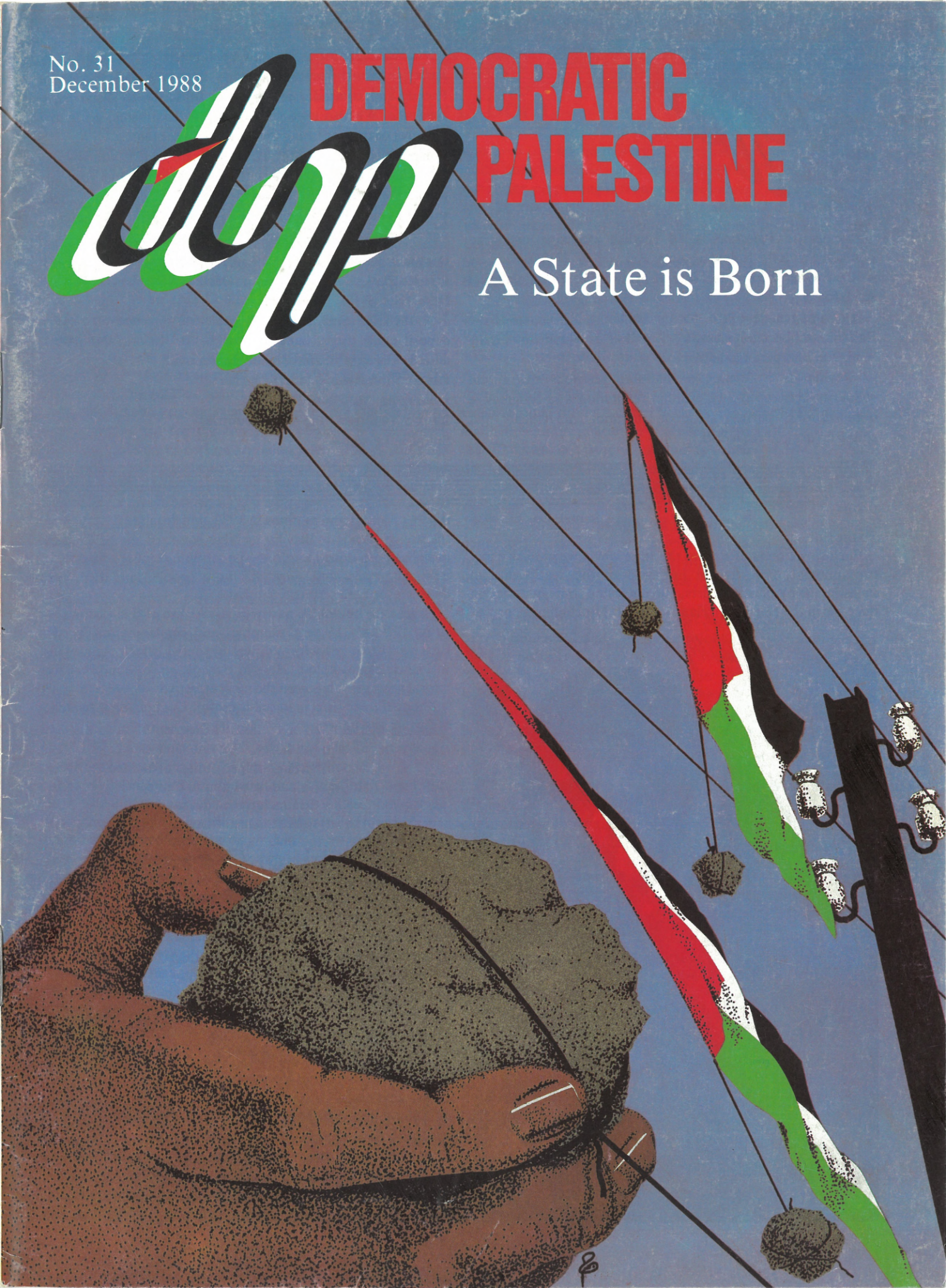


No. 31
December 1988

DEMOCRATIC PALESTINE

A State is Born





Democratic Palestine is an English language magazine published with the following aims:

- Conveying the political line of progressive Palestinian and Arab forces;
- Providing current information and analysis pertinent to the Palestinian liberation struggle, as well as developments on the Arab and international levels;
- Serving as a forum for building relations of mutual solidarity between the Palestinian revolution and progressive organizations, parties, national liberation movements and countries around the world.

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September 29, 1988

To the Editor:

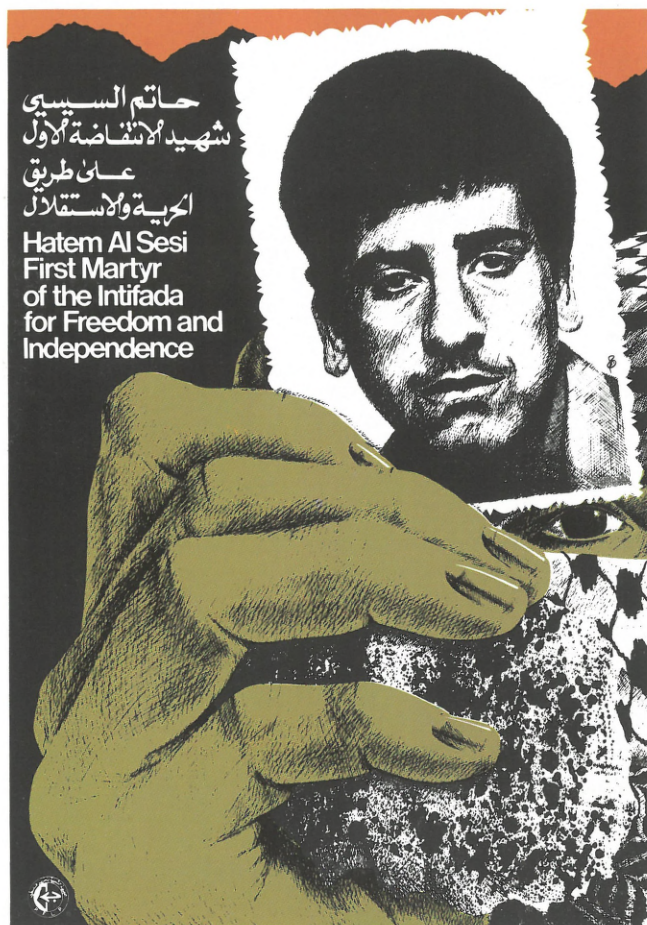
Enclosing a copy of *Behind the Wire* which we publish every two months. Also, having just read of the deaths of two Palestinians by plastic bullets, I'm enclosing some material on their use in the North of Ireland since 1973, including a copy of

the EEC debate and motions in 1982, which called for a ban on the use of plastic bullets by member states of the EEC. Very little has been done to enforce the motion; the EEC hasn't the political power, and since '82 more people have died, and dozens have been seriously injured.

Israel will, no doubt, partly excuse its use of this weapon by citing Britain's 15 year example, and condemnation by the EEC will be tinged with political hypocrisy which the Israelis will be quick to exploit. Here in Europe we've found that the 'moral argument' has been the most effective.

I hope the enclosed material is useful. Contact me if I can be of further assistance.

in solidarity,
M.F. Quilligan, editor of *Behind the Wire*
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حاتم السيسى
شاهد الانتفاضة الأول
على طريق
الحرية والاستقلال
Hatem Al Sesi
First Martyr
of the Intifada
for Freedom and
Independence

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A State is Born

The Palestine National Council held its 19th session (extraordinary), the Session of the Intifada, between November 12th and 15th. Palestinians from the four corners of the earth, with the exception of the Palestinian territories occupied by 'Israel', along with hundreds of media personnel, converged on the Algerian capital for this historic event. Two landmark decisions were made during this PNC session: first the declaration of an independent Palestinian state; and second, the acceptance of UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, plus Palestinian self-determination, as a basis for a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

On the agenda were four major issues: the Declaration of Independence, the formation of a provisional government, the uprising and the political report.

The intifada was the catalyst not only for the Declaration of Independence, but for the convening of the PNC session as well. The decision to declare an independent Palestinian state was discussed by the PLO Central Council after King Hussein severed the administrative and legal ties with the West Bank on July 31st. Despite its motives, the king's move was a result of the continuation and escalation of the intifada, and the Palestinian people's rejection of the Jordanian option. Between the declaration and actual establishment of the state lies a long and treacherous road, which necessitates consistent struggle on all levels, persistence and above all national unity. Nonetheless, the declaration is a victory for the PLO. It puts to rest once and for all the Jordanian option and the idea of a confederation between the Palestinian West Bank and Jordan, before the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. King Hussein can no longer claim the Palestinian West Bank as part of his kingdom; nor can Peres continue to hope of negotiating its future with Hussein. The Palestinians now have a state. This also puts an end to Shamir's plan to enforce the Camp David «autonomy» plan on the Palestinians.

The declaration of an independent Palestinian state has given the intifada new momentum. The Palestinian people under occupation have come so far during the past year that it would be next to impossible to go back, after sacrificing hundreds of lives, the thousands of injured and imprisoned, the demolition of homes, expulsions, the closure of schools, desecration of Moslem and Christian holy places, etc.

As in the case of the Declaration of Independence, the formation of a provisional government was also discussed and agreed upon in principle at the Central Council and Executive Committee meetings prior to the PNC. Some of the specifics were hammered out during the PNC's discussion of the political report, while some issues were left to the Central Council to make final decisions on. Among the issues left open for the Central Council to decide are: the relationship between this government and the PLO - whether the government will be the political apparatus of the PLO, or take its place; how and when the government will be formed - now or at the doorsteps of an international peace conference? These are all critical questions whose answers will have a direct bearing on the future course of events and on the PLO.

Two committees were formed in the PNC, an intifada committee and a political committee. The intifada committee met and drew up draft resolutions which were unanimously

approved (see text in this issue). They stressed the need for national unity and escalating the uprising, as well as programs of action for supporting it from outside on the Palestinian, Arab and international levels. Besides material aid, there were specific proposals for placing the occupied territories under UN supervision and for the Arab countries to open their borders to the Palestinian resistance, as part of the support to the uprising.

The political committee was engaged in a heated discussion over the political report which was finally approved by a majority with some abstentions. The report calls for convening an effective international conference under UN auspices, with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council, and all parties to the conflict, including the PLO on an equal footing, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, with the guarantee of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination; the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the areas occupied in 1967, including East Jerusalem; a halt to all annexation and the removal of Israeli settlements built since 1967; resolving the question of Palestinian refugees in accordance with related UN resolutions; and guaranteeing freedom of worship in holy places for all religions. The political report also rejects all forms of terrorism, including state terrorism (see text in this issue).

The main point of contention was making specific reference to resolutions 242 and 338. These resolutions were adopted by the UN Security Council after the 1967 war and directed at 'Israel', Egypt, Syria and Jordan. They do not present a solution for the Palestinian question, whereas there are other UN resolutions which specifically deal with the Palestinian problem, for example resolution 194, which recognizes the Palestinians' right to repatriation, and 3236 which recognizes the Palestinians' right to self-determination.

Accepting 242 at this time is in essence answering to the US demands, and giving a gratuitous concession. Making such a concession, without any concession from 'Israel' in return, will put the PLO at a disadvantage at the negotiations table. It will also set a precedent for the US and 'Israel' to ask for more concessions, while they have yet to recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination or even to choose their own representatives.

Concessions, as an essential ingredient in making a settlement, must be reciprocal. The PLO's decision to accept 242 and 338 was met with demands from the US administration for yet more concessions, while Israeli leaders are now speaking of the mass expulsion of Palestinians. 'Israel' is not interested in making peace, but in more annexation. 'Israel' has to be forced to make peace, and this will only come about through continuing and escalating the intifada, at the same time increasing the growing isolation of 'Israel' on the international level.

All in all, the drawback of accepting 242 and 338 was balanced by the declaration of an independent state and the resolutions on the intifada. Despite the polarization over the political report, Chairman Yasir Arafat and Dr. George Habash both stressed the overriding issue of national unity; a split in the ranks of the PLO was ruled out by George Habash even before the PNC started.

Interview with Dr. George Habash

At the conclusion of the PNC session, *Democratic Palestine* interviewed comrade George Habash, General Secretary of the PFLP, in Algeria.

How do you evaluate the results of the 19th session of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) and its resolutions?

The PNC discussed four basic issues: the declaration of independence, the formation of a provisional government, the uprising and the political report. As for the independence declaration, we consider this a big victory for the Palestinian people. As you know, this is a result of the intifada without which no one would have thought of declaring independence and it would not have been possible to do so. The intifada forced the Jordanian regime to sever the legal and administrative ties between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the West Bank. In this light, we had to answer the questions: To whom does this land belong? What is the future of this land? The answer was that on this land we establish a Palestinian state, on the way to fulfilling the historical rights of the Palestinian people.

Therefore, we evaluate this declaration positively, especially since it was based on the natural and historical rights of the Palestinian people. It has the positive political result of eliminating the Jordanian option. There are three proposed solutions to the Palestinian question: Camp David, the Jordanian option and national independence. The declaration of independence narrowed down these options to the only option through which the solution to the Palestine question can be materialized. We hope that this declaration will play an important role in our political and diplomatic struggle.

The second issue was the formation of a provisional government, including the basis on which such a government should be erected. The timing was left open until the circumstances are appropriate, and to give ourselves enough time to clarify the relationship between the PLO and this government, and other details. We are convinced that the declaration of a state necessitates a government. The PNC gave the Executive Committee of the PLO the authority to form this government. However we hope that there will be agreement in the Palestinian arena on the details of the formation of this government, so that it does not nullify or replace the PLO. Instead, it should be the political and diplomatic apparatus of the PLO.

The third issue is the resolutions for supporting, continuing, escalating and spreading the intifada and all of its aspects. These resolutions were very, very good, provided they are implemented. It is my duty to point out the difference between passing resolutions and implementing them. However, passing these resolutions gives us the opportunity to struggle within the framework of the PLO for their implementation.

The fourth issue is the political report. This is where we feel that there was a basic discrepancy. We in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine opposed a major point in the report which makes specific reference to UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, plus the (Palestinian) right of self-determination, as a basis for a peaceful solution. During the discussion, we explained our position and the reasons for our opposition. I am sorry to say that due to the composition of the

PNC, this resolution was passed. This poses the question of whether or not the PNC resolutions are consistent with Palestinian public opinion. I don't believe that the majority of the Palestinian people accept 242 and 338 as a basis for a peace conference, yet the PLO's highest body of authority (the PNC) passed this resolution. This indicates a contradiction in the composition of the PNC, which is not based on proportional representation of the political forces in reality.

In any case, our general evaluation of the 19th session of the PNC is positive. I realize the danger of resolution 242. However, the declaration of an independent Palestinian state outweighs the negative results of accepting resolutions 242 and 338.

The lesson to be drawn from this session is the need for rectifying the organizational relations in the PLO institutions. There is talk of the ideal Palestinian democracy. If we mean democracy as freedom of expression within the framework of these institutions, then it is correct. However, we realize that democracy is more than freedom of expression. We should evaluate our institutions, the way in which they function, and the basis on which they are built. It is not possible to have genuine democracy without giving proportional representation to every political trend in the Palestinian arena. I mentioned that the majority of the Palestinian people reject 242 as a basis for a settlement. If we constitute a minority in the PNC, we know without a shadow of a doubt, that our views enjoy majority support from the Palestinian public opinion. If there are some who disagree, then let's agree on a method of gauging the true size of every political trend.

You have always been known for consistently demanding democratic reforms in the PLO. What are the possibilities of achieving this during the uprising, and can this be achieved with the present composition of the PLO institutions?

We presented a program for democratic reform in 1983, in a booklet entitled «The Program of Unity and Reform». We spoke of it on many occasions within PLO institutions and in public. Now the intifada necessitates the speeding up of the process of reform. Our sincerity to the intifada demands the same level of diligence from us as our masses are showing in their determination to achieve freedom and independence. Therefore, it is necessary to rectify the internal situation of the PLO so that it will become a real tool for the liberation of Palestine. At the same time, the intifada forces us to limit our struggle within the PLO's institutions, so that this reform can take place without the danger of a split or serious problems. It is a very delicate balance: on one hand, the necessity of reform; and on the other, this process of reform taking place within the framework of the unity of the PLO.

It is very difficult to institute reforms during the present situation. It is our duty to struggle in a very serious manner, so that the composition of the next PNC is based on proportional representation. This is the start of the process of reform which should include many facets.

There are some appeals to the PLO to change its Charter. What is your opinion on that?

We reject this. There was agreement on two basic issues prior to the discussions which took place before the convening of the PNC. The first was not to alter the Palestinian National Charter, and the second was not to change the political program of the PLO. I realize that such talk did take place; therefore, it was necessary to have consensus on rejecting any change in the Charter or the program so that we could begin dialogue on the other issues. Of course, the demands for changing the Charter are basically from 'Israel' and the US. World public opinion should know that their aim is to put obstacles to the peace process. The Israeli motto is 'Greater Israel' from the Nile to the Euphrates. The program of the Likud incorporates all of Palestine and Jordan into the Jewish state.

If the US demands that we change our Charter, and if we and our Soviet friends demand a change in the charter of the Zionist movement, the program of the state, etc., this will be placing obstacles to the process of peace. The imperialist-Zionist plan is clear. Until this moment, they do not recognize the PLO or our legitimate national rights; they object to our right as a people to self-determination.

How do you evaluate the PLO's effectiveness in galvanizing support for the intifada on the Arab and international levels?

We realize, of course, that the PLO's major issue is the intifada and facilitating support for it. All the political and diplomatic endeavours since December 8, 1987, are related to the intifada. However, allow me to say that, despite that, we are not satisfied. The most prominent example was during the Palestinian dialogue prior to the PNC; 95% of the dialogue centered around the political issues stemming from the intifada, the Jordanian move severing ties with the West Bank, and the new international political climate. Of course, all this is important. However, it should not be at the cost of the continuation and escalation of the intifada, its consolidation and expansion, its repercussions on the Palestinian and Arab levels, and our tasks based on these repercussions. Placing emphasis on the political issues is not satisfactory to us.

Our main concern now after the PNC is for our comrades who represent the PFLP in the (PLO's) occupied territories committee and the Executive Committee, to work on implementing the PNC resolutions concerning the intifada. Of course, supporting the intifada does not mean financial support only; it includes material, mass and military support from outside. As far as the financial support is concerned, we feel that it should go to the United National Leadership and its various committees in the different cities, villages and camps, so that this support will reach the poor masses who bear the largest share of the burden. The intifada is on the agenda of all activities of the PLO. However, we are not satisfied because there is an opportunity to do more, to make more reforms and to give more support on all levels.

What are the immediate tasks for the independent Palestinian state, and what are the dangers facing it?

Before I answer this question, I want to point to the vast difference between the declaration of the state and establishing a state. Extracting a state from 'Israel' will not be easy. It's sad

to see that there are some who take this lightly. The Palestinian state will not come about unless the balance of forces makes 'Israel' accept the establishment of this state. The intifada has raged for one year, and had vast repercussions internationally, as the cry of a people calling on the world to face up to its responsibility towards the values of humanity. Despite that, despite the isolation of 'Israel' and its economic losses which have been beyond our expectations, both the Likud and Labor agree on force as the only means for dealing with the intifada. The experience of this last year exposed the true nature of Zionism and the settler-colonialist interests which it will not easily yield. Therefore, we stand before a long and difficult struggle in order to bring about tangible changes in the balance of forces. We have to think of how to make such a change, to think of all the factors which affect the balance of forces.

I hope that the declaration of independence will give our masses a new motivation for struggle, and not cause illusions among us about the difficulty of bridging the gap between the declaration of the state and its establishment. Before I answer the question about the tasks of this state, we should examine the tasks of the PLO for closing this gap. The task of this state at present is attaining the greatest recognition possible, as well as membership in the Arab League, the Islamic Conference, the Organization of African Unity, the non-aligned movement and the United Nations, even if not full membership... Of course, we hope for more recognition in the future because that would be a big moral support for the intifada and the Palestinian people, and a big slap in the face to 'Israel'.

As for the dangers facing this state, there are three sources: from 'Israel', from the Arab states and from within. The most dangerous, of course, are those from 'Israel' and the US administration. 'Israel' will try its utmost to prove to the Palestinian people and the world that what the PLO did during the last PNC is but a joke and has no practical value; with the passing of time, the Israelis will ask the Palestinians: Where is your state? Where are your leaders? What have they done for you? This is the biggest danger.

The Arab reactionary governments, such as Egypt and Jordan, will say: Your state has been declared, congratulations! This is a very good thing you've done. Why don't you think of a confederation with Jordan? This will bring us back to the Jordanian option; this is another danger.

The danger from within stems from the present condition of the PLO. I am afraid that there exists a discrepancy between the resilience of the intifada and the PLO's reaction to it; this gap should be closed. I wish to reiterate, however, my deep belief in the ability of our masses in the occupied territories and outside to persevere and bypass all of these obstacles and establish our state.

Where does the Palestinian bourgeoisie stand now?

We are in a stage of national liberation. We face a settler-colonial enemy which hurts the interests of all classes of the Palestinian society. This explains the comprehensiveness of the intifada which encompasses all cities, villages and camps, all ages, all political and ideological trends, all classes, businessmen and workers. We can only explain this by the nature of the contradiction between Zionism and the Palestinian people. The bourgeoisie is now in the nationalist camp. After the accomplishment of national liberation, then it is another story, but for now it is a national bourgeoisie and plays a very basic role relative to its size and ability.

The Declaration of Independence

Palestine, the land of the three monotheistic faiths, is where the Palestinian Arab people was born, on which it grew, developed and excelled. The Palestinian Arab people was never separated from or diminished in its integral bonds with Palestine. Thus, the Palestinian Arab people ensured for itself an everlasting union between itself, its land and its history.

Resolute throughout that history, the Palestinian Arab people forged its national identity, rising even to unimagined levels in its defense, as invasion, the design of others and the appeal special to Palestine's ancient and luminous place on that eminence where powers and civilizations are joined... all this intervened thereby to deprive the people of its political independence. Yet the undying connection between Palestine and its people secured for the land its character, and for the people its national genius.

Nourished by an unfolding series of civilizations and cultures, inspired by a heritage rich in variety and kind, the Palestinian Arab people added to its stature by consolidating a union between itself and its patrimonial land. The call went out from the temple, church and mosque that to praise the creator, to celebrate compassion and peace was indeed the message of Palestine. And in generation after generation, the Palestinian Arab people gave of itself unsparingly in the valiant battle for liberation and homeland. For what has been the unbroken chain of our people's rebellions but the heroic embodiment of our will for national independence? And so the people was sustained in the struggle to stay and to prevail.

When in the course of modern times a new order of values was declared with norms and values fair for all, it was the Palestinian Arab people that had been excluded from the destiny of all other peoples by a hostile array of local and foreign powers. Yet again had unaided justice been revealed as insufficient to drive the world's history along its preferred course.

And it was the Palestinian people, already wounded in its body, that was submitted to yet another type of occupation over which floated the falsehood that 'Palestine was a land without people.' This notion was foisted upon some in the world, whereas in article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations (1919) and in the treaty of Lausanne (1923), the community of nations had recognized that all the Arab territories, including Palestine, of the formerly Ottoman provinces, were to have granted to them their freedom as provisionally independent nations.

Despite the historical injustice inflicted on the Palestinian Arab people, resulting in their dispersion and depriving them of their right to self-determination, following upon UN General Assembly resolution 181 (1947), which partitioned Palestine into two states, one Arab, one Jewish, yet it is this resolution that still provides those conditions of international legitimacy that ensure the right of the Palestinian Arab people to sovereignty and national independence.

By stages, the occupation of Palestine and parts of other

Arab territories by Israeli forces, the willed dispossession and expulsion from their ancestral homes of the majority of Palestine's civilian inhabitants was achieved by organized terror: Those Palestinians who remained, as a vestige subjugated in its homeland, were persecuted and forced to endure the destruction of their national life.

Thus were principles of international legitimacy violated; thus were the Charter of the United Nations and its resolutions disfigured, for they had recognized the Palestinian Arab people's national rights, including the right of return, the right to independence, the right to sovereignty over territory and homeland.

In Palestine and on its perimeters, in exile distant and near, the Palestinian Arab people never faltered and never abandoned its conviction in its right of return and independence. Occupation, massacres and dispersion achieved no gain in the unabated Palestinian consciousness of self and political identity, as Palestinians went forward with their destiny, undeterred and unbowed. And from out of the long years of trial in ever-mounting struggle, the Palestinian political identity emerged further consolidated and confirmed. And the collective Palestinian national will forged for itself a political embodiment, the Palestine Liberation Organization, its sole legitimate representative, recognized by the world community as a whole, as well as by related regional and international institutions. Standing on the very rock of conviction in the Palestinian people's inalienable rights, and on the grounds of Arab national consensus, and of international legitimacy, the PLO led the campaigns of its people, molded into unity and powerful resolve, one and indivisible in its triumphs, even as it suffered massacres and confinement within and without its home. And so Palestinian resistance was clarified and raised into the forefront of Arab and world awareness, as the struggle of the Palestinian Arab people achieved unique prominence among the world's liberation movements in the modern era.

The massive national uprising, the 'intifada', now intensifying in cumulative scope and power on occupied Palestinian territories, as well as the unflinching resistance of the refugee camps outside the homeland, have elevated consciousness of the Palestinian truth and right into still higher realms of comprehension and actuality. Now, at last, the curtain has been dropped around a whole epoch of prevarication and negation. The intifada has set siege to the mind of official Israel, which has for too long relied exclusively upon myth and terror to deny Palestinian existence altogether. Because of the intifada and its revolutionary irreversible impulse, the history of Palestine has therefore arrived at a decisive juncture.

Whereas the Palestinian people reaffirms most definitely its inalienable rights in the land of its patrimony:

- now by virtue of national rights, and the exercise of those historical and legal rights and the sacrifices of successive generations who gave themselves in defense of the freedom, and independence of their homeland;

- in pursuance of resolutions adopted by Arab summit conferences and relying on the authority bestowed by international legitimacy as embodied in the resolutions of the United Nations since 1947;
- and in exercise by the Palestinian Arab people of its rights to self-determination, political independence and sovereignty over its territory;
- the Palestine National Council, in the name of God, and in the name of the Palestinian Arab people, hereby proclaims the establishment of the State of Palestine on our Palestinian territory with its capital, Jerusalem (Al Quds Ash Sharif).

* * * *

The State of Palestine is the state of the Palestinians wherever they may be. The state is for them to enjoy in it their collective national and cultural identity, theirs to pursue in it a complete equality of rights. In it will be safeguarded their political and religious convictions and their human dignity by means of a parliamentary democratic system of governance, itself based on freedom of expression and the freedom to form parties. The rights of minorities will duly be respected by the majority, as minorities must abide by decisions of the majority. Governance will be based on principles of social justice, equality and non-discrimination in public rights, men or women, on grounds of race, religion, color or sex, under the aegis of a constitution which ensures the rule of law and an independent judiciary. Thus shall these principles allow no departure from Palestine's age-old spiritual and civilizational heritage of tolerance and religious co-existence.

The State of Palestine is an Arab state, an integral and indivisible part of the Arab nation, at one with that nation in heritage and civilization, with it also in its aspiration for liberation, progress, democracy and unity. The State of Palestine affirms its obligation to abide by the Charter of the League of Arab States, whereby the coordination of the Arab states with each other shall be strengthened. It calls upon Arab compatriots to consolidate and enhance the emergence in reality of our state, to mobilize potentials and to intensify efforts whose goal is to end Israeli occupation.

The State of Palestine proclaims its commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations, and to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It proclaims its commitment as well to the principles and policies of the Nonaligned Movement.

It further announces itself to be a peace-loving state, in adherence to the principles of peaceful co-existence. It will join with all states and peoples in order to assure a permanent peace based upon justice and the respect of rights so that humanity's potential for well-being may be assured, an earnest competition for excellence be maintained, and in which confidence in the future will eliminate fear for those who are just and for whom justice is the only recourse.

In the context of its struggle for peace in the land of love and peace, the State of Palestine calls upon the United Nations to bear special responsibility for the Palestinian Arab people and its homeland. It calls upon all peace- and freedom-loving peoples and states to assist it in attainment of its objectives, to provide it with security, to alleviate the tragedy of its people, and to help it terminate Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories.

The State of Palestine herewith declares that it believes in the settlement of regional and international disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with the UN Charter and resolutions. Without prejudice to its natural right to defend its territorial integrity and independence, it therefore rejects the threat or use of force, violence and terrorism against its territorial integrity or political independence, as it also rejects their use against the territorial integrity of other states.

Therefore, on this day unlike all others, November 15, 1988, as we stand at the threshold of a new dawn, in all honor and modesty we humbly bow to the sacred spirits of our fallen ones, Palestinian and Arab, by the purity of whose sacrifices for the homeland our sky has been illuminated and our land given life. Our hearts are lifted up and irradiated by the light emanating from the much blessed intifada, from those who have endured and fought the fight of the camps, of dispersion, of exile, from those who have borne the standard of freedom, our children, our aged, our youth, our prisoners, detainees and wounded, all those whose ties to our sacred soil are confirmed, in camp, village and town. We render special tribute to that brave Palestinian woman, guardian of sustenance and life, keeper of our people's perennial flame. To the souls of our sainted martyrs, to the whole of our Palestinian Arab people, to all free and honorable peoples everywhere, we pledge that our struggle shall be continued until the occupation ends, and the foundation of our sovereignty and independence shall be fortified accordingly.

Therefore, we call upon our great people to rally to the banner of Palestine, to cherish and defend it, so that it may forever be the symbol of our freedom and dignity in that homeland, which is a homeland for the free, now and always.

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

Say: O God, master of the kingdom,

Thou givest the kingdom to whom thou wilt,
Thou seizest the kingdom from whom thou wilt,
Thou exaltest whom thou wilt,
And thou abasest whom thou wilt,
In thy hand is the good,
Thou art powerful over everything.

* * * *

Habash and Arafat celebrate the Declaration of Independence.



PNC - Session of the Intifada

Political Communique

In the name of God, the most gracious and merciful...

From November 12th to 15th, 1988, the PNC held its 19th session (extraordinary), the session of the intifada and national independence, the session of the heroic martyr, Abu Jihad, in heroic Algeria, and with the hospitality of its people and President Shadli Ben Jedid.

The session was crowned with the declaration of a Palestinian state on our Palestinian land, as the culmination of the brave popular struggle which has continued for more than seventy years, bolstered by the great sacrifices offered by our people in the homeland, in exile and on its borders.

Besides the heroic steadfastness of our people in the camps inside and outside the occupied territories, the session was devoted to the great Palestinian national uprising, since it is one of the most prominent events of struggle in the contemporary history of the Palestinian people's revolution.

From the first days of the uprising and during the twelve months of its continuity, the basic features of the great uprising of our people have become apparent. It is a total popular revolution, embodying the consensus of the homeland - women and men, elderly and children, camps, villages and cities - on rejecting the occupation and carrying on the struggle until it is defeated and ended.

The national unity of our people has prevailed in the uprising, as has their total adherence to the PLO, their sole, legitimate representative everywhere... This was materialized in the participation of the Palestinian masses, including all their national institutions and the students', workers', women's, peasants', merchants' and other unions, and landlords, artisans, academics, etc. in the uprising, via the United National Leadership and the popular committees which were formed in villages, camps and city quarters.

The revolutionary rage of our people and their honorable uprising, coupled with the continual accumulation of our revolution in all places and fields, inside and outside the homeland, have destroyed the illusions of our people's enemies that the occupation of Palestine is an everlasting fact and that the Palestinian cause can be pushed into oblivion. Generations have been brought up in the goals and principles of the Palestinian revolution and experienced its battles from its beginning in 1965 until today... including the heroic steadfastness against the Zionist aggression in 1982, and the steadfastness of the camps of the revolution against the siege of starvation and death in Lebanon. These generations, the sons of revolution, the sons of the PLO, confirm the vitality and continuity of the revolution, igniting the land under the feet of the occupiers, thus proving that the accumulation of our people's struggle doesn't end, and their belief (in their cause) is strong and deep.

With the revolutionary harmony between the children of the RPG outside the homeland and the children of the sacred stones in the occupied territories, our people rise up against all attempts of the enemy authorities to abort our popular revolution. They rise up despite all the means used by the authorities, the desecration of Christian and Islamic holy places and viola-

tion of freedom of worship, land confiscation, house demolition, committing the crimes of deliberate and indiscriminate killing, the armed settlers opening fire on our villages and camps, burning crops, cutting off water and electricity, beating women and children, using prohibited gases which cause death and miscarriages for thousands, and the policy of enforcing ignorance by closing schools and universities.

Our people are paying the price of their heroic steadfastness with hundreds of martyrs and tens of thousands of wounded, detained and expelled... However, in the most difficult moments they are able to invent new means of struggle to reinforce their steadfastness, resistance and confrontation of the crimes and measures of the enemy, and to continue their heroic struggle.

Through steadfastness, continuing the revolution and escalating the uprising, our people have proved that their determination knows no limits despite the costs, for they are armed with a great heritage of struggle, an inflexible revolutionary will, consolidated national unity... and total adherence to their national leadership, the PLO. They are armed with adherence to its goals of defeating and ending the Israeli occupation, and achieving their inalienable national rights to repatriation, self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

In all this, our people rely on the support of the masses of the Arab nation and its forces, which is apparent in the broad popular Arab support the uprising enjoys, and the official Arab consensus expressed by the Arab summit in Algeria and its decisions. This confirms that our people are not alone in confronting the racist/fascist offensive; it precludes the possibility of the Israeli aggressors isolating our people from the support of their Arab nation...

