# DALESTINE BEISPECTIVES

FEBRUARY 1979

VOL. 1, NO. 10



Children of the revolution: Beirut, 1977



## The Palestine National Council Concludes Its Sessions

The Palestine National Council, the Palestinian Parliament in exile, has concluded its recent sessions in Damascus with resolutions affirming the Palestinian peoples' commitment to the total liberation of Palestine from Zionist settler colonial domination; to the principles of national unity among the Palestinians and democratic dialogue within the ranks of their revolution; to solidarity with other liberation movements around the world and with national democratic forces inside the Arab world; to rejection of the Camp David Accords and all other imperialist plots aimed at dominating the region of Africa and the Middle East; and to a transitional program, to be implemented by the various popular agencies of the executive committee of the P.L.O., that would aim at strengthening the political, military, social, cultural, and economic conditions of the Palestinians, whether in exile or in the occupied homeland.

The resolutions adopted at the PNC are both predictable and inevitable. The Palestinian people will never negotiate with, or in any way recognize, the Urgun terrorists who now head the illegal regime in Palestine. These terrorists through their interaction with Palestinians since the 1920's, have shown themselves to be, in the general context of things, no better than racists. From the massacre of Deir Yassein to the dropping of concussion bombs on innocent civilians; from the expulsion of Palestinians in 1948 to the torture of Palestinian prisoners on the West Bank/Gaza; and from the expropriation of all lands owned by Palestinians who left in 1948, to recent deportations, collective punishments on whole villages, the blowing up of homes and the hideous terror tactics practiced against the Palestinians under occupation: the Zionists in Palestine have certainly shown themselves to be terrorist hoodlums armed with a colonial vision of oppression, derived from nineteenth century Europe, in a region that had struggled for two centuries to liberate itself from the European colonial onslaught. The Zionist leadership in Palestine, which had been thus terrorizing the Palestinian people all these years, will not go unpunished by the Palestinian people, nor will the struggle of the Palestinian people to liberate its homeland from settler colonial apartheid culminate in anything but victory. History, time and the dynamic of the mass energy of the Palestinians are on the side of the Palestinian revolution. The Palestinian revolution, reinforced by the formidable will of a people that refuses to knuckle under, is gaining strength, experience and know-how each year. The Phantoms and concussion bombs owned by Israel, and the vision of racism that is embodied in its institutions, are of less enduring value, in the final analysis, than the symbols of freedom rooted in the human spirit of a people committed to struggle. In the struggle of the many slaves against the slavemaster, the many colonized against the colonizer, the many occupied against the occupier, the many native sons against the European settlers, the outcome of the struggle has never been, in history, deflected from its preordained course.

The principle of national unity among Palestinians and democratic dialogue in the Palestinian revolutionary movement is more crucial today than at any other time since the re-emergence of the revolution fourteen years ago, on January 1, 1965.

With the combined assault on the Palestinian movement, and the rights of the Palestinians to freedom, becoming increasingly evident since the Camp David Accords, that which unites Palestinians engaged in the national struggle today is more fundamental than the trivial issues that divide them. The various ideological currents and political sensibilities with which Palestinian society is imbued can

find full democratic and open expression within the major factions in a revolution that never seeks to suppress but derives its energy from the popular organs of the masses.

The Palestinian movement considers itself, though flourishing outside the orbit of any outside power, an integral part of all liberation movements in the Third World struggling against indigenous reaction and imperialism. Hence, the PNC resolution adopted at the recent session is a logical expression of the interdependence of peoples engaged in struggle, especially in Africa and Iran, to wrest independence from the same enemy, for the same cause, in the same battle. The Palestinians, in calling for a joint struggle with the democratic forces in the Arab World, recognize that the cooptation of an Arab regime by the imperialist forces, such as in Egypt, does not imply the co-optation of the masses in Egypt. There undoubtedly exist in Egypt and other Arab countries, whose regimes now act as agents of oppression, progressive masses whose leadership the Palestinian revolution reaches out to in common struggle.

The rejection of the Camp David Accords by the PNC needs no elaboration. These Accords represents a blatant attempt to sell out the Palestinian people and their rights, isolate the PLO, create conditions for the flourishing of Zionism in the Palestinian homeland and transform Egypt into a force dedicated to the destruction of movements of liberation in Africa, just as Israel was intended from its inception as a "state" to act as one in the Mashrek, and the Shah's Iran as another in the Gulf.

The transitional program the PNC adopted calls for a variety of projects to continue the work already started in Palestinian society by the revolution. This program would touch on every facet of Palestinian life. In the economic field, attention is given to Samed, whose workshops already employ thousands who produce a great deal of the goods and services needed by Palestinians, especially in Lebanon. Culturally, funds are allotted to the various institutions engaged in the preservation and enrichment of Palestinian folk art. The many educational centers, both of learning and research, such as the schools run by the P.L.O. around the Arab world for Palestinian children and the diverse think tanks operating within Palestinian institutes, will find themselves with a work load considered by the revolution to be as equally significant as the work load of Palestinian guerrillas in the mountains.

Special attention most decidedly was given to the plight of the Palestinian people under occupation, the geographical severance from whom was never considered an impediment by other Palestinians for helping them and coordinating with them resistance activities, as well as economic and social projects. Other popular organs, councils, committees, unions and organizations, such as the Palestine Red Crescent and the Palestine National Fund, will each unquestionably find it has a role to play, each with its own positional value in the struggle.

From year to year, from generation to generation, the revolution prospers, grows and matures, drawing on the enormous resources of a people against whom the Zionist movement has not scored a single victory all these years—for the Palestinians have survived! They have reassembled their nation in exile. And until they Return, ending their exile, Israelis will continue to live in no more than a mythical state, because the Palestinian component of Palestine is crucial to its statehood. Without the Palestinians, Palestine will remain undefined, form without content, an entity (though called by another name) divorced from its relation to the real world.

