liquidating anyone remotely connected with the (K.M.L.L.).

Two of the founding members, comrades Shihab Sheik Nuri and Jaafer A Wahid, were executed in october 1976.

A third founding member comrade Shaswar Berzenji was killed in January 1978 near Kirkuk.

Hundreds of members and the leagues supporters have been executed.

But the red star flutters ever higher on the mountains of Kurdistan.

The revolution marches forward towards the final victory of the workers and peasants.

The revolution of the Iranian brethrens has overthrown one of the last pillars of reactionary dictatorships, adding strength to the revolution of toilers in Kurdistan.

After nine years of political and armed struggle, the establishment of a broad mass base, and the organization of the Kurdish Marxists Leninist successfully.

The historical turning point has finally arrived to achieve the dream of the (K.M.L.L.) martyred founders.

THE MARXIST LENINIST VANGUARD PARTY OF KURDISTAN WILL SOON BE

About the martyr

JEMAL ALI MARIF

- \* - Born 1944 in the City of Sulaimaniya to a mill-worker who had migrated to the City from the village of Haji Mamendi - Berzenje-district.
- \* - Entered secondary school after completing primary school, but soon left to help support his poor family.
- \* - Joined the Kurdistan Democratic Party in 1962, later became a Pesh Merga.<sup>+</sup>
- \* - Entered the Marxist study circles of the (K.M.L.L.) in 1973.
- \* - After the collapse of the Kurdish revolt in March 1975, helped found and organize the newly born (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan) in the district of Sulaimaniya.
- \* - His cousin Osman Sheik Feraj was executed by the Baathists at Mosul Central Prison on 21-9-1977, charged with aiding the "Pesh Merga".
- \* - Caught while hiding in Sulaimaniya during August 1977.
- \* - Severly tortured in the (Sulaimaniya intelligence center) and later at the notorious "special investigation committees" H.Q. in Kirkuk. He remained steadfast without divulging information about his comrade or party.
- \* - Transferred to "Mosul Central Prison" and hanged on 28-11-1978.
- \* - Throughout his adult life was known popularly as Jemal Resh.

<sup>+</sup>) : "Pesh Merga" : Kurdish popular term for resistance fighters meaning (facing death).

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