Besides Arab solidarity, the revolution of our people and their glorious uprising enjoys broad international solidarity, as is apparent in the increased awareness of the question of the Palestinian people, the increased support of the peoples and countries of the world to our just struggle, and the condemnation of the Israeli occupation and its crimes. All of this contributes to exposing Israel and increasing its isolation and that of its supporters.

Security Council resolutions 605, 607 and 608, and the General Assembly resolutions asserting Palestinian rights against the expulsion of the Palestinians from their land, and against the repression and terror which Israel enforces on the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, are strong indications of the increased support of international public and official opinion in favor of our people and their representative, the PLO; they also indicate the increased international opposition to the Israeli occupation and its racist/fascist practices.

UN General Assembly resolution 1/43/L21, adopted at the special session for the uprising on November 4, 1988, is another evidence of the support of the peoples of the world, and the majority of its states, for the just struggle of the Palestinian people and their inalienable rights to liberation and independence, and their opposition to the occupation. The occupation's crimes and inhuman practices have shown the falsi-

ty of the claim that the Zionist entity is democratic, a claim which deceived international public opinion for forty years. The reality of Israel appears as a colonial, racist, fascist state based on the usurpation of Palestinian land, exterminating the Palestinian people, threatening and practicing aggression and expansion against the neighboring Arab countries.

It has been confirmed that the occupation cannot continue to benefit at the expense of the rights of the Palestinian people, without paying the price, whether on the ground or in the field of international public opinion.

In addition to the Israeli progressive and democratic forces which have rejected and condemned the occupation and its repressive practices, Jewish groups all over the world are no longer able to continue to defend Israel, or to keep silent about its crimes against the Palestinian people. Many from among them have raised their voices demanding a stop to these crimes, and calling for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination.

The overall impact of our people's revolution and glorious uprising on the local, Arab and international levels, has confirmed the correctness and realism of the PLO's national program, the program for defeating the occupation and achieving our people's rights to repatriation, self-determination and an independent state. It has also been proven that the struggle of our people is the decisive factor guaranteeing the extraction of our national rights from the claws of the occupation. Popular authority, represented by the masses' committees, is dominating the situation in the confrontation of the occupation authority and its fragmented apparatuses.

The international community is more than ever ready to take part in achieving a political settlement for the Middle East crisis and its essence, the Palestinian question. The Israeli occupation authorities and the US administration that supports them cannot continue to ignore the international will which unanimously calls for convening an international peace conference on the Middle East and enabling the Palestinian people to attain their national rights, first and foremost their right to self-determination and national independence on their land.

In the light of all this, and supporting the steadfastness of our people and their glorious uprising, responding to the will of our masses inside and outside the occupied homeland, and in loyalty to the martyrs, wounded and detainees, the PNC decides:

FIRST: FOR ESCALATING AND CONTINUING THE UPRISING:

A. To provide all means and capacities for escalating the uprising of our people on all levels and by all means, in order to guarantee its continuity and escalation.

B. To support the mass institutions and organizations in the occupied Palestinian territories.

C. To strengthen and develop the popular committees and the specialized mass and trade union bodies, including the strike forces and the popular army, for expanding their activity and role.

D. To consolidate the national unity which has been embodied and developed in the course of the uprising.

E. To increase the work on the international level for the release of the detainees, the return of those expelled, and the end of the repression and organized state terrorism against our men, children, women, men and institutions.

F. To call on the UN to place the Palestinian occupied territories under international supervision in order to protect our masses and end Israeli occupation.

G. To call on the Palestinian masses outside the homeland to increase their support and consolidate work on the family solidarity program.

H. To call on the Arab nation - the masses, forces, institutions and governments, to increase their informational, material and political support for the uprising.

I. To call on all honest and free people in the world to stand by our masses, revolution and uprising, against the Israeli occupation and its repressive means - the fascist military terrorism practiced by the occupation troops and the fanatic armed settlers against our masses, universities, schools, institutions, national economy, and Christian and Islamic holy places.

SECONDLY: ON THE POLITICAL LEVEL:

- Based on its responsibility towards the Palestinian people, their national rights and their desire to achieve peace...

- Based on the Declaration of Independence of November 15, 1988...

- Responding to the will of humanity for international detente, nuclear disarmament, and resolving regional conflicts by peaceful means... The PNC confirms that the PLO is determined to achieve a comprehensive political settlement for the Arab-Israeli conflict and its essence, the Palestinian cause, in accordance with the UN Charter, the principles and rules of international legitimacy, international law, the UN resolutions, most recently Security Council resolutions 605, 607 and 608, and the decisions of the Arab summits, in such a way that guarantees the right of the Palestinian Arab people to repatriation, self-determination and the establishment of an independent state on their national soil, and instates security and peace arrangements for all countries in the area.

To achieve that, the PNC confirms:

1. The necessity of convening an effective international conference on the Middle East question and its essence, the Palestinian question, under UN auspices and with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council, and all parties to the conflict in the area, including the PLO, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, on equal footing, on the basis of UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, and guaranteeing the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, first and foremost their right to self-determination, according to the principles and provisions of the UN Charter relating to the right of peoples to self-determination, and the inadmissibility of the acquisition of others' territory by force or military conquest, and in accordance with the UN resolutions relating to the Palestinian issue.

2. Israeli withdrawal from all Palestinian and Arab territories occupied in 1967, including Arab Jerusalem.

3. Annuling all expropriation and annexation measures and removing the settlements built by Israel in the Palestinian and Arab territories since 1967.

4. Endeavoring to place the Palestinian occupied territories, including Arab Jerusalem, under UN supervision for an interim period, to protect our people and provide the proper atmosphere for a successful international conference, in order to make a comprehensive political settlement, achieve security and peace for all with mutual acceptance, and to enable the Palestinian state to exercise real authority over these territories.

5. Solving the question of Palestinian refugees in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions.
6. Guaranteeing freedom of worship in holy places for all religions in Palestine.
7. The Security Council determines and guarantees arrangements for security and peace among all countries, including the Palestinian state.

The PNC confirms its previous resolutions concerning the special relationship between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples; the future relationship between the states of Jordan and Palestine will be established on the basis of confederation, on the basis of the free and voluntary choice of the two fraternal peoples, consolidating their historical ties and common interests.

The PNC renews its commitment to the UN resolutions which confirm the right of peoples to resist foreign occupation, colonialism and racism, and their right to struggle for independence; it declares once again its rejection of terrorism in all its forms, including state terrorism, confirming its commitment to previous resolutions on this matter and to the resolutions of the Arab summit meeting in Algiers in 1988, and the two UN resolutions 42/159 in 1967, and 61/40 in 1985, and what was stated in the Cairo declaration of November 7, 1985, in this regard.

THIRD: ON THE ARAB AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

The PNC confirms the importance of the unity of Lebanon's land, people and institutions, and stands firmly against the attempts to divide the land and the fraternal people of Lebanon; it also confirms the importance of joint Arab efforts to resolve the Lebanese crisis by crystallizing and implementing solutions which can safeguard its unity. The PNC also confirms the importance of consecrating the rights of Palestinians in Lebanon to practice political and informational activities, as well as their right to security and to work against all forms of conspiracies against them, their right to work and to live, and to facilitate all the means for guaranteeing their self-defence and providing security for them.

The PNC confirms its solidarity with the Lebanese nationalist-Islamic forces in their struggle against the Israeli occupation and its lackeys in southern Lebanon. The PNC is proud of the militant solidarity between the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples in confronting the enemy and working to end the Israeli occupation of parts of South Lebanon, and confirms the importance of consolidating this bond between our masses and the fraternal Lebanese masses.

On this occasion, the PNC salutes those who are steadfast in the camps in Lebanon and in South Lebanon, against the aggression, massacres, starvation, destruction, bombing and siege, carried out by the Israelis and their lackeys, via land, air and naval forces, against Palestinian camps and Lebanese villages. The PNC reiterates its rejection of the settlement conspiracy.

The PNC confirms the importance of the ceasefire agreement between Iraq and Iran, and the achievement of a lasting peace between the two countries and in the Gulf area; it calls for consolidating efforts in order for the peace negotiations to succeed, so that peace can be established on a stable basis.

On this occasion, the PNC confirms that the Palestinian Arab people and the whole Arab nation take pride in Iraq's steadfastness and victories as it is defending the eastern gate of the Arab nation.



Women demonstrate in support of the PNC, Hebron.

The PNC expresses deep pride in the stand of the masses of our Arab nation in support of the struggle of the Palestinian Arab masses, the PLO, and our people's uprising in the occupied territories. The PNC confirms the importance of consolidating militant relations between the forces, parties and organizations of the Arab national liberation movement in defense of the rights of the Arab nation and masses to liberation, progress, democracy and unity. The PNC calls for making all needed arrangements to consolidate militant unity among all parts of the Arab national liberation movement.

The PNC salutes and thanks the Arab countries for their support to the struggle of our people, urging them to meet their commitments as decided in the Algiers summit, to support the struggle of the Palestinian people and their blessed uprising. The PNC expresses great confidence in the leaders of the Arab nation, who will remain, as always, a support to Palestine and its people.

The PNC reiterates the PLO's desire to maintain Arab solidarity as a framework for organizing the efforts of the Arab nation and states, to confront the US-backed Israeli aggression, and to consolidate the Arab status and role needed to influence international policies in favor of Arab rights and issues.

The PNC thanks all states, forces and organizations in the world that support Palestinian national rights. The PNC confirms its desire to consolidated freindship and cooperation with the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and all the socialist countries, non-aligned countries, Islamic countries, African countries, countries of Latin America and all friendly countries: The PNC views with satisfaction the positive development in the stance of some West European countries and Japan towards supporting the rights of the Palestinian people. The PNC salutes these developments and urges the consolidation of efforts in order to strengthen them.

The PNC confirms the solidarity of the Palestinian people and the PLO with the struggle of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America for liberation and independence. The PNC condemns all US attempts to threaten the independence of Central America's states, and interference in their affairs.

The PNC expresses the PLO's support to the national liberation movement in South Africa, and in Namibia led by SWAPO. The PNC specially salutes the militant brother, Nelson Mandela, who is struggling against the racist Pretoria regime. The PNC demands freedom and independence for the peoples of these countries. The PNC also expresses its support for the African confrontation states and condemns the aggressions of the racist South African regime against them.

The PNC views with great concern the growth of the Israeli fascist and extremist forces and their public calls to carry out the policies of annihilation, and single and collective expulsions against our people. The PNC calls for gathering efforts in all fields to confront this fascist threat. Meanwhile, the PNC expresses its appreciation of the brave role of the Israeli peace

forces in confronting and exposing the fascist and racist forces' aggression, and in supporting the struggle of our people, their heroic uprising and their rights to self-determination and the establishment of the independent state. The PNC confirms its previous resolutions concerning consolidating and developing relations with these democratic forces.

The PNC urges the American people to work for ending the policies of the US administration that denies the national rights of the Palestinian people, including their sacred right to self-determination. We urge all sectors of the American people to work for enacting policies that are in conformity with legitimate human rights, and international resolutions and charters; which serve the purpose of peace in the Middle East; and which guarantee security for all peoples, including the Palestinian people.

The PNC delegates responsibility to the Executive Committee to complete the formation of the committee for commemorating the martyr, Abu Jihad. This process should begin immediately after the PNC.

The PNC salutes the UN committee for the Palestinian people exercising their inalienable rights, friendly international organizations and institutions, the NGO's and media personnel that support our people's struggle and uprising.

The PNC expresses its deep concern about the continued arrest of hundreds of militants of our people in a number of Arab countries. We gravely condemn these acts, and call on these countries to put an end to this situation and immediately release these militants, so they can assume their roles in the struggle.

Finally, the PNC confirms its great confidence that the just Palestinian cause, and the demands our people are struggling for, will continue to enjoy the support of honorable and freedom-loving people in the whole world. We also confirm our confidence that victory, and the establishment of the Palestinian independent state with Jerusalem as its capital, is inevitable. ●

Resolutions of the Uprising Committee

At the 19th extraordinary PNC, a subcommittee called the Uprising Committee was formed, headed by Dr. Abdul Aziz Al Haj. The committee met on November 13-14th to discuss the report of the PLO department of the affairs of the occupied territories, and adopted the following resolutions, which were then adopted by the PNC unanimously.

POLITICAL/ORGANIZATIONAL

1. The PNC highly evaluates the total national unity that has prevailed during the uprising. The PNC confirms the importance of consolidating this unity as a guarantee for achieving the aims and the continuation of the uprising, in order to escalate and develop it until ending the occupation, achieving freedom and independence, and imposing national authority.

2. Escalating armed struggle and urging the Arab countries to open all fronts for revolutionaries to perform their sacred duty towards their people and (Arab) nation.

3. The PNC confirms the necessity of consolidating the role of the United National Leadership of the Uprising, the militant arm of the PLO in our occupied homeland. We must further activate its committees in order to escalate the uprising to an advanced level, to deal more blows to the occupation's apparatus and administration, and to consolidate revolutionary

popular authority on the land of Palestine.

4. The PNC salutes the important role of the mass organizations of the youth, women, workers, students, merchants, teachers, professionals, artisans, academics and employees, as well as the associations, clubs, trade unions, the health, scientific, agricultural, informational and guarding committees and other national institutions. The PNC confirms the necessity of consolidating all of these institutions, enabling them to continue the struggle and complete the process of forming united higher councils for the mass organizations.

5. Taking into consideration the (Jordanian) decision to sever ties (with the West Bank), the PNC confirms the necessity of materializing the Palestinian national identity of all the popular and official institutions and unions by unifying them in form and content. The PNC also confirms the importance of the unity of these institutions in the occupied territories and ►

abroad, and of providing all that is needed to achieve this step.

6. The PNC salutes our people in the territories occupied in 1948, and confirms the important role they are playing in supporting the uprising and protecting their national identity despite all attempts to obliterate it.

7. The PNC welcomes the creative initiatives of our people's uprising and the programs proposed by the United National Leadership in all aspects - political, economic, social, cultural and educational, etc. The PNC confirms the necessity of supporting and developing these initiatives, and all the national institutions, in order to completely boycott the occupation and build the national economic base, reaching the point of sovereignty and total national independence.

MATERIAL SUPPORT

The PNC confirms the priority of supporting the uprising and our people's heroic steadfastness. The PNC urges the PLO Executive Committee to implement the programs and plans that have been put forth for providing everything needed for our people's steadfastness, for escalating their heroic uprising, and for laying the foundation for a cohesive socioeconomic structure which will provide for our people's needs in terms of food, clothing, housing and work opportunities. The PNC confirms the necessity of channeling support according to the following priorities:

1. Relief for the areas harmed by the savage Zionist repression; providing social care for the families of the martyrs, injured, prisoners, and homeless, whose homes were dynamited or sealed, and all those harmed.. rehabilitating the crippled and injured.

2. Providing all possible support to the uprising's apparatuses and national institutions.

3. Providing all support possible to the cultural, educational and health institutions, to consolidate their important role in the popular uprising. This includes universities, colleges, institutions, schools, kindergartens, art and cultural associations and clubs, hospitals, clinics and trade unions.

4. Providing support to agricultural and industrial production. New production projects should be established, in order to create a productive economic base which will contribute to satisfying the needs of the uprising masses, and create work opportunities for our heroic workers in their national (economic) institutions, and for new graduates. Support should be given to the commercial sector, and small projects should be founded for the artisans.

5. Increasing support for the trade unions in the occupied homeland to enable them to provide for dismissed workers and those boycotting work in the Israeli (economic) institutions in order to enact a total boycott.

6. It is necessary to begin building popular housing projects, first and foremost, for those who became homeless due to militant activities.

ON THE PALESTINIAN, ARAB AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

A. PALESTINIAN LEVEL

1. The PNC delegates responsibility to the Executive Committee to draft a complete plan for mobilizing all our people outside Palestine to support the uprising, provide for its needs, create new fund-raising methods, and increase their financial support to the uprising. This plan should be circulated to all PLO offices and solidarity committees as soon as possible.

Special committees should be formed in all Palestinian gatherings outside the occupied territories, through the PLO offices and all popular organizations, in order to make it successful.

2. A family support program should be developed. Support for the students from the occupied territories who are studying abroad should be continued.

3. Activating the departments and institutions of the PLO, and forming specialized departments, institutions and councils in all fields for the purpose of making programs and plans to be carried out in our main area of work (the occupied territories). All of these plans should be coordinated and unified in accordance with the declaration of national independence, and the demands of the new stage since the great uprising and the Jordanian regime's decision to sever relations with the West Bank.

4. A new, developed and active Palestinian information policy should be drawn up for the purpose of promptly spreading the news of the uprising and of the Zionist enemy's practices to the whole world. This policy will contribute to creating the necessary reactions through all forms of the media - radio, television, theatre, etc.

5. We call on all our masses wherever they are, the masses of the Arab nation and the friendly peoples to commemorate the anniversary of the uprising on December 8th every year.

B. ARAB LEVEL

1. Strengthening and organizing relations with the Arab masses, the strategic dimension for our people's struggle; supporting the glorious uprising through forming specialized committees and prominently publicizing the news of the uprising in the Arab media; organizing relations with the Arab unions and trade unions and activating their role in support of the uprising and Palestinian steadfastness.

2. Twinning Arab cities with Palestinian cities, and strengthening relations between Arab and Palestinian professional and workers unions and universities.

3. We urge the Arab states to pay their dues for the uprising as was decided at the Arab summit (the Summit of the Uprising) that was held in Algeria, in June 1988 (the financial support that was approved at the Algeria summit).

C. INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

1. We thank all of our friends that contributed to supporting our people's struggle and consolidating the uprising. We call for more active support on the official and popular levels, for the uprising and our people's steadfastness.

2. Activating all of the Palestine solidarity committees. Their activities should be directed towards supporting the uprising. New committees should be formed and specialized in supporting the different sectors' activities in the occupied territories.

3. Activating the role of the NGO's to support the specialized sectors' activities in the occupied territories, particularly the productive, health and educational sectors.

4. Continuing and encouraging delegations from all sectors in all countries of the world, to visit the occupied territories in order to witness and expose the fascist Zionist practices.

5. Consolidating and activating Palestinian participation in all international institutions of the UN, in the political, economic, social, cultural and educational fields, whereby the fascist Zionist practices should be exposed, and support should be given to our people.

The Aftermath of the PNC

With the break of daylight on the 15th of November, Palestinians took to the streets in the occupied Palestinian West Bank, Gaza Strip and 1948 territories after the declaration of the independent Palestinian state, despite the curfews which had been enforced since November 12th (the opening day of the PNC), the clampdown on all communications to and from the occupied territories, the road blocks and the warnings by Shamir and Rabin against any form of celebration. Palestinians challenged the Israeli occupiers and filled the streets, carrying Palestinian flags and singing nationalist songs, defying the 5-year jail sentence and \$10,000 fine declared by the Israeli army just prior to the convening of the PNC against those carrying the Palestinian flag and singing nationalist songs.

Amidst the rejoicing and welcoming of the Declaration of Independence, many Palestinians, however, were not in favor of accepting UN resolutions 242 and 338, which was a major concession in return for no Israeli concessions. According to the London-based International Information Service's survey in the occupied Palestinian West Bank and Gaza, 98% of those polled supported the declaration of an independent state, while only 22% were in support if the declaration entailed recognition of 'Israel'; the survey was conducted in October 1988, and included 1,000 Palestinians of various age groups and strata, including students, workers, professionals, employees and farmers. Taking into account the margin of error of a few points more or less, the survey clearly indicates a majority of Palestinians against recognition of 'Israel' (at least at this time).

THE ARAB RESPONSE

On the Arab level, the reaction was positive. Algeria was the first Arab country to recognize the Palestinian state, in a statement which was read immediately after its declaration. Brother Bousayeh, Central Committee member of the National Liberation Front Party, congratulated the PNC and the Palestinian people «on the

historic occasion of declaring an independent Palestinian state.»

On the other hand, Egypt lauded the PLO for taking a «courageous step» by recognizing UN resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for a negotiated settlement. Egypt's recognition of the Palestinian state is very important however, because it negates the Palestinian section of the Camp David Accords, the so-called «autonomy» or «self-rule» although the Egyptian section of the agreement is still intact.

King Hussein's reaction, which reflects his overriding concern, was that he feels «clearly and honestly that President Arafat has fulfilled all US demands.» The excitement of the reactionary Arab regimes over the results of the PNC was not particularly due to the Declaration of Independence, but rather to accommodating US and Israeli demands - recognizing UN resolutions 242 and 338, in addition to renouncing terrorism. Furthermore, these regimes are fearful of a spill-over from the intifada into their own countries, and their support is hinged on reaching a political settlement (not necessarily a just one) as soon as possible, before their population is «contaminated» by the revolutionary fervor of the intifada. Concurrently, these regimes continue to pressure the PLO into trying to end the intifada, although Chairman Arafat himself said that he cannot stop it, even if he wanted.

INTERNATIONAL REPERCUSSIONS

Repercussions of the PNC were felt on a wide scale in the international arena, particularly after the denial of a visa by the US State Department to Arafat, to address the UN General Assembly in New York. Most European countries viewed with favor the results of the 19th PNC, which facilitated a conducive atmosphere for peaceful negotiations. European Community representative and Greek Foreign Minister Carlos Papoulious said, «The EEC wants an international peace conference which would result in a just, durable and global solution to the conflict.» France urged 'Israel' to reciprocate to the PLO initiative, and

Britain's Foreign Office Minister William Waldegrave declared, after meeting with a PLO official in early December, that he will go to Tunisia and hold discussions with PLO leaders. Waldegrave said that «progress is being made» and that «there had been nothing from Israel but a concerted blast of criticism.» He will go to 'Israel' in an effort to get the Israelis involved in the peace process. Italian Prime Minister De Mita said, «World public opinion demands from the Israeli government to avoid all actions which increase tension.» He added, «It's not possible for one to sit idle before the tragedy in the occupied territories.» The Spanish Foreign Minister has scheduled a Middle East tour during January in his capacity as an EEC representative; he will make contacts with the parties involved in the conflict in an effort to mediate and push for the convening of an international peace conference. Austria has elevated the PLO representation to the ambassadorial level.

This positive European response to the outcome of the PNC and the initiatives the various states have undertaken, was explained by the *Guardian*: «European patience with US tolerance of Israel's obstruction of a peace conference and the violent repression of Palestinians in the occupied territories has worn extremely thin (December 2, 1988).

The most positive reaction, however, came from the African and Asian countries and the socialist community which extended full recognition to the Palestinian state, and opened Palestinian embassies on their soil. Nicaragua and Cuba are the only Latin American states so far to have recognized the Palestinian state.

Both Labor and Likud reacted negatively to the PNC, describing it as a «publicity stunt,» while according to a survey taken after the PNC by a leading Israeli newspaper, *Yediot Ahranot*, 54% of Israelis favored direct negotiations with the PLO if it does not abandon the resolutions passed in the 19th PNC. This indicates that the Israeli leaders, regardless of their political affiliation, are out of step with their con-

stituents regarding peace. Isaac Modai, a Likud minister, said that the agreement between Likud and Labor to form a national coalition government, which was ratified on December 22nd, is based on three negatives: No to negotiations with the PLO, no to withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza, and no to the establishment of a Palestinian state anywhere between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. This can best be described as «negative thinking.»

The reaction of the US State Department was that the outcome of the PNC was a «step forward» but did not meet the American criteria. Moreover, Arafat's request for a visa to address the UN session on the Palestinian question in New York was denied. This ill-advised and narrow-minded decision by US Secretary of State George Shultz brought on an unprecedented deluge of international condemnation which culminated in a resounding UN General Assembly vote of 151 to 2, ('Israel' and the US being the only two votes against, while Britain abstained), condemning the US decision, despite the ludicrous argument by Shultz that Arafat was a security threat to the US. *Newsweek* reported: «Among international lawyers, the consensus was that the US had breached its responsibility.» Former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance said, «It is quite clear that the US decision is wrong legally.» The 1947 Headquarters Agreement, which was signed by the US and the UN and later approved by the US Congress, stipulates clearly in Article 4 Section 11: «The Federal, State or local authorities of the United States shall not impose any impediments to transit to or from the headquarters district of representatives of members or officials of the United Nations, or of specialized agencies... or representatives of non-governmental organizations recognized by the United Nations.»

Despite widespread criticism from the US media, the public and the whole world, with the exception of 'Israel', 61 US Senators signed a letter commending Shultz on his move. This is an indication of the influence of the pro-Israeli lobby (AIPAC) within the US Senate, and of AIPAC's ability to pressure elected US officials to take stands, even when such stands are clearly against the prevailing sentiments in the US and throughout the world.



Palestinian West Bankers celebrate the Declaration of Independence.

The State Department's decision resulted in criticism from the US's closest allies. Francois Mitterrand, when asked if he understood the US decision, said «I prefer not to understand it, for if I understand it, it would lead me to pessimistic conclusions» (*International Herald Tribune*, December 2, 1988). The UN gave the US 24 hours to reconsider and reverse its decision. The US response was negative again. Two days later the UN passed another resolution to move the session from the UN headquarters in New York to Geneva; again the vote

was 'Israel' and the US against the whole world (154 in favor and 2 against). The new date set for the session was December 13-15th which coincided with the first anniversary of the intifada.

On his way to Geneva, Arafat made a stop in Stockholm and held a much publicized meeting with members of the International Center for Peace in the Middle East, an organization which has branches in Tel Aviv and New York. The head of the American Jewish delegation was Rita Hauser who was previously a consultant to George Bush

and a candidate for US ambassador to the UN.

UN SESSION ON PALESTINE

From Stockholm, Arafat went to Geneva and addressed the UN General Assembly on December 13th, reiterating the PLO's acceptance of UN resolutions 242 and 338, as a basis for an international peace conference, and its condemnation of all forms of terrorism. After the speech, the General Assembly passed two resolutions acknowledging the proclamation of the Palestinian state, and as of December 15, 1988, using the designation *Palestine* in place of the PLO.

The initial US response to Arafat's speech was lukewarm. Charles Redman said, «Mr. Arafat had made some interesting and positive points but fell short of meeting US conditions for opening a dialogue with the PLO» (UPI, December 14, 1988). Redman added, «Arafat failed to meet any of the conditions laid down by the United States.» Then, on December 14th, in a

180-degree turn, the US State Department declared that the PLO had met the conditions for beginning a dialogue, and that State Department officials would meet with PLO officials in Tunisia. The meeting between the US ambassador in Tunisia and members of the PLO Executive Committee took place a few days later. Although the US placed «terrorism» as the first item on the agenda, the PLO put the question of an international peace conference on top of its agenda. The meeting was basically an introductory one and it is thus too early to draw conclusions about the extent of change in US policy. However, the reversal in the US position on talking to the PLO, although falling short of recognizing the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, is a gain, occurring first and foremost as a result of the intifada and the isolation of the US internationally on the question of dealing with the PLO. If the US is genuinely interested in ushering in a new era of

peace to one of the world's most troubled regions, it must persuade 'Israel' to sit down at the negotiations table.

Undoubtedly, Arafat's moderation and flexibility have won him praise in many parts of the world, unveiling once and for all Israeli intransigence and unwillingness to make as much as an overture for peace. The position of the Israeli government has not changed; they will not talk with the PLO no matter what the PLO says. The PLO has been calling for the convening of an international peace conference with the participation of all parties involved. There is consensus on this position in the PLO. The peace conference is the forum for discussing all issues, and naturally concessions will have to be made by both sides. The PLO is being asked to make concessions to 'Israel', while 'Israel' is stepping up the daily killing, house demolition, imprisonment, torture, collective punishment, deportation, etc. The US made it one of its conditions for the PLO to recognize 'Israel' before opening a dialogue with the PLO. 'Israel', for its part, still refuses to recognize what the overwhelming majority of the nations of the world recognize, i.e., that the PLO is the chosen representative of the Palestinian people. The PLO is being asked to renounce «terrorism» while terrorism is the official Israeli policy vis-a-vis the Palestinians. The Israeli answer to the calls for it to cease its aggression, in order to pave the way for negotiations, is an inexorable NO. Instead of asking the Palestinians to stop the intifada, which is in essence self-defense against Israeli terror, the US should ask 'Israel' to make a show of good faith. The only obstacle to getting peace negotiations underway is Israeli intransigence.

At this point, it seems apparent that the only way to pressure 'Israel' to abandon terrorism and its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, is the consolidation and escalation of the intifada, the total boycott of Israeli goods, the refusal to pay taxes and the resolve of the Palestinian people to persevere in their struggle for freedom and independence. After 13 months, the intifada seems to be gaining even more momentum, and the Palestinians are more determined than ever to continue their resistance to occupation, despite the very high price they are paying. ●

UN Resolution A/43/L.54

In its mid-December special session in Geneva, the UN General Assembly adopted several resolutions on the question of Palestine. Among them was resolution A/43/L.54, which 104 countries voted for, while the US and 'Israel' voted against, and 36 abstained.

The General Assembly,
Having considered the item entitled «Question of Palestine»,
Recalling its resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, in which, *inter alia*, it called for the establishment of an Arab State and a Jewish State in Palestine,

Mindful of the special responsibility of the United Nations to achieve a just solution to the question of Palestine,

Aware of the proclamation of the State of Palestine by the Palestine National Council in line with General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and in exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people,

Affirming the urgent need to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East which, *inter alia*, provides for peaceful coexistence for all States in the region,

Recalling its resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, on the observer status of the Palestine Liberation

Organization and subsequent relevant resolutions,

1. Acknowledges the proclamation of the State of Palestine by the Palestine National Council on 15 November 1988;

2. Affirms the need to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their sovereignty over their territory occupied since 1967;

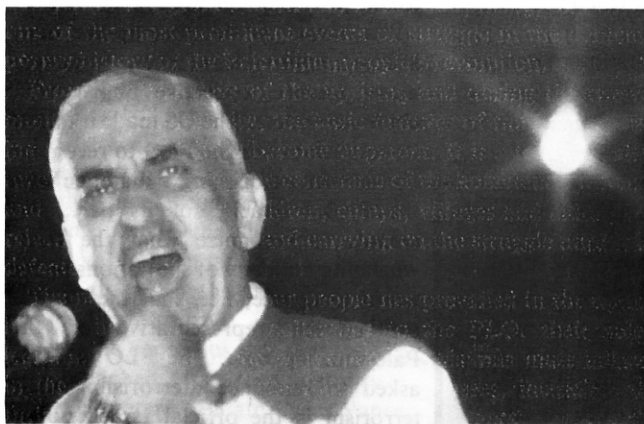
3. Decides that, effective as of December 1988, the designation «Palestine» should be used in place of the designation «Palestine Liberation Organization» in the United Nations system without prejudice to the observer status and functions of the Palestine Liberation Organization within the United Nations system in conformity with relevant United Nations resolutions and practice;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to take necessary action to implement the present resolution.

PFLP 21st Anniversary

On December 2, 1988, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine celebrated the first anniversary of the intifada and the 21st anniversary of its own establishment at a mass rally in Yarmouk Camp, Damascus. Addressing the over 5,000 in attendance were Politbureau member Abdullah Shatfeh, the South Yemeni Ambassador to Syria; George Hawi, General Secretary of the Lebanese Communist Party; Jesus Barriero, the Cuban Ambassador to Syria; and the keynote speaker, Dr. George Habash, General Secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Also in attendance at the four hour program were Nayef Hawatmeh, General Secretary of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and representatives of the PFLP-General Command, Palestinian Struggle Front, Palestinian Communist Party, Palestinian Liberation Front, Saika and the Syrian Communist Party. Below is the speech of Dr. George Habash.

Speech of Comrade Habash



Sisters and brothers, comrades and guests:

We meet today on the occasion of the first anniversary of our people's great uprising and the 21st anniversary of the establishment of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. We meet to celebrate the announcement of the independent Palestinian state. Based on the fact that the PFLP constitutes a major organization in the United National Leadership, we announce to our Arab masses that the PFLP will work to continue the uprising, to deepen, escalate and expand it. We will work towards achieving its political slogans on the Palestinian, Arab and international levels until the uprising, through the masses' struggle and sacrifices, succeeds in achieving freedom and independence. In my capacity as General Secretary, it is my obligation to announce to the Palestinian masses, wherever they may be, and to the Arab masses... that the PFLP will remain true to its political line. The main point in this line is the PFLP's understanding of the Zionist entity, considering its major feature to be colonialism. We will fight year after year, generation after generation, until we rid all Palestinian and Arab land of it.

We also meet to celebrate the announcement of the independent Palestinian state. The PFLP realizes the difference between the announcement of this state and its establishment. I announce in the name of the PFLP that we will build the bridge with our bodies to span the distance between the dream of announcing the state and the reality of establishing it on the land of Palestine.

Comrades, the uprising of our people in Palestine has great meaning and repercussions. I know very well that you are here today to listen to what occurred at the PNC - how the PFLP understands the Declaration of Independence and the political statement that was issued; what we suffered from the policy of political concessions; and why we refused UN resolutions 242 and 338. Still, allow me to speak briefly about the repercussions and great meaning of our people's uprising in the occupied territories. The PFLP Central Committee said in its last session before the PNC, that the uprising represents a new stage in the Palestinian national struggle and it could become a new stage in the entire Arab national struggle.