## "Please do not let me die in prison!"

A campaign has been launched in the United States to save the life of Aiysha Audi. Aiysha Audi is a 34-year old Palestinian prisoner incarcerated by the Israeli military authorities in Neve Tirzah prison. In two meetings with her, on December 12 and 22, 1978, Israeli lawyer Felicia Langer observed that Aiysha, who has suffered from continuing spinal and heart problems in her ten years in prison, appeared seriously ill. Langer reported on December 12: "She was pale, trembling, so weak she was hardly able to walk. She asked me, as never before, to help her to be released, begging me: "Felicia, do not let me die in prison." On Langer's next visit, ten days later, Aiysha's condition had worsened. Her weight loss was considerable. Frightened fellow prisoners told Langer that they had thought Aiysha might die the night before and that prison officials had disregarded her urgent pleas for emergency medical attention.

Aiysha has served ten years of an Israeli military court's sentence of two terms of life imprisonment plus ten years on the charge of planting explosives which, in fact, did not explode. Langer, in her appeal for Aiysha's release states: "Ten years of Aiysha's life, the most beautiful in everyone's life, have been spent behind bars, years full of illness and sorrow."

Aivsha begged Felicia Langer: "Please, do not let me die in prison." Responding to this appeal, the national office of the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, the Washington Palestine Solidarity Committee and the New York Palestine Solidarity Committee, among other groups, have begun to work for Aiysha's release Informational material, petitions and a card campaign directed at the Israeli Embassy and the Minister of Defence in Tel Aviv ask for an immediate investigation into Aivsha Audi's health and for her release from prison. The Arab Student Committee at Hebrew University has also begun a similar card campaign. The following appeal, issued clandestinely, came from Palestinian women on the West Bank:

On behalf of Palestinian women under occupation and in the name of justice and human rights, we wish to appeal to the human conscience, to our friends and to all the peaceloving and just people of the world to take active steps towards the release of our young women in Israeli prisons who are facing the threat of death because of ill health and neglect.

Recently, alarming news has been coming out of prison regarding the health conditions of four young women.

1. AIYSHA AUDI from Deir Jreer (Ramallah), born in 1944 and sentenced to two life sentences in 1969, has been sending urgent cries for help to her family and



Credit: Courtesy Palestine Human Rights Campaig

Aiysha Audi's mother with her picture

lawyers begging them not to let her die in jail. In her letters to her family, she complains of a multitude of symptoms—stomach ulcers, back pain, headaches, irregular heartbeats, spells of loss of consciousness and memory, and alarming weight loss.

- 2. AIDA SA'AD from Gaza, sentenced to 17 years in 1968 has a serious lung condition.
- 3. MARIAM SHAKHSHIR from Nablus, born in 1950 and sentenced to life in 1969, is suffering from a serious blood disease.
- 4. AFIFEH BANNOURA from Beit Sahur, born in 1937 and sentenced for life in 1969, is suffering from a serious blood disease.

After spending the best years of their lives in jail under extremely harsh conditions, it is terrifying to envisage that any of them might pass away in jail while the whole world discusses "peace" and the human rights issue without actually doing anything about it

The case of these women is only an example of what is continuously happening to our young men and women in Israeli jails. Their suffering and complaints have become a daily routine, neglected and taken lightly by the prison authorities.

Palestinian women under occupation urge the whole world to come to the rescue of these young women who, after despairing of all peaceful efforts to restore the right of their oppressed people, the Palestinians, have had the courage to strive for the liberation of their usurped country and to stand up for the right of their people so that they may finally attain independence, peace and justice.

Issues clandestinely by the Palestinian women under occupation. Jerusalem 12/26/78



## Iran: The Heroism of a People

On New Year's Eve 1977, President Carter, attending a state dinner in Teheran. offered this toast to the Shah of Iran: "Iran under the great leadership of the Shah is an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world. This is a great tribute to you, your majesty, and your leadership, and to the respect, admiration and love which your people give to you." Barely one year later, the Iranian people, whose "respect, admiration and love" the Shah was supposed to command, succeeded in driving the Shah from Iran after months of popular rebellion, which paralyzed major cities with huge demonstrations and shut down oil production with crippling strikes. The sacrifice of the people was immense: an estimated 20,000 Iranians were killed by the Shah's troops in the last year of protest.

What caused this unprecedented popular mobilization? U.S. policy makers and the American press have attempted to make a case that the Iranian people, inspired by Islamic fundamentalism, are revolting against the Shah's "reforms" and the "modernization" of Iran. Washington Post columnist Stephen Rosenfeld even invoked racist images in his January 5 column by warning that a "dark new force is at work in the world" - "Islam in a particular form." Presidential advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski took up this theme in a calmer manner in the New York Times of December 31 when he commented that "Islam is producing a fundamentalist reaction, if you will, an escape from modernity.

In fact, this "escape from modernity" is instead an escape from the 37-year old dictatorial reign of the Shah, a reign whose hallmarks were terror, torture and corruption not genuine reform. James D. Cockcroft, a Professor of Sociology at Rutgers University, visited Iran this October on a fact-finding mission on invitation of the Iranian Jurists Committee. He notes: "the Iranian people have risen as one to rid themselves of the Shah and his henchmen and introduce democracy, independence and social justice. . ." Cockcroft also interviewed Avatollah Khoumeini for six days and reports the following main points of Khoumeini's "vision of an Islamic republic": "redistribution of wealth in favor of the oppressed; national control of the economy; a modern industrialization program emphasizing basic heavy industry instead of assembly of imported parts; mechanization of agriculture, rather than



Anti-Shah demonstration in Teheran.

foreign agribusiness, to meet the needs of the peasantry; religious and all other basic human freedoms now denied in Iran; social rights for women; and multiparty electoral system."

