Hurrah for a 'Journalist'

A Palestinian boy dresses up as a journalist to survive Israeli attacks

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While covering the recent Israeli savagery in Gaza, Swedish Radio correspondent Johan-Matthias Sommarstrom was approached by a little boy as he returned to his hotel after a day of reporting in the troubled Strip.

The Palestinian boy, about six years old, had dressed up as a journalist with a homemade flak jacket. "I'm a journalist, I am reporting on what is happening here, this is my flak jacket." the boy told Sommarstrom, who loaned him his Press helmet to complete the look. The youngster stood proud as he posed for the camera.

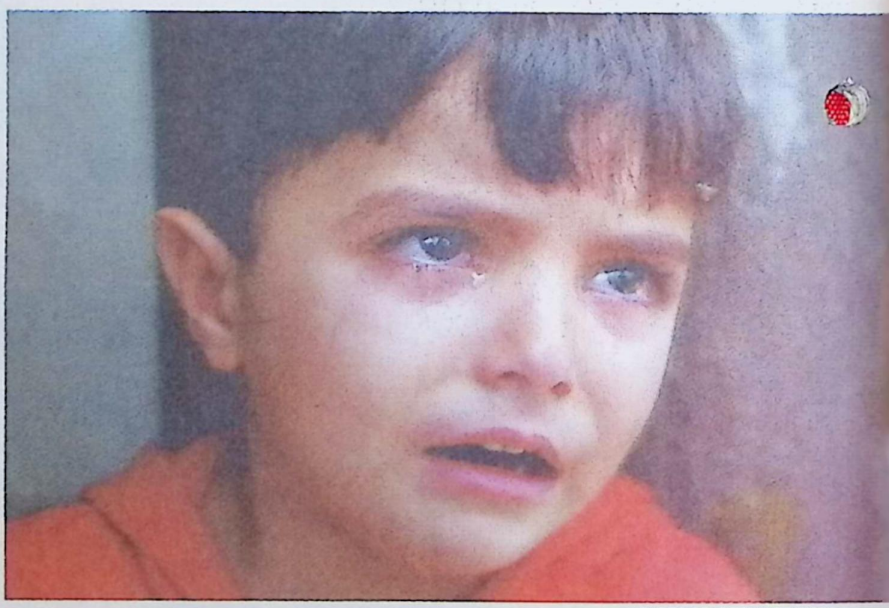


PHOTO COURTESY: REUTERS

A Palestinian boy who lost his family members in an Israeli air strike.

Sommarstrom said on Swedish Radio: "He has seen us journalists go in and out of the hotel, he has seen that we survive. I think that in his pretending play he wants to be like us, someone who survives."

Sommarstrom posted the picture on Twitter with the caption: 'Young boy in #Gaza pretending to be a journalist with his home-made flak jacket had to lend him my helmet.'

The image from Gaza has become a symbol of the sufferings Palestinians have been going through since the fighting between Israel and Hamas militants broke out on July 8.

No Israeli civilians were killed by Hamas in 2013 or 2014 before Israel Defence Forces launched Operation Protective Edge on July 8 in the Hamas-governed Gaza Strip earlier this summer in response to the killing of three Israeli teenagers. There is no evidence that the killing of the three Israeli teenagers was under direct order of Hamas. What ensued is not a war—rather; it was a top military power unleashing massive firepower against an occupied Palestinian population.

If three American citizens were killed by Mexican drug traffickers on the US-Mexico border, would that entitle the US military to bomb entire Mexico City?

Before an open-ended ceasefire was announced on 26 August, more than 2100 Palestinians were killed, most of them civilians. Sixty six Israeli soldiers, six Israeli civilians, and one foreign worker were also killed. The great disparity between the casualties on the two sides once again shows that the Israeli military action has been disproportionate. By attacking civilians in their homes, bombing hospitals, schools and infrastructure, Israel gave up the principle of attacking only military targets. Israeli tanks also indiscriminately sprayed flechettes (small darts) in densely populated areas like Gaza.