FEATURES OF THE UPRISING... THE NEW STAGE

What do we mean by this? What is this stage concretely? We must know this in order to understand it, so that our masses understand it and all struggle for it. We have begun to live in a new stage that has its own specific features. For the first time, the central burden of confronting the Zionist plan has been transferred to our masses inside Palestine. You might say such talk is not new. This is correct theoretically, and perhaps other organizations wrote that our masses in Palestine are the center. But what was happening on the ground in the days of the armed struggle trend in Jordan and Lebanon? What was happening was that the central movement was taking place from outside, due to Palestinian presence outside of Palestine. Now, for the first time since 1948... the 40% of our masses who are inside Palestine are the ones who are in the forefront confronting the Zionist plan. This is the first new feature.

The second feature: The Palestinian struggle against the Zionist plan was always an integral part of the Arab-Zionist struggle, and this principle must be preserved. This was what happened in the 1950's during the Suez War, and in the 1960's during the June War, as well as in the 1970's during the October War. The main form of the struggle was the Arab-Zionist struggle, marginally encompassing the Palestinian-Zionist struggle. Now, for the first time in the 40 years of this struggle, the Palestinian appears to say, «I am the center and the essence of this struggle, and will remain so.» Without meaning to detract in any way from our understanding of the pan-Arab

nature of the struggle, the Arab dimension of this struggle has come to rotate around the main axis, that of the Palestinian-Zionist struggle.

The third feature of this stage, which appeared more clearly than in any other period, is the role of the masses in making history - their potentials, abilities, initiative and talents. We are now living in one of the historical periods that has tangibly manifested what this expression means. After 1982 specifically, the masses reviewed the long struggle and the results of the Arab-Israeli wars. They reviewed the October War and Sadat's deviation towards Camp David, and they also reviewed the crisis experienced by the Palestinian armed presence in the Lebanese arena. They asked, «What about all the sacrifices? What about the hope? What about my legitimate national rights?» Consequently, they armed themselves with rocks, knives and molotovs against the occupation, to prove that they will defend their rights and remain alive until the achievement of victory.

The fourth feature of the new Palestinian stage was crystallized in the first few months of the uprising, when a set of values was established by the masses in the occupied territories, which increases our belief in our ability to achieve victory. These values are self-reliance, international and internal solidarity, despising the life of exploitation, emphasis on economic self-sufficiency and boycotting Israeli products. A new set of values crystallized during the first year of the uprising which, all together, constitutes a new stage of the Palestinian national struggle, and paves the way for a new stage in the Arab struggle. This is the uprising. We must know what the uprising means historically and how to use it on the Palestinian and Arab levels.

On the Arab level, you all know that in 1978 began the stage of Camp David and the struggle against it, as it was correctly designated by the progressive forces and parties. The Camp David Accords meant the surrender of Sadat and the Egyptian regime, and its discontinuing the struggle against the Zionist offensive. This led to the establishment of a tripartite alliance, imperialist-Zionist-Arab reactionary, confronting the Arab mass movement's aspiration to uproot the Zionist invasion.

This is the Camp David stage and the struggle against Camp David.

What has happened during these last ten years? All formulas that were drawn up by the Arab League and the Arab nationalist governments failed. The Baghdad resolutions to isolate the Egyptian regime evaporated, as did the Syrian-Iraqi agreement... The Steadfastness Front? Where is it? All the tactical steps that were taken to face Camp David ended. This means that the Camp David regime, that raised the Israeli flag over the skies of Cairo, will attend the next meeting of the Arab League. We are now witnessing the complete deterioration of the official Arab position. The subject is not Sadat, because there will be a Sadat II and III, and IX and X. Now our masses in the occupied territories are introducing the model and example, not only to the Egyptian masses, but to all the Arab masses and Arab national liberation organizations. That shows that the masses can, despite all difficulties, fight for their rights and hopes. It is impossible for the masses to raise the banner of surrender. For this reason, we said that the uprising represents a new stage in the Palestinian national struggle and will begin a new stage in the Arab national struggle.

THE PNC

Comrades, I want to address the vital political subjects concerning the uprising and the PLO, which were the main topics of discussion before and during the PNC. The first result of the PNC was the Declaration of Independence. What is the Declaration of Independence? It is the responsibility of every Palestinian to read it, study it, and to ask about every phrase in it. The Declaration of Independence announced the establishment of a Palestinian state on Palestinian land, based on the natural and historical rights of the Palestinians to Palestine, and on all the legitimate international resolutions. The various articles of the Declaration of Independence cannot be interpreted separately. Some understood that the Declaration of Independence means the complete and final recognition of UN resolution 181 and thus of the partition of Palestine. ►



Please read this declaration so that we don't allow any Palestinian leaders to interpret these decisions as they want. We are ready to return to the text to judge and to fight political battles, not as the PFLP alone, but with the DFLP, the Palestinian Struggle Front and the Palestinian Liberation Front, realizing the importance of the text and the possible danger of tactics and the importance of monitoring them. In this specific period of the Palestinian revolution, the announcement of the Palestinian state is a correct decision. Each and every comrade in the PFLP, not only in Syria, but also in Lebanon, the occupied territories and everywhere, is asked to enter every Palestinian home until the masses are deeply convinced of the correctness of announcing the independent Palestinian state.

The slogan of freedom and independence was raised by our people in Palestine before the uprising. Moreover, in July, as a result of many months of the uprising, the Jordanian regime announced the severing of ties between the Hashemite Kingdom and the Palestinian land. Regardless of why the decision was taken, this posed major questions: Who, then, is responsible for this land? For whom is this land? The leadership of the PLO had to give answers to these two questions. In regards to the first question, our people raised the slogan of freedom and independence. To be realistic and not exaggerate, we all know that the uprising is in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the territories occupied since 1967. We cannot put upon the Palestinian masses in the West Bank and Gaza Strip the responsibility, in this period, of liberating all of the land. That is the responsibility of all the Palestinian masses, in the Galilee, the Triangle, the Negev, the Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and abroad. It is the responsibility of all the Arab masses. Our masses in the West Bank and Gaza Strip want to end the occupation. They want the Israeli soldiers to leave the land they occupied in 1967. Jordan said, «I have no relation to this land.» What is the obligation of the PLO now? It is to say that this land is ours, to announce the establishment of the independent Palestinian state. Therefore, we support this decision which is represented by the Declaration of Independence.

Next, the PNC addressed the formation of a Palestinian government... The decision to declare the state in principle demands the establishment of a Palestinian government. Of course, in the light of the reality of the Palestinian arena, the interconnection between the Palestinian and Arab arenas, and the influence of the Arab reactionary forces on them, the PFLP asked many questions. We decided to tie our approval of the formation of the government with the sum of the answers to these questions: Is it true that this government will be formed with moderate personalities, and what is meant by this? What is the basis for the formation of this government? What is its program? Who are the members of this government? What is the relationship between it and the PLO? Will the PLO cease to exist, or be relegated to a secondary position in the event of the formation of the government?

It is necessary to pose all these questions and then take a decision. In fact, it was decided that the government would be formed of nationalist personalities from Palestine and the diaspora. It will be formed in a way that reflects national unity. It will be based on the Declaration of Independence, the PLO's national program of repatriation, self-determination and the establishment of a Palestinian state, and on the PNC's resolutions. While removing obstacles to forming this government, it has become natural to think seriously about its

formation in the suitable political circumstances, after being sure of the detailed interpretation of all these decisions.

After that, the PNC addressed the question of support to the uprising. By implementing the decisions taken by the Uprising Committee, we can give the best and most correct support to the uprising, materially, media-wise and politically. One example of this is the decision to support the uprising by escalating the armed struggle across the Arab borders.

THE POLITICAL STATEMENT — SUBJECT OF CONTROVERSY

Lastly, we reached the political statement. This is where there was disagreement. I ask of our Palestinian masses everywhere to judge after one or two years, whether the PFLP was correct or wrong in our point-of-view which can be summed up in two main points. First, we rejected UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, even though the term *self-determination* was added, as the legal basis for an international conference. Why should the PLO single out 242 and 338 in the political statement from among all the UN resolutions concerning Palestine? I cannot understand a leadership that concedes the rights accorded to it by international legitimacy, such as UN resolution 194 which is not a resolution of the PFLP or the DFLP. Resolution 194 is that of the UN. There is also resolution 3236; it is true that it does not give us our natural and full rights to the land of Palestine, but it does give us a certain level of rights. UN resolution 3236 gives us the right to establish a state, and 194 gives us the right to return. Why should we limit our rights with 242 and 338? In Algeria, when some journalists asked me if we represented an extremist line, I told them *no*; we know the current balance of forces in the Arab arena very well, and we know how this balance of forces can reflect itself on Palestinian tactics. We are ready to deal with tactics, but for the majority of the PNC to accept 242 and 338, plus self-determination, in the political statement means giving a concession and weakening the Palestinian national struggle in the international conference when we try to discuss all the UN resolutions and the demands of the international community to find a solution to the Palestinian cause and all its aspects on the basis of all these resolutions.

Pay attention to this subject and judge us on this, because hopes are one thing and reality is another. This is our tactic, but the enemy camp also has a tactic; it aims at stripping us of all our weapons. Until now, 'Israel' refuses the idea of an international conference; Shimon Peres and the Labor Party also refuse the idea of a real international conference, viewing it only as an umbrella for direct negotiations. The extreme right wing and the religious parties have just won in the Israeli elections. They want us, before we enter the international conference, to take off all our clothes, so that we enter the conference naked. This is the enemy's tactic. So we raised the slogan against gratuitous concessions. Why do we give such concessions, especially in this period of the uprising? I am warning about continuing this policy, because the enemy will not be satisfied with what was given. They will find excuses to ask for more concessions, to prepare for the next PNC in advance.

If we fought the 242 battle with strength, our comrades in the DFLP also fought with strength the battle against naming 'Israel' in the section on the international conference and secure borders for all the countries of the area. Why? We all know that a temporary settlement will not mean liberating all of Palestine. Why are we giving away all our cards? A few days

ago in Stockholm, the talk was not about 242 but about recognition. No! Comrades, the PNC did not recognize the Zionist entity. I call on you to read the PNC's decisions well, study, understand and ask about them. When George Habash comes or Nayef Hawatmeh or anyone from the Fatah Central Committee, ask and discuss with them, so that we can feel we are a people alive, no one can deceive us and I am convinced that the Palestinian people are alive.

THE QUESTION OF CONCESSIONS

Comrades, in the press conference that brother Yasir Arafat held at the end of the PNC, he said the following: «We gave all the possible concessions and the ball is now in the US court. If the US administration does not respond to this line, I will call for a PNC and tell them that I failed and that the moderate line failed, and you must review the decisions you took on this basis.» (I shouldn't say concessions because Arafat doesn't use this term)... We in the PFLP accept this approach and the judgment of the PNC. When we judge this concession policy, we must review its results, and the major yardstick is the response of the US administration and Europe. I am convinced that if we had told our friends we accept all UN resolutions but not 242, it would not have affected their support. I recall what brother Yasir Arafat told me when he returned from China. He explained to them the choices the Palestinians have. The Chinese General Secretary's response was, «Comrade Arafat, we will support you in any decision you take.» Was the US position influenced? Was the Zionist position influenced? Was the European position influenced? The US response to these concessions was banning Arafat from entering New York. The European countries' response was to write their ambassadors in Geneva and tell them to attend the session on Palestine.

Pay attention and be cautious about giving concessions other than 242 between this PNC and the next. The PFLP will put the responsibility on those who deviate from the PNC decisions and affect Palestinian national unity. We do not want them to underestimate the deep responsibility that the PFLP feels during the uprising. We will not see our cause stumble, and remain silent. What is the Stockholm statement? Who said that the PNC recognized 'Israel'? This is not what occurred at all. In the PLO we fought strongly against recognition... and not alone; the DFLP, the Palestinian Struggle Front, the Palestinian Liberation Front and some of Fatah did so as well. The PNC did not agree on recognition.

Recently, a European country sent a proposal stating their preconditions to the PLO: explicit recognition of 'Israel' and 242, and renouncing terrorism officially and clearly. These are the same as the US conditions. In return for what? In return for opening a dialogue with the PLO. They are ridiculing us. We aren't being overly skeptical; 40 years of experience has taught us to be careful. We see a clear distribution of roles: The reactionaries came, representing the Camp David thinking, and pressured the PLO until it recognized resolution 242. Then comes the US, pressuring us until they open a dialogue with the PLO and then they'll say at the end, well, Shamir doesn't agree. We are very much afraid of this tactic, because there are a lot of progressives who emphasize the importance of flexibility and tactics... We have experience. We are confronted by enemies who have a specific tactic, and want us to lose step by step. First they want us to lose our national unity, then the trust of the masses, and lastly, our relations and allies. It is true that some countries were at ease with the political statement of the PNC in regards to UN resolution 242, but others were not.



January 15th, West Bank - general strike and demonstrations

Not long ago, a major Nasserite group told me that they are no longer able to activate the Egyptian masses in support of the Palestinian cause when they see that the PLO gives these concessions. Here we must take into account the Palestinian and Arab mass movement when we take any step.

There is a point of view within the Palestinian arena that in order to realize concretely the Palestinian state that we announced, 90% of our work should be diplomatic and political. Undoubtedly, this work necessitates concessions. The PFLP has a different opinion concerning the establishment of the Palestinian state: On the Palestinian level, we raise the slogan of escalating, continuing, consolidating and spreading the uprising. This uprising should be deeply rooted in order to make it impossible for Rabin and Shamir to end it. Their dream of ending the uprising is not achievable, because it would mean exterminating the entire Palestinian people. History has shown this is an impossible task, even for the biggest colonial power in the world, and Vietnam is one example of this. The consolidation of the uprising involves the United National Leadership, the popular committees, the popular resistance committees and the strike forces. It means the unity of all the unions and national organizations, as occurred within the women's work. A while ago, the women's committees formed a coordination council. Unfortunately, in the occupied territories, there are four labor unions, four student unions, four unions for voluntary work committees and four women's unions. What we mean by consolidating the uprising is a unified, steadfast, organized base that secures its continuation. All unions should immediately begin with the formation of coordination committees as the first step towards unification. The UNL should review the past year's experience. We, in the PFLP, are committed to protecting the uprising and its victory.

We should invite HAMAS, whether it accepts or not, to work within the framework of the UNL; if this is not possible, then at least there should be a certain degree of cooperation guaranteeing agreement on the daily program of struggle that the UNL proposes to the masses. It is also necessary to continue to invite the organizations that are not in the framework

of the PLO, to join its ranks, whether they accept or not. It is the PLO's responsibility to seriously continue with this dialogue and exert all possible efforts for the unification of all the Palestinian forces in order to confront the occupation. It's impossible to understand that such differences (in the Palestinian arena) can exist in the period of the uprising, whereas this might be understandable in other circumstances. It is our responsibility, just as Comrade George Hawi mentioned, not to forget that the enemy's plan aims at all of us. By taking this into account, it is possible to protect ourselves from many political mistakes. For example, we disagreed with a central point in the political statement and yet we chanted afterwards, «Revolution Until Victory» and «Unity Until Victory.» We were later asked, «How can you be like this?» We answered with two points: because there is an uprising and because events will prove, after one or two years, that the concession policy will not accomplish anything ; then we will return and unify on a decisive political program. I refer to a person with great experience, Comrade Ho Chi Minh, who said, «The more flexible we are, the more the bombs increase over Hanoi.» So the uprising imposes a ceiling on expressing differences of opinion, and the PLO is obligated to be open to every organization that wants to struggle via its framework.

THE NEED FOR REFORM

Also on the Palestinian level, I would like to emphasize a major task which will contribute to adjusting the balance of power in the PNC: This is the achievement of real reform within the PLO. This subject cannot be taken lightly. It is true, everyone is comfortable with what is happening in the occupied territories, but only a small percentage of our people's potentials are mobilized. Why don't we mobilize our potentials 100%? The answer is because the PLO does not yet have the organizational frameworks for mobilizing all the Palestinian masses' potentials, in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the US and everywhere. I hope that the Palestinian leadership will be on the same level of the masses and their enthusiasm, potentials, abilities and willingness to offer sacrifices. Why don't we aim for the PLO being like the Algerian National Liberation Front - a real front, giving every organization the right to its own ideology and organizational life. If this is our goal and hope, then it demands the following: collective leadership, respecting institutions, and democratic proportional representation. This battle for democratic reforms will be on the top of our list of priorities in the coming PNC sessions. We will work hand-in-hand with all the other organizations who feel the danger of not making such reforms and know what this will lead to in the long run. In this context, I ask: «Is it true that the size of the PFLP is the number that voted against UN resolution 242 in the PNC?» I am not convinced of this, especially when I hear that 78% of our masses in the occupied territories reject the equation of establishing a Palestinian state in return for recognizing 'Israel'. It is my right to say that the political line that the PFLP represents does not constitute 14%, as is the case in the PNC. We will work in order to reorganize and re-establish the PLO on the basis of proportional representation. At that time we promise that we will submit to the majority opinion. The representation of each organization will not be determined by prior agreements. The size of each organization and the strength of their political lines will be determined according to proportional representation. During this process, it is our right to convince the others that the PFLP represents the majority,

just as it is the DFLP's right and the Palestinian Struggle Front's and others. This is how we understand democratic reforms which are obligatory for the PLO.

Some believe that there is no relationship between the subject of reforms and the uprising, but this subject is related to the essence of the uprising. This is what Comrade George Hawi meant when he said he was pained about the lack of support to the uprising, in spite of its having continued for one year. This leads me to ask about the role of the Palestinian masses outside of Palestine. It is true that they responded to the uprising, but to what degree was their strength mobilized? Is this all of their potentials? Once again, we see the necessity of reforms.

What do we mean by spreading the uprising? We mean spreading it to include our masses in the territories occupied since 1948. I don't mean that the Palestinian state that we will establish tactically will include the Galilee. Rather, they should be included in order to increase the pressure on 'Israel' and force it to deal politically with the uprising. Despite the great value of international pressure, internal pressure must be increased, because 'Israel' and the fascist forces don't care about international public opinion. For example, South Africa is isolated and internationally boycotted, but yet it does not care. 'Israel' after one year of the uprising continues its policy of suppression. How can we force it to change its approach? How do we force it to agree to an international conference? The only way is increasing its economic and other losses as much as possible by preserving the mass character of the uprising. In Lebanon, there are 15,000 armed Palestinians; their responsibility is to support the uprising and pressure 'Israel' so that it submits to the demand of freedom and independence and even to the international conference.

Last May and June, the War of Fires took place in the 1948 occupied territories and the Palestinians threw tens of firebombs in many cities, which shook 'Israel'. I have read many editorials in Israeli newspapers which said: «If the uprising spreads to Israel, then we will have two disasters.» We want them to have four disasters, and it is our duty to use all means possible against them. We do not underestimate the importance of the Palestinian and Arab roles. We must struggle to change the balance of forces on the Arab level. The current lack of activity is not acceptable. The Arab masses have an honorable history of struggle against imperialism. It is incorrect to only emphasize the prevailing subdued political conditions on the Arab mass level. Revolutionaries should understand the reality in order to change it. Then and only then, will the US and 'Israel' feel threatened; both are observing with great interest the uprising's effect on the Arab and Palestinian levels. We should not despair nor surrender.

THE ARAB LEVEL

On the official Arab level, we call for the implementation of the decisions of the Algiers Summit, that were among the first political victories of the uprising. These decisions were good, but the important issue now is their implementation, especially on the material level, in order to secure that the people of the uprising have their basis necessities of life provided for. I am sorry to say that the majority of the Arab countries did not live up to their promises, but rather they implemented the recommendations of the US administration by reducing their material support to the PLO.

Palestinian-Syrian relations is a central point in the PFLP's thinking. The strategic interests of both Syria and the PLO

demand that the two leaderships re-establish their bilateral relationship despite all the present obstacles. But, the real hope is the Arab masses. The Lebanese arena is open to us through our alliance with the Lebanese National Movement. Arab history has recorded the best times of this alliance. Here I see the necessity of seriously working to re-establish this alliance as a priority among our tasks and thinking on the Arab level. It is the PLO's responsibility to correct and clarify its position and political line in regards to this alliance, and in regards to the isolationist-Zionist project in Lebanon. This is the first step that will pave the way to re-establishing the strong alliance between the Palestinian and the Lebanese armed struggle. We will join with our comrades in the Lebanese Communist Party, the Lebanese National Movement, Amal and Hizballah in raising the slogan: «All guns against the Zionist enemy.» I say to my comrades in the Lebanese National Movement that the re-establishment of the Palestinian-Lebanese alliance, and directing all nationalist, Islamic, Lebanese and Palestinian guns against 'Israel', would be the most important support we could give the uprising in its second year.

By the way, you heard today about the Israeli attack against Naima (Lebanon) and the heroic fighting there, which caused the death of an Israeli officer and two Israeli soldiers at the hands of the Progressive Socialist Party and the PFLP-General Command. In this battle, Abu Jamil, the hero, was martyred. This heroic resistance is the best present for the uprising on its first anniversary. I have big hopes and confidence that the Palestinian-Lebanese alliance, continuing its daily operations, will have opened new horizons before us by the time we celebrate the second anniversary of the uprising. Changing the balance of forces in the Arab world will depend, to a certain degree, on this arena, Lebanon.

The uprising is a cry to the progressive Arab parties in all the Arab world, saying: «Why aren't you moving?» I say this in a brotherly and loving manner, on the basis of joint thinking and responsibility, and I hope that the coming year will bring a scientific answer to this question.

INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

We must emphasize the importance of the international role, especially in this period. With the help of our true allies, we are faced with the following tasks: Firstly, continuously proposing international supervision over the occupied Palestinian territories, even if the US administration vetoes this ten times over. It is impossible for our masses to remain at the mercy of the occupation authorities, continuing to suffer and be tortured. This is Palestinian land, as the UN Security Council has recognized, and it is also occupied land, just as the Security Council recognized. Thus, it is the responsibility of the UN to protect our masses.

Secondly, in the light of the present Arab reality, we must use all means, first and foremost, the international conference, in spite of our conviction that what was taken by force must be regained by force, and despite all our previous experience. There are those who agreed to UN Security Council Resolution 242, 21 years ago, and some of them practiced flexibility and others were more than flexible, but they have not achieved anything. Yet, we are going to try in order to say to the world, «Look, this is 'Israel' that you created. Look what it did to the area and the Palestinian people.» Then the international community should work to solve the Palestinian problem in all of its aspects at this stage, a comprehensive solution, though I don't say it will be fair or eternal. The international conference

is a weapon in our hands. We should use it; it is a militant slogan for our benefit. But do you think that 'Israel' will accept this? We must work to create the balance of forces which will make 'Israel' accept this and accept that the PLO is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Then comes the struggle to gain recognition of the legitimate national rights of our people. The question is: Will the international conference give us all our natural and national rights in Palestine? No. It will give us the rights that the international legitimacy agrees to. This is something positive and to our benefit, because the establishment of a Palestinian state on part of the Palestinian land means the beginning of the deterioration of the Zionist project.

Thirdly, we must raise our voice loud, asking our friends to give continuous support and solidarity to the Palestinian people. We also ask of them to take severe measures against the Zionist entity and to raise the slogan on the international level: «Our battle against neo-Nazism is the battle of all democratic and progressive forces, as was the battle against Nazism.»

Comrades, the blood of our people that has flowed throughout the occupied territories imposes upon us to think in a serious and responsible manner. It imposes upon us to prepare all our abilities and potentials; to be truthful and faithful in every word we say, and to close every gap between word and deed. Our families and children deserve from us these deep feelings of responsibility.

We salute the children of the stones, those who throw molotovs and who stab the occupation soldiers! We salute our imprisoned comrades who have been on a hunger strike for days! We salute all the martyrs and their mothers and wives. At this particular moment, I cannot but remember the souls of our heroic martyred leaders: Izz Al Din Al Qassam, Abdul Qader Al Hussein, Guevara Gaza, Ghassan Kanafani and Abu Jihad. I remember my brother and comrade, Talat Yacoub (General Secretary of the Palestinian Liberation Front, who died in November 1988). A special salute to the people of the Galilee, Triangle and Naqab (Negev) and all the areas that were occupied in 1948.

We salute the Palestinian-Lebanese Resistance which unfortunately has not received the importance that it deserves on the official or popular levels, and which played an important role in activating the uprising in the occupied territories! We salute the Arab liberation movement! We salute the camp of peace, progress, liberation and socialism, and its vanguard, our friend, the Soviet Union! We salute heroic Cuba and Comrade Fidel Castro whom our people hold in deep respect!

Before I end my speech, and in the light of the psychological warfare of the Zionists, imperialists and Arab reactionaries, I want to say that we will fight for the sake of victory. We do not fight only because it is our duty, and not for the sake of saying we are doing so. Rather we are fighting for a noble and just cause, and we want to win. If the enemy wants to scare us with talk about its long-range missiles, then we will scare them with rocks. They are afraid of the Palestinian birthrate; during the uprising, 25,000 babies have been born in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. We will confront the Zionist enemy with the birthrate, not only in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but also in the Galilee, Bir Sheba, Lydd and all the cities of Palestine, and in every Palestinian community. We will confront 'Israel' with rocks and grenades and all means, including literature and art, until they end the occupation. Our slogan, and the focus of our struggle, alongside all the Arab progressive forces, will be: *Al Intifada, Al Intifada!*

Political Economy of the Uprising

This study was presented by Dr. Hussein Abu Nimal at the intellectual debate held by the Arab Cultural Club at the Carlton Hotel in Beirut, in June 1988.

The subject matter of this research falls basically in the field of political economy, with special priority given to the political - strategic factor which has always been a determinant in Israeli affairs, including the economy. I believe that it is necessary to deal with this subject on two interrelated levels: The first is the direct costs (of the uprising) to Israel, due to increased security expenditures and the interruption of production... The second is the indirect losses which have occurred in the realm of morale, and their overall and long-term implications. While the direct losses have been more prominent and measurable, the indirect ones are deeper, more long-term and more closely linked to the present conflict in the area. Based on this, a writer would adopt the opinion that one side achieves its aim by breaking the will of the enemy; this is both a material and psychological state; in this way, one of the two conflicting parties will be forced to submit to the aims of the other.

This concept applies to the Arab-Israeli conflict and provides us with a proper interpretation of the state of ambiguity which has continued for many decades. Although Israel has militarily won all the wars it waged, it could not achieve the aims of these wars. Thus, losing the war did not lead to the loss of our aim. Therefore, the concept of winning or losing has a relative and changing meaning which can be defined by understanding all elements which interact at a given historical moment.

Dealing with this subject on the two levels mentioned above will give us a picture of the reality of the uprising's present and future cost to Israel, taking into consideration the qualitative difference between the direct material costs, which can easily be compensated for via foreign economic aid, and the Israeli losses on the second level, which are not so easily compensated for; nor is it so easy for Israel to adjust to the new balance in the historical battle of wills...

Whatever way of evaluating the costs and effects of the uprising on Israel is chosen, it is important to describe the present relationship between the Palestinian Arab and Jewish economies in Palestine, in an attempt to clarify the limits and nature of this relationship, which in turn defines the extent of the mutual effects between them. However, this requires prior knowledge of the two economies, simply because any relationship is but the outcome of the structures of the two parties. I would not start from this point if not for the mistaken concept that has prevailed about the two economies and the relation between them. The Arab point-of-view on this matter has mainly depended on what Israel has said about its problems or its relationship with the 1967 occupied territories. Those who follow this subject notice that Israel concentrates on its secondary problems, avoiding as far as possible any serious or ex-

tensive talk about the problems which have a distinctively structural nature.

ISRAEL'S «CAPTIVE ECONOMY»

The Israeli economic experience has passed through different stages. For various reasons which cannot be included here, many factors contributed to the formation of the Israeli economy. This experience was based on three integrated elements: highly qualified human resources, great capital input and political administration. If we put aside the human and financial resources which were provided internally, and talk only about the external contributions, then we are speaking about an influx of 25,000 engineers and 62 billion dollars in the period between 1950 and 1985. These resources and others were channelled through the state and its different institutions. This process enabled them to function in accordance with a long-term, overall development strategy for achieving aims which originally seemed very difficult to attain. As a result of the abundance of resources, the political administration redefined priorities at every stage on the basis of two in-variables: integrating the immediate and short-term plans with the long-term, overall strategy; and constantly strengthening the connection between development and security considerations, reaching a stage in which development expenditures became security ones, and *vice versa*.

Perhaps the most dangerous consequence of this was the mutual reinforcement between the material achievements and the political aims; each was expanded ambitiously with every success of the other. All this happened in a continued mutual movement, leading to a meaningful change in Israeli strategic thought. Accordingly, the demand increased for Israel to move to a new stage in which it would apply the strategy of a great power and seek to be a great regional power... Military victories combined with economic achievements and Biblical heritage. The demand for supremacy in all fields grew greater and greater. Therefore, it has become difficult to distinguish between the archaic ideas of rabbis who rely on the saying of «God's chosen people,» and the concepts used by secular scientific Zionists to predict the twenty-first century. Accordingly, it is imperative to distinguish between knowledge and civilization; we see that the most brutal form of barbarism occurs when science and reactionary ideology are combined.

The problem lies not only in this, but in the pattern of subordination exhibited by the Israeli experience. In spite of its claims of having become more independent, Israeli dependence has increased with every advance it has made. We will not argue about abstract political or economic concepts, simply because it is agreed that the standard for economic dependence

or independence is the degree of the role which others may play in the economy of any country. All countries depend on each other, but this generality cannot be applied in the case of Israel. The political factor is perhaps the most important one which enables us to distinguish precisely between a form of dependence which is essentially mutual, and another form of dependence which embodies the full meaning of the term. Accordingly, we can list two forms of Israeli dependence:

The first is positive in that it benefits Israel. It concerns relations with the capitalist West which provides Israel with enormous capital on the one hand, and receives the greatest portion of Israeli exports on the other. Moreover, the direct and indirect exports (to Israel) of the capitalist West are equivalent to its imports from Israel. If there is a need for more clarity, we can affirm the political-strategic consideration which dominates Israel's relations with the capitalist West and has made its reliance on the West the reason for its own strength. This is very different from the relations other countries have with the West, because these relations have a different background.

The second is the structural relationship between the rising Israeli economy and the Palestinian economy which has increasingly assumed the position of an underlying structure of the Israeli economy, to the point that the Israeli economy cannot dispense with it, either now or in the future. Our ability to define the economic effects of the uprising depends on seeing the structural relationship between the two economies, especially since the Israeli economy became like a captive to the Arab economy in Palestine, although its aim was quite the opposite.

It must be admitted that the term «captive economy» could give rise to misunderstanding. Is it reasonable that the stronger, richer colonist is a captive to the occupied, poorer, weaker economy? This misunderstanding does not arise if we look at the matter as one of mutual necessity between the two parties, or the necessity which the weaker party represents for the stronger. Accordingly, the relationship between the two parties is not one between strong and weak, great and small, but between two necessities, where each party has its ultimate significance. Therefore, the relationship is between two qualities, not between two quantities. If one ton of wood is added to one hundred tons, the amount added would only amount to 1%. However, adding one ton of iron, or just a few kilograms of nails, to that amount of wood means the addition of a new element which cannot be dispensed with if we want to change wood into a table or chairs. Accordingly, the relationship between the two economies is not only an overall one, but a relationship between two labor forces and two markets of two different natures.

What I have said might lead to a very dangerous conclusion -that the structural relationship between the two economies is a form of mutual necessity simply because each of them has a different nature. Doesn't this mean that the occupation became necessary for the occupied territories and their economy? I ask this question in order to use it to answer another two questions: Firstly, the limits of the necessity and benefit which each

economy represents for the other; and secondly, the loss which would result from upsetting or severing the relationship between the two economies. Addressing the subject matter of this research will help us to answer all questions which may be raised about this subject. Moreover, answering the question about the economic effects of the uprising will enable us to get a clear picture of the economic background of the uprising which had been accumulating for more than two decades.

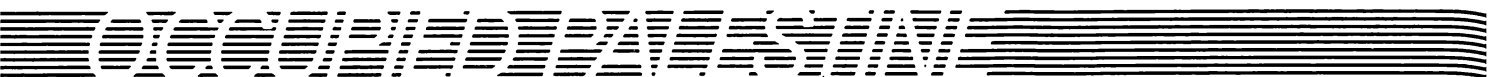
THE PALESTINIAN ECONOMY

Talking about a economy under occupation requires defining the meaning intended by this. Does it only cover the economy of the 1967 occupied territories, or does it also include those occupied in 1948? The term as we are using it in this research covers the Palestinian economy in both areas, although there are some differences between them particularly in the degree of Israel's hold on each of them. We don't only say this because of the unity of the land and the people; but also due to the similarity of the mechanisms to which both areas have been subjected, as well as the role which the Palestinians from both areas are playing as an underlying structure of the Israeli economy. Therefore, talking about the occupied territories of 1967 is considered a proper standard for those occupied in 1948.

Israel has run the affairs of the 1967 occupied territories in accordance with two aims: The first is exploiting all the resources of these territories in favor of its own economy. The second is the political aim of creating a situation in the territories whereby they can be annexed in the future. However, if there is a contradiction between the two aims, Israel has given preference to the political aim. Accordingly, Israel didn't try to deform the Palestinian economy, but to destroy it. The first aim would allow for keeping the structure of the economy, although in a backward or deformed state, but the second targets the structure itself.