Contrast this and the programs put forward by other elements of the Iranian opposition with the oppression Iranians suffered under the Shah — at the mercy of Savak, the Iranian secret police, with the country's resources being plundered by foreign business - and the revolt against the Shah is no mystery. It is also no mystery why the United States backed the Shah to the hilt, and did everything in its power to continue the government of Shopar Bakhtiar, which the opposition considered illegal. Re-installed to power by a CIA coup in 1953, the Shah permitted Iran to be an outpost for U.S. interests: economic, political and military. He waged wars against liberation movements in the Gulf, sold oil to Israel and South Africa, and gave CIA "listening stations" and U.S. military personnel a home away from home in Iran.

In contrast, the Iranian opposition wants Iran to be free of foreign domination, and to pursue a non-aligned foreign policy. Significantly, opposition leaders affirm, in a commitment even Bakhtiar has echoed, that Iran will not sell oil to Israel and South

Africa because of these countries' racis policies. In the past, almost 100% of South Africa's and 60% of Israel's crude oil imports have come from Iran. The Shah, in addition, had developed wide-ranging and largely secret financial, industrial, as well as nuclear and defense accords with apartheid, reports Sara Rodrigues, a Guardian correspondent stationed in Luanda, Angola.

A democratic Iran allied with the Arab world, and in solidarity with the Palestinian people, would clearly alter the balance of power in the region. Yasser Arafat in a January 7 speech noted that "Anyone who says 'Bye, Bye PLO' must say goodbye to his own interests in the region," He added: "This means that we and our allies, the Iranian people, can tell Brzezinski 'Bye bye' to U.S. interests in one of its strongholds in the region: Iran."

In a recent speech, Farouk Kaddoumi, Political Department head, also re-affirmed the Palestinian people's historic solidarity with the Iranian people, saying "The heroic Iranian people will find in the Palestinian people and their armed revolution all the support they need in their battle to attain their freedom, their national rights and the liberation of their country from slavery, from oppression and from imperialist domination."

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# Zionists Force Suspension of Palestinian Students

Six Palestinians and supporters were recently suspended from the University of Illinois in Chicago. They were suspended for conducting a counter-demonstration during the 30th anniversary "celebration" of the State of Israel in May 1978. In addition to the academic suspensions, the students also face criminal charges.

Although numerous students participated in the demonstration, only the leadership of the Arab, Puerto Rican and Iranian students as well as the O.A.S. and Students for Palestine were charged and brought before an academic disciplinary hearing.

The people bringing the charges were members of different Zionist organizations on campus. They alleged that the Palestinian students and their supporters had disrupted the Zionist celebration of the establishment of the State of Israel. The Zionists claimed that the celebration was a "normal and necessary" activity. The "normal and necessary" activity of the 30th anniversary of the state of Israel was for Palestinian students an attempt to provoke them. Many had been driven from their land by the Zionist occupation. For example, the morning before the Israeli day celebration, the Zionists blocked the Palestinian literature booths by dancing and singing.

From the outset of the campus administrative proceedings, the Zionists believed that they had been victimized by an unjust disruption of their activity. One of the lawyers for the Zionists referred to the counter-demonstration as a "racist pogrom." They expressed a clear desire to get assurances that the next Israeli day celebration would not be disrupted and that if such assurances could not be given, it would be necessary for their own security to prosecute the Palestinian students and "teach them a lesson." To that end, the Zionists retained four attorneys. Two of their attorneys were law professors associated with Northwestern University. Two attorneys were affiliated with the American Jewish Congress.

The Palestinian students and supporters, represented by National Lawyers Guild attorneys advanced a political defense directed at explaining how and why the May 11th celebration was a clear provocation to the Palestinian students. "It would be analogous to the U.S. cavalry celebrating the 'winning of the West' from the native Americans or the Klu Klux Klan holding a celebration of South African Apartheid", explained one of the defense attorneys in his opening statement.

The hearings commenced in early September and met one to two times per week for four months. The hearing procedure itself lacked numerous fundamental elements of due process.

Attorneys were not allowed to directly cross-examine witnesses. All questions had to be directed to the chairperson who would then distort and rephrase the questions. For example, when a defense attorney would try to elicit information about a witness's bias, prejudice, organizational affiliation, i.e., membership in the JDL, the chairperson would refuse to ask defense attorneys' cross examination questions directly. Instead she would simply ask the witness the following question: "Are you biased or in any way prejudiced against the defendant in this case?" Naturally, each witness would deny being prejudiced.

The chairperson continued to deny defense attorneys' motions challenging the selection and composition of the hearing panel due to under-representation of Third World people, refusing to remove panel members who had obvious Zionist sympathies, refusing to allow expert witnesses to testify about the political significance of May 15th to the Palestinian people. The chairperson accused the lawyers for the Palestinian people of being disruptive.

Perhaps one of the heaviest examples of the biased nature of the hearing panel was established when six weeks into the trial defense attorneys obtained and offered documentary evidence that an informed advisor to the hearing panel, who had been sitting among them throughout the proceedings, was on the governing council of the American Jewish Congress. This is of particular significance because the staff counsel for the AJC was representing the Zionist students. In a court of law if it can be proved that there is clear and direct ties between the judge and one of the attorneys, such information would be grounds for a mistrial. Such was not the case in the Palestinian hearings at the University. The chairwoman ruled that this information was irrelevant and denied attorneys' motion and proceeded with the trial. From that moment on the member of the governing council of the AJC was no longer sitting among the panel during the hearings.

Perhaps one of the high points of the hearings was the case of Khalil Shalabi. Mr. Shalabi was charged with disruption of normal and necessary extracurricular activities. The complaining witness, Ms. Patty Ray, the head of the Hillel organization at the

University of Illinois, swore that she saw Mr. Shalabi break down the door of the room where the celebration was being held, enter the room and participate in chanting, shouting and marching around the room. Ms. Ray believed that she was making a clear identification of Mr. Shalabi as she has had numerous dealings with him as he is in the leadership of the Organization of Arab Students. Defense attorneys countered her testimony by calling two University security personnel who testified that Mr. Shalabi was at all times present outside the Illinois room and never once entered the room. Furthermore, a record from the student health service showed that Mr. Shalabi was present in the health clinic at exactly the moment that Mr. Shalabi was to have been disrupting the Illinois room.

