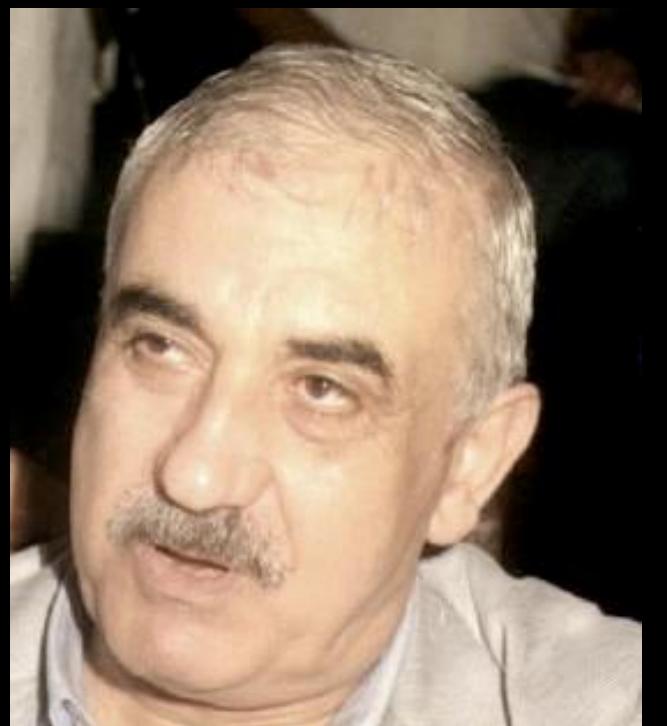


# IN MEMORIAM

## GEORGE HABASH (1926 – 2008)

Born in  
LYDDA, PALESTINE

Died in Exile  
AMMAN, JORDAN



“Every Palestinian has the right to fight for his home, his land, his family and his dignity – these are his rights.”

*George Habash, 1998*

Dr George Habash was born into a Christian merchant family in Palestine and experienced the devastating effects of the Palestinian al-Nakba (Catastrophe) when he and his family along with 750,000 fellow Palestinians were terrorised into leaving their homes and homeland by Zionist forces to make way for the artificially created Jewish state, Israel. Although he graduated in medicine and specialised in paediatrics, he eventually devoted his time to the life-long struggle for the liberation of Palestine.

In 1952, he founded the *Arab Nationalist Movement* (ANM) which aimed to unify the Arab world to confront Israel. He saw Zionism as a force that would divide the Arab world and believed that Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser would be the instrument of Arab unity that would enable a conventional war to be mounted against Israel.

The Arab loss of the 1967 six-day war dashed his hopes and the ANM folded. Habash then decided that guerrilla war was the only option for the Palestinians (despite his initial criticism of Arafat's *Fedayyeen*) and he formed the *Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine* (PFLP). He believed that desperate people must turn to desperate acts and although the hijacking of planes brought world-wide condemnation, it also brought publicity to the Palestinian cause. “When we hijack a plane it has more effect than if we killed a hundred Israelis in battle . . . For decades world public opinion has been neither for us or against the Palestinians. It simply ignored us. At least the world is talking about us now.”

He saw the Oslo peace talks as diffusing the First Intifada with its powerful images of stone-throwing Palestinian youths against Israeli tanks and also capitulating on the legal international framework represented by United Nations and Security Council resolutions. He never resiled from his belief that an overwhelming majority of Arabs feel that the Palestinian problem is a pan-Arab cause and that the common enemy is Israel.

Dear Friends,

You are invited to attend a Memorial Service for our late Palestinian leader, Dr. George Habash, the founder and general secretary of the “Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine”.

Date & Time: Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2008 at 1145 am  
Venue: St Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church  
32 – 34 Plunkett Road  
Dandenong VIC 3175

*(On behalf of the Beit Jala Palestinian Association and the Palestinian Community)*