Thus, the results of the Israeli policy were on two levels: The first is emaciation of the Palestinian economy, particularly its productive sectors, since these were less in 1985 than in 1967. The second has a structural nature, because of the increase of the Palestinian economy's dependence on income from outside the 1967 occupied territories. If we take the development of the labor force in the 1967 occupied territories as a standard for measuring economic activity, we will see that the number of employed in 1985 was the same as in 1970. What should be taken into consideration is that a considerable number of them are working in Israeli settlement projects; Israel considers them as part of the labor force of the 1967 occupied territories.

We find more than one evidence of the structural change. For instance, the number of those working in the agricultural field was 37,400 in 1985, only 65% of those in 1970. But where is the decrease? Surely, the Israeli agriculture has absorbed it. However, the loss of the occupied territories is not confined to the size of the labor force, but also applies to the quality of those employees, since all of them are wage laborers. Accordingly, the labor force in the 1967 occupied territories began to decline. In 1985, only 64,300 wage laborers were actually



working. This was only 42% of the total labor force of the occupied territories, which was 152,700. Accordingly, there are 157 employers for every wage laborer, namely, less than three-fourths worker per single employer. If we want to be more precise, we will find that the majority of wage laborers in the 1967 occupied territories are civil servants. For instance, only 3,400 wage laborers are working in agriculture in the occupied territories, which means that there is less than one agricultural laborer for every 11 agricultural employers.

Thus, we are faced with a dangerous situation, i.e., the disappearance of Palestinian Arab wage labor from the productive sectors, in particular from the agriculture of the 1967 occupied territories. So the outcome is dual: the decline of production and a basic change in production relations. We will take citrus fruit production in the Gaza Strip as an example. During the last few years, it has averaged only 160,000 tons annual produce, which is less than two-thirds of the production in the 1975-76 season, which was 244,000 tons.

Concerning production relations, the employers didn't lose their positions in favor of an alternative Palestinian Arab social group or class, but in favor of the Zionist exploiter. This situation constitutes the base for the class unity which now exists in confronting the Israeli occupation. In this point lies the main distinction between the Israeli occupation model, whose interest lies in destroying the entire social and economic structure, and other colonial models.

After two decades, the Palestinian Arab labor force in the Israeli economy realized the falsity of the prosperity provided by working in Israel. Due to how the occupation functions, the Palestinian worker has no personal or collective future. On this level, he differs greatly from the immigrant labor force, whether from the countryside to the city, or from one country to another, for such an immigrant is in a cycle where he may be able to return to his origin when he saves enough money to reestablish himself and maybe even become an independent producer or other possibilities. Palestinians working in Israel are caught in a vicious circle. At best, they reinject (into the Israeli economy) the money they get from Israel itself. In such a situation, employers are changed into wage laborers, so it is self-evident that those who are originally wage laborers have no opportunity for a class or even functional advance.

LINKING POLITICS AND ECONOMY

This is an example of the extreme decline witnessed in the occupied territories on various levels. There has been research on the destruction of this field or that, but it is the all inclusive form of destruction which deserves to be confirmed, in particular whenever politics are involved. Whatever has been said in describing the Israeli exploitation, it cannot precisely express the situation if it doesn't go deeply into matters which are so complex that the science of economy can only with difficulty encompass them. Thus a relationship has emerged in which politics are interlinked with economy to the extreme, as is the present with the past, and nationalism with the class question. All this occurred in a provocative form: For example, the Palestinian and his crops are dying from thirst simply because

since the occupation of 1967, Israel has prevented the drilling of new wells, and invents thousands of methods to prevent the Palestinian from obtaining the limited amount of water which he consumes. Perhaps he recently pulled up the citrus tree planted with his sweat and blood, for there is no water to irrigate the orchard. Perhaps he is the same employee who is charged with opening the water tap as much as possible, not only to irrigate the land of the settlement, but also to fill the swimming pool which was needlessly emptied simply because Mr. Settler likes swimming in clean water.

The case of those working in Israel is nearly the same. Not only must they bear daily discrimination; they are working on land which was originally theirs, not only in the collective sense, but perhaps the very land they themselves owned. The Palestinian is not only demanded to accept national and class oppression, but also the displays of the Zionist racist ideology, with its expressions of which the following is not the worst: «Arabs are dogs, Arabs are dirty...»

Two decades of occupation were enough to return matters to their point of origin. Those who did not understand Israel through its policy, did so through its practice which has expanded with the development of occupation and exploitation. This was particularly clear with the settlement policy which began to be applied more and more intensely, affecting most of the land of the territories, whereby the main Palestinian cities began to slow down, while others that seemed to be secure are hanging on the cliff, soon to be infringed upon. What is more obvious than Sharon coming into the heart of the Arab quarter in Jerusalem, or the Zionist settlers who infiltrated the heart of Hebron?

These developments deeply affected the totality of the underlying structure in the occupied territories, providing the organized political movement there with the required objective conditions. On the other hand, twenty years of experience created a broad, solid organizational and political structure with a flexible yet firm leadership. This leadership has not only learned from the experience of others, but from its own experience. Whatever has been said about the causal factors of the uprising, it should be kept in mind that the experience of occupation and oppression served as a form of collective education, not only for the leadership, but also for the masses.

This provides us with a picture of the economic background of the uprising, as well as of the relationship between the Palestinian and Israeli economies which are integrated in as much as integration is possible between the exploiter and the exploited, the top floor and the bottom one in a building. If this picture is clear and needs no further explanation, then what does need to be expanded upon is a point which is deeply connected with our research, namely the structural importance and the nature of the role the Palestinian economy in the occupied territories plays in the Israeli economic cycle. The full importance of this point will only be apparent via a practical example, namely the role of the Palestinian labor force in the Israeli economy. Its importance lies not only in its numbers, but by virtue of its being concentrated in certain fields, i.e., construction, agriculture and industry. Even this doesn't

reflect the full importance of the Palestinian labor force, because it is concentrated at a certain stage of production. For example, 89,200 Palestinians from the 1967 occupied territories worked in the Israeli economy in 1985, according to official estimates. This is about 6% of all those employed in the Israeli economy. Moreover, estimates which take into consideration the so-called illegal workers count a total of about 120,000 Palestinians from the occupied territories working in Israel.

Let us stick to the official number - 89,200 workers distributed as follows: 14,000 in agriculture; 15,800 in industry; 42,500 in construction; and 16,800 in services. Then let us move to the percentage of employees they constitute in these sectors. For instance, Palestinians from the 1967 occupied territories constitute about 15% of all those working in agriculture, and 39% of wage laborers in this field. If we add the Palestinians of the 1948 occupied territories, Palestinians would constitute 32% of the agricultural labor force, and 54% of wage laborers.

The number of Palestinian Arab and Jewish workers in the construction sector was 115,000; Jews constitute 38% of this number, while the rest are Palestinian Arabs from the two occupied areas. Workers from the 1967 occupied territories alone constitute 37% of all workers in the construction sector, but they account for 43% of the wage labor.

Palestinian Arabs in general account for 28% of those who work in the service sector, while those from the 1967 occupied territories constitute 15.5% of the total number of service workers, and 24% of the wage laborers in this sector.

In the industrial sector, Palestinian Arab constitute 15% of the labor force; workers from the 1967 occupied territories constitute about 5% of the whole industrial labor force and 6% of wage laborers.

In summary, Palestinian workers from the 1967 occupied territories have decisive importance in three main sectors in the following order: construction, agriculture and services, as well as a lesser importance in industry. Even these percentages do not totally represent the role of the Palestinian workers in the Israeli economy. Labor and wage labor are general terms. Even if the Jewish agricultural engineer or architect is a wage laborer, is he the same as the Palestinian worker? Absolutely not, for each has his respective position in the production process and the professional hierarchy. Even though we haven't statistics about the distribution of the wage labor force, we are certain that we can conclude that Palestinian wage laborers are increasingly concentrated in the lowest stratum of wage laborers.

This means that we can speak of the semi-domination of Palestinian labor over a total production stage in the main sectors of the Israeli economy. This is extremely dangerous for the Israeli economy, not only because of the huge number of Arab laborers, but because of the political implications this has. Any move on the part of the Palestinian labor force would not only obstruct a single production stage in one sector at a time, but it would obstruct several other related sectors as well, since these sectors are linked by one internal dynamic.

THE ACHILLES HEEL OF THE ECONOMIC GIANT

This indicates the most important direct loss which the uprising has caused to the Israeli economy. It is not only a direct, material loss, but has many dimensions connected to the Israeli development policy. It exposed the weakness of the political base on which the economic giant was founded. From a distance, this giant seems to be one body, while in essence it consists of two simultaneously unified and contradictory parts. Before moving from this point, it is necessary to confirm that Israel needs to employ a certain amount of Palestinian labor. In practice, Israel employs about 120,000 workers from the 1967 occupied territories. Moreover, Israel has previously tried to dispense with what it found could not be dispensed with - the Palestinian workers. In other words, Israel has a limited freedom and capacity to dispense with them and compensate for their total or partial boycott of work.

There is no need to go further in adding statistical details. I dare conclude that the Israeli losses can be calculated at more than one billion dollars to date based on: the size of the Israeli national product and the share of each economic sector in this, since the Palestinian workers have a decisive effect on this national product; the percentage of the Palestinian labor force in the economic sectors; and the period of time which has passed since the uprising began.

I elaborated on the previous point because it is the crux of the whole matter, not only because of its implications in terms of Israeli economic losses, but because it sheds light on a central matter which has rarely been given attention in the past. It will provide us with a proper foundation for measuring the position of the 1967 occupied territories in the whole Israeli economic cycle. This leads us to deal briefly with another important point concerning trade. The 1967 occupied territories' exports to Israel in 1985 were valued at 178.4 million dollars, while imports from Israel amounted to a value of 602.4 million dollars. This gave Israel an annual surplus in the trade balance of 424 million dollars. Calculating Israeli losses on this level is not easy, but whatever they were, they were compound. Like in other cases, these losses surpass their numerical cost, since they contribute to the spread of a negative dynamic in the whole Israeli socioeconomic fabric. We hereby move to another level which concerns the performance of the economy as a whole under the new conditions, which should have important effects in the future.

There are many statements and signs confirming that Israel longs to become an economic base for the capitalist West. To achieve that, it offers as incentives cheap labor power, proximity to the Afro-Asian market and other features. Accordingly, Israel strives to attract foreign investment. While it is early to talk about numbers in this field, we can speak of the great negative effect of the uprising on Israeli capacity to attract this kind of capital which seeks profits and safety at the same time.

Delaying mention of the Israeli security expenditures doesn't mean any lessening of their size or importance. These expenditures are not restricted to the cost of maintaining the soldiers, ►

vehicles and ammunition which are used to face the uprising. Rather it extends to that portion of the Israeli security apparatus which is called out on alert as a precaution against anything that might happen on any Arab front. Some may oppose this idea, since Israel has reason to be at ease on this level. Yet even in this case, Israel generally takes all possibilities into consideration.

THE BATTLE OF WILLS

All the losses which I have noted are direct losses, but the indirect losses are connected with the overall balance of forces between Israel on the one hand, and the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular on the other. There is no need for details or dispute here. The overall balance of forces is the sum of all material and moral elements which each party possesses. The Israeli losses were compound on more than one level. However, I can summarize this point in the role of the uprising in the battle of wills, which has been going on not only since 1967 or 1948, but since the start of the Arab-Zionist conflict. The Zionists had occupied our land; then in 1967, they began to occupy our will and spirit. The attempts to dominate our will were launched via multiple points and means. Accordingly, Sadat sunk into the outlying depths whereby it seemed that the Arab will was dominated. Yet at a historical moment, Israel and those whose will had seemed to be occupied were put back at the starting point. Israel not only lost its image as an oasis of democracy; it lost its image as a victim. After forty years of nourishing the newborn child, the victim of Nazism, the world discovered that it was no more than a bastard. Moreover, the Zionist settler came back to the question which he thought he had left far behind, concerning the degree of legitimacy and security on which the Israeli project is based. At this historical moment, a big question arose about the rationality and realism of the Zionist ideology, since it is the basis of the existence of Israel, but is called on to retreat or commit suicide.

Israel doesn't consider its own losses only. It considers every one of our achievements as its loss. In this vein, Israel discovered that the Palestinian will hadn't been destroyed, but is fully intact, and Israel knows what kind of dynamics may be unleashed by that. From a position of total adherence to the PLO as the Palestinians' moral homeland and the guardian of their struggle, the most important achievement on this level is the revolutionary impact of the uprising on the internal state of affairs in the PLO. Much can be said about this point, for there remain many rotten and calcified forms and structures. However, all these will fall in succession with the downfall of the political logic to which they have clung. Moreover, a new balance of forces has emerged in the Palestinian arena which relies not on external elements, but on the process of struggle, since the struggle inside has basically become the standard. To avoid any misunderstanding, what I have said isn't restricted to the different organizational trends, but applies to the totality of the Palestinian structure.

One of the results of this has been the reestablishment of Palestinian national unity on a firm base, not governed by

special considerations but by the profound respect which exists among the militants in the battlefield, who are directly facing the enemy and paying the highest price. While the media has been preoccupied with searching for the identity of the heroes and militants, the simple and expressive response was: National unity - Jihad, Fatah and Popular Front.

Bringing matters back to their beginning, to the roots and simple basics, has ended all illusions. Political concepts have been reformed and cleansed, and what is not yet reformed is on the way to being so. This reformation includes the concepts of political realism, the political - diplomatic work, penetration of the enemy front inside and outside Palestine, the Palestinians, the Arabs, the world, and the relation of patriotism to nationalism and internationalism.

We have gotten the historical moment for which we paid a high price; thus, we will not let it slip from our hands, whatever the cost. In order for this to be a Palestinian and Arab milestone, we don't want the major issues to be lost in inter-Arab politics, inter-Palestinian or international politics. Henceforth, political realism should assume its real meaning of knowing the reality in order to change it, not to submit to it. Similarly, political work is a means of achieving goals, not an end in itself. Diplomacy is to bring others to our position, not the contrary. Both politics and diplomacy are to penetrate and weaken the enemy front, to know ourselves in order to free ourselves from the pressures of illusions, impatience and running after easy solutions.

Demagogy and crocodile tears will not succeed in making one thing of Husni Mubarak, Sadat, Islamboli, Suleiman Khater and the revolution of Egypt.* Demagogy will not shorten the distance between the two sides of Hamra Street (Beirut), since on the left are those who are writing with their hearts' blood for Palestine and freedom, but on the right are those who are still not ashamed to call the martyrs of the uprising «those killed.» Not all of them are Arab even though they all have prisons, exile and repressive means. However, the dangerous thing about this bitterness caused by the repression of our Arab relatives, is if it leads to political color blindness. The Palestinians who haven't distinguished themselves from the Arab regimes are considered those entitled to hold them accountable. In fact, the only Palestinians who should be entitled to hold the Arabs responsible, and who are really qualified to do so, are the Palestinians who can knock on their doors with hands as clean as the blood of martyrs.

This moment is very serious and may not easily come again. To protect it, questions should be asked bravely, for failure to ask the real questions in time has caused the loss of sacred blood in the past... Finally, a stand for the uprising is a stand for freedom, wherever and for whoever it may be. Therefore, any hostility to freedom and democracy is a plan of treason or defeat, however good the intentions may be. ●

* Besides referring to Mubarak and Sadat, the two Egyptian presidents who surrendered to US and Israeli dominance, this refers to Khaled Islamboli who assassinated Sadat, and to Suleiman Khater who on October 5, 1985, shot seven Israelis who had trespassed into the Egyptian security zone in the Sinai, and was later murdered by the regime's forces while imprisoned.

One Year of the Palestinian Uprising

The following article is an attempt to assess the first year of the Palestinian uprising as seen through the periscope of the calls issued by the United National Leadership.

Paper took on a new vitality in occupied Palestine. Leaflets and the Palestinian press have historically expressed popular opposition to the occupation, but in 1988, for the first time, the printed word became a daily struggle guide for all the people on a regular basis. Call no. 1 was issued on January 8, 1988, in the name of the Palestinian nationalist forces, one month after the outbreak of the uprising. It was quickly followed by call no. 2, issued by the United National Leadership (UNL) of the Uprising, signalling the stable functioning of a collective leadership representing the major Palestinian political trends. Since then, calls have been issued at weekly or biweekly intervals, eagerly awaited by the masses and painting an ongoing picture of the uprising's development. Through the calls one can trace how the uprising has built the political, economic, social and militant bases for its own continuation towards the establishment of an independent Palestinian state; one can also discern the democratic, popular outlines of the state that was recently declared by the PNC.

Comparing the calls with the actual unfolding events, one is immediately struck by the absurdity of the misconceptions that the uprising was either spontaneous in the sense of being without firm basis or reason, or alternately that it was «directed from outside.» What is most striking is the calls' close connection with mass action. The calls seldom dictate forms of resistance that have not already been initiated on the local level, i.e., tried in the battlefield in one or more places in Palestine.

It is most common that a new type of mass action or civil disobedience is first introduced generally, while the following call makes the directive more specific, and the next again prescribes organizational structures for making this act maximally effective. This shows the tangible daily give-and-take bet-

ween the UNL, the popular committees and the masses. One can infer that various forms of struggle are tried out to gain experience about their results, before being required of the people at large. The calls' main function then is not to «give orders» but to initiate, organize and coordinate action on a national basis, in this case, throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and on occasion reaching out to the Palestinians in the 1948 occupied land and the people of the Golan Heights.

Most calls begin with a brief assessment - in glowing terms - of the experience and achievements of the uprising in the foregoing period, while calling attention to upcoming political events - Shultz's shuttles, the Arab summit, the European Parliament meeting, a UN session, etc. This provides both an overall perspective and encouragement to the people of the uprising, while setting the stage for the concrete tasks of the week. Besides coordinating major demonstrations, strikes and boycotts, to make them more effective and force the occupation authorities to spread their troops on all fronts, the main function of the calls is organizing a new routine and quality of life, enabling the people to continue the uprising and advance towards total national civil disobedience.

THE SOURCE OF THE CALLS — A LEADERSHIP OF QUALITY

The fact that the UNL's only public appearance is through the calls is one indication of how it distinguishes itself not only from the traditional (usually reactionary and pro-Jordanian) notables, but also from the nationalist leadership that rose to prominence in the territories in the seventies. While the former carved out their place within the confines of occupation and functioned as agents for Arab reaction, the nationalist mayors and other public

figures represented the people's aspirations, but were soon attacked and deprived of all freedom of movement by the occupation authorities.

The UNL, having learned from the foregoing experience and based on the priorities of organizing an all-out popular revolt, is totally clandestine. Stemming chiefly from the Palestinian organizations that have resisted the occupation since 1967, the UNL is closely linked with the generation of militants who have served time in Israeli prisons, contributing a heavy dose of political and organizational training and perseverance. The UNL's composition is also linked to the proliferation of new mass organizations in the decade prior to the uprising, in which the Palestinian political organizations, and especially the left, took the initiative. These links are one explanation of the high degree to which the UNL's calls are implemented, as has been noted by a number of first-hand observers. For example, Joe Stork observed from his June 1988 visit to occupied Palestine: «The most organized villages seem to be those where at least two, and often all four, of the major organizations have a presence, in just about every case going back several years... the cadres of the major organizations are responsible for interpreting and implementing the *bayanat* (manifestos) of the Unified Leadership. The composition of this local leadership thus reflects the balance of political forces in the area» (*Middle East Report*-formerly *MERIP*, September-October 1988).

The UNL is the PLO in its dual sense of representing all the people, and representing the major Palestinian political and resistance organizations. It moreover functions in a way which provides a model for the PLO. Not depending on individuals or the dominance of any single group, its membership is rotating and in line with the various forces' actual activities. This insures not only secrecy but also internal democracy and unity. The consistency of the political line and program of action found in the consecutive calls shows that this is conducive to a realistic and correct political line that reflects the Palestinian na-

tioned consensus shared by organized forces and the masses.

THE INTERNAL FRONT

A high degree of internal unity and security has been essential for bringing about the current state of civil disobedience and popular authority. The calls always refer to this question in one aspect or another. One is warning collaborators and others who are not following the program concerning resignations and strikes. Another is alerting the people to rumors, false calls, provocations and other devices used by agents and the Shin Beth to plant division.

On another level, the calls deal with the need for unity of action despite the existence of different political trends. Calls no. 23 and no. 24 appeal to the national and progressive forces behind the green line (Palestinians living under occupation since 1948) to end their differences and unite for the sake of the uprising and Palestinian national rights, in reference to the disagreements that have prevailed between Rakah and other groups, such as the Sons of the Village, on how to best support the uprising. In this case, the call does not «take sides» or prescribe a specific solution, but leaves this up to the forces involved.

The approach is different in the case of groups in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, who make divisive actions or challenge the uprising's unity and adherence to the PLO. Here the problem is addressed via internal discussions, as in the case of Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement) with whom there have been discussions both inside and outside the occupied territories, aimed at preserving the maximal degree of unity. Still, the problem reached the point of being dealt with openly in one call, no. 29, which condemns Hamas' decision to declare a three-day strike in Al Khalil (Hebron), separate from the uprising's stated program. Here the call alerted the masses to the problem posed by this, whereas direct discussions are continuously conducted to try to get Hamas to join the UNL, or at least agree on the joint program of action.

The calls consistently link the uprising with the Palestinian revolution outside of Palestine, stressing the unity of the PLO. Accordingly, call no. 15

asserts that the new situation created by the uprising allows for the return of all Palestinian organizations to the PLO, based on the 18th PNC. Calls no. 20 and 21 contain strong statements against the inter-Palestinian fighting in the Beirut camps. This elicited the first explicit condemnation of another Palestinian force by name: «We condemn the savage bombing of Shatila and its destruction by the renegade group of Abu Musa, because this is a stab in the back to the PLO.»

POLITICAL VISION — NATIONALIST AND INTERNATIONALIST

The UNL's firmness in political line but flexibility in tactics is apparent in all its calls. The second call sets out interim demands such as withdrawal of the army from populated areas, release of detainees, an end to the iron fist, settlement-building, land confiscation and unjust taxation, etc. These are maintained but never confused with the ultimate goal of ending the occupation and establishing «a free Palestine - a united land, people and cause» (call no. 4). Throughout, it is clear that there can be no compromise on the Palestinian people's right to repatriation, self-determination and an independent state. Equally important, the calls expound the link between tactical and strategic goals as being an ongoing struggle, in view of the nature of the Zionist enemy. Call no. 29 expresses the basic similarity of the Labor and Likud blocs in uniting on repressing the uprising, adding after the Israeli elections: «we expect four more years of the rule of the most racist extremist trends in the Zionist entity. But this does not scare us.»

Even with the euphoria of what the uprising has achieved, the calls exhibit no illusions that victory can be quick, or that the US can be begged into supporting the side of justice. Those who argue that the PLO should make concessions for the sake of the people under occupation have perhaps not read call no. 17 which affirms Palestinian rejection of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, while asserting that in the eyes of the uprising, Security

Council resolution 605 (Dec. 22, 1987) cancels the council's earlier resolutions because it «expresses an international consensus; it deals with our people's cause as one of a people with legitimate rights to live on their land, and calls for sending international observers to the occupied territories.» As stated in call no. 26, it is the US that should offer concessions, not the PLO.

At the same time, the calls express a mature and concrete concept of political and diplomatic work, and how to widen the Palestinians' circle of friends and concurrently Israeli isolation. This is coupled with explicit support to the PLO's work to translate the uprising's achievements into international achievements, as expressed in call no. 27, prior to the PNC's 19th session. Call no. 28 expressed the dialectical relationship between struggle and diplomatic gains: «The enemy understands only the language of violence. Therefore, the more the flames of the uprising rage, the closer we are to victory, and the more our leadership and cause gain diplomatic status.»

Call no. 23 notes the three UN Security Council resolutions passed during the uprising (605, 607 and 608) which «spoke for the first time about the occupied *Palestinian* territories» as opposed to previous resolutions which referred to the «territories occupied by Israel since 1967,» without specifying their Palestinian identity. The call lists these three resolutions and the international exposure of the occupation's racist and fascist face as main achievements of the uprising, on a par with the Israeli economic losses, the fragmentation of the civil administration's apparatus and Jordan's decision to sever ties with the West Bank. The UNL carefully defines the uprising's demands to the international community in accordance with the adopted principles and responsibilities of the UN, such as enforcing the Geneva Convention of 1949, seeing this as a protective support to the Palestinian people, but always retaining the idea that the responsibility for advancing the struggle rests with the Palestinians

themselves.

The calls also differentiate between the various components of the international community. Calls no. 14 and 15 recognize the Soviet Union's leading role in the efforts to convene a fully empowered international conference, while call no. 17 terms the Soviet-Palestinian agreement, regarding legitimate Palestinian national rights, a just basis for which there is no alternative in a comprehensive solution of the Middle East problem. In call no. 29 the work of solidarity committees is recognized, and they are asked to pressure their governments to recognize the Palestinian state and exert economic and political pressure on 'Israel'. Call no. 28 notes the non-aligned countries' support for the Palestinian cause.

On another level, the UNL is obviously monitoring positions that are subject to change under the impact of the uprising, such as that of the EEC which is commended for originally not renewing certain economic treaties with 'Israel', then criticized in call no. 29 for signing three agreements despite continued Israeli repression.

The calls also express solidarity with other liberation movements. Call no. 20 designates June 25th as a day of struggle against racial discrimination, and solidarity with the people of South Africa and all people subject to this. Call no. 23 expresses solidarity with all the people struggling for freedom and independence, naming Namibia and Chile as well, while joining the international cry for the release of Nelson Mandela.

The uprising's democratic outlook is also reflected in relation to the Israeli society. Call no. 21 salutes the Jewish progressive, democratic and peace forces that support the Palestinians' national rights. In call no. 23, Jewish doctors who have treated the wounded of the uprising, and journalists who have exposed the occupation's brutality, are singled out for commendation, and urged to work to increase consciousness among Israelis since «a human being who accepts the repression of others can never be free.»

THE ARAB ENVIRONMENT

The uprising has posited the struggle of the masses under occupation as the central dynamic in the process of liberating Palestine. This, however, implies no indifference on the part of the UNL to the Arab political scene. By combining the concrete political positions expressed in successive calls, a clear picture emerges of the constellation of forces in the Arab world, and their respective roles.

The first concrete reference to Arab politics occurs in call no. 5 (January 5, 1988), terming the Jordanian regime «traitorous» and accusing it of trying to exploit the uprising. Coupled with this is a call for boycotting *Al Nahar*, the pro-Jordanian newspaper in the West Bank - the first of many measures that expressed and enforced the marginalization of pro-Jordanian figures by the uprising. Succeeding calls reject the various initiatives of Jordan and Egypt, naming the Arab reactionary forces which are most prominent in the attempts to abort the uprising, and pinpointing their alliance with US imperialism. This critique is generalized in call no. 10 to include all Arab states who welcome Shultz's shuttles, while call no. 13 denounces the reactionary attempts to delay the Summit of the Uprising.

The calls also recognize the role of the opposing camp in the Arab world by praising the mass demonstrations in support of the uprising, while saluting the Lebanese nationalist masses and the people on the Golan on a par with the Palestinians in the 1948 occupied territories - indicating where the uprising sees its main sources of support. The Arab nationalist states are dealt with in relation to concrete events: Algeria is praised for its initiative to convene the Summit of the Uprising; Libya and Algeria are commended for their efforts to reinforce the PLO's unity and align all Arab nationalist forces against the Shultz plan; meanwhile, there are repeated calls to Syria to normalize relations with the PLO.

The calls also define the supportive environment which the Arab world could constitute for the uprising. This is

most obvious in the UNL's demands to the Arab summit. Call no. 12 makes clear «to the Arab kings and presidents that the Palestinian people do not seek money; they are ready to suffer hunger and poverty, but never to surrender.» The uprising's demands to the summit are chiefly for a united Arab stand, publicly declared, refusing Shultz's plan, while adhering to the PLO's status, Palestinian rights and the concept of an international conference. These basic positions of support for the uprising are linked with a call for releasing political detainees from Arab jails and instating democratic freedoms, so that the Arab masses can «join with the masses of the victorious uprising» (call no. 17).

Notably, the calls do not spell out specific demands to the Arab masses other than designating occasional days for solidarity demonstrations. However, what the UNL would like to see in the Arab world can be inferred from references to Lebanon. Besides calling for the Palestinian-Syrian-Lebanese nationalist triangle of steadfastness, the UNL says: «The struggle of South Lebanon and the struggle of the uprising should unite in order to speed up the process of ending the era of Camp David in the Arab area, in order to begin a new era for a new struggle» (call no. 29). The fact that the UNL does not elaborate on what is expected of the Arab masses is surely connected to the generally low level of the response of the Arab national liberation movement to the new situation created by the uprising. As one sees from the UNL's directives in Palestine, it always gears its guidelines to the concrete realities and possibilities. An upsurge in the struggle of the Arab masses and progressive forces would surely spur a new dialogue on how to enact change in the whole area, which would then be reflected in the UNL's calls.

ARMED STRUGGLE

There has been a tendency in the media to contrast «the revolution of the stones» with the Palestinian armed resistance which began in organized

OCCUPIED PALESTINE

form in the late sixties. Concurrently, the idea is promoted that armed struggle is outdated, or that the occupation can be ended without it. Indeed, the political and geographical terrain on which Palestinians under occupation struggle differs markedly from the situation in which the freedom fighters rose to prominence, first in Jordan and later in Lebanon. However, the contents of the UNL's calls show that the distinction is not one of principle. The fact that the masses of the uprising have thus far mainly employed what could be termed «non-military» weapons, from stones to homemade devices like firebombs, does not reflect rejection of forms of struggle that are more advanced in the military sense. Rather it reflects keen awareness of how to capitalize on what is possible at a given time, how to balance between mass and military struggle whereby the broadest segments of the people are involved in militant struggle, meanwhile steadily building towards other potentials.

The other side of this coin is using available resources to maximize the enemy's losses, not only materially where the main damage is being inflicted by economic boycott and civil disobedience, but also in the war of nerves whereby a people with few resources are driving the world's fourth-ranking army to distraction. In this context, one understands the significance of the UNL's declaring April 21st as the Day of the Palestinian Molotov in response to the Israeli authorities officially permitting settlers to fire on molotov-throwers, showing that the masses are not afraid but rather capable of escalating in step with the occupation's escalating brutality. Firebombs have indeed been the most prevalent weapon next to stones. From the beginning of the uprising until the end of October, 1275 firebombs were thrown against Israeli military targets, as reported by the Jerusalem daily *Al Shaab*, based on the statements of Israeli military sources.

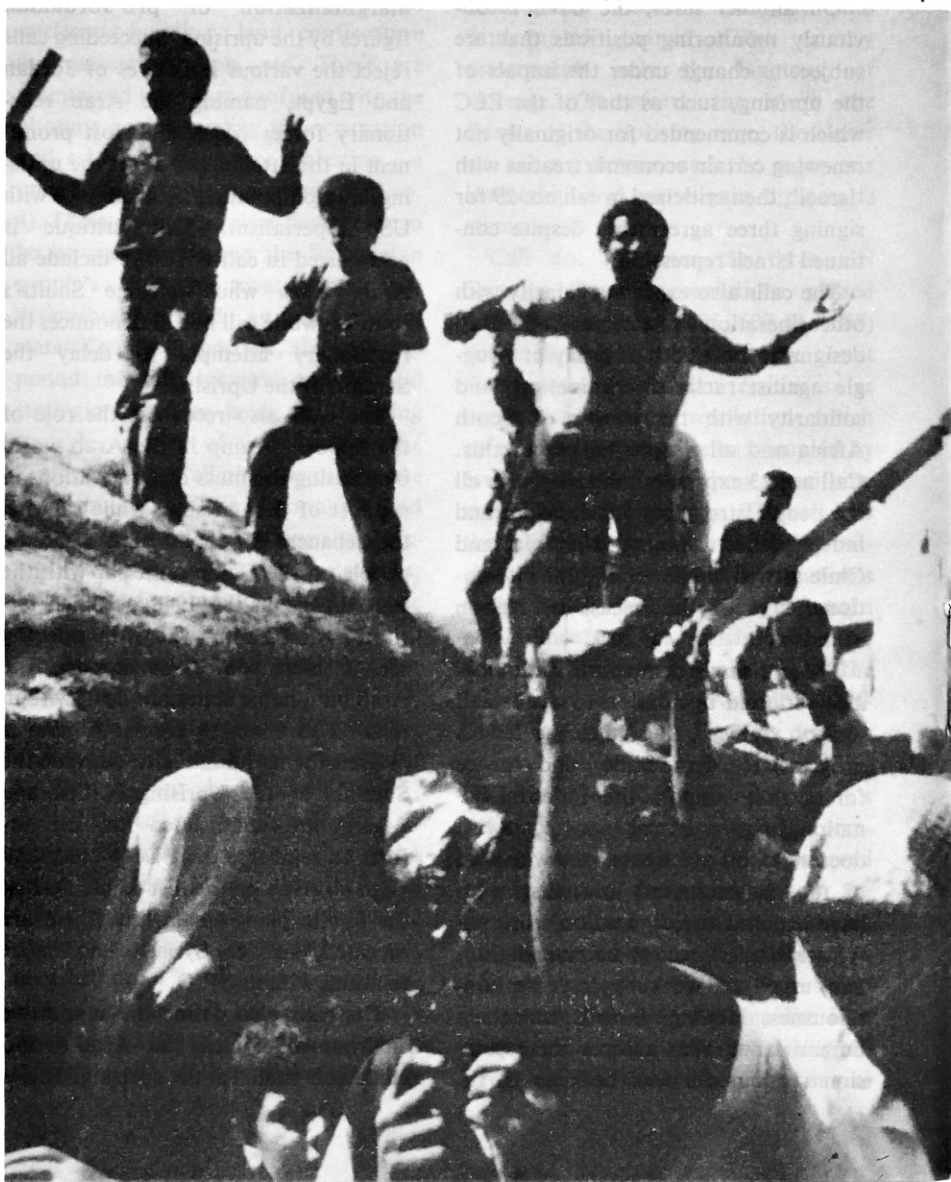
Perhaps the most effective selectively employed weapon, in terms of inflicting material damage and loss of morale in the enemy's ranks, has been setting

fires. Call no. 7 (February 14, 1988) declared a war of attrition against the occupation and settlers, including «burning the land under the feet of the invaders.» In the spring, this was literally implemented, as 400 fires damaged over 40,000 acres in the Galilee and Jerusalem areas, and signalled the involvement of Palestinians living in the 1948 occupied regions of Palestine.