Upon the close of the hearings the judiciary committee decided that six of the seven students were guilty as charged. They were given a 2 semester suspension and placed on academic probation for the duration of their school careers.

At the same time as the administrative hearings proceeded so have cases in state court. The students were charged with assault, battery, criminal damage to property and disorderly conduct. In the state court one of the Palestinian's lawyers was criticized by the State's Attorney. "How could you be representing these people. They're anti-Semitic", said the State's Attorney. "They're not anti-Semitic, they're anti-Zionist", countered the attorney for the students. At another date the same State's Attorney remarked that he was sorry that he was no longer on the case because he would "demand the maximum penalty" for the students.

Not only are the administrative and judicial processes being used to stifle the Palestinian students and supporters but the Zionists have taken to more overt forms of repression. On November 15, 1978, one of the members of the O.A.S. was assaulted by one of the JDL members by use of a set of brass knuckles. Other members of the O.A.S. and their relations have received threatening phone calls. At the present time, defense attorneys are appealing the school disciplinary hearings and will probably be going to federal court if the school doesn't overturn the convictions.

Persons interested in obtaining more information should write to: The Westtown Community Law Office, 2403 W. North Avenue, Chicago, IL 60647. Contributions are desperately needed for the political and legal defense effort.



# Report from the Palestine National Council

The fourteenth session of the Palestine National Council, which met in Damascus January 15-22, 1978, came at a time of challenge for the PLO and the Palestinian people. In the wake of Camp David, the United States is trying to impose a settlement on the area that denies the national rights of the Palestinians. Israel is conducting a military-political campaign to suppress the Palestinians and strike against them, especially in South Lebanon. The PLO considers the Sadat iniative as surrender to Israel's demands and allowing continued occupation of Palestinian land.

All the leaders of the Palestinian resistance attended this crucial PNC. All representatives of Palestinian trade, professional, women's, and student unions, and all popular organizations were there to discuss these challenges and to arrive at policies for the coming period. The meeting was characterized by extensive dialogue and debate—all in a democratic spirit. It was very important to discuss political realities and changes and arrive at a certain consensus. One of the major achievements of this council is reaching this consensus, in the National Unity program, which was passed unanimously by the council. Following are some highlights from the Council's decisions:

- The program stressed rejection of the Camp David accords, which it noted paved the way for extended U.S. and Israeli domination over the Arab and African states, using the Eyptian regime.
- The program reaffirmed Palestinian national rights, and the central role of the PLO as "sole legitimate representative of our people, leader of their national struggle and their spokesman in all Arab and international forums." The program further condemned all attempts to create alternatives to or partners with the PLO in representing the Palestinian people, and expressed determination to pursue and escalate armed struggle and all forms of political and popular struggle inside and outside the occupied territories.
- The program further backed the Palestinian National Front in the occupied land, and stressed the Palestinian people's attachment to Palestine as their historic homeland and their opposition to all plans for resettlement or for the creation of an 'alternative homeland.' It pledged more material and political support for Palestinian struggling under occupation.
- The program affirmed that the National Front for Confrontation and Steadfastness and its pillars, Syria and the PLO, are the central pivot in confronting the US-Israeli

settlement conspiracy, and called for Arab and international support for the front.

• It stressed that the PLO abides by the unity, Arabism and independence of Lebanon, and reasserts its respect for Lebanese sovereignty and its commitment to the Cairo agreement and its annexes. It called for further unity with the Lebanese

people and its national and progressive forces, and for continued cohesion between the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples.

• It added that the Jordanian regime commitment to the Rabat and Algiers summit resolutions, its rejection of the Camp David accords and of any

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### Excerpts from Archbishop Helarion Cappuci's Historic Address to the PNC:

"Brothers and sisters, this is a Godgiven day so let us rejoice and celebrate. I and overjoyed and happy to be among you for I carried you everywhere with me in my small prison and my larger exile. My love of you enabled me to endure and remain steadfast.

I have done my duty as a religious and honorable man, a man of justice and love. I have cried for Palestine and its bleeding people. I have seen my Palestinian children oppressed and persecuted. I rose to protect them, and I shall do so the rest of my life.

I pledge to you and to God that I will safeguard Palestine and all its religious holy places, Islamic and Christian, in Jerusalem. I will not rest until the bells of return ring there and we all return. For the way to Palestine is from Damascus, and we are all one caravan that will return to our homeland, our land, our people, our liberated Arab Jerusalem."

In its first meeting on January 15, the PNC unanimously resolved to make Archbishop Capucci an honorary member.

## Message from Palestinian Political Prisoners in Tulkarem Prison in Occupied Palestine

"From behind the prison bars and from cells of persecution and death, we send you our greetings and bless your efforts at unifying our great Palestinian people.

We appeal to you to remain unified in the face of the Zionist and imperialist plots and their agents in the Arab area, and we ask you to carry this grave responsibility without consideration of narrow party or organizational loyalties. Thus your unified efforts will result in great military and political victories on the way to liberation and return to Palestine.

.We are suffering the worst persecution, oppression and slow death in our prisons with little attention from the Arab and international community. The world protests the persecution of Soviet Jewry, but pays no attention to us, who are dying on our own land, and subjected to inhumane treatment, beatings and persecution in Israeli prisons. Even representatives of the International Red Cross, who visit us once every three months are unable to stop Israeli persecution and oppression. Hundreds of us, including our women prisoners have held hunger strikes demanding humane treatment and as a result, have been beaten severely by the Israeli prison guards.

We are prisoners of the Palestinian revolution in Israeli prison, and thus we will remain steadfast and strong. We would rather die on our land than accept occupation and exile.

We strongly believe in our Palestinian revolution and we are determined to continue sacrificing. We send our greetings to the Palestinian revolution and we remain with you, steadfast until victory."

### Message from Dr. Muhammad Khalaf of the Egyptian National Progressive Front

"The Egyptian people are in full solidarity with the just struggle of the Palestinian people and the National Progressive Front is with you, committed to your principles. That is why we reject Sadat's surrender and all agreements at Camp David. We uphold the resolutions of the Arab summit conferences that stress the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian Arab people. Representatives of the National Front have been prevented by Egyptian authorities from joining the PNC meetings, yet they send you their warm greetings and their hope that the next PNC session will be held in liberated Palestine."

involvement in these accords, and its enabling the PLO to exercise its responsibilities in struggle on the popular level against Zionism, is the basis which governs the PLO's relations with the Jordanian regime.

After describing the role which the U.S. government is playing against the Palestinian people, as representing blatant aggression against the Palestinian people. The program declared that 'the PLO declares its determination to resist U.S. policy, objectives and practices in the area. It confirms the importance of PLO alliances with nonaligned, socialist and Islamic states, and calls for relations with all liberation

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Opening session of Palestine National Council.

## Abu Hassan: A Heritage of Struggle

On January 22, a massive explosion in Western Beirut ended the life of 38 year old Ali Hassan Salemeh, known as Abu Hassan, and four of his companions: Khalil Owdeh, Khaled el-Asmar, Ali Abdel-Razzak and Jamil Saleh. Israeli intelligence had achieved what had become an almost obsessive goal over the years; the assassination of Abu Hassan, head of Fateh's Security Operations and a dedicated Palestinian activist. Israel had termed Abu Hassan "Israel's public enemy number one."

Giving Abu Hassan this dramatic title, as well as conducting a campaign to portray him as an arch-terrorist, was intended by Israel to pave the way for his assassination and "justify" it. Abu Hassan himself noted in a rare interview with a Lebanese paper that "I was not the only victim of the campaign aimed at portraying us as terrorist leaders who should be liquidated. They were trying to present our assassination as a legitimate act." He countered this image by saying "the truth is that we are waging a revolutionary struggle."

It was this struggle for the liberation of Palestine that informed the entire course of Abu Hassan's life. His father was a well-known Palestinian freedom fighter who died in battle defending the Jaffa area against the attacks launched by the Irgun in the spring and summer of 1948. He was also the military commander of that district during the 1936-39 Palestinian revolt against the British. Abu Hassan, born in 1940 in a village near Lydda, was only eight years old when his father was killed, but the spirit of his father exerted tremendous influence on him. He said: "I grew up in a family which considered struggle a matter of heritage. When my father fell as a martyr, Palestine was handed over to my care, so to speak."

Abu Hassan took constant and vigilant care of Palestine, of the Palestinian people, and of Palestinian leaders. In 1964, he attended the first Palestine National Council in Jerusalem, the meeting which founded the PLO. Subsequently, he went to Kuwait and headed the PLO's Popular Organization Section. He became Deputy Chief of Central Intelligence in July 1968 and a member of the Fateh Revolutionary Council in 1970, when he was appointed to head the Security Section.

Upon hearing of his murder, the Palestine National Council, meeting in Damascus, went into special session where Council President Khaled Fahoum and PLO Political Department head Farouk Kaddoumi delivered eulogies, praising him as a brave comrade who always stood in the front



Ali Hassan Salameh

lines. Palestinian sources analyzed the assassination as the work of "Israel and its allies," noting its similarity to a failed assassination attempt on the life of Abu Jihad. Abu Hassan's murder is seen as part of a stepped-up campaign against the Palestinians, which recently has included incursions into South Lebanon and threats against Palestinians living inside Israel.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese marched in the funeral procession that wound through Western Beirut on January 24. In a moving farewell, Yasser Arafat, who said he regarded Abu Hassan as his own son, promised that "your son, Hassan Ali Salameh, will complete the journey to Palestine which you have begun. This is our road, the road of martyrdom, and we will not stop except at the gates of the Holy Sepulchre and the Asqa Mosque. I have not invited you to a wedding celebration, but to the long hard path of revolution and this river of blood which has flowed all around us is evidence that we are continuing to fight alongside the militants everywhere, in Nicaragua, in Iran, with Khoumeini until victory."



## The Palestinians: The Role of the Revolution

Following is an interview with Jamil Tarek, a Palestinian-American recently returned from a visit to Lebanon with a Palestinian-American delegation.

- **Q:** You were in Beirut for the January 1st anniversary of the beginning of the Palestinian revoluton. Could you comment on the significance of this date?
- A: Even long after the liberation of Palestine, January 1, 1965, will always be a significant date in our history, marking the juncture at which the Palestinian people re-emerged, in an authentic liberation movement, to continue the struggle against Zionism that they had launched back in Palestine in the 1920's.
- **Q:** Have the goals of the revolution changed over the last fourteen years?
- A: Not at all. The very basic foundation of the revolution, and Palestinian nationalism, remains identical to what it was in 1965. Indeed Palestinian nationalism, since 1918 has been based on the liberation of Palestine from Zionism, and since 1948, our return to our homeland and self-determination as expressed in statehood. Of course, the tactics and strategy of the revolution may change, with the ebb and flow of political and diplomatic events in the region. The basic tenets of the revolution remain today, and will always remain forever, identical liberation and freedom in Palestine.
- **Q:** After experiencing the on going revolution at first hand in the last few weeks, do you think the Palestinians are close to achieving their goal?
- A: First of all, one has to destroy a whole body of mythology that people in the West have about the Palestinians-a whole set of presuppositions and mutilated perceptions-before we can even begin to talk meaningfully about this question. Above all, the most significant thing that we witnessed as a delegation from the United States to our people in the south of Lebanon, in Beirut, and other places, was a fierce sense of commitment to liberation. We witnessed a collective political sensibility that expresses itself in faith that the revolution will, sooner or later, achieve its goals. The setbacks, as identified on the political level, and as expressed in, for example, the Camp David accords, are not felt by the masses of the Palestinian people to be anything other than stumbling blocks that can easily be overcome. Above all, among the Palestinian leaders as well as the rank and file of the fighters, militias and regular forces-