In fact, the calls put no restrictions on the means of struggle to be employed; on the contrary, they routinely urge escalating the uprising with all revolutionary means. They also express an integrated view of the different stages and forms of struggle required in the liberation process. Call no. 10 states: «Our comprehensive and tremendous uprising - the stones,

molotovs and various means of popular struggle, first and foremost the legitimate armed struggle against the occupiers - is drawing the picture of our homeland with the free Palestinian will.» Call no. 17 states: «The uprising has confirmed that there is no alternative to struggle and protracted people's war, as the way to achieve our rights,» while call no. 14, issued after the martyrdom of Abu Jihad, pledges to all the martyrs that «the day will come when the sound of the kalashnikov rings out in every part of Palestine...» Call no. 18 demands that the Arab leaders permit the Palestinian commandos to operate across the Arab borders towards occupied Palestine. Obviously, the role of armed resistance is included in the UNL's vision of the liberation process.

October 16th demonstration in Yatta to protest



CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Total civil disobedience, as defined by the uprising, essentially means the masses' independence from the occupation authorities. Reviewing the calls, one can chart the progress of this process. From the beginning, the emphasis was on inflicting economic damage to the Israeli economy, to make the occupation materially unprofitable, meanwhile calling for resignations from the «civil» administration apparatus established by the occupation authorities. Call no. 13, issued on April 12th, contains the first comprehensive assessment of the uprising's accomplishments in terms of moving towards civil disobedience. It lists five main points: (1) the beginning of the dissolution of the civil administration



Shin Bet killing of two Palestinians. Photo by Neal Cassidy, first foreign photographer to be shot by Israeli troops.



apparatus; with the resignations of policemen, customs officials and tax collectors; (2) the majority of people are not paying taxes; (3) the boycott of Zionist goods for which there is a local alternative; (4) the resignation of a large number of appointed municipal councilmen; and (5) the work boycott. These were to remain the basic elements of civil disobedience, each being expanded over time, and some new elements added.

The boycott of the civil administration was expanded with the resignation of department heads and, by early summer, employees in the license and traffic departments, and the regulation, housing, ID and population registry offices, as stipulated in call no. 18. Added to this, the people were called on





to stop paying the fines and bails determined by the Zionist courts, and the fees exacted by the appointed municipal councils, as well as to boycott security clearances. In call no. 15, the people were requested to boycott the new ID's which the occupation authorities tried to impose in the Gaza Strip, as a new means of control. There was resistance to the Zionists' confiscation of old ID's and the issuance of new ones, but this proved to be the only measure called for by the UNL, which has been impossible to implement strictly. It was subsequently dropped from succeeding calls, as it proved impossible for the masses to move without ID's in the current stage. Nonetheless, due to the basic successes achieved, the UNL was able to call a day of total boycott of the civil administration on June 19th. With call no. 29, issued November 20, 1988, a new step was taken with the call for judges in civil courts to resign.

The tax boycott has been successively tightened, starting with resignations and followed up by the masses' and strike forces' physical confrontation of the tax authorities, as was prominent in the war of the taxes which raged in West Bank towns and villages last summer. Another economic measure was added with call no. 21 which urged people to withdraw savings from Israeli banks.

The boycott of Zionist goods began with the specification of a few products in call no. 3 (sweets, cigarettes and dairy products), growing to include both agricultural and industrial products for which there are local replacements, as of call no. 18 issued May 29, 1988. It became more than a consumer boycott as of call no. 21, with the stipulation of not allowing the export of Israeli products to the Palestinian market, nor advertising for them in the local press, as well as pursuing any one who continues to market them. A key to the enforcement of the twin boycott of Israeli products and tax payment has been the commercial strike which began in the early days of the uprising and has been sustained ever since.

The work boycott stems from the general strike that prevailed in the Gaza Strip from the first days of the uprising. Like the commercial strike, it could not have been sustained indefinitely without organization. While in the case of the commercial strike, call no. 5 set a schedule allowing people to buy necessities, it was apparent that a general strike could not be enforced indefinitely until people had alternative sources of livelihood. The solution found by the UNL was to totally boycott work in Zionist settlements as of call no. 6, while those with jobs in 'Israel' should prepare for gradually boycotting this work, meanwhile observing the declared general strike days. As of call no. 17, people were urged to boycott the employment offices connected to the occupation authorities. Call no. 26 advised workers not to remain overnight in 'Israel'. Call no. 29 stipulated that fruit pickers should boycott this work in 'Israel' - hitting the occupiers' economy during the harvest season.

The other side of the boycott coin is building popular authority, as a prerequisite for sustaining civil disobedience. Reviewing the calls over a year's time, one is struck by the transition from the first half of the year, when the predominant concern is what is not to be done, to the second half, when the calls are more oriented towards what is to be done, i.e., building the political, economic and social basis for people to organize their own lives. While the first calls stress days of general strike, protesting the occupation and its various acts of repression, by the summer, general strikes are called in order to build popular authority - consolidating the popular committees, rebuilding demolished houses, holding a national health day, etc.

POPULAR AUTHORITY

«Our people have begun creating a new national lifestyle and consolidating their national authority» (call no. 13, April 12, 1988). This began with very simple things corresponding to the direct needs of the uprising - calls for doctors to help the injured, for all to

help needy families, the families of martyrs and prisoners, etc. With the continuation of the uprising, the directives become more specific, both in the form of action prescribed and the assignment of tasks to different sectors of the population, in accordance with their role and assets.

Already from the contents of call no. 1, it is obvious that popular committees are in place and carrying a major organizational role as are the strike forces. By the time we reach call no. 18 in the late spring, there are, in addition to neighborhood committees, specialized committees for health, general security, guarding of property and crops, information, popular education, agriculture, storage and distribution of supplies, and family solidarity committees for helping the needy, as well as committees for special sectors: merchants, workers, students, etc.

The new thing is not only the proliferation of committees, but their new way of working and their initiative which is commended in the UNL's calls as experience to be spread. A newsletter issued by the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees in July 1988, states: «The national and mass organizations' previous general attitude of holding fast to traditional and narrow methods of carrying out activities amongst the masses has now, in the midst of the uprising, found a new kind of flexibility and maneuverability; furthermore, the mass organizations have done exceptionally well in creating variety in their work that has allowed for the active participation of large segments of the population in the work of popular committees in villages, camps and cities, in neighborhood committees, medical committees and land rehabilitation committees.»

From the beginning the UNL exhibited clear awareness that while the strength of the uprising lies in the participation of all the people, still different sectors can and should have different roles. The distinction is made on both a class and functional basis, i.e., how to best utilize the skills and resources of different sectors for the

common good. Call no. 2 assigns the leading role to the workers in view of the impact of their strike, while also singling out for special mention the revolutionary role of the camp masses.

Successive calls assign progressively more specific tasks to different sectors in accordance with their ability. For example, from call no. 1, doctors were called on to mark their cars, so that they could be easily identified for helping the injured; they should be on alert along with the pharmacists. Call no. 3 proposes specialized health committees to aid those under siege. By call no. 14, these committees are charged with conducting first aid and preventive medicine courses. Indeed, the independent Palestinian medical sector has mushroomed under the uprising. One example is the Medical Relief Committees which date back to 1979, and now encompass 800 health care professionals. While in 1982, their mobile clinics saw 2,000 patients, in 1987, they served 50,000; in the first five months of the uprising alone, they served 28,000.

Another case in point is that of students. Call no. 3 advocates making the Zionist policy of closing educational institutions backfire by mobilizing all students «in the school of revolution.» As the uprising became a permanent phenomenon, students were directed to contribute by organizing their own life, in this case popular education. Students were urged to coordinate with mass organizations and the staff of educational institutions to force the reopening of the schools, to struggle for the release of their detained colleagues, and above all not to leave the country in search of an education, as happened in the past.

«LET US BE OUR OWN MASTERS» — COLLECTIVELY

Starting with call no. 4, one finds the guidelines for self-sufficiency: tilling the land, vegetable gardening, keeping livestock, frugality, encouraging the national economy and full capacity at local production sites, for as noted in call no. 8, the Vietnamese defeated US

tyranny not by guns alone, but also with their small farms. By striving for self-sufficiency, the people of the uprising are simultaneously revitalizing the cooperative traditions of the peasantry, and creating new social patterns. A biproduct of this is a tendency towards class solidarity and in some cases, class leveling.

Women are being affected by the new models for production. The best example is cooperatives for processing and preserving local produce as a contribution to self-sufficiency. At the same time, this provides employment to rural women. One cooperative, which is called Our Production is our Pride, lists among its aims: «The transformation of women's traditional role in the domestic economy into a positive role in the national economy.» Our Production is our Pride is run on a truly democratic basis, with the general membership making all decisions.

Through the successive calls, one can distinguish a new mode of social relations in factory work. The UNL calls for doubling production at local workplaces, but at the same time warns factory owners against dismissing workers, deducting for strike days or prolonging working hours; rather working conditions should be improved and the maximum number of workers employed. On this basis, workers are encouraged to enter into labor contracts in line with the national interest.

Along the same lines, landlords are instructed to reduce rents by 25%, while tenants are urged to pay without evasion; doctors are also required to reduce their fees (of course, many are treating the wounded of the uprising free). This is part of a deliberate policy to make a relative redistribution of income for the sake of bolstering steadfastness, as became clear in call no. 29. This directed the popular committees to form national levying committees to collect from those who were able to give (merchants not harmed during the uprising, factory owners, employees and academics) «in order to achieve social solidarity.» This money should be distributed on a regular basis, at the end of each month, to the needy. In

this, the popular committees, the backbone of popular authority and the seed of the Palestinian state, have taken over another «state» function. The occupation's illegal taxation has been superseded by the revolutionary tax and welfare system.

SEMILIBERATION

Call no. 22 of July 21st states: «Our masses' new lifestyle and the many new forms of confronting the occupation's repression, are indications that the uprising has entered a qualitatively new stage.» The same call stresses that *all* problems should be referred to the popular committees (a situation that already exists in most places), in order to replace the occupation authority with popular authority. This state of semiliberation is also reflected in the battlefield; features, though not the general character, of liberated areas, can already be discerned. Since the early days of the uprising, especially in the Gaza Strip, there were repeated instances of the occupation troops being driven out of camps or quarters, if only for a short period; curfews were successfully defied. This phenomenon soon spread to the West Bank where the occupation was forced to send large contingents of soldiers to recapture villages and camps. It has been steadily escalated since. Call no. 20 of June 21 notes that in the foregoing week, there had been a «new transition» with large confrontations, molotovs, facing settlers and forcing the occupation to announce its weakness. The calls of this period emphasize collective defiance of curfews, arrests, house demolitions and tax collection. By the autumn, evading arrest had become a mass phenomenon. Call no. 29 notes that: «All the wanted and pursued are participating in the confrontations against the enemy forces; they are masked and know to withdraw at the right moment, lest they be assassinated or detained... we will prove to the enemy that none of their many varied attempts to use force will be successful. Our people have broken the harness; they are not ready to accept anything less than freedom and independence.»

The Lessons of Four Decades of Struggle

In *Democratic Palestine* 30, we printed an article by Dr. George Habash, analyzing the reality of the Zionist state, entitled 'Israel' - 40 Years. The article below is the conclusion of this analysis, entitled Lessons of Four Decades of our People's Militant Experience. It reviews past tendencies and mistakes, with the aim of contributing to a new Palestinian and Arab strategy of confrontation.

THE LESSONS OF FOUR DECADES OF OUR PEOPLE'S MILITANT EXPERIENCE

On the occasion of the ill-fated fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the state of 'Israel', we cannot but speak, though briefly, about the most significant lessons gleaned from the mistakes committed in the process of Palestinian and Arab nationalist confrontation of the Zionist invasion over more than half a century. The starting point of such an assessment should by necessity be comprehensive, scientific and integrated knowledge of the enemy. Such knowledge becomes doubly necessary in a situation where there are heaps of false information, and policies of ignorance and obscurantism pursued by a series of hostile parties. Yet it is even truer that our approach should be complemented by careful observation of the gaps and errors we ourselves have been committing in the same period. Knowledge of the enemy and critical reassessment of the course of our struggle are two essential conditions. There is no way to overlook them when drawing up a comprehensive confrontation strategy equal to the challenges of the Zionist-imperialist project which targets all of us.

The first lesson of our errors concerns the dialectics between the Palestinian national dimension and the pan-Arab dimension of the struggle against the Zionist enemy. How have we dealt with this extremely important issue?

Historically, this issue has played a principal role in determining the advances as well as the retreats of the Palestinian struggle. Mistakes in solving the Palestinian national / pan-Arab equation have led to the exaggeration of one dimension at the expense of the other, bringing about the most serious and harmful consequences. The history of the Palestinian struggle is full of evidence to support this hypothesis.

In 1936, the reactionary Arab position, particularly that of the Hashemites, made a particular contribution to foiling the longest and most comprehensive strike in our people's history, which had reached the level of civil disobedience. Also in 1939, the Arab reactionary regimes contributed to thwarting the Palestinian rebellion. Through their influence on some Palestinian leaders, they planted illusions about the intentions of the colonial British Mandate authorities. The same tragic scene was repeated in 1948 when the Arab armies, led by Prince Abdullah of Jordan, came and asked the Palestinians to depend on them to liberate Palestine from the «Zionist filth» (as Abdullah said). These armies performed the well-known

drama of losing Palestine, in spite of the popular resistance and heroic steadfastness of the Palestinians.

Since then, the relationship between the Palestinian and the Arab national dimension has taken a wrong course; the Arab national aspect, for various reasons, overwhelmed the essential Palestinian aspect. The problem became even more complex when the Jordanian reactionary regime took part in the conspiracy to liquidate the national identity of the Palestinian people.

It is impossible in such an article to cover the entire development of the Palestinian and Arab liberation movements' outlook, including our own, on this issue. Therefore, we shall confine ourselves to the most prominent stages of development as far as we, the PFLP, earlier the Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM), are concerned:

1. The first stage covers the period 1948-1967. In this period, the Arab national dimension was clearly held above the Palestinian one. At that time, we were in the framework of the ANM. The reason for such an erroneous outlook may be found in a number of factors, including the level of our development and the spread of the liberationist national trend which took a clear anti-imperialist direction, represented at its height by Nasser and Nasserism. At that time, we gave priority to the Arab national dimension, rather than the Palestinian one, in the struggle against the Zionist enemy, though we didn't overlook the need for having Palestinian action, slogans and programs. This developed gradually in our consciousness and practice, going through different stages, including the foundation of the Palestinian branch of the ANM, up to the establishment of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) at the end of 1967. At that time, we succeeded in grasping the correct way to deal with the problem.

2. The second stage began with the end of 1967, the year of defeat, and has continued to the present. During this period, we were functioning within the framework of the PFLP. We stressed the necessity of safeguarding and crystallizing the particularly Palestinian dimension within the general Arab national framework. At that time, we were able to grasp a sound approach to this very sensitive problem, regardless of occasional mistakes.

In brief, it can be said that this problem has given birth to two wrong tendencies which appeared at different historical stages. The two continue to coexist in contradiction to each other...

A. The first tendency tries to subjugate the Palestinian national dimension to the Arab national one. Its supporters raise

slogans such as: «The way to Palestine is through Arab unity!» This tendency dominated the Arab liberation movement in the fifties and up to the mid-sixties. Its prevalence coincided with the emergence of the Arab national bourgeois and their respective struggles for national independence. The period was characterized by almost total absence of a distinct Palestinian role. Our people were subject to continuous attempts at liquidation by both the Zionist enemy and the Jordanian or other Arab regimes.

B. The second tendency was narrow Palestinian nationalism which upheld the motto, «We by ourselves alone,» to justify a secessionist logic of disengaging from the Arab nationalist dimension and following Arab provincialism, receding to extremely destructive conflicts. This tendency originally grew as a reaction to the policies of liquidation (of the Palestinian national identity). It draws its strength from its militancy at times when the Palestinian identity becomes an accusation in many Arab countries. In addition, it expresses a militant affiliation for which its advocates pay a heavy price under the yoke of occupation and the iron fist. Narrow Palestinian nationalism was nourished by the Arab situation which generates all kinds of hated regionalism, communalism and sectarianism. It was also nourished by the miserable status of the false Arab nationalist propaganda of which remains only hostility to Palestinian nationalism and attempts to liquidate it.

We cannot agree with either of these tendencies. Both have been tested during the last forty years; both proved to be lacking the correct perception of the dialectical relationship between Palestinian and Arab nationalism, as well as the scientific solution to this equation. This deficiency has led to a series of problematic consequences.

While engaged in the struggle for national liberation and independence, we cannot but take into consideration a number of invariables, the most important of which are the following:

1. Palestinian patriotism is essential; the particular Palestinian identity, as now embodied in the PLO, has to be stressed. It is the only way to keep our cause in the proper perspective as a question of a people, self-determination and legitimate rights, not one of territorial borders and refugees. Concern for the Palestinian identity, and protecting it from being liquidated or confiscated, is part of the militant confrontation of the so-called 'Zionist identity'. Our Palestinian character is the antithesis of the Zionist character in Palestine. It is an effective weapon against Judaization on the one hand and Jordanization on the other. Needless to say, such emphasis by no means involves any contradiction with the Arab national identity or with the Arab national dimension of the whole conflict; on the contrary, it complements and consolidates that dimension.

2. Also essential is the Arab national dimension of the Palestinian issue. Without an active Palestinian movement interacting in harmony with its Arab nationalist environment, it is impossible to seriously think of the national liberation struggle or to preserve the achievements of our people and revolution. We do not say this solely on the basis of the Palestinian cause's ties to Arab nationalism. We also say it because of the particularity of our cause, the Palestinian dispersion, the importance of rearguard bases, the Arab national aspect of the struggle against the Zionist enemy, the fact that the Israeli factor has become a direct factor in the strug-

gles of many of the Arab peoples, etc. All such considerations make us accept the interconnection of the Palestinian and Arab national struggles. We are now talking in general terms, because of limited space and other considerations. Yet we do understand that the dialectics between the Palestinian and the Arab national dimensions are much more complex than can be covered in such a brief way.

3. Our concern about the Palestinian nationalism and particularity should be no means push us to regionalism or its most harmful expression, chauvinism. Our concern about the Arab national aspect of the struggle must not drag us to positions of liquidating the Palestinian identity, even if the Arab nationalist movement happens to be of a Nasserist or undoubtedly progressive character.

4. The importance of correctly solving the problematic Palestinian / Arab national equation leads us to look into the relationship of the revolution to the Arab masses and regimes. The prevailing mentality was to call for relations with the Arab regimes instead of the popular masses, most often rendering the latter relations temporary and tactical. The PLO's relations with the Arabs should, therefore, be corrected by rectifying the links with the masses, which must remain the axis of Palestinian-Arab relations.

5. Being an essential part of the international forces of liberation, progress and peace, the Palestinian national movement cannot help but be aligned with the progressive Arab regimes, organizations and forces. This alliance should be determined once and for all, because of the very character of the Palestinian revolution and its status in the ongoing struggle locally, nationally and internationally. It is absolutely impermissible to make use of the deviations of some nationalist or progressive Arab forces to justify cancelling the demarcation line between the progressive and nationalist regimes and forces on one hand, and the reactionary, collaborating ones on the other. The most important question is: Is it permissible to get confused between the two camps? Are the progressives in practice equal to the reactionary forces in practice, concerning the cause of Palestine? Consequently, can we maintain the same level of relations with the two?

6. Our alliance with the camp of progress in the Arab world neither prevents nor contradicts the establishment of broader Palestinian-Arab relations, including with what are called the conservative regimes which are not directly involved in conspiracies against the Palestinian people, their patriotic cause and armed revolution.

Taking these invariables into account, the proper attitude towards the dialectics of Palestinian-Arab relations is to concentrate on the preservation of the particular Palestinian national dimension in close dialectic association with the general Arab national dimension. It means to ally with the camp of progress, essentially represented by the Arab masses, without detaching ourselves from the Arab regimes which are not directly involved in the conspiracies to liquidate the Palestinian cause.

This point of view is based on rejection of all Palestinian seclusionism which tries, under the pretext of the Arab weakness, to spread despair and frustration. It also rejects all kinds of regionalism, communalism and sectarianism which are the expression of the weakness and disarray in the current

Arab situation. On the other hand, it is against the false Arab propaganda which uses Arab slogans to cover its impotence and persistently tries to confiscate the independent Palestinian role.

The decisive conclusion in this respect can be summed up as follows: There is no way to ignore the Palestinian national factor, nor to take this factor in isolation from its broad Arab national dimension.

The second lesson is about the international factor in the struggle.

While dealing with the experience of the forty years since the establishment of the Zionist entity, we cannot but notice the great influence exercised by world public opinion and the international community in the emergence of this entity, as well as in its preservation and consolidation over the years. Without an international consensus burdened with the abhorrent shadow of Nazism, without the illusions about Zionism which penetrated even the circles of our allies, what has happened would not have happened; the whole history of the region would have taken a different course.

Today, with the increased interconnection of the regional and international factors of the conflict, whereby the whole world appears as a single battlefield, the struggle to win over world public opinion and the international community seems even more essential. Any underestimation or ignorance of the international factor appears as infantile adventurism, causing the most serious harm to the process of our struggle on both the Palestinian and Arab national levels.

A prerequisite for our success in the struggle to restore the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, is the collapse of the image of 'Israel' in the eyes of world public opinion, and its emergence as an ultra-reactionary force which threatens world peace and stability, and is in the forefront of the imperialist-reactionary assault to hinder the development of the revolutionary liberation movement in the world. As stated above, the last forty years have shown the reactionary, fascist and racist nature of 'Israel'. We only have to go on waging our struggle wisely and skillfully to win over more circles of sympathizers and supporters for our legitimate cause.

'Israel' is strategically allied with US imperialism; it supports counterrevolution in Africa and Latin America; it is a partner of the US military-industrial complex in Star Wars, being in possession of the atomic bomb as well as its delivery system-the Jericho II missile which constitutes a threat to the southern part of the USSR.

We have a concrete possibility of success in this struggle (for world public opinion). We have already made considerable progress in this respect, especially after the popular uprising in the occupied territories, which has clearly shown the racist, fascist character of the Zionist entity. Yet complete victory in this battle requires a number of conditions, primarily the following:

1. It is essential to maintain the strength and tempo of the struggle, and to guarantee its continuous ascent. No matter how fully our cause and tragedy are understood, the world does not respect the weak; the force of logic is never an alternative to the logic of force... Moreover, the precision of the Palestinian revolution's political line plays a decisive role in

this respect.

2. It is necessary to come closer to the attitude of the international community without compromising on essential matters, and to give up rigid positions which widen the gap between the special Palestinian position and the international position. It is necessary to reconcile with the international community which has come closer to understanding the legitimacy of our national cause, as expressed in a number of resolutions and positions adopted by international and regional bodies, including the socialist countries, the nonaligned countries, the OAU and the Islamic Conference.

How can we meet the position of the international community while maintaining the essence of our demands and goals, and avoiding compromising our full national rights? How can we resolve this apparent contradiction between accepting the international will and resolutions, and adhering to our ultimate goals and slogans? Within the limits of this article we are going to give answers:

- a) How to keep in line with the international will and the mainstream of world public opinion, so that we don't become isolated from the movement of the world and its effective forces?

The point of departure for answering this question lies in formulating an interim political program which is in the realm of historical possibility and acceptable to the majority of the international community. Sticking to mere repetition of general and ultimate slogans is not understood in international circles and may make it impossible to win over broad sectors for our struggle against the enemy. Thus the interim program of the PLO, the program of repatriation, self-determination and an independent state, was appropriate. Hence, our support to it and our adoption and defence of it as being the program of Palestinian national consensus, which also enjoys the support of the overwhelming majority of the international community. Undoubtedly, the success of the Palestinian people in restoring their legitimate rights to repatriation and building their independent state will pave more than half of the way to the liquidation of the Zionist-imperialist project in our homeland, and to the realization of the ultimate goals of our people.

Some may oppose the concept of stages in the struggle, saying that the attainment of an interim solution may come in the way of a strategic solution for the Palestinian issue. This point is going to be dealt with while answering the second question.

- b) How can we reconcile with the will of the international community without compromising the national rights of our people? What is the way out of this contradiction?

Our confidence about resolving this paradox stems from realization that the reality of the Zionist state can be exposed before a broad spectrum of world public opinion which mistakenly thought that they had planted a «lamb of peace» and an «oasis of democracy» in the Arab «desert of repression and barbarism». We are not exaggerating or relying on illusions; the world is gradually coming closer to understanding the reality of the Zionist entity.

The Israeli strategy is based on the concept of the enemy as including all those whom it has invaded and may invade for religious, nationalist or political reasons, as well as their actual and potential allies. According to this strategy, the danger lies

not only in the real capacities of the enemy but also in its latent potentials. Israeli aggression aims not only at undermining a real threat, but also any potential one.

According to this concept of the enemy, the concept of force - its policies and components - is defined in such a way that military force is the sum of all economic, human, social and scientific capacities. Guided by this strategy, 'Israel' concluded a memorandum of strategic understanding with US imperialism, which has been further developed so that the Zionist entity has become equal to the NATO allies in the imperialist network. Overlooking the details of this memo and its annexes which make 'Israel' a spearhead in the offensive against all the forces of peace, progress and socialism in the world, we can clearly see that the essence of the relationship between Zionism and imperialism can be summed up as follows: 'Israel' is at the service of the imperialist plan globally, while world imperialism is ready to serve the regional objectives of the Zionist project. This relationship has been translated into reality on many ugly occasions. 'Israel' has rendered many a service to world imperialism, especially in dirty work which the USA, for many reasons, could not directly undertake; 'Israel' acted as a surrogate for the boss of the imperialist camp. On the other hand, throughout the years of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Washington has placed itself at the disposal of 'Israel' and its «grand» regional schemes, with all the military capacities of the imperialist camp.

In this relationship, 'Israel' has risen from being a hiring instrument to being a partner in the imperialist camp's global system of interests. In view of the supreme Israeli strategy and the nature of the relationship between Zionism and imperialism, it is natural to state that the interconnection has become equally strong and organic between the success of the Palestinian people in retrieving their ultimate rights from the claws of the Zionist state, and the success of the forces of peace, progress, liberation and socialism in their battle against the imperialist center. The battle against these two reactionary centers becomes one; no matter how different the fields and the weapons, the protagonists remain the same.

Of course gradualism is not the only way we can win world public opinion to our side. The current struggle over the convention of a peace conference for the Middle East is also a battle, an intense one, between the revolutionary and the counter-revolutionary camps on the regional and international levels. The international conference we are for is an arena for the struggle of wills, and a means to build the broadest world public opinion against the arrogant stubbornness of Zionism. It has become clear that only 'Israel' and the US are refusing a fully empowered international conference under UN sponsorship, with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council, as well as the equal participation of the PLO. Palestinian support to the convention of the conference greatly contributed to transferring the ball into the Israeli court. International pressure has started to shift from being exerted on the Palestinian-Arab side, to being exerted on 'Israel'.

A rigid attitude towards the international conference could have isolated and suffocated the Palestinian national efforts. How can we imagine the status of the Palestinian struggle on the international level without the support of the Soviet Union and the other socialist and friendly countries? How can we

imagine that the Palestinian position be in sharp contradiction to the positions of the international allies of our revolution?

Serious, comprehensive confrontation of the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary alliance is impossible without Palestinian, Arab and international agreement. Such agreement has to be based on a well-defined political program which is within the limits of historical possibility. As experience has shown, the current program of repatriation, self-determination and the establishment of an independent state is the historically possible program in the foreseeable future; and an international conference is the suitable mechanism for implementing this program.

Thus we can face the Israeli dimension with the Palestinian dimension, the Zionist dimension with an Arab nationalist dimension, the imperialist dimension with an internationalist dimension-all within the framework of comprehensive, persistent confrontation until complete freedom and independence are won.

As for the shift from the interim to the strategic slogans, this depends on our ability to make this shift within the realm of the historically possible, not only in the realm of propaganda and proclamations. The proper beginning is to convince our allies that the enemy we are facing is not only a threat to the Palestinians and Arabs, but also a threat to world peace and stability - to all the forces of peace, progress and socialism.

'Israel' and Zionism are playing an active counterrevolutionary role in Africa, Asia and Latin America. They are getting fully involved in the schemes of Washington and the West against the socialist countries. They are trying to revive the so-called Jewish question in these countries and to put the immigration of Jews on their agendas, and carrying out broad propaganda and agitation campaigns against socialism. In this way, 'Israel' provides us with the objective basis for success in our task. It remains for us to make good use of the objective basis through a sound policy which does not drop strategy from the current and interim tactical considerations, nor overlook the ultimate goals of the Palestinian people.

The third lesson concerns the dialectics between the struggle inside Palestine and the revolution outside (the interior and exterior).

This question emerged especially after the 1967 war when all Palestine and about half of all the Palestinian people fell under occupation. Before 1967, a Palestinian center in exile had not clearly materialized. Palestinian struggle was just beginning. The militant role of the Palestinians in the 1948 occupied territories was not as clear as it is now. There is a wide controversy over the nature of the relationship between the interior and the exterior factors... Many a time the one overwhelmed the other, especially the latter at the expense of the former...

The PFLP has been in the forefront of the tendency which acknowledged that there were two essential bases of the Palestinian revolution, which are mutually interdependent.

1. The first base is inside occupied Palestine. There, half of our people are waging a fierce daily struggle against attempts at political liquidation and cancelling their national identity, against Judaization and settlement-building, plans for joint Israeli-Jordanian administration, the conspiracy to appoint ►

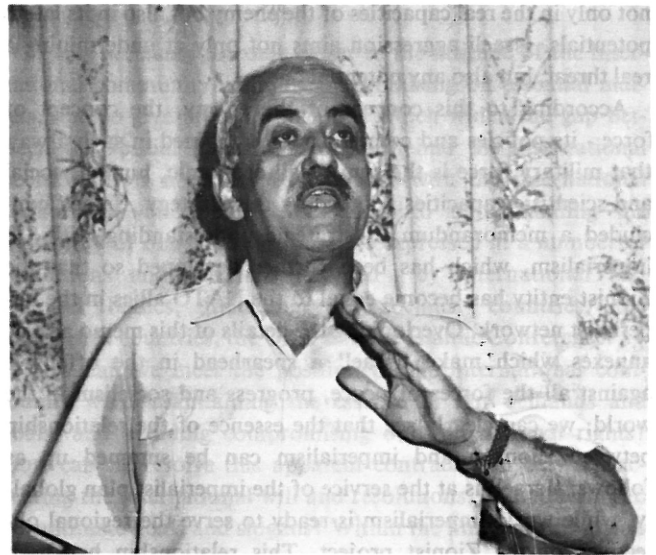
(Palestinian officials) and attempts to create a reactionary leadership as an alternative to the PLO. In brief, they have fought all the policies and attempts of the occupation to liquidate our national cause, whether through direct violent methods or political schemes coordinated with the Jordanian regime.

2. The second base is represented by the main body of the revolution with its leadership, informational, socio-political and military institutions and organizations, which after the massacres of Amman and Jerash in 1970-71, were transferred to Lebanon, and are now facing further problems after the 1982 exodus (of the PLO from Beirut). Throughout the last twenty years, this second base faced different attempts to uproot and liquidate it. Our people have paid dearly for defending this base; thousands of martyrs fell in battles against both the Zionists and those Arab forces who tried to put an end to the Palestinian armed struggle.

In the course of the contemporary Palestinian revolution, the dialectical relationship between the two bases has been consolidated and developed. Each has affected the other both positively and negatively; each has influenced the rise and decline of the other. Each has tried to fill any relative gap left by the temporary weakness of the other, enabling it to rise again, so that our people, at home and in exile, could continue their united struggle in all fields under the same banners and for the same objectives, within the common framework of the PLO. It is true that sometimes we have witnessed incidents when the interior predominated through a broad popular uprising. It is also true that at other times, the exterior seemed to monopolize the struggle, when armed struggle over the borders was stepped up, or when there was intense confrontation between the enemy's external aggression and the armed popular resistance, as in the case of the invasion and siege of Beirut in 1982. Yet, it is also true that we constantly experience this deep dialectical interaction, this solid association of the exterior and interior. There is no other way as long as we are a single people with a single cause and a single leadership, i.e., the PLO.