- was the feeling that they are gaining more strength and experience as time goes on. Now they cannot be defeated. To them the first war in which the Israelis have suffered a defeat in the Middle East is what is called the "Eight Day War" in the South of Lebanon, which was a Palestinian-Israeli war. And the Israelis' first battle defeat was an exclusively Palestinian-Israeli battle at Karameh in 1968. With every controntation the experience we are gaining ultimately leads to the strengthening of the political, tactical and military resources of the movement.
- **Q**: So the history of the past fourteen years serves as an example and source of strength. Is this history present in most peoples' minds? If you talk to a teenager, for example, does this history serve as his or her reference points?
- A: The average Palestinian, young or old, fighter or non-fighter, has not merely interacted with historical incidents since 1965, such as the battle of Karameh, Black September in 1970, the heroic struggle of Tal al Zaatar, and so on, but indeed they feel they are inspiring history, conducting daily transactions with it. The collective consciousness among Palestinians today is that they are the main focus of the whole geo-political struggle that is now being waged in the region. They are the vanguard of any revolutionary change in the Middle East that will take place in the future.

- **Q:** How then do the Palestinians today see their relations with other Arab peoples?
- A: In my conversations, I discovered a distinct feeling among the Palestinians, whether they are fighters, Ashbal, or regular Palestinians, that there is a distinction to be made between the Arab people and the Arab regimes. I saw no bitterness at all directed toward the Egyptian people but distinct bitterness and enmity directed at the Egyptian regime. A similar case is Jordan, where past and even present conflicts with the regime have occured. We must also keep in mind that sixty percent of the Jordanian people are Palestinian. The Palestinian people are very, very politicized. Within the Palestinian movement, it is mandatory—and this was stressed repeatedly to us by Palestinian leaders, both military and political—that the fighter should be trained equally in the art of war as in the art of politics. He should know why he is holding his gun.
- **Q:** Could you describe how this political mobilization is effected what institutions or mechanisms the revolution uses to ensure this mobilization of the people?
- A: People active in the PLO, and not just the political/military cadre, come from virtually every class of Palestinian society. They might come from the Union of Palestinian Women or the Federation of



Folktroupe celebrates anniversary of revolution.

Palestinian Workers, from the Red Cresent (medical services) or Samed (workshops), or a variety of institutions, councils and associations. Political education is always stressed on the military level and on the social level — within the refugee camps and elsewhere. Every member of political and fighting groups should be educated in terms of the role of imperialism in the Third World, should be educated in distinguishing between the Jewish people and Zionism as a movement, and finally educated in terms of the history of the struggle in Palestine, and its inextricable link to the struggle of the Arab masses, for social justice and freedom. We did not meet one single fighter or commander in Beirut who was not acutely aware of the political implications of the struggle for Palestine and of the international dimensions of the Palestinian movement. I will cite one example: One day I accompanied an Afro-American brother, who was a member of the delegation, to an Ashbal camp in Borj el Barajina. Ashbals range in age from 6 to 14. We talked to one Ashbal who was 12 years old. The Afro-American brother asked a few questions, and the dialogue between him and the Cub developed into a discussion having to do with the role of imperialism, racism in America, solidarity with the struggle of Third World people for liberation and justice, the role of reaction in the Arab world, the meaning and significance of Zionism and what precisely the struggle of the Palestinian people was all about. At the termination of the interview, the brother was not only surprised, he was stunned. He said to me: "I am stunned to find a child who is barely in his teens able to talk in such a sophisticated manner about issues which many Americans do not find time to involve themselves in."

Q: Aside from the political mobilization of the Palestinians in the refugee camps, there is also the work of survival — vocational training, health care, education, and so forth. We have heard that some of this work is endangered by the cut-off of UN funds. What is the state of this work?

A: The work that is done in Palestinian society by the UN is so minute it is insignificant. Much of the work that is now being done in terms of care for the Palestinian people — eduational, social, economic and so on - comes from the projects that the revolution, especially over the last seven years, has been creating. First of all, take the case of Palestinians in refugee camps, which have the highest concentration of Palestinians. Each refugee camp is run by a popular committee. All the concerns of each one of these camps is determined by the democratic will of the masses, through their committees. The people are determining their own daily destiny. There are a large number of PLO

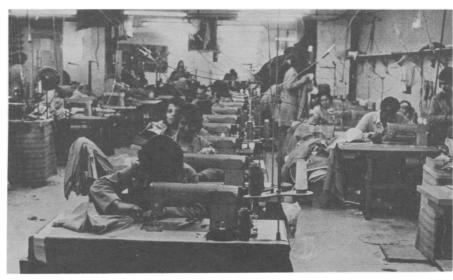


Photo credit: Milt Taam/Palestine

Palestinian workers in Samed clothing factory in Beirut.

projects that have been going on for a number of years and some new ones. Most significant is the work of the Palestinian organization called Samed, which currently has 131 workshops all over the Arab world. Many of them are in Lebanon. These workshops are involved in the gainful employment of thousands of Palestinian and Lebanese workers. They manufacture goods at subsidized prices for sale to poor Palestinians and Lebanese. The employees of Samed, we were told, get the best possible social benefits and workers' compensation offered anywhere in the Arab world. They produce goods and services such as the exquisite Palestinian national dress, clothing for the poor in the camps, anything from uniforms for the fighters to kitchen utensils and a variety of traditional Palestinian arts and crafts famous for hundreds of years. We found that the workers, unlike their counterparts in the Western world, were totally unalienated from their means of production and were proud of the products they made. All the workshops were run by a popular committee, composed of the workers in each workshop. We were told that Samed now has a great many agricultural, engineering and technical projects in different parts of Africa. The workforce in these shops is composed exclusively of African labor. The purpose behind these workshops is to strengthen the solidarity that has always existed between the Palestinian and African people. We were told that in some cases, the workshops exist on sites previously occupied by Israelis before the 1967 War.