This interconnection has affected not only the Palestinians, but also their enemies who have waged regular, coordinated attacks on both bases at the same time. Whenever the Palestinian revolution outside the occupied territories was encroached upon, the enemy's attention concentrated on the territories which are considered the path to the second stage of the Camp David accords. Whenever the occupied territories were subject to the iron fist and campaigns of repression and terror, the enemy forces concentrated on undermining the prestige of the PLO abroad, it being the main impediment to the US solution. Thus the cause of our people is one-a cause of national liberation, independence and self-determination.

These are the dialectics of the interior and exterior factors which have been emphasized throughout years of experience, without being diminished by moments of ascent and decline on different occasions. No doubt at some stages of the Palestinian struggle, the exterior factor was held to be more important than the interior one, especially during the distinctive, broad, legal presence of the PLO in Lebanon before 1982. We must admit that the interior has, on many occasions, been accorded insufficient attention by the different contingents of the



Palestinian revolution. Although this fault is due to well-known circumstances and reasons, its dangers cannot be underestimated. We must reject its continuation or repetition.

No matter how important the second base of the revolution becomes, the occupied territories remain the main battlefield where the result of the struggle will be decided, in close connection with the exterior as well as the Arab and international links. In these blessed days of the heroic uprising of our people, which is entering its sixth month, we hear voices trying to belittle the significance of the second base of the revolution, claiming that Palestinian struggle outside is secondary. Such views were expressed previously in 1982, and especially after the camp war in Lebanon. Then some reached the erroneous and dangerous conclusion that the second base had completely collapsed and we had no choice but to depend exclusively on the struggle inside the occupied territories.

Disregarding the ill intentions of liquidation which lie behind some of these views, and assuming good faith on the part of those who advocate them, we may say that we are facing a seriously mistaken view. The interior is considered an essential and decisive base. Yet it cannot achieve our people's full legitimate national rights without being associated with the struggle of the exterior, without deeper interconnection with the struggle of the Arab masses and their patriotic forces, and without close alliance with the struggle of the international movement for peace, progress, liberation and socialism. While admiring the epic heroism of the masses in the occupied territories, we should consider the role that the Palestinian revolution and masses in exile must play, in addition to the role required of the Arab national liberation movement, and of our allies and friends on the international level.

To sum up this condensed examination of the interior-exterior dialectics, we would confirm that the Palestinian revolution has from its very beginning had two essential bases. It continues thanks to the interaction of the two bases. While considering the first, i.e., the interior, to be the primary and decisive base, we cannot for any reason underestimate or cancel the significance of the second essential base of the revolution which is outside Palestine.

While dealing with the interior and exterior, we have to distinguish the particularities of each Palestinian community

and notice the distinct role that one or another group can play in the long process of our people's militant struggle.

When talking about the interior, we immediately think of the West Bank and Gaza Strip which were occupied in 1967. We usually overlook the territories which were occupied in 1948. This approach is wrong. Our people and homeland that have been subject to occupation since 1948 are an integral part of the Palestinian people and land. We must do our best to increase their activity and contribution to the heroic struggle of our people against their enemies. We should raise the level of their role from solidarity and support to full actual participation... We must carry the spark of the uprising to the Galilee, Triangle and Negev and to every town and village in occupied Palestine... the whole of Palestine. Perhaps this is what the Zionist enemy is most concerned about. The Zionist leadership expresses fears about changing conditions in these areas, and the spread of the spark of uprising over the so-called green line to burn everything, including their attempts to tame our people. This weapon, i.e., our masses in the areas occupied in 1948, has not yet been used fully. We have to think seriously of how to make use of it in the best way.

Concerning the exterior, although all the Palestinian communities in different places, especially in Lebanon, have significance, the Palestinian community in Jordan is exceptionally important. We have to pay attention to this group which is an extremely vital part of our people for a number of reasons, including the following: (1) the size of this community which constitutes the majority of the population in Jordan; (2) the special relations between the Palestinian and Jordanian people who are united by a common destiny in a single national movement; (3) the particular role played by the Jordanian regime in facilitating the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary schemes which aim at the liquidation of our people's cause under different guises; and (4) the geographical consideration due to the permanent attachment of the two banks of the Jordan River, and the longest border with the Israeli enemy...

For these reasons, the PFLP's 4th National Congress in 1981 not only dealt with the two bases of the revolution, but allocated a lot of time to the particularity and essentiality of the Jordanian arena.

The fourth lesson is related to armed struggle and other forms of struggle.

One of the most prominent mistakes/lessons which previous experience has clearly shown is the necessity of achieving a creative combination of the different forms of struggle without exaggerating one at the expense of others. For years, especially immediately after the beginning of the revolution, armed struggle was considered the only form of struggle; this was also confirmed in the official documents of the PLO. However, with the development of the revolution, our view on this question matured and crystallized, especially as the revolution successfully embarked on political, informational, diplomatic and mass struggle, etc. This by no means decreases the importance of the armed struggle or relegates it to a secondary level. Armed struggle will continue to be the principal form of struggle, as the lever which has brought about all the important political gains of our people. It is the lever which carried our cause, revolution and the PLO to the positions they are now occupying on the Palestinian, Arab and international levels.

It must be stressed, however, that armed struggle by itself, divorced from political, diplomatic, informational and mass action, remains incapable of materializing the objectives and

achievements that our people look forward to and for which they make heavy sacrifices. Our battle against the Zionist enemy is a comprehensive one in all senses. The enemy is fighting us with arms, politics, diplomacy, finances, economics and propaganda; it wages a war of history, heritage, culture, etc. Hence, we must confront the enemy in all these spheres.

We must know how to conduct our political and diplomatic battles. We must know how to isolate the enemy internationally by exposing its reality. We have to mobilize all our forces to deprive it of its advantages in the Western mass media by winning over wide sectors of world public opinion through successful use of information in the battle. We have to wage a battle on the economic front, targeting the enemy's interests and thus depriving it of the chance to benefit from them in building up its socioeconomic structure. We have to expose its attempts to encroach on our history, culture and heritage.

We have, first of all, to assign a definite role in this battle to each Palestinian in the occupied territories, in the adjacent Arab countries and in exile abroad.... We have to convert our militant action into a complete symphony where each and every one of our people has his clearly defined role. In addition, we in the revolution bear the responsibility of mobilizing all friendly and allied forces in both the Arab and international arenas, and of striking 'Israel' and its links with world Zionism and imperialism. The successful experiences of the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America have taught us the importance of armed struggle in fighting the enemy. Yet the same experiences have also taught us the importance of using the various forms of struggle without underestimating any of them.

While facing an enemy which is trying to negate our very existence, erase our identity and culture, falsify our history and divert the attention of the world from our legitimate rights, how necessary it is for us to learn the ways of waging the struggle on all fronts with all weapons - the gun, the book, the picture, the poem, folklore, information, diplomacy, etc. It is also essential to strongly adhere to armed struggle as the principal method, because we are facing a fascist, racist enemy which is armed to the teeth.

The fifth lesson is about avoiding confrontation between the strategy of people's war and other strategies.

One of the mistakes/lessons which must be considered while dealing with the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the Zionist entity, is not to put the strategy of the protracted people's war in opposition to the strategy of classical warfare. For several years, ideas have prevailed in our ranks that the strategy of the protracted people's war is the sole, adequate strategy for confronting the Zionist-imperialist enemy. The strategy of the regular classical warfare was considered useless and unsuitable for confronting the enemy camp. The emergence of such views, which still have some influence in the Palestinian ranks, is due to several reasons including the following:

- There are quite a number of successful experiences which showed that a small people could score a decisive victory and defeat reactionary-imperialist enemies which were much superior in arms, technology, resources, etc.

- Some Arab regimes have capitulated and proved incapable of carrying out the required task in the struggle for the restoration of Palestinian and Arab rights.

- Such regimes have also withdrawn from waging any

decisive confrontation because of the enemy's superiority. They have, in addition, repeatedly tried to prevent the Palestinian people from practicing the strategy of protracted people's war against the Zionist enemy, under the pretext of preparing for a «comprehensive» war against the enemy, or avoiding involvement in a war without full preparation.

Thus it was not surprising that some views emerged in our circles, considering the two strategies mutually contradictory.

We have always been firm supporters of the strategy of protracted people's war for facing the imperialist-Zionist enemy which is superior in resources and weapons, as well as destructive capacity. We still call for the mobilization of all the capacities of the Palestinian and Arab peoples in the battle to counter the superiority of the enemy and steadily proceed towards realizing our people's rights. Yet we do not consider the strategy of protracted people's war contradictory to the strategy of classical warfare. On the contrary, the two may be complementary when there is a unity of political objectives and views, and when the proper foundations for a well-defined Palestinian-Arab nationalist front are crystallized.

The experience of the 1973 war provides good evidence. In this particular war, the self-confidence of the Arab soldier was restored. He proved to be distinctly capable of mastering modern weapons and waging battles, some of which were the greatest in recent military history against the Zionist enemy. If not for the incapable and collaborationist leadership of Sadat, the war would have been much different, not only in terms of the political results but also on the operational level, as has since become clear.

For all these reasons, the people's war strategy should by no means be put in contradiction to the classical war strategy. It is necessary to look at them as mutually complementary.

The sixth lesson lies in the dialectical relationship between strategy and tactics in the Palestinian political action.

It is not enough to define our strategic long-term objectives; nor is it enough to draw a structural map of the camp of friends and the enemy camp, although such things are most essential. We must also have a clear picture of the correct tactical steps which lead to the ultimate aims. Also needed is observation of all the contradictions and differences within the enemy camp, to make use of them in both our partial and comprehensive battles against this camp. It is essential to precisely observe the existing balance of forces, to be aware of what demands and goals are obtainable at each stage, and to formulate the suitable tactical slogans according to the existing balance of forces. It is also necessary to study the situation accurately in order to define the principal central link at every stage, to avoid being plunged into a heap of tasks which are not so important. Finally, it is necessary to conclude alliances according to all these considerations. This is an essential task without which we cannot successfully proceed towards our tactical or strategic objectives.

We don't exaggerate when we say that the official instatement of the interim program of the PLO towards the end of 1979 played an important role in guiding the militant Palestinian movement and defining goals within the realm of the historically possible. This program expressed a higher level of ideological development.

The battle we are fighting now for the international conference should enrich our struggle with increasing numbers of allies and friends on the international level; it contributes to

our success in winning over ever increasing circles of world public opinion. These are just a few examples. There are scores of others which concretely show the fundamental importance of successful tactics in our political struggle, without being satisfied by general slogans.

Concerning the dialectical relationship between strategy and tactics, two erroneous tendencies have emerged among the Palestinians:

1. There is a pragmatic tendency expressing the national bourgeoisie's limitations and incapacity to shoulder the burdens of continuing the struggle. Their confidence in the possibility of obtaining the ultimate goals and rights of our people has been shaken. That is why the representatives of this tendency have often behaved impatiently and put current tactics above the ultimate long-term strategy. We also notice that some of them have shown an inclination to relinquish the long-term goals under the pressure of the existing circumstances. In the chaos of our daily struggle, while exercising political tactics, the most serious setback we may face is forgetting our strategic goals and consequently losing the compass which directs our progress and shows our people the way forward.

2. The other erroneous tendency is of a dogmatic nature which limits itself to repetition of big, strategic slogans and remains aloof from political tactics, while viewing the enemy front through rigid stereotypes without noticing any political nuances. The danger of this tendency lies in the fact that it leads to nihilism and sectarianism, removed from the real political movement; it leads its advocates to the margins of political life, rendering them incapable of effective action.

On the other hand, we see that the scientific approach, as experience has proved, should be based on:

- (a) clear definition of the strategic goals of both the people and the revolution, and precise identification of the camps of the friends and the foes; (b) the role of the political leadership which has to define the interim tasks of the national struggle in the given conditions and balance of forces of the particular stage; (c) successful connection between tactical and strategic targets so that we have a chain of interconnected links, each leading to the next, rather than tactics that are alien to the strategy; and (d) practicing political tactics involves among other things seeing the minor differences which exist among the parties of the enemy camp, without ever forgetting that they are all integral parts of this camp.

These are some of the most outstanding features of the dialectical relationship between tactics and strategy as shown by our experience of the last forty years. Just as the enemy has managed to attain its goals, one after the other, to reach its present status, we have to complete our process of return, self-determination and establishing an independent Palestinian state through continuous and persistent struggle, without losing the compass that points towards our right to restore the whole of our homeland, and the ultimate goals of our people. At the same time we must be free of all seclusionism; we must abstain from compromising on vital issues or squandering our people's achievements.

The seventh lesson lies in the class question and the importance of a decisive political line in the confrontation.

While reviewing the forty-year process of continuous struggle against the Zionist entity implanted on our homeland, we

have to examine the most outstanding points of this process. As far as our particular experience is concerned, we will deal with the two most significant lessons drawn from the experience of the ANM.

1. The required exact scientific balance was lacking in our view of the dialectics of the Palestinian and Arab national dimensions; we put greater emphasis on the Arab national factor. Then, after the 1967 defeat, we seriously reconsidered our attitude and expressed our new outlook through the PFLP.

2. In the period of the ANM, we lacked a class view for distinguishing among the classes of the people within the Arab liberation movement, and the roles of these classes.

More than twenty years after our conversion into the PFLP, we are increasingly convinced that we made the correct choice and reached the proper conclusions on these matters. It is true that we still are at the stage of the national democratic revolution, even at its elementary steps. It is also true that all the classes of the people should be capable of participating in this revolutionary process, including the bourgeoisie. However, it is equally true that the different classes have different roles in the struggle process. Any glance at contemporary historical experience points without failure or ambiguity to the fact that the class nature of the leadership of the Palestinian national movement at its different stages has been at least partly responsible for the results we have had. That is what happened in 1936-39 and was repeated in 1948. No one can deny that the present class leadership bears part of the responsibility for what has happened, whether negative or positive.

Out of our review of the lessons and mistakes in the course of our struggle, we have clearly seen the essentiality of the emergence and consolidation of a firm political line in the confrontation against the enemy, both for checking right-wing tendencies and for resisting the nihilist, adventurist orientation. The revolution as well as the PLO have, for more than two decades, faced a series of stages and turns which have shown the importance of such a firm line. The last five years have witnessed the intensification of the tendencies of squander of our people's achievements on one hand, and the emergence of the adventurist, nihilist orientation on the other. Exactly at this juncture, the revolutionary democratic forces have played a decisive and vital role. Further, the increased role of the revolutionary democratic trend is the basis for maintaining and consolidating the entire national line of the revolution, and thus an indispensable condition for achieving our ultimate goals.

WHAT THEN?

Forty years have elapsed since the occupation of Palestine and the establishment of the Zionist entity in our homeland by force of iron and fire, blood and massacres... Forty years have passed with a record full of struggles and sacrifices on the part of the Palestinian and the Arab people. As noted above, the enemy has succeeded in scoring a whole series of strategic objectives, while the Palestinian and Arab militant movement remained incapable of achieving comparable results.

We have mentioned the points of strength of this entity and briefly specified the most salient ones. We have also referred to the points of weakness which have accompanied our militant process. Through both, we have aimed at refuting the prevalent simplistic attitudes. At the same time, we have been aware of the enemy's weak points as well as our own strong points. Due to the lack of space for broader discussion, we will limit ourselves to two essential points:

1. While the Zionist entity has emerged and developed because of the support of the West, as well as its own wise investment of this support according to a well-defined strategy, there is no doubt that the same West will be this entity's fatal point of weakness. It has been possible for this entity to develop throughout the last four decades in relatively favorable conditions. It is true that it has waged six wars but most of them, except the 1973 and the 1982 wars, have been very cheap compared to the results scored. The enemy has been capable of making decisive advances in building a socioeconomic structure and reaching the level of a great regional power.

The reversal in the process is bound to begin when 'Israel' finds itself incapable of continuing the same path. Needless to say, such a thing is not going to occur spontaneously or due to the internal development of this entity. An action on the part of the Palestinian liberation movement, closely interconnected with the Arab national movement, is needed to contribute to the frustration of the Israeli strategic schemes, rendering the price of occupation unbearably high, so high that it cannot be paid from the 'Israeli pocket'. This would be a step towards rendering the very existence of 'Israel' so costly as to be intolerable even for the imperialists.

The enemy's strong points are themselves the ones we can convert into fatal points of weakness. Through their racist aggressive policies, the enemy is digging its own grave. Even as 'Israel' tries to annihilate the Palestinian people and erase their identity, play the role of imperialist gendarme in the region, and work to be the spearhead against the camp of peace, liberation, progress and socialism in the world; it is catalyzing the energies of the Palestinian people who refuse to be annihilated and adhere to their rights. The enemy is also catalyzing the energies of the Arab nation whose development it tries to arrest, as well as the energies of the forces of peace and progress all over the world. By so doing, the enemy is in fact creating its own grave and concretely proving that it is swimming against the current of history.

This obviously requires Palestinian, Arab and international action different from what is going on now. This brings us to the second point.

2. It is necessary to draw up a supreme Palestinian-Arab-international strategy of confrontation, which makes use of all the energies of the Palestinian people at home, in Jordan and all other places of exile, at all the levels and in all fields -political, military, diplomatic, economic, informational and cultural, together with the energies of the Arab nation and national liberation forces, in close strategic alliance with all the forces of freedom, progress, peace and socialism in the world. The crystallization of such a strategy should be based on a deeper and more exact understanding of the Zionist entity... as well as a scientific comprehensive review of the process of our struggle over the last forty years.

While referring to the most outstanding, though not all, of the lessons/mistakes of our past experience, and without pinpointing all the aspects of the comprehensive confrontation strategy, we do consider that the main features of such a strategy are already present in the PFLP's literature and the documents of its successive congresses, especially the 4th National Congress.

This article is only one effort in the process of enriching and crystallizing the strategy... It is a call to a comprehensive and deep dialogue among all forces and tendencies involved in Palestinian and Arab national democratic action in order to reach the stage of formulating such a common strategy.

Fighting Partition

With two rival governments claiming legitimacy after the expiration of Amin Gemayel's term as president, Lebanon faces partition. Although major violence has not broken out so far, the continuing power struggle between the two governments -and the visions for Lebanon connected to each - could still ignite a new round of fighting.

Two plans exist for resolving the current crisis in Lebanon. First is the plan of Michael Aoun, head of the military government, and Samir Geagea, head of the Lebanese Forces militias. This plan, which coincides with the Israeli plan for Lebanon, aims at dividing the country in the name of decentralization and pluralism, but actually to ensure the privileges of the reactionary Maronite bourgeoisie. US policy has tended to support this plan, despite stated aims to the contrary.

Second is the plan of the Lebanese National Movement, supported by Syria, for electing a new president qualified to preside over a degree of reform in the sectarian system. Syria and the Lebanese National Movement regard the government of Prime Minister Salim Hoss as the legitimate government until such a plan can be enacted.

In this situation, there was an initiative by the Arab League to convene an Arab summit on Lebanon, to be attended by the conflicting parties in order to settle their differences. To promote this initiative, Arab League Secretary General Shadli Klibi toured the Arab countries, afterwards concluding that the Arab leaders were more inclined to hold a ministerial meeting

rather than a full-scale summit on the grounds that this was more practical, since a summit would confine itself to issuing statements without implementation. However, as of this writing in mid-December, a ministerial meeting has not been held. In reality, differences between certain Arab regimes are further aggravating the Lebanese crisis. The most obvious example is the financial and military support given by the Iraqi regime to Geagea's Lebanese Forces as part of the former's efforts to weaken Syria's role in Lebanon and the region.

STATE INSTITUTIONS PARALYZED

Following the obstruction of the presidential elections on August 18th and again on September 23rd, all three constitutional institutions have been impaired: the presidency, the government and the parliament itself. The term of House Speaker Hussein Husseini ended on October 18th. His post was the last remaining position in the Lebanese constitutional government. Accordingly, he called for the convention of parliament to renew his term or elect a successor, but only 26 deputies of the 39 needed for a quorum showed up. The same mechanism by which the Lebanese Forces had blocked the presidential elections was again employed. Deputies residing in East Beirut boycotted the session, saying the place was unsafe; actually they had been pressured by the Geagea-Aoun alliance not to attend, in order to prevent the renewal of Husseini's term and thus put the parliament out of function.

This dashed hopes that the parliament could play a unifying role in the situation of pending partition. Instead, the legislative body followed the ex-

ecutive branch into partition, raising new complications. With the blockage of the parliament, it became impossible to elect a new president or to pass any legislation; affairs of state came to a halt.

Added to this, the Lebanese Army was de facto split again from the time that its commander-in-chief, Aoun, accepted being appointed as the head of the unconstitutional military government. Aoun's illegal and provocative steps (described later in this article) led Adel Osseiran, the defense minister (in the Hoss government) to replace Aoun by appointing Sami Al Khatib as army commander. The existence of two armies, each connected with one of the rival governments, increases the possibilities of a military showdown.

THE AOUN—GEAGEA ALLIANCE

Attempting to consolidate his power, Aoun replaced three leading army officers: the chief of military intelligence, the presidential guard and the General Director of the Public Security Department. He also removed three Maronite officers loyal to the former president, Amin Gemayel, in an attempt to consolidate his own power. He furthermore made new appointments in the foreign and education ministries, confirming his intention to purge all but his own people from the state institutions.

The appointment that caused the most controversy was that of the General Director of the Public Security Department, since the Hoss government had already appointed an acting general director. Aoun also replaced the officers working in this department, who reside in West Beirut. It is this department which issues passports, so toying with it infringes upon all Lebanese. Faced with Aoun's blatant manipulation, the Hoss government informed all foreign embassies in Beirut not to process visa applications dated after September 23rd. Thus, a passport turmoil has been created in Lebanon, whereby no passports can be issued or renewed before a solution to the crisis is found.

Aoun topped his provocative partitionist moves by announcing the establishment of new headquarters for the Defense Ministry in East Beirut,

Israeli raid near Sidon, November 1988



creating a parallel institution to the ministry which is located in West Beirut.

While Aoun is taking concrete steps to cement Lebanon's partition, Geagea is working to consolidate the hegemony of the Lebanese Forces over the Phalangist Party and the Lebanese Front, which groups all the right-wing Christian organizations, because in the foregoing period these were more closely aligned with Amin Gemayel. Geagea's militiamen have been taking over the military posts held by soldiers loyal to Gemayel in the North Metn. Geagea was the inspiration behind the Phalangist Politbureau's recent decision to replace the general director of the *Voice of Lebanon* radio station, and the editor-in-chief of the party newspaper *Al Amel*, both of whom had been aligned with Gemayel.

All these moves demonstrate that the Aoun-Geagea alliance aims to confront the Lebanese people with a fait accompli, forcing them to accept the continuation of the sectarian system which guarantees class privileges. According to this plan, Lebanon would be split into two entities, the first consisting of the areas controlled by Aoun's part of the army and Geagea's Lebanese Forces in the North and the areas under Israeli occupation and Lahd's South Lebanon Army in the South. The second entity would be the rest of Lebanon, living under the constant threat and provocation of the first entity. Such an arrangement would keep Lebanon as a whole subordinated to the imperialist West, and would give 'Israel' free reign to interfere in Lebanon.

In line with these aims, Aoun has rejected all suggestions for merging the two governments, refusing to give up his right to the presidency on the basis that he was 'constitutionally' appointed by Gemayel. Aoun has asserted that he will only consider such a solution after prior recognition of his military government. The Lebanese Forces have also rejected merging the two governments; they reject any new government unless it gives them direct representation and control.

While this isolationist camp and their fascist plan of partition is the first threat to Lebanon, 'Israel' represents the second threat, both enjoying support from US imperialism.

US ROLE

While the US role does not appear to be the most prominent in determining current developments in Lebanon, imperialist policy - today and in the past - has contributed decisively to the current impasse. In line with Phalangist thinking that «Lebanon's strength lies in its weakness» as was articulated by the party founder, Pierre Gemayel, it is in the interests of US imperialism to keep Lebanon divided and weak. Accordingly, the US funded the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and was pivotal in the imposition of Phalangist Bashir Gemayel as president. The US sponsored the negotiations which finally led to the May 17th agreement. However, with the abrogation of this treaty and the general Israeli-rightist failure to passify Lebanon in line with imperialist interests, the US today prefers to keep Lebanon a prisoner of its own turmoil. Thus, the Reagan Administration had a role in subverting the Lebanese presidential elections, leading to the constitutional vacuum that prevails today.

In late August, the Lebanese newspaper, *Al Safir*, and other Arab newspapers revealed that Washington had sent a secret memorandum to a top Lebanese official. This memo contained the US administration's formula for a different kind of Lebanon, raising the possibility of two or more governments, and then a form of confederation between them. This bears evidence to the duplicity of the US role in the negotiations that preceded the aborted presidential elections. On the one hand, the US reached an agreement with Syria on a presidential candidate; then it worked to undermine this same agreement.

The US aims are very clear - to prevent the establishment of any nationalist government in Lebanon, that would enact meaningful reforms in the sectarian political system. Since such reform is imperative for maintaining the unity, sovereignty and Arab identity of Lebanon, the implications of US policy are in fact a divided Lebanon. Thus, US policy aims to give 'Israel' a free hand in Lebanon to serve the Zionist plan of uprooting all Palestinian and Lebanese nationalist activity, and thus isolating the uprising in the

occupied territories from support from the surrounding countries.

It would, however, be inconvenient for the US to openly state such policy aims. For this reason, the Reagan Administration has not formally recognized the Aoun government. Rather, the US is following events from a distance, alert to any chance to strengthen its influence in Lebanon as part of tightening its hegemony in the region. Thus, the US administration appears to keep all doors open. One day, US spokesmen reiterate that the Syrian-US agreement on a consensus candidate for the Lebanese presidency still applies. Another day, there are statements to the effect that the Lebanese themselves should agree among themselves, which is really just leaving the door open for the Aoun-Geagea alliance to block a solution. On yet other occasions, US statements say it is «unfortunate» that the Lebanese parliament was unable to elect a new president or speaker, and that Lebanon's partition has become a bitter fact.

'ISRAEL' BENEFITS FROM PARTITION

'Israel' is taking advantage of the current disarray to enlarge its so-called security zone, further subjugate the South and increase its attacks on Lebanese and Palestinian patriots. By supporting the partitionist forces in East Beirut, 'Israel' enlarges the scope of its influence.

In coordination with the South Lebanon Army, 'Israel' has beefed up its presence in the occupied 'security zone.' In addition to the approximately one thousand troops it has permanently stationed in this zone, 'Israel' brought in 1,800 more soldiers and 160 armoured vehicles to the areas adjacent to Metullah, plus 700 soldiers and 45 armoured vehicles close to the West Bekaa Valley; it established two new barracks at Ayshia and Koukaba. There are many indications that these steps are more than preparations for 'retaliation' in the face of increased Lebanese and Palestinian nationalist resistance. Rather, 'Israel' appears to be preparing for a major military operation to enlarge its self-declared security zone and uproot Lebanese and Palestinian nationalists.

The Zionist forces suffered great losses on October 19th, when a Lebanese patriot drove an explosive-laden car into an Israeli convoy near Metullah at the Israeli-Lebanese border. The driver was martyred, and seven Israeli soldiers were killed by the explosion, in an operation claimed by the Islamic Resistance, and dedicated to the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories.

In the same week, three guerrilla groups tried to penetrate the Israeli security wall in the South, to attack Zionist settlements in occupied Palestine. 'Israel' reacted with a massive upsurge of aggression in the following ten days, shelling Lebanese villages north of the 'security' zone and staging five major bombing attacks, ranging from the Bekaa to just south of Beirut. Meanwhile, SLA militiamen launched an offensive against the Sidon area from their stronghold in Jezzine. This brought to 22 the number of Israeli air strikes on Lebanon in 1988, as of November 1st, causing the death of 108 persons and the injury of 309, according to Lebanese police records.

On November 6th, the Israelis bombed the city of Sidon itself for the first time since the 1982 invasion, and on December 9th, Israeli air, sea and ground forces staged one of their broadest aggressions since that time. Over 200 Israeli commandos attacked positions of the PFLP—General Command in the hills of Naima, south of Beirut. There was a clash lasting several hours during which time Israeli helicopters brought in reinforcements, while fighter planes staged 17 consecutive bombing raids. As the Israeli forces withdrew, they admitted the death of the lieutenant who had led the operation, plus three soldiers. Nine nationalist militants were martyred.

Attacks on the Israeli occupiers and the SLA have continued, with the most outstanding occurring on November 7th, the eve of the sixth anniversary of the founding of the Lebanese National Resistance Front. Soha Beshara, Lebanese Communist Party member and a resident of the occupied village, Deir Mimas, in South Lebanon, shot SLA commander, Antoine Lahd, three times, seriously wounding him, in his home in Marjayoun. She was captured and subjected to interrogation by

Israeli intelligence officers. The Lebanese Communist Party issued a communique terming Lahd the symbol of treason, collaborating as he is with the partitionists in the interior (a reference to the Aoun-Geagea alliance).



Lebanese militant Soha Beshara

THE LEBANESE NATIONALIST FORCES

The opposing pole to the Israeli and right-wing partitionist plan for Lebanon is the Lebanese nationalist forces. Their position is in turn reinforced by strict Syrian opposition to the Aoun government, plus the Palestinian revolution's ongoing struggle against the occupation and partition of Lebanon.

However, at this crucial juncture, the Lebanese nationalist forces are faltering. Though the Lebanese National Movement has historically had a plan for a united, democratic, Arab Lebanon, today they stand without a concrete unified plan for fighting for this in the current situation where partition is a de facto. Though there have been some public gatherings of all nationalist forces in West Beirut, their level of unity is not sufficient to surmount the present dangers. This situation contrasts sharply with the earlier

one where broad unity engendered the rise of the Lebanese National Resistance, eventually enforcing Israeli withdrawal from most of Lebanon, and abrogation of the May 17th accord which Gemayel's government concluded with 'Israel'.

One major reason for this is that some in the broad nationalist coalition have yet to surmount sectarian tendencies in their own ranks, in favor of broad united action for the good of the Lebanese people at large. The corollary of this problem has been the flare-up of secondary conflicts. Most recently, the long-standing conflict between the Amal movement and Hezbollah, over who represents the Shiite community, broke out anew. Early in November, Amal leader Nabih Berri openly accused Hezbollah of being behind the assassination of three Amal officials a month earlier. There were clashes in the southern quarters of Beirut, added to the intermittent fighting between the two in parts of South Lebanon.

A united militant nationalist movement dedicated to unifying Lebanon and liberating it from fascist control and Israeli occupation, is the urgent need today. This would promote effective coordination with Syria and the Palestinian revolution, instead of involvement in secondary differences. All efforts could then be put for democratic reform in Lebanon, rather than the present situation where some forces divert energy to false causes, like challenging Palestinian presence in Sidon or other parts of the South, under the pretext of fighting the «resettlement» of Palestinians in Lebanon.

The current deadlock in Lebanon demonstrates that there is no solution without radical democratic reform in the sectarian system. Without such reform, there will not be peace or stability; nor will the energies of the Lebanese people and political forces be concentrated in the essential struggle between a national democratic Lebanon and a fascist Lebanon, tied to 'Israel' and US imperialism. In view of this, it is an essential task to unify the efforts of the Lebanese nationalist forces, the Palestinian revolution and Syria, as a prerequisite for consolidating the struggle for a united national democratic Lebanon. ●

Israeli Elections

On December 21st, seven weeks after the elections, a new coalition government was formed, with Y. Shamir as Prime Minister, S. Peres as Finance Minister, Y. Rabin as Defense Minister and M. Arens as Foreign Minister. The main points of the agreement between Likud and Labor are the following: adherence to the Camp David accords; calling on Jordan to begin peace negotiations with 'Israel'; no to talks with the PLO; no to the establishment of a Palestinian state; no changes concerning the sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza Strip are to be made unless both coalition partners agree; Jerusalem's status as the «united and eternal capital of Israel» is not to be changed. Moreover, the agreement stipulates that Shamir will remain Prime Minister the whole term, and that if one of the partners withdraws from the coalition, new elections are to be held. This government was formed due to the necessity of uniting to face the current situation. It serves to confirm that the position of the Israeli leaders hasn't changed as far as essentials are concerned.

The November 1st elections had been labelled the most important in the history of 'Israel', but their inconclusive result clearly indicates that 'Israel' is not and will not be ready for peace in the foreseeable future. With Peres clinging to the Jordanian option which had been marginalized even before King Hussein's decision to sever legal and administrative ties with the West Bank, and Shamir saying no to almost everything (an international peace conference, talks with the PLO, withdrawal from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip), the election campaign ended as it had started, not offering any new elements. Likud and Labor proved to be very similar in their complete failure to take a realistic position in the face of the new situation created by the uprising of the Palestinian people, and their almost identical response to the question of how to end it, i.e., more violence and more repression.

Faced with the uprising and its achievements, with growing international condemnation and the failure of the big parties to present a viable solution to the crisis shaking their society, Israeli still voted according to the patterns which have prevailed in the last decade. As a result, the balance between Labor and Likud remained even, allowing neither to hold the reins of power alone and making both dependent on the demands of the small parties, or on a renewed government of national unity/disunity.

The result of the elections allows us to draw the following conclusions:

The Israeli democratic forces opposed to Zionism are still weak; they have not yet reached the point where they can

have a real influence on Israeli politics. This fact, combined with the dispersion of the Palestinian vote, explains the disappointing results of the leftist and non-Zionist parties. Hadash (the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality) obtained 4 seats, the same as in the 1984 elections; the Progressive List for Peace obtained one seat, as compared to two in 1984; and the Arab Democratic Party got one. Disagreements among these parties also contributed to this result, since they failed to agree on sharing excess votes, which cost them at least two seats.