**Q:** You seem to be saying that Palestinian institutions today are more than social services and that they have a productive and political function Would you comment?

A: There are a great number of social institutions that involve themselves in the care of the Palestinian people. The General Union of Palestinian Women is one example. In Beirut we listened to three sisters, each of whom talked about a certain aspect of the role of Palestinian women in the struggle and in Palestinian society. We found that the sisters have been doing a great deal of remarkable work in raising the consciousness level of Palestinian women and involving them in projects dealing with their problems as productive members of society, and as women engaged in their own liberation. One sister described at length the history of the struggle of Palestinian women, which she traced back to the 1920's in Palestine. Another project on the social level, which the Palestinian liberation movement has fostered, is the establishment of schools for the sons and daughters of fallen Palestinian patriots. We have thousands of Palestinian kids, for example from Tal al Zaatar, who have neither mother nor father. There are many schools run and subsidized by the PLO that offer these children the best possible care and education. Another PLO institution on the cultural level is the Institute of Palestinian Popular Arts, in downtown Beirut, which over the past two years has preoccupied itself with the preservation and enhancement of Palestinian arts and crafts, such as Palestinian folk-dancing, vocal arts, music and so forth. This institution has been responsible for sending a number of folktroupes to North America, Western Europe and the socialist countries. On our visit we met a great many Palestinian kids, ranging in age from 12 to 25 who were extremely sophisticated singers, dancers and musicians. I don't know why this

(Continued on page 16)





Woman flees Israeli shelling in South Lebanon, January 1979.

## Israeli Torture of Palestinians Revealed; Rights Abuses Intensify in 1979

On February 7, a front-page article in the Washington Post revealed the contents of two secret cables from the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem to the State Department. The cables, dated May 31 and November 30, 1978, detail the cases of Palestinians who have suffered torture at the hands of Israeli interrogators. In the November cable the consulate concluded: "Physical mistreatment is systematically used on many Arab security suspects interrogated on the West Bank." Post reporter Edward Cody provided additional corrobation in interviews he conducted with Palestinians now living in the U.S. who were tortured while living on the West Bank.

One of those interviewed by Cody appeared at a press conference sponsered by the Palestine Human Rights Campaign on February 9. Elias, who now lives in Chicago, told in detail of his thirty day interrogation, which included extensive beatings, some while being hung upside down in what is called the "meathouse." In an appeal signed by James Abourezk, I.F. Stone, Noam Chomsky, and Reverend Ralph Abernathy, the PHRC called for an impartial "Commission of Inquiry" to investigate charges of torture in Israeli jails.

The 1979 U.S. State Department human rights report, released the same week, notes cautiously that "instances of mistreatment have occurred." Yet the evidence of systematic rights abuse by Israel is glaring. As 1979 opened, in fact, an intensification of

such abuses occurred. In January alone, the following events attest to an escalation of Israeli attacks on Palestinian rights:

- Six Arab students—Lutfi Abu Hija, Mustapha Ali, Nasser Samara, Masoud Gabarieh, Walid Amer and Jamal Mahada-were expelled from Hebrew University and placed under house arrest on January 27 for sending a message of solidarity to the Palestine National Council, the policy-making body of the PLO. Attacks against Palestinians who publicly express support for the PLO are likely to increase. Following a declaration by 200 Arab leaders in the Galillee in support of the PLO, Foreign Minister Dayan, in a speech before an Israeli Bonds dinner on January 23, warned Palestinians living in Israel, who are citizens of the state, to "remember 1948," indicating that they would face expulsion if they supported the PLO.
- Arif Rateb Abdel-Salam, a Palestinian prisoner from the West Bank, died in Ramle prison on January 20 as a result of Israeli torture.
- On January 29, in violation of the Geneva Convention of 1949, which governs the behavior of an occupying power and forbids collective punishment, Israeli soldiers blew up the houses of Ahmad Daoud Abu Hilal of Abu Dis, Youssif Ashour of the Ras al-Ain district, Issa al-Shakshir of Balata Camp and Youssif Omar of Kfar Qalil. Previously, on December 3, the Israelis blew up the houses of Abd el Rahman Abd el Fath Ahmad Hammad of Silwad and Adiba Hassan Ai Amer of Kfar Qalil.
- Again in violation of the Geneva Convention, the Israeli government announced on January 15 that three new "military outposts" would be established in the West Bank and Gaza. These outposts commonly become civilian Jewish settlements and will join the 117 settlements already established in the occupied territories. Minister of Agriculture Arik Sharon, in a January 23 statement in the Knesset, stated that 32 new settlements will be established in 1979, of which 17 will be built in the occupied West Bank. He also said that within the next twenty years, one million Jews should settle in the Arab city of Jerusalem, illegally annexed to Israel in 1967. Moreover, Israeli radio reported on January 18 that the Finance Committee of the Knesset had allocated 710 million Israeli pounds for building new housing units and increasing the population of settlements on the West Bank. Ma'ariv newspaper also reported on January 11 that Yigal Allon was appointed as head of a special Knesset committee to study means of increasing Israeli settlements in the Jordan Valley and establishing a new canal connecting the Valley with the Mediterranean Sea.
- Israeli tanks and soldiers once again invaded South Lebanon and conducted a bombing campaign in late January. Civilian

targets were shelled, including the Palestinian refugee camps of Burj-alShemali and Rashidiya and the town of Sour. Thousands of Lebanese fled their villages and farms. It is reported that the Israelis used U.S.-supplied cluster and phosphorous bombs, in violation of an agreement with the U.S. governing the use of cluster bombs. In a January 23 statement, Defense Minister Ezer Weizman affirmed that the Israelis would continue to bomb civilian targets in Lebanon.