- The majority of Israeli voters appear to have little or no regard for the opinion of the outside world, whether the international community's condemnation of Israeli human rights violations, or the deluded attempts of King Hussein and President Mubarak to put in a good word for Labor and peace.

- The Israeli society is facing a major crisis, not only on the economic level. The most salient dividing line runs between the secular majority and the religious minority, but there are many other points of conflict. Even if more Israelis have started to realize that only a major redefinition of the premises of their society will bring about a solution to their problems, first and foremost a chance for peace, this didn't reflect on the result of the elections.

THE MINORITY HOLDS THE BALANCE

With the two main parties' avoidance of seriously addressing the most pressing issue - the future of the 1967 occupied territories, the post-election scene was overwhelmed by matters that

are actually secondary to the Zionist project. With the 18 seats they attained, the religious parties became the winners of these elections. Though they have always participated in the Israeli political life, their role has increased a lot in the last decade. The development of their positions can be described as follows: While after 1948, the National Religious Party strove to combine religious observance with Zionism, Agudat Israel remained in theory anti-Zionist, but coexisted with mainstream Zionism and participated in elections. An important change took place in 1967. Many religious Jews regarded the war as a literally miraculous event, and gave the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip a religious significance. The religious parties became more and more involved in politics and started to step up their demands, while right-wing settler groups mushroomed, raising religious slogans in support of colonization in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In 1977, the National Religious Party, which had always achieved its objectives by joining forces with the ruling party, joined the Likud government. Agudat Israel joined the parliamentary coalition, but not the government. In the 1981 elections, Agudat with only four seats held the balance in the Knesset. Likud needed their votes for a parliamentary majority, and Agudat extracted increasing amounts of state funding in exchange. In 1984, Agudat Israel and Shas (formed by Sephardics who left Agudat in 1983) won 6 seats together.

Today, the National Religious Party is very close to the extreme right with its pledge to keep every bit of «Greater Israel» and its demand for more settlements. Shas, Agudat Israel and Degel Hatorah keep their territorial attitudes deliberately vague and concentrate on «internal issues» like the amendment of the Law of Return or the implementation of strict Sabbath laws. Though some of the spiritual leaders of the Orthodox parties have said that a territorial compromise is possible, these parties can hardly be considered advocates of peace. The convergence between religious motivations and «security considerations» as opposed to concessions seems to be quite strong, and it came as no surprise

that Shas, Agudat and the National Religious Party finally backed Shamir.

The upsurge of the religious parties in the elections has different reasons:

- Labor and Likud's failure to give a clear answer to the problems facing 'Israel', which provoked a protest vote in favor of the religious parties.

- A return to traditional (fundamentalist) religion similar to the one observed in the western world, resulting from the alienation and hopelessness generated by capitalist societies.

- The crisis in Zionism and the fall of its democratic facade in the last years, which pushed many secular people to return to religion in order to legitimate their presence in Palestine.

- The increase of the religious sector due to the immense development of the religious establishment and the fact that immigration since 1967 has been increasingly based on religious motivations, as well as a high birth rate in the ultra-Orthodox population.

The reactions to the religious parties' demands were generally negative. The majority of Israelis are not particularly religious and are disturbed by seeing their life directed even more by religious law. The Orthodox rabbis already control the registration of births, deaths, marriages, the granting of divorce, along with the regulation of hotels, restaurants and places of entertainment. Besides, many Israelis are angry to see a minority which enjoys privileges, such as not having to serve in the army, trying to impose its will.

The proposed amendment of the Law of Return has provoked an outcry from Jewish communities everywhere. Jews identifying themselves with the Conservative or Reform trends have been sending one delegation after the other to 'Israel' in order to convince the political leaders to block the demands of the religious parties. American Jewish organizations and rabbis, who have always avoided public criticism of Israeli policies, and conveyed an image of unconditional support, have now signalled that the alienation resulting from a change in the Law of Return might affect that support which has always been essential to 'Israel' and is especially so now, because of growing Israeli isolation in the face of the PLO's peace offensive.

LABOR DIVIDED

The big loser of this election is Shimon Peres who is now facing the consequences of declaring that he wants peace on the one hand, meanwhile having Rabin practice the iron fist policy against the Palestinian people on the other. With King Hussein's decision to sever ties with the West Bank, Peres' Jordanian option was dealt a deadly blow. Labor lost one-half of its Palestinian vote as a result of its policy against the uprising, and the majority of the Israeli electorate still decided that other forces were more able either to achieve peace or to suppress the uprising. But the worst problem Labor is facing now is internal divisions. Rabin and the hawks within Labor worked to strengthen their position in the party; they favored a coalition with Likud and a continuation of the current policy of brutally suppressing the uprising. On the other hand, leading figures, like Uzi Baram and Ezer Weizmann, and a large number of the party's young cadre and rank-and-file think that going into opposition is the best thing to do, in order for Labor to clarify its positions. They want a change in Labor and are open to taking the uprising and the decisions of the PNC in Algiers into consideration. There was talk that Rabin and his supporters might leave Labor and join Likud. On the other hand, a coalition government, in which Labor plays the role of a junior partner, might increase the dissatisfaction within the party and eventually lead to a split to the left. Peres remains in a personal dilemma: He knows very well that one of the first steps Labor would undertake if it goes into opposition would be a critical reassessment of his policy, which would probably cost him his position. By allying with Likud, he may retain his seat as a minister, but with a divided party behind him.

POLITICAL BANKRUPTCY

Likud, though also affected by internal rivalries, appeared much stronger in terms of internal unity and firm positions. The problem it faced was how to set up a government. A coalition with the extreme right parties, Tzomet (two seats), Tehiya (three seats) and Moledet (two seats), and the religious parties, was problematic not so much because Likud disagreed with

them on political issues, but because it might have created problems with support to 'Israel' from abroad, and deepened the split between the secular majority and the religious minority. On the other hand, a coalition with Labor on the same basis as the previous one had proven to be unviable. So Likud worked to pressure Labor into a coalition in which Labor would be forced to give up its plan for establishing 'peace', namely its project for a ceremonial international conference.

Another option was to form a coalition government on the basis of changing the electoral law, in order to raise the percentage of votes needed by parties to enter the parliament. This would lead to more clear-cut results and majorities; still it doesn't absolve the Israelis of having to face their crisis and to realize that there is only one solution to it: breaking with Zionist tenets and recognizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Though mentioned as an aim of the newly formed government, electoral reform is not its central issue.

The election results showed that whatever government was set up, no real qualitative change is to be expected in Israeli policy in the near future. One indicator of this is Peres' and Shamir's identical rejection of the decisions taken by the PLO in the 19th session of the PNC.

The deadlock in the Israeli political life was dramatically expressed in the petty bargaining which took place to form a government and the failure of the big parties to see the main contradiction, the conflict between Zionism and the Palestinian people, as the first to be solved. This will lead to further isolation of 'Israel' and increase its dependency on political and financial support from the US. With the cease-fire in the Gulf war, and first and foremost the uprising of the Palestinian people and the facts it has created, much of the world's attention is now focusing on this conflict. In the new atmosphere of detente and widespread understanding that regional conflicts need a political solution, it is clear, more than ever before, that 'Israel' is an anomaly in the modern world, and that Zionism, like apartheid, cannot be reformed.

US Elections: Continuation of the Reagan Era

On November 8th, Americans went to the polls to vote for several things. They voted on a president and chose Republican George Bush over Michael Dukakis. They voted heavily Democratic for Congressional Representatives and Senators. And in four cities, separated by thousands of miles, they voted on referendums on Palestinian human rights, self-determination and statehood. Indeed, this was an election that has been heavily observed by progressive activists internationally, because it will have serious results affecting them until at least the year 1992.

For Palestinians, in the occupied territories and the diaspora, this election was also important. They watched to see who would become President of the United States and how that would affect the American position on the one-year-old uprising. They watched to see the results of the congressional elections and how much aid Congress would vote to 'Israel'. And lastly, Arab-Americans witnessed for the first time a detailed and serious discussion take place in subcommittees, caucuses and conventions of the two major political parties around the issue of Palestine.

This year, for the first time, in Democratic State Conventions, 10 states adopted a plank calling for Palestinian self-determination and statehood. It was also this year that in four cities, referendums were held for voters to state their position on the Palestinian quest for self-determination and a homeland. And it was this year, for the first time since the creation of the state of 'Israel', that a plank was introduced at the Democratic National Convention around this issue. Additionally, it was this year that more Arab-Americans were registered to vote and active in the electoral process than in any other election. Therefore, we at the staff of *Democratic Palestine* decided to write a detailed article on the US elections with special emphasis on both presidential candidates' positions on the Middle East and specifically, the Palestinian question.

BUSH

There is no doubt that George Herbert Walker Bush, soon to become that 41st President of the United States,

represents the military-industrial complex in the US and therefore poses a danger to all peace and justice causes on the domestic, as well as, international level. He represents the extreme right-wing in Washington. Bush, 64 and the son of former liberal Republican Senator from Connecticut, has held the following positions: Director of the CIA (1976), Vice-President to Ronald Reagan (1980-1988), Chairman of the Vice-Presidential Committee on Terrorism (1986), former Ambassador to China and former US Representative to the UN. Bush is also a member of the Trilateral Commission* and of the Council on Foreign Relations.

On the domestic level, Bush outlined several proposals, none with any real substance or ideas that had not been put forth during the Reagan era, such as a «war on drugs», maintaining the minimum wage at a rate workers cannot live on, tax cuts for the wealthy,

nothing new in health care or housing, while maintaining support to the death penalty.

In the military field, Bush said he would call for a NATO meeting to reassess the alliance's purpose as it heads into its fourth decade in 1989. He asserts, «NATO is not just a military organization and our policy must be more than defense initiatives» (*International Herald-Tribune*, September 23, 1988). He said of chemical weapons, «If I am remembered for anything it would be this: a complete and total ban on any chemical weapons.» Bush proposes international censure against any nation that uses chemical weapons, and on-site inspections on demand of suspicious plants. This, of course, is a farce. Bush stated this due to the domestic and international outcry against the use of chemical weapons. It is a well-known fact that the US used chemical warfare during Vietnam, i.e., Agent Orange. ►

Bush - the military industrial complex's man



Bush's call is a tactic to pressure the Soviet Union, because the US can test chemical weapons elsewhere if it wants and not on US soil. Moreover, there is a contradiction between supporting nuclear build-up and claiming to want to ban chemical weapons. In fact, Bush would like to increase the defense budget, especially that of SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative) or «Star Wars.» He favors the deployment of new weapons designed to shoot down enemy satellites, and a new land-based missile capable of striking Soviet targets with pinpoint accuracy. He also favors continued under-ground nuclear tests and continued flight testing of ballistic missiles.

In regards to Bush's foreign policy, it would continue along the main lines of existing Reagan Administration policy, but with differences in style and priorities and some shifts in substance. He has much experience in foreign affairs, having visited 72 countries and met with leaders of nearly all foreign governments. Bush is more pragmatic and issue-oriented than Reagan. He is reported to support close intelligence cooperation with Britain. Concerning the Soviet Union, he is skeptical about Gorbachev's initiatives. He said he would speak with the Soviets, but calls for caution and realism. He said his election would represent a mandate to press negotiations with the Soviet Union on reducing conventional military forces. As for Bush's policy on South Africa, he opposes further sanctions. He is a strong believer in «constructive engagement» with the apartheid regime in Pretoria. According to Bush, Central America's problems can be traced back to the Cuban missile crisis when the Monroe Doctrine was challenged. His policy is to resist all Soviet-Cuban efforts to «foment communism in Central America and the Caribbean.» He supports military aid to the contras and isolating Cuba.

THE MIDDLE EAST

The lynchpin of Bush's Middle East policy is Israeli security. This means continuing and expanding the Republican administration's policy which brought about a «Golden Era» in US-Israeli relations, exemplified in the Memoranda of Understanding for Strategic Cooperation. Bush has stated

that the US will never waiver in its strategic and economic partnership with 'Israel'.

Bush calls for direct negotiations between 'Israel' and its Arab neighbors along the lines of Camp David, as opposed to a genuine, fully-empowered international conference. He was a major force behind the 1982 Reagan plan for ousting the PLO from the Middle East political map, thus freeing Arab reaction to conciliate with 'Israel'. Bush also played a key role in the airlifting of Ethiopian Jews from South Sudan to 'Israel' in 1985. He was a formulator of the aggressive US attack on Libya in 1986, and supported the re-flagging of Kuwaiti transports in 1987.

Bush has clearly said that he would not deal with the PLO or back a Palestinian state, but has said very little concretely about how he would promote peace. He maintains the Republican Party's position that the PLO cannot participate in negotiations unless it recognizes the right of 'Israel' to exist, accepts UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, and renounces terrorism.

A corollary of this Camp David policy is Bush's concern for increasing cooperation and military support to the reactionary Arab regimes, especially Egypt and Jordan that are considered vital in any Middle East settlement, and Saudi Arabia and other oil-rich Gulf states. Bush's policy is basically interventionist. He has stated that the US should be prepared to intervene in the region alone if its interests are threatened. In line with the Republican party generally, Bush sees the establishment of relations between the Soviet Union and some Gulf states as a threat to US interests, while viewing the Soviet position on 'Israel' at the UN as an obstacle to peace.

Bush's Middle East policy carries over to the UN. The Bush Administration pledges to support legislation providing for US refusal to pay its financial share and withdrawal from UN agencies that take any decision to exclude Israeli participation. His program includes working to cancel the 1975 UN General Assembly resolution 3379, naming Zionism as a form of racism; the failure to do so would justify a US decision to cancel financial support to

the UN.

For the above reasons, most Zionist leaders called on the members of their organizations to vote Republican.

DUKAKIS

Michael Stanley Dukakis, 55, the Democratic presidential nominee, lost his bid for the White House after a long struggle. Analysts have said that his loss can be attributed to Dukakis' emphasis on attracting the Reagan-Democrats and tilting his campaign to the right so he could be perceived as a more centrist candidate. Unfortunately for progressive, working-class Americans, his strategy failed; why would Reagan-Democrats vote for a Democrat when they have the choice to vote for another Reagan?

Dukakis domestic policies by far outweighed those of his opposition. He had outlined programs on housing and the homeless, a national dilemma, endorsing recommendations of the National Housing Task Force. His conservation record was called 'exemplary'. He opposes the death penalty; is pro-gun control; supports the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment), and increased spending for maternal and childcare. Dukakis proposed universally-available college loans and put forth a plan to confront illiteracy. Compared to the Republicans' agenda, Dukakis' domestic policies were generally pro-people, taking into account the issues which affect and concern the majority of Americans.

However, although Dukakis' programs seem to benefit the poor, the difference between him and Bush is a relative one. Both represent the ruling class in essence. Thus, in principle, there is little difference. Rather their respective programs reflect two different approaches for perpetuating the capitalist system. Dukakis' tactic is to instate relative reform, such as a partial redistribution of benefits to the lower and middle classes through more state funding of education, housing, health care, etc. Nonetheless, because his policies represent an alternative to the Reagan era, Dukakis' model is one which progressives could rally around and utilize.

In the military field, Dukakis said he would cancel the MX and Midgetman missiles and two proposed aircraft and

carrier groups, and scale back «Star Wars» research. He would pursue a test ban, a missile flight test ban and strategic arms cuts with the Soviet Union. Yet he is unwilling to pledge himself to cuts or even to a freeze in military spending. Dukakis was an advocate of the 1982 US—Soviet freeze on nuclear weapons testing, production and deployment. He is deeply skeptical of the eight years of nuclear rearmament under Reagan. He said he would try to negotiate bans on underground nuclear explosions and ballistic missile flight tests needed for weapon development, and he would try to halt the deployment of highly accurate nuclear weapons. Yet, he was against a «no first use» (of nuclear weapons) platform at the Democratic National Convention. He supports upgrading US and NATO conventional forces.

In foreign policy, Dukakis is for a new era of activism. He would reshape America's agenda on problems of debt and conflict in the third world. He would seek initiatives within existing alliances and multilateral partnerships. He is called a pragmatic problem-solver. He feels the US should play a greater role within the UN. However, on many issues, Bush and Dukakis do not disagree as much as they would have liked voters to believe. As for the Soviet Union, Dukakis believes in seizing the initiative from Gorbachev in US-Soviet relations, arms control, regional conflicts, and testing the limits of Soviet «new thinking.» He said he would challenge Soviet intentions with some specific tests on global responsibility, terrorism, emigration and regional conflicts.

On South Africa, he vowed «to lead the fight for South African sanctions and against apartheid from the White House» (*Guardian*, October 19, 1988). But his record on South Africa is uneven. He is vocal in his criticism of apartheid, and has called for negotiations between the Botha regime and the ANC, but he is against military assistance to Mozambique and other frontline states. He is against funding anti-government insurgence in Angola but not in Afghanistan for example. Dukakis says he would break sharply with Reagan's «constructive engagement» approach to the white-ruled South Africa and impose total

sanctions in an attempt to force change. He told Ted Koppel of ABC's Nightline, «Apartheid has to go.» Botha said he feared Dukakis' proposed sanctions. The labelling of South Africa as a terrorist state in the Democratic Party platform was truly enforced by the Rev. Jesse Jackson who refused to compromise on the question of South Africa.

Concerning Central America, Dukakis has consistently opposed contra aid, and as governor refused to send detachments of the Massachusetts National Guard to Honduras for training exercises. He is critical of the administration's fondness for repressive dictatorships, and was against the invasion of Grenada. He would like to call a «hemispheric conference» of Latin American leaders. He supports the lead of President Oscar Arias Sanchez of Costa Rica in seeking to deal with Managua. Dukakis believes that the Rio Treaty and the Charter of the Organization of American States provide the foundation for regional security. He would use US aid to help civilian leaders establish control over their armies, and would impose human rights conditions on military and economic help.

Also concerning foreign policy, it can be said that Dukakis differs slightly from Bush, but in essence the bottom line is the same: a shared interest in protecting US global interests. Dukakis is, however, less inclined towards military interventionism, and his positions on Central America and South Africa are better than Bush's. For these reasons, progressive forces internationally, including the socialist community, would have felt more comfortable with him in the White House. Still, his election would not have meant a radical departure from the international policies followed by the US over the years.

CATERING TO PRO—ISRAELI FORCES

If Dukakis had won the presidential election, he would have followed the same path other Democratic presidents had in supporting 'Israel' - from Truman and the recognition of 'Israel' to Kennedy who cancelled the arms sales prohibition to 'Israel', to Johnson who provided it with modern offensive

arms, and lastly Carter and the Camp David Accords. Dukakis criticized Reagan's «take it or leave it» tactic for stymieing the search for peace, and favors the Carter approach of open-ended negotiations as with Camp David in 1978. An avid supporter of 'Israel', Dukakis blamed «Arab intransigence» for the lack of progress toward peace in the region.

Dukakis went to the pre-convention Democratic platform committee with a formulation stating that the US «maintaining the special relationship with Israel founded upon mutually shared values and strategic interest, should provide new leadership to deliver the promise of peace and security through negotiations that has been held out to Israel and its neighbors by the Camp David Accords» (*Frontline*, September 26, 1988). Dukakis, in an attempt to gain commitment from the Jewish community, issued a 300-page document entitled, «The Concerns of the Jewish-American Community,» in which he announced that he would move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, thus giving an official US recognition of Israeli occupation and sovereignty over Jerusalem. Dukakis also promised never to recognize a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state. According to *Middle East Report* (formerly *MERIP*, November-December) Dukakis' position on 'Israel' went through an interesting series of turns during the course of the primaries, in his attempt to cater to the pro-Israeli forces: In May 1987 in Des Moines, Iowa, he called for a Middle East peace conference between «Israel», Jordan, Egypt and «responsible elements of the Palestinian community.» Then in October 1987 at the Democratic National Committee Forum in Miami, he emphasized rejuvenating the UN's role in resolving international conflicts. The following spring, Dukakis sided with the 30 Senators who had criticized Shamir over the peace issue. But with the New York primaries in sight, he quickly shifted and in an early April speech in Wisconsin, he said, «The first thing that anyone must understand about the Middle East is that we will never let Israel down.» He sidestepped any criticism of Israeli handling of the Palestinian uprising. Additionally, at a



Jesse Jackson - mass outreach

forum held by the Conference of Presidents of Major American-Jewish Organizations, Dukakis blamed the intransigence of Arab leaders for the absence of peace in the region. But he failed to explicitly rule out US support for an independent Palestinian state, and even opined that the final status of Jerusalem should be «subject to negotiations.» Subsequently, he volunteered: «if Israel wants its capital in Jerusalem then, as far as I'm concerned, its capital is in Jerusalem.»

Finally, Dukakis would oppose arms sales to Arab countries that are thought to endanger Israeli security. He would not sell advanced equipment to countries that refuse to take part in the US-sponsored peace process. He would like an international naval force in the Gulf. For the record, he was opposed to the US bombing of Libya in 1985.

In assessing Dukakis' Middle East

policy, one could say that it is not better than Bush's. There are differences, but these center on the details of how to best support 'Israel' and promote US interests in the region. Dukakis showed himself more ready to meet certain Israeli demands, such as on the status of Jerusalem. Bush, for his part, shares the militaristic approach of the Reagan era which funded Israeli aggression at an unprecedented level, as in the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, joint «Star Wars» research and military cooperation, etc.

CATERING FAILS

It had been widely assumed that Dukakis had the so-called Jewish vote locked up, as a liberal and devoted friend of 'Israel'. Yet, despite all the above-mentioned facts and catering, the Zionist lobby in the US expressed a

preference for Bush and not Dukakis, for the following reasons: (1) Dukakis opposes the SDI program which could mean cancelling US-Israeli cooperation in this field. (2) He declared South Africa a terrorist and racist state; called for a break in US-South Africa ties; and warned all countries that have dealings with the apartheid government. (3) He belongs to the American Civil Liberties Union whose lawyers played a prominent role in the defense of the Los Angeles 8 (threatened with deportation due to their work for the Palestinian cause), and in confronting the attempt to close the PLO's UN mission. (4) It was within the Democratic Party that the issue of Palestinian self-determination and statehood was discussed. Thus, the Zionist lobby demonstrated that its priority is a militaristic and expansionist 'Israel' at all costs, rather than

the liberal domestic policies traditionally supported by the Jewish community in the US.

JESSE JACKSON

«The hour's late, the possibilities great» is one of the most famous quotes of the Rev. Jesse Jackson as he campaigned for Dukakis across the US. Prior to losing the bid for the Democratic presidential nominee, the Rev. Jackson, a long-time civil rights leader, ran a campaign unprecedented in US politics. Never has an Afro-American or a person of any other minority been a serious contender for the White House. However, the Jackson campaign did not limit itself to minority issues, but encompassed issues of concern to all sectors of the American public. The Rainbow Coalition really was a rainbow of all colors, women and men, young and old, farmers, laborers and professionals, with a similar agenda.

Jackson's forces were credited with registering over 500,000 new voters this year alone - an important electoral strategy after less than 50% of eligible voters cast their ballots in 1984. Jackson appealed to millions of Americans about the need to find a «new direction» and profoundly transform both domestic and international policy. Perhaps Jackson's most important victory in terms of influencing mainstream party politics was the Democratic Party's position on South Africa. Jackson refused to compromise on apartheid and pressured the Democrats to officially declare South

Africa a terrorist state. This was the exact language adopted in the final party platform to lay groundwork for a Democratic administration to enact total sanctions against Pretoria. Jackson was also the only front runner to push for a complete moratorium on nuclear missiles and flight testing, a no first strike nuclear weapons policy, Palestinian self-determination and statehood, and an end to Washington's war on Central America.

With 7 million voters behind him, Jackson called for a pro-peace, anti-intervention stance with a fundamental re-orientation of US policy away from East-West confrontation and towards improved relations with developing countries, away from the nuclear arms race and the Reagan military build-up, and towards promoting self-determination and human rights. Concerning Jackson's Middle East position, he stated at a major Los Angeles address on foreign policy in May, «In the Middle East, Israeli security/Palestinian self-determination are two sides of the same coin. We must break the cycle of violence, provide guarantees for mutual security in exchange for mutual recognition, land in exchange for peace» (*Middle East Report*, November-December). Additionally, the Jackson forces played a key role in raising the subject of Palestinian self-determination at the Democratic National Convention held in July, where the resolution received over 1500 endorsements in only two days. This was due to four main factors: the intifada, Arab-American ac-

tivism, the success of the Jackson campaign and the support of progressive Jews. Jackson was targeted by the pro-Israeli lobby within and outside of the Democratic Party, primarily due to his pro-Palestinian stance.

CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION RESULTS: WHO CONTROLS CONGRESS NOW?

Besides their 41st president, Americans went to the polls on November 8th to elect 33 Senators (two per state and 100 in total) and 408 of the 435-member House of Representatives (with three vacancies), as well as, 12 Governors (out of 50) and thousands of other state and local officials. Of the Senate seats filled, 18 were previously held by Democrats and 15 by Republicans. Prior to the elections, Democrats controlled the House by a margin of 255 to 177 and the Senate by a 54 to 46 majority. They also had a 27 to 23 lead in Governors. Democrats have formed the majority in Congress from 1955 to 1981, and this year is no different. As a result, the House in the 101st Congress will look much like the House in the 100th, heavily Democratic. Only seven seats changed and Democrats picked up at least two seats and could have a 5-seat gain by the time the absentee ballots are counted in a few tight races. Republicans lost net party strength in the Senate, but managed to promote two prime right-wingers from the House to the Senate. 98.5% of the House of Representatives incumbents were re-elected to office. All the members of the Congressional Black Caucus were re-elected. In the Senate the 34-member «class» up for re-election in 1990 is disproportionately Republican, and Democrats could easily add three or four new Senators.

President-elect George Bush is the first president to lose members of the House where Republican strength has dropped to a record low for a year in which the party won the presidency. This marked the first time in 28 years that a political party lost the White House, while gaining strength in Congress.

All in all, for peace and justice activists world-wide, the retaining of

THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE: IS THIS DEMOCRACY?

The President of the United States really was elected on December 19, 1988, at the meeting of the 538 members of the Electoral College. The College was established in 1804 under the 12th Amendment to the Constitution and was expressly devised to prevent the election of a candidate who merely attracted a majority of the popular vote. The College's members are nominated by the individual state parties and their numbers are determined by state population density. It

was established to provide a safeguard against the election of a maverick or extremist candidate. The candidate with the most ballots takes all of a state's votes. Alternatively, a candidate who wins the 12 states with the most college votes can win the election regardless of the national popular vote and national poll margin. This has occurred three times in the history of US presidential elections. Therefore, following this line of thought, is there really a need to have popular democratic elections, since ultimately it is the Electoral College which decides who has the right credentials to become president?

power over Congress by the Democrats can be seen as somewhat of a victory. This is because questions such as aid to the contras, military intervention and cutting needed domestic programs can be checked by a Democratic Congress, despite the wishes of a Republican president. It is also a sign that through popular voting (unlike the presidency where the electoral college decides), Americans were intent on the re-election of Democratic representatives and unwilling to have a straight Republican ticket in power.

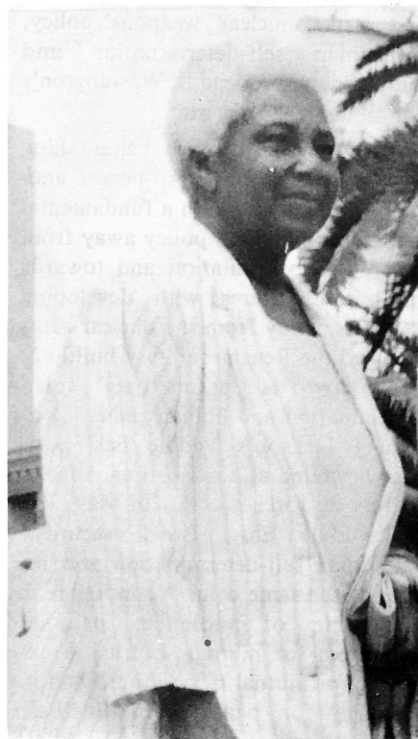
REFERENDUMS ON PALESTINE

On November 8, 1988, Americans in four cities voted on referendums relating to the Palestinian cause. In Berkeley, California, a proposition was placed on the ballot requesting Berkeley to adopt, as its sister city, Jabalia refugee camp in the occupied Gaza Strip. The proposal was originally brought up to the Berkeley City Council several months ago by councilwoman Maudelle Shirek who had recently returned from a delegation to the occupied territories. After heated town meetings, the proposal was voted down 5 to 2. This initiative was

defeated on November 8th by a high-financed, frantic campaign.

Across the bridge in San Francisco, an alliance of hundreds of organizations and individual religious, peace, Jewish and Arab activists was formed.

Maudelle Shirek



They were able to get over 18,000 signatures in order to put on the ballot a referendum entitled «Peace and Justice in the Middle East» calling for mutual recognition, and the Palestinians' right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. After the pro-Israeli lobby spent over two million dollars to foil this referendum, the measure was defeated.

However, in Cambridge and Somerville, Massachusetts, a resolution was passed condemning US support for the Israeli occupation and calling for an independent Palestinian homeland. According to Kathryn Silver, an organizer of the referendum, the referendum demanded from the President and members of Congress to exert pressure on 'Israel' in order to put an end to its human rights violations against the Palestinian people, and to end the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in order to establish an independent state there. The organizers of the referendum advocated that pressure be put upon 'Israel' by cutting American financial support to the Zionist entity. They utilized the results of recent polls concerning the Palestinian question, in order to gain support for the referendum. In fact, one poll revealed that approximately 41% of Americans support a Palestinian state and approximately 23% oppose. Likewise, 41% called for a cut in financial support to 'Israel' while 7% called for an increase in aid. The results of a *New York Times* poll revealed that 50% of American citizens support a Palestinian state.

The value of these initiatives is not so much whether they passed or failed; rather they are important because they are actions taken to familiarize the average American citizen with the Palestinian question. The discussion which evolved has raised consciousness about the Palestinians' situation among Americans, and has threatened the Zionist lobby's aspirations to keep North Americans ignorant on the question of Palestine. ●

CHANGING VIEWS ON THE MIDDLE EAST

«I think all Jews have viewed the Democratic Party in the past as their home, and even when they voted out of the Democratic Party, they did so on a basis of individual candidates,» says Sylvia Neil, executive director of the Chicago branch of the American Jewish Congress. Jews have been, in recent decades, among the most loyal members of the frayed Democratic coalition, casting their votes for Democratic candidates in most cases by 2-1 or better (*International Herald-Tribune*, October 18, 1988).

In this presidential election, although the Zionist lobby in the US urged the supporters of 'Israel' to vote Republican, seeing their strategic interests hand-in-hand with George Bush, approximately 70% of the Jewish community voted for Dukakis. Meanwhile, various organizations, pollsters and newspapers have been busy per-

forming polls on the topic of the Middle East to see if there was any qualitative change in opinions. A survey taken by the American Jewish Congress in April, 1988, found that 43% of the US population favored an «independent Palestinian state in the West Bank;» 62% endorsed US negotiations with the PLO. According to pollster John Marttila, support for a Palestinian homeland has increased 10% over the last three years among the general public. A *Los Angeles Times* poll done this spring found that 34% of non-Jews favored a reduction of military aid to 'Israel' and 65% thought there was «an element of racism involved in the attitude of Israelis toward Arabs.»

With all this recent information, Zionists are still counting on the Republican party to follow through on their commitment to 'Israel' regardless of the changing tide of sentiment existing among US citizens.

*Trilateral Commission: began functioning in 1973 and represented a fresh attempt by world imperialism to find solutions for its economic and political crisis. It includes men representing the acme of power.

Chile

Verdict on Pinochet: No

On September 11, 1980, as Chileans were voting at gunpoint for a so-called constitution, General Pinochet certainly didn't expect what would happen eight years later. The opposition had been reduced to silence by seven years of bloody repression; the gaps in the economy weren't apparent yet; and he felt confident enough to accept the idea of a referendum on his rule for the sake of «authoritarian democracy». On October 5, 1988, the general's dream was over. The Chilean people were to vote Yes or No on giving Pinochet eight more years as president, and with 54.68% voting No as opposed to 43.04% voting Yes, the answer was clear.

In the beginning of the 80's, the idea of the referendum was unacceptable to the opposition, mainly because it was stipulated by a constitution which was only seen as a tool for Pinochet to remain in power. When the economic crisis reached its peak starting in 1981, and a huge number of Chileans took to the streets and participated in the *protestas*, the opposition's slogan was «Democracy Now». Towards the end of 1986, the protest movement lost some of its strength and broadness as a result of the repression. The Christian Democratic Party, due to a new growth of the economy from which it certainly profited, started to distance itself from mass actions, and was the first to break the consensus within the opposition and to announce that it would participate in the referendum. Within the left, a broad discussion about the relation between mass activities and armed struggle took place. Finally, in February of this year, 13 parties agreed on a platform calling for a mobilization to vote No in the referendum. The command for a No vote, as the alliance was called, later grew to 16 parties and represented a broad spectrum of the opposition. Participation in the referendum was seen as a possibility for inflicting defeat on the military dictatorship, by refuting its claims that the majority of the Chilean people stand behind it and its economic program, and thereby denying it the legitimation for staying in power. After a successful campaign which simply outclassed Pinochet's well-financed effort, the

opposition was sure to win the referendum. It managed to mobilize enough forces inside and outside of Chile to deter Pinochet from calling off the referendum or from instigating a coup and reinstating the state of emergency, two options that certainly came to the dictator's mind when he realized he would lose.

PINOCHET BALKS

It came as no surprise when Pinochet, soon after the referendum, made it clear that he has no intention of respecting the will of the majority of the people. Defying calls for his resignation, he repeated that he and the army are the guarantee «that neither the spirit of the constitution nor its content will be amended.» According to the constitution, presidential and congressional elections are to be held at the end of 1989, and the new president is to begin his term in March 1990, which means that Pinochet will remain in power for 17 more months. After this period, he will remain commander in chief of the army for at least four more years. The constitution also stipulates that the elected president would need the consent of the military-dominated National Security Council to make major amendments to the constitution. All this means that Pinochet would retain enough power to veto any decision taken by the parliament.

Within the opposition, the discussion has started about the degree of changes that can be achieved in the near future.

The agenda of the No Command includes the following:

1. Immediate negotiations to allow free elections in the shortest time possible.
2. The withdrawal of the military from politics.
3. Guaranteeing respect for human rights.
4. An end to political bannings, and reforming the constitution.

One of the most controversial issues is that concerning negotiations with the military. Parts of the armed forces were not in favor of Pinochet's candidacy, and would have preferred a younger, civilian candidate, but for the sake of unity, they finally backed him. It seems unrealistic to expect them to mediate between the opposition and Pinochet, first of all because some of them, like Admiral Merino, are at least as fanatical anti-communists as Pinochet. Moreover, an amendment to the constitution reducing the role of the National Security Council, as demanded by the opposition, is against their interests. The military has accepted that local military officials were replaced by civilian ones in the last weeks, but it remains unclear whether they will tolerate constitutional reforms.

The controversy within the Christian Democratic Party about the tactic to be adopted has become sharper. The youth organization and the party's left agree that Pinochet has to resign as soon as possible. The party's conservative presidium is not really interested in his immediate resignation. For them, it is enough to have some constitutional reforms which will make a formal democracy possible, without changing the economic system. National Renewal, the strongest right-wing party, has similar aims. Though it supported Pinochet during the campaign, it distanced itself from him after his defeat. Both parties' declared aim of pursuing Pinochet's neoliberal economic policy make their program sound like «Pinochetism without Pinochet». The 1985-87 macro-economic concept implemented by the dictatorship, with the full support of the international banking system, has had a catastrophic impact on the majority of the people. The 24% increase in exports in 1987 was attained at the price of further reducing consumption and the interior market. ►

Between December 1981 and January 1988, the wage index shrank by 14.7%, and the buying power of the minimum wage was reduced 45.7%. According to this, one wonders about the «democratic means» the conservatives intend to use to convince the Chilean people that a further reduction of their standard of living is necessary to pay for a debt which wasn't made to improve the national economy, but to increase the wealth of a few privileged circles.

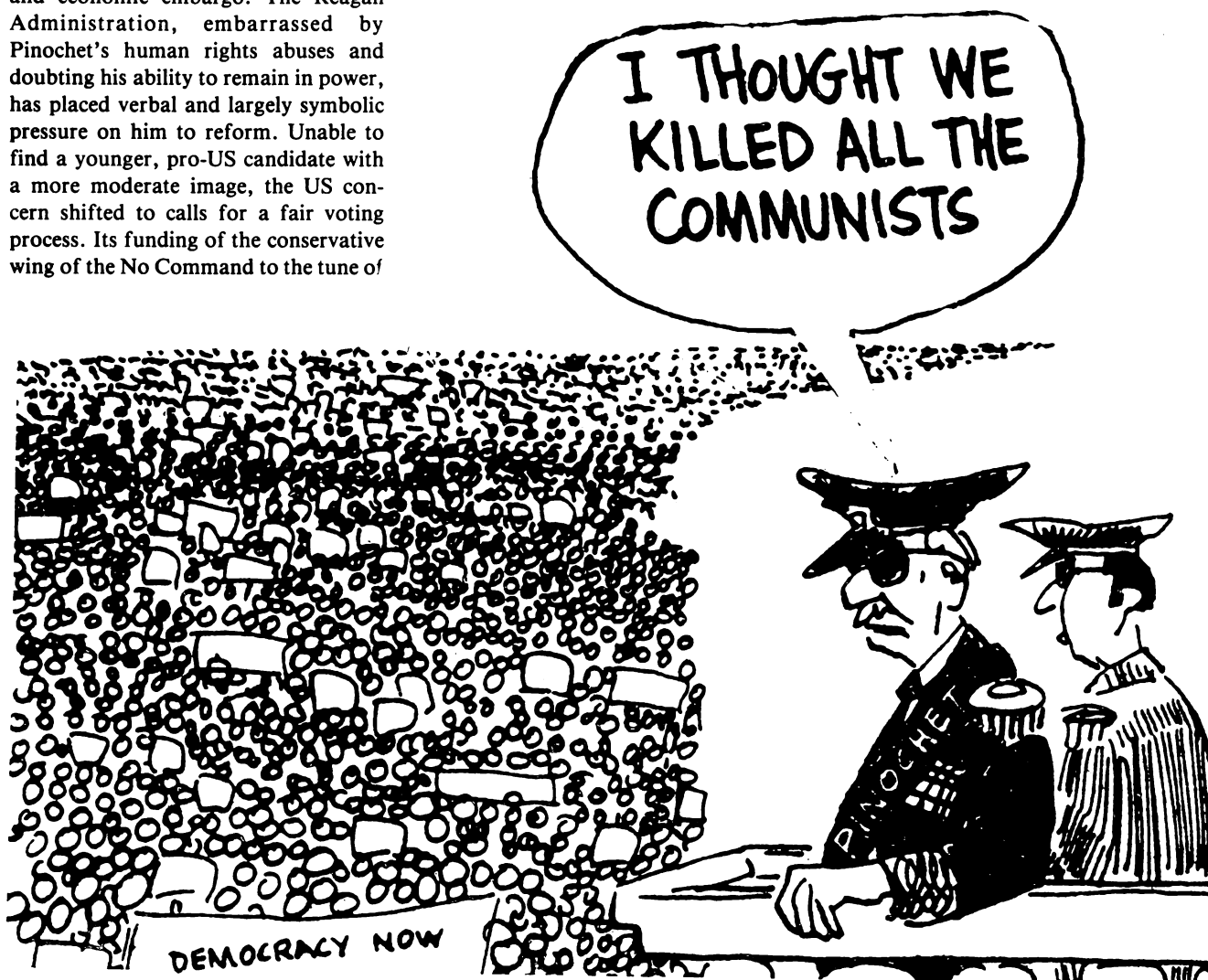
PROSPECTS FOR DEMOCRACY

The US administration praised «the people of Chile» 15 years after the military coup which the Nixon administration sponsored by aggravating the problems of the Allende government with a CIA program of destabilization and economic embargo. The Reagan Administration, embarrassed by Pinochet's human rights abuses and doubting his ability to remain in power, has placed verbal and largely symbolic pressure on him to reform. Unable to find a younger, pro-US candidate with a more moderate image, the US concern shifted to calls for a fair voting process. Its funding of the conservative wing of the No Command to the tune of

\$1 million can be seen as an attempt to block a genuine democratization process by supporting the advocates of cosmetic change.

While the referendum has shown majority opposition to Pinochet, it has also shown that the struggle for genuine democracy has a long way to go. The brutal repression of demonstrations in the days following the referendum, and the fear expressed by many exiled Chileans concerning their security if they returned, clearly show that Pinochet still holds the reins of power. The referendum was an opportunity for the opposition to beat Pinochet on his own ground by denying him the legitimation for staying in power. It was a chance for the opposition to unite under a common program and to focus its efforts on the main task, which is

pushing forward the transition from military to civilian rule. Pinochet still rejects the main demand of the opposition for change in the constitution, but the disunity of his supporters after the referendum has made his margin of maneuver much smaller. Criticism has become stronger within the military, and the fact that the government has resigned twice since the referendum indicates that there are differences within his civilian supporters. In contrast, the opposition has remained united. The No Command now calls itself the Assembly of Political Parties for Democracy, and has decided, among other things, to present a common candidate for the December 1989 elections. The combination of these facts leads us to believe that the post-Pinochet era has already started. ●



Naguib Mahfouz

and the Nobel Prize

This year the Nobel Prize for Literature was awarded to the Egyptian Naguib Mahfouz - the first time it had been given to an Arab author. Mahfouz, who was born in 1912, has been famous in the Arab world since the fifties. Novels such as *The Cairo Trilogy* and *Midaq Alley* brought him recognition as the father of the Arab novel. He was beloved by a broad spectrum of readers, and especially by progressive nationalists, for his rich narrative style and social realism. Mahfouz began by drawing his material from the daily reality in the popular quarters of Cairo. His early works focused on the life and problems of the poor classes, while jeering at the hypocrisy of those who became rich and powerful at their expense. He often challenged standing preconceptions, as in his novel *The Children of Gebelawi*, published in 1959, which in allegorical form dealt with religion in the context of everyday life in Cairo.

Later, however, Mahfouz's literary focus became more diffuse, while his political views put him in contradiction with the national democratic movement fighting imperialism and Zionism in the area. Thus, his receiving the Nobel Prize now raises a set of questions which are addressed by Dr. Faysal Darraj in the following essay entitled «The Nobel Prize for Literature - Awarded to the Great Writer or to his Petit Status?».

Finally the Nobel Prize crosses the mountains, plains, valleys and lanes to find Naguib Mahfouz. By doing so, it surprises everybody. Why does the prize choose a literary acme after sinking to the level of hardly significant writers? Do we have to take this as a literary verdict and an objective evaluation after it having long ago become a political ideological judgment.

Reaching Naguib Mahfouz, the prize creates confusion - not because the author of *The Thief and the Dogs* does not deserve it, but because the Nobel prize itself has long been divorced from all sense of objectivity, since it went to a marginal Israeli writer, bypassing Aragon; since it went to Pasternak, Solshenitzen, Walesa, Sadat and Begin, meanwhile avoiding Graham Green, Peter Weiss, Vasco Pratolini and Chinghiz Aitmatov!

For a very long time, the Nobel Prize has chosen the side of racism, anti-communism and Zionism. Consequently, it has not been throwing water on explosives, but scattering burning matches here and there. The moment it came close to complete scandal, it sought refuge in the persons of Neruda, Sholokhov and Marquez, not to honor talent and humane positions, but to make use of honest names as a cover on its path to Agnon and his likes. If things followed their real names, we could take the prize seriously; we would consider it a literary prize which has come to a great writer. But when names have been divorced from their meaning, we become confused and obliged to look at the different faces of Naguib Mahfouz to pinpoint the particular face which got the prize. As soon as we come across a suitable face, we fail to see the criteria of the prize and find it only an enigma, nothing more.

Why has the grand prize come to Naguib Mahfouz? We may immediately say that he deserves it and has for over thirty years. It may also be said that it is due to the progress of the



Arabs and the development of their literature; it is a break in the Zionist-imperialist wall; or it comes with the time of «detente» and «unity of the world»... or through the role of translation which has made Mahfouz readable in the different languages of the world. Yet these justifications, chosen at random, do not change the situation at all. Neither has worthiness cropped up this year, nor has Arab progress suddenly materialized. Besides, translation has never been the royal path leading to genuine evaluation.

We are fully aware that Naguib Mahfouz is much worthier of the Nobel Prize than a long list of its other winners. Yet we are also aware, without a shadow of doubt, that the current political context was the ultimate condition which pushed the prize into Mahfouz's pocket. The world we are living in has already rid itself of the burdens of objectivity and common sense, from the moment capitalism monopolized science, the mass media and propaganda, as well as the issuing and generalization of verdicts.

The Nobel Prize, in the objective sense of the term, will add nothing to Naguib Mahfouz except its title and financial weight. He was a great novelist before the prize and will remain so after it. The question revolves around another point. Has the prize come to Mahfouz for his literary worthiness, for his political «moderation,» or for both? Was it to honor the works of an Arab novelist, or of an Egyptian writer who lived through the reign of Sadat without a word of protest; who experienced the time when Sadat was awarded the same prize after his treason, without uttering a word of objection; who lived through the «normalization» of relations between Egypt and the Zionist state, and kept silent? We may naively ask: Would Naguib Mahfouz get the Nobel Prize if he were anti-Zionist? Including Arab literature in the list of «world literature» through the Nobel Prize means nothing but the

surrender of the Arabs to the imperialist-Zionist assault. The Arabs are no more known as those who fight the battle of Port-Said, nationalize the Suez canal, resist Western military pacts, reject 'Israel' and uphold the banner of socialism. They have become those who were defeated, who have gotten used to enjoying defeat, to entreat for the blessings and alms of the West, to preach moderation, to fully accept dependency and the conditions of the IMF, to fetter any Arab militant and denounce any Palestinian armed action, to glorify the wisdom of the West, to consecrate capitalist commodities and to make long speeches about peace... In this context, the Nobel Prize has found its way to Naguib Mahfouz. The necessary conditions which enabled part of the West to bless part of the Arab literature have materialized. This part has been found in a defeated writer with a great stature and a great talent, i.e., Naguib Mahfouz.

The Nobel Prize awarded to Naguib Mahfouz has a special political meaning. While Egypt, the largest Arab country, has recognized 'Israel' and given up the dreams of independence and Arab unity, the greatest Arab writer has chosen to sail in the waters of the capitulating regime. In this sense, we are faced with a sad paradox: Egypt, which should be the supporter of the oppressed Arab dreaming of a different future, becomes an unofficial member of NATO; Mahfouz, who should be the staunchest defender of all the causes of Egypt, the Arabs and culture, sheds all his turbans and chooses what is comfortable for him as an individual; he chooses the petit ego and gives up the common cause.

Some may ask why we try to connect Mahfouz, the consistent writer, with the Arab cause? Hasn't he limited himself, through his consistency, within Egypt, the history of Egypt and the streets of Cairo, with no reference whatsoever to the Arab cause? Such an objection is valid; Naguib Mahfouz is not necessarily to be blamed. Yet the author of *A Beginning and an End* has not appeared as a mere Egyptian character, but taken a role unworthy of a great writer, choosing to keep silent while the regime was selling «immortal Egypt» to the World Bank, while the «land of the pharaohs» with all its magnificent glories was changing hands at the cheapest prices. The great literary figure remained satisfied with his pen, writing pad and desk, forgetting his big national and social role which happens to go beyond writing novels.

A sad paradox indeed - such a miserable fate for Egypt and its great writer: A distinguished writer seeking refuge in mean and petty positions; a writer wasting his words for personal safety although he has never been threatened; a novelist whose name has become a shield; a pen which finds protection and support in a great name and fame. Mahfouz has failed to combine his ego as an individual with his person as a great writer. He gave up the latter to maintain an ego occupied with small calculations.

After Abdul Nasser, Naguib Mahfouz wrote *Al Karnak*, a novel in which he denounced prisons and torture cells. During Sadat's rule, he wrote a novel about the judgment of history, *Amam Al Arsh (Before the Throne)*, equating Nasser and Sadat, even showing the latter to be more rational and positive than the former. After Sadat was killed, Mahfouz wrote *The*

Day the Leader was killed, where the «leader» was Sadat who appeared even more rational and convincing than before. In these writings, we failed to see the author of *Zuqaq Al Midaq (Midaq Alley)*, *Al Sukkeriyyeh*, *Bain Al Qasrain (Between Two Palaces)*, *Qasr Al Shouq (The Palace of Longing)*, *Al Qahire Al Jadid (New Cairo)*, *Tharthara Foq Al Nil (Chatter over the Nile)*, etc. We only saw an ordinary journalist seeking mediocre material in both form and content. The great artist disappeared to be replaced by an ordinary writer who opted for the easiest way and produced easy books that history would forget, or that, at best, would be marginal in comparison with the great early texts, or stand as a literary testimony to a writer's descent from the peaks of clarity to the foggy steppes of ambiguity.

Naguib Mahfouz is a prominent writer who belongs to the past, a novelist who was finished when his first bourgeois dream vanished. This bourgeois dream ended with the June war, with a novel which preceded and predicted it, *Tharthara Foq Al Nil (Chatter over the Nile)*. The dream collapsed gradually and pulled the man with it. When he reached the Sadat phase, the man had changed; nothing remained except the ordinary character who was looking only for protection, safety and petit aims. He lived through the Sadat phase with a petty pen. Petty pens never frighten. Yet the tragedy remains; his, ours or the Arabs reader's tragedy is the fact that he had been holding a great pen which founded the Arab novel and wrote the best examples of the genre. When the Nobel Prize goes to him after he had become a petit writer, we do not feel happy but get confused, because we feel that the prize has not come to the great novelist whom we revere and love, but to his shadow in which we can see neither the face of «immortal Egypt» nor that of the founder of the Arab novel.

Before Nasser's revolution, Naguib Mahfouz could observe the rhythm of history; he could see history as an ascending process of evolution through struggle; he could write his great trilogy. With the revolution, the man is at first happy, then confused; he withdraws from the big flow of history to the alienation of the individual and writes *Al Lis wa Kilab (The Thief and the Dogs)*, *Al Tariq (The Path)*, *Al Shahhath (The Beggar)*, *Al Samman wa Kharif (The Grocer and Autumn)*. After the defeat, he gets lost in the formulae of abstract time and writes *Al Harafish (The Outcasts)*, *Rihlat Ibn Fattouma (The Journeys of Ibn Fattouma)*, *Shey'y an Alf Leyla wa Leyla (Something about the One Thousand and One Nights)*. When Sadat settles into power and everything is gone, he writes only simple and ordinary things as if the chain of defeats spared the ego after defeating the artist who lost his project and failed in the realm of literature.

Has the prize come to the writer of dreaming after he has dissipated his very dream, or to a defeated novelist? Has it come to honor a pen before its voluntary defeat? Emotion tears within everyone of us. We do not know what to say to an author we are proud of. We are extremely confused. Is the Nobel Prize honoring Naguib Mahfouz or eulogizing him though he is still alive; is it glorifying him or blessing his defeat?

Book Review

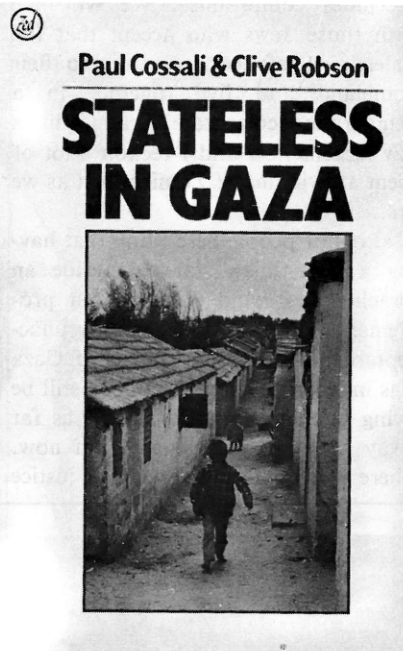
Stateless in Gaza

Stateless in Gaza is part of a modest but meaningful trend that began a few years ago to focus on the occupied Gaza Strip, after years of this area's being neglected, even in literature on Palestine. Other contributions to this trend are the excellent film «Gaza Ghetto» and the spat of media coverage generated by the report on the Strip published by Meron Benvenisti's West Bank Data Base Project.

While painting a picture of socioeconomic conditions no less grim than those revealed in Benvenisti's statistics, *Stateless in Gaza* puts flesh and blood on dry facts. The reality of life under occupation is portrayed in vivid human and political terms, via interviews with the Palestinians themselves. The authors' contribution is in letting the people speak, injecting only brief explanatory passages and arranging the narratives into main topics: Dispossession, Society, Occupation, Resistance. Cossali and Robson lived in the Strip for a time, and interviewed Gazans of varying ages, educational levels, backgrounds, vocations and political views. The result is a lively composite not only of Gazans, but of the Palestinians as such, both as refugees and as a people striving to assert their identity.

Stateless in Gaza is highly relevant as a background for understanding the causes of the current uprising and the forms it has taken. It chronicles the devastating extent to which the occupation has disrupted people's lives, victimizing them in countless ways, big and small. As one Palestinian says: «Unlike most governments which give protection and support to enterprises operating under their jurisdiction, Israel is only interested in bleeding us slowly to death.» Another notes: «Socially, Gaza is unique: surrounded and occupied, with a real sense of helplessness and isolation. All sectors of the community feel the need for change, from the communists to the Muslim Brotherhood.» Though the Strip is de facto absorbed by the Zionist state and half its labor force works there, an older Palestinian reports:

Stateless in Gaza, by Paul Cossali and Clive Robson, was published by Zed Press, 57 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DN, in 1986. It is 160 pages, illustrated with photographs of life in the Gaza Strip, and costs £5.95 for the soft cover edition.



«I've never met a settler... I only ever see them in their cars. They seem to be mostly European and American... It was bad enough being surrounded prior to 1967; now they are building little fortresses actually among us - in our little crowded corner of Palestine.»

The difficulties experienced by the Palestinian revolution at the time are also addressed by some of those interviewed: «I think that the situation is becoming so desperate now in Gaza that we can't afford to wait for unity outside, just as we can't expect to be delivered by waiting for revolution in the Arab world or some kind of diplomatic initiative.»

These factors combined go a long way towards explaining the sense of nothing to lose which we have seen in the children confronting Israeli tanks

with stones, and the persistence of the uprising despite the great sacrifices exacted.

PROPHECY OF THE UPRISING

The book also gives an impression of the difficulties encountered in any kind of organizing work, since the armed resistance in Gaza was brutally suppressed by the occupation army in the early seventies. At the same time, the interviews reflect the persistence of people's will to struggle, and the critical thinking to which political activists subject their past experience. Many of those interviewed, while expressing loyalty to the PLO, leveled hard criticism at the leadership for failure to promote strong grassroots organization - something which has since been created by the dynamics of the uprising.

Some expressed ideas which in retrospect seem prophetic of current developments. For example, a young political activist says, «To succeed, we need three things: the elimination of collaborators, strong grassroots organization and a gradual shift away from our economic dependence on Israel... We must learn to refuse to do things which it would be impossible for the authorities to force us to do.» A young boy's description of confrontations with the Israeli occupation forces in Jabalia camp in the spring 1982 uprising stands out as a rehearsal for the current uprising, and clearly shows the continuity between earlier struggle and today's.

Despite presenting a broad range of opinion, the book fails to present an integrated view of some essential questions. This is especially apparent concerning the role of armed struggle and the relationship between the revolution inside and outside of Palestine. Some of those interviewed reject armed struggle as such in the process of critically reviewing past experience, instead of discussing how armed struggle can be an integrated part of the mass-based struggle they advocate. It is also generally overlooked that the revolutionary Palestinian organizations, ►

especially after 1982, have put major emphasis on work in the occupied territories, especially with a view to strengthening mass organization; this phenomenon has clearly borne fruit under the uprising.

SOCIAL ISSUES

A similar reservation can be registered concerning the section on society. This is the most provocative part of the book, where women speak about the oppression imposed by conservative trends in their own society. To some extent, it is disorienting that these views, i.e., contradictions within the Palestinian society, are dealt with before the chapter on occupation, which gives the overall framework. It is also disorienting to be presented with widely divergent views ranging from one woman who regards housework as a form of resistance, to another who advocates separatist organization for women. An integrated view of how women can work for their own liberation in the context of the overall national liberation struggle is not presented, even though this is the approach adopted by virtually all prominent Palestinian women activists.

Despite these reservations, the chapter on society is useful in evaluating the conditions for struggle in the Gaza Strip; it pinpoints critical issues to be addressed by the Palestinian revolutionary forces.

Along with other new realities created by the uprising, changes have most certainly occurred vis-a-vis these social questions since the book was written. For example, one woman told Cossali and Robson: «The effect of occupation on women is worse than on men because they lived under social restrictions before occupation... Women are more likely to be kept at home because of the occupation and those women who work for Israelis will be exploited in the same way as men are. But most women hardly have any direct contact with the occupation. The impact is usually indirect.» This woman would surely want to modify her evaluation in view of the high degree to which Palestinian women have entered into the direct confrontation of the occupation forces during the current uprising. All in all, *Stateless in Gaza* has begun many subjects which we

hope the authors or other friends of the Palestinian people will follow up in the light of the experience of the uprising.

FOR A DEMOCRATIC PALESTINE

The interviews in the book also accentuate what the Palestinians are fighting for. For example, an UNRWA teacher and avowed leftist explains the solution he envisions for the Palestinian problem:

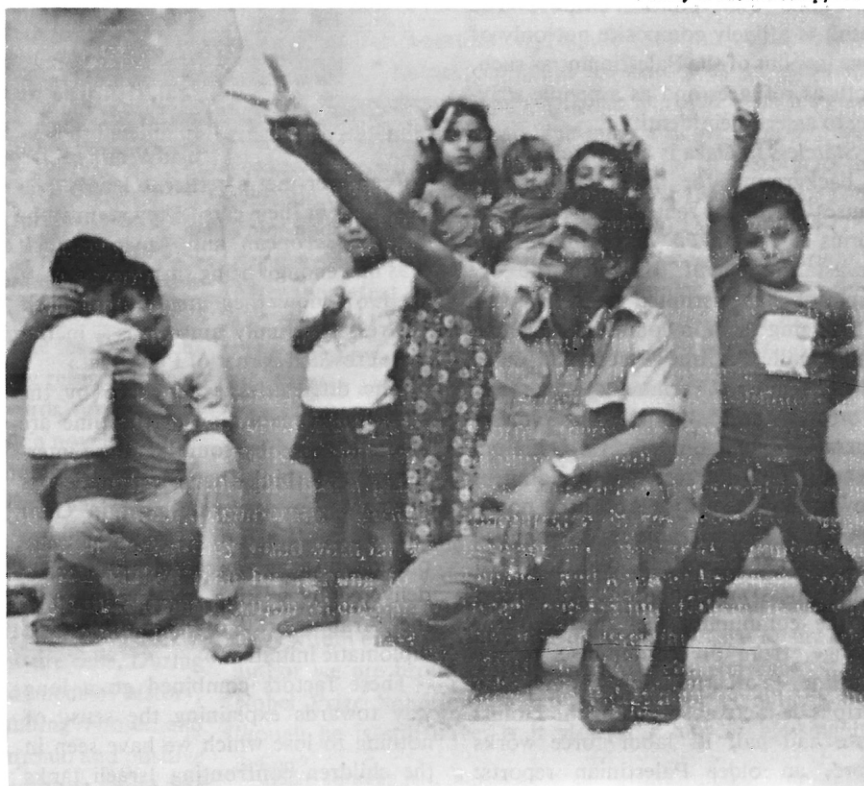
«I've lived in this camp - I was born in this camp - what compromise can I make?... The very nature of Zionism precludes compromise. We will live with those Jews who accept that the Palestinian refugees can return to their homeland and live together in a democratic secular state. I know quite a few Israelis now and I reckon a lot of them are victims of Zionism just as we are...

«Lots of people here think that having a Palestinian state alongside an Israeli state would solve all our problems... I think this is not only unacceptable, but also unrealistic. If Gaza was independent tomorrow, I'd still be living in this camp. I'd still be as far away from my village as I am now. There will be no peace without justice

and no justice without the return of the refugees. I'm looking for a one-state solution and I'll tell you why. The whole political reality has progressed beyond the two-state solution. We are already too intertwined whether we like it or not. Even if the Israelis had the political will to agree to an independent state in Gaza and the West Bank, they wouldn't be able to allow it to happen. We are now their second biggest market and a vital source of cheap labor and water. It's not about defence, religious nationalism or things like that: it's about economic survival. And how would they hold together all those different communities if there was no Palestinian people as a common and unifying enemy? To talk about a two-state solution is a red herring and unrealistic. We've wasted a lot of energy discussing it. I don't want to have two highly nationalistic and antagonistic states living alongside each other. I want to be part of a state which is progressive, secular and based on justice.»

We of *Democratic Palestine* would like to thank Paul Cossali and Clive Robson for giving a broad spectrum of Palestinians the chance to speak out to the international audience. ●

Family in Jabalia camp, 1984.





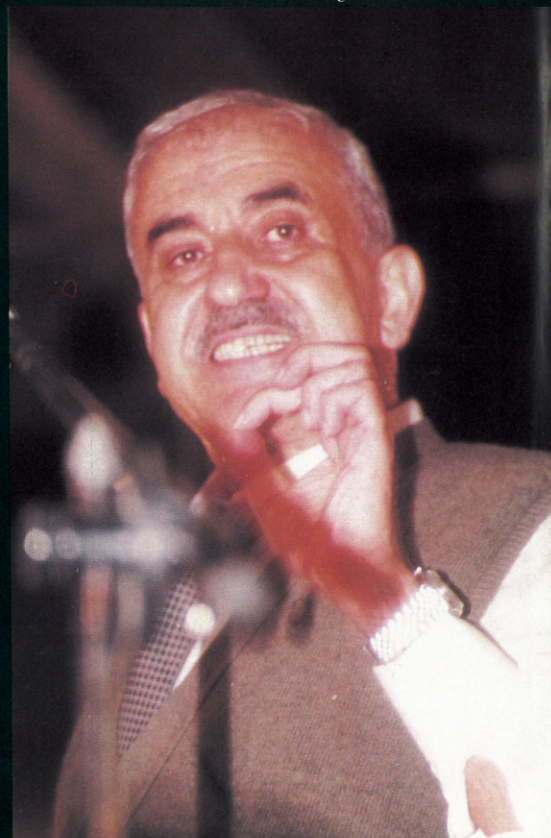
Samih Al Shkair's ensemble performs in musical evening.



1st Anniversary of the Uprising

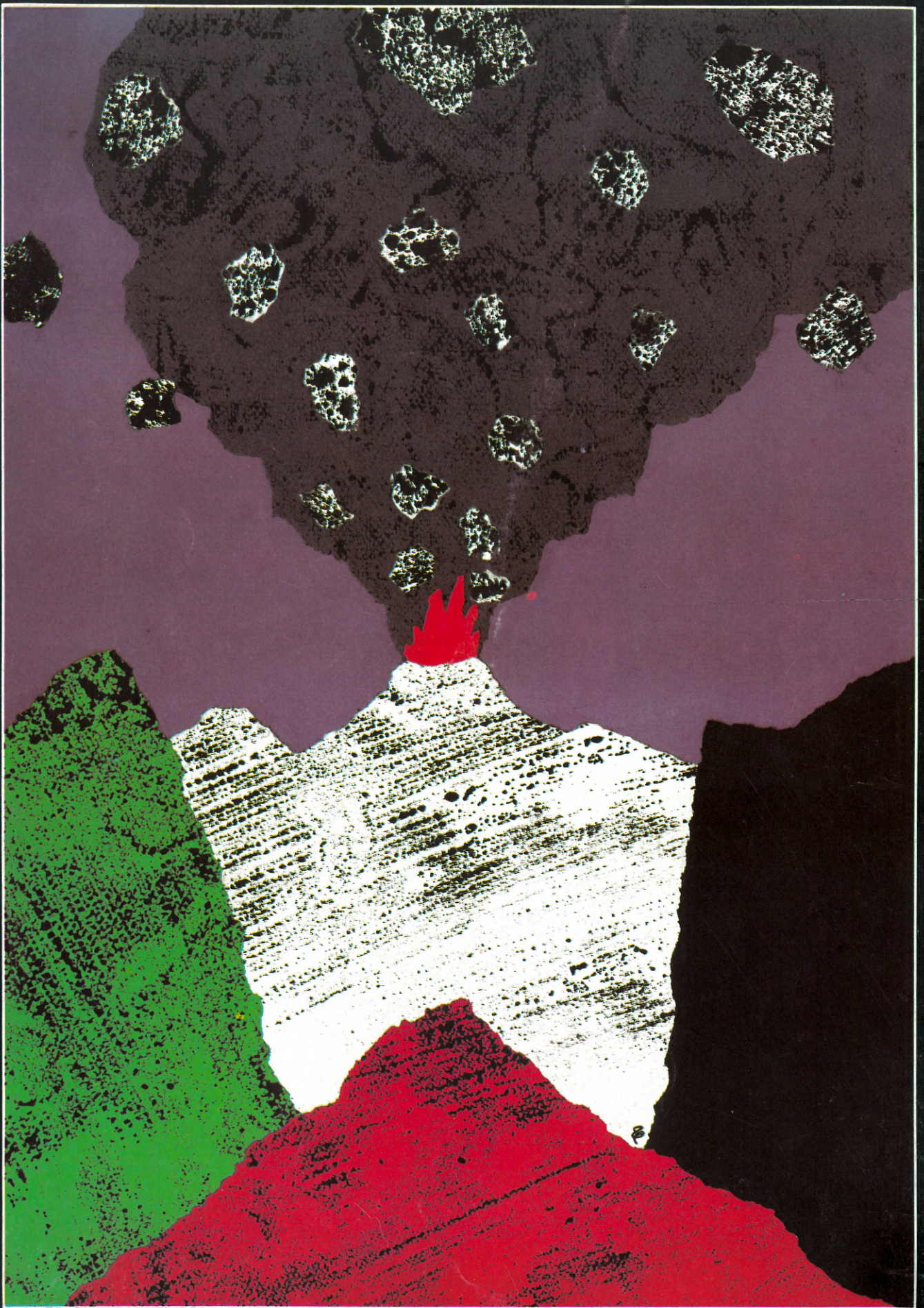
21st Anniversary of the PFLP

Comrade George Habash



Mass rally in Yarmouk





«Let us burn the land under the feet of the occupation, and let the world know that the volcano of the uprising ignited by the Palestinian people is not to be stopped until the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.» - the United National Leadership, Call No. 2, issued January 10, 1988.