# Bir Zeit University Still Target for Israeli Occupation

On January 15, officials of Bir Zeit University and members of the Committee for a Just Peace between Palestine and Israel, an Israeli organization, planned to hold a meeting to protest the continuing harassment of the University by Israeli military authorities. The evening before the Military Governor of Ramallah warned Dr. Gabi Baramki, Vice-President of Bir Zeit that he "forbids the participation in this meeting of Bir Zeit students, faculty and staff and specifies that very severe legal actions will be taken against anyone who participates."

When representatives of the Committee, headed by Dr. Israel Lev of the Shelli party and Felicia Langer, arrived at Bir Zeit, the gates of the University were shut and Israeli soldiers surrounded the University. Telephone and electrical wires going to the University had been cut.

Felicia Langer remarked that Bir Zeit was in a "state of siege," which is an apt image for the situation throughout the West Bank and Gaza. Bir Zeit University receives an especially large share of the repression because of its role in educating young Palestinians to be articulate, responsible representatives of their society. As such, the defense of academic freedom and human rights at Bir Zeit University takes on an added importance. On December 18, the Palestine Human Rights Campaign sent "An Appeal for Palestinian Rights" to the White House and State Department. The Appeal signed by one hundred political, religious, civl rights and labor leaders including Senator James Abourezk, journalist I.F. Stone and Reverend Ralph Abernathy, protested the December arrests of Bir Zeit students and of members of the Christian Orthodox club of Ramallah. It called on the U.S. government to demand an end to such actions.

The Palestine Human Rights Campaign is continuing a campaign in behalf of the Bir Zeit students. Please contact their national office at 1322 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 for more information.

## Arafat Delivers Message on Anniversary

Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, delivered the following message on the fourteenth anniversary of the Palestinian revolution:

"Brothers and sisters, companions of the long march, My people, persistent and steadfast, Heroes in the trenches of the revolution:

The fourteenth year has passed, and our victorious revolution enters its fifteenth year embroidered with triumphs. Our people will record in history books this year's new triumphs that will lead to our inevitable victory.

By their decision to persist and fight against the Israeli-American military conspiracy in South Lebanon, our heroes and revolutionaries, alongside our brothers and comrades in the battlefield, the Lebanese people, scored a great military victory for our Arab nation against the Israeli army, equipped with the most sophisticated and destructive American weapons. The revolution keeps its flag held high,

and its posture powerful, in an area that is sensitive and full of conspiracies and dangers.

The strength of our revolution is expressed by the mobilization of our masses in the occupied territories against the injustices of the Camp David agreements. Our outcry of truth, conscience and revolution and the will and determination of our people has brought failure to the Camp David conspiracy.

Year after year, the revolution grows and becomes reality, despite all the powerful plans and predictions of its enemies. The revolution is a powerful current, moving along a historical path. It has become the spearhead of progressive and revolutionary movements against oppression, prejudice and exploitation.

But victory is inevitable, whether our enemies like it or not. This is the will of history and of the blood and sacrifice of our Palestinian people. This is the will of victory for every brave and just human being.

### LNM: In Solidarity with Palestine

Two hundred people attended a celebration of the 14th anniversary of the Palestinian revolution in Washington, D.C. A representative of the Lebanese National Movement delivered the following statement of solidarity:

"On the occasion of the anniversary of the Palestinian revolution, we stand in respect of the first bullet fired on January 1, 1965, which became our guide to the stolen land. We renew our commitment to those who sacrificed their lives on the road to liberation, and we will continue the struggle regardless of the obstacles. Today, on the fourteenth anniversary of the Palestinian revolution, we are more than ever determined not to let down those who paid the highest price in order for future generations to live independently in the land of Palestine.

We salute those who with their struggle stopped the conspiracy against our people and against the presence of our comrades, the Palestinians in Lebanon. The comradely relations between the Palestinian and Lebanese people were and continue to be the first line of defense for the rights of both our people. The Palestinian problem is as much our problem within the Lebanese National Movement as it is the Palestinians and every revolutionary Arab everywhere. The willingness and ability of both our people to resist for more than twenty months the forces of imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction is the best example of Arab unity and sacrifice.

The Lebanese people, represented in the

Lebanese National Movement, stood beside the Palestinian forces and paid thousands of lives of its members and still is willing to pay thousands more for the cause of Palestine and Arabism. We together shall continue the struggle for a united, Arab, democratic and progressive Lebanon. Lebanon and Palestine are one land, their people are one people and their revolution is one and shall continue to be so until victory."

### Palestinian Delegation Mourns Boumedienne

Yasser Arafat, the Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, and a Palestinian delegation attended the funeral of the President of Algeria, Houari Boumedienne. As they stood before the casket, the Palestinian delegation recited "Al-Fatiha," the opening sura of the Koran. Approaching the casket, Arafat expressed his deep sorrow at the loss of Boumedienne, who he called a great Arab hero. Arafat described the support and protection Boumedienne and Algeria had extended to the PLO and the Palestinian people, and the tremendous achievements of Boumedienne in Algeria and the Arab world.

In his speech at the funeral, Abu Tafliqa, the Algerian Foreign Minister said "You have departed to eternity and left behind a mission that will prove a heavy burden without you." He added: "How can we announce your death when you are still alive in our hearts?... You emerged from among this great people, a nation of peasants and workers who fought occupation and barbaric colonialism to regain their national identity and freedom."



**Boumedienne and Aratat** 

(Newsbriefs continued on page 16)





## The United States and the Palestinians

On November 29, 1978, the United Nations celebrated the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. In a letter addressed to the Honorable Abraham Ribicoff, senator from Connecticut, Andrew Young, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, wrote "The United States strongly opposed the creation in 1975 of this committee (Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People) and the annual extension of its mandate on the grounds that a) it was a misuse of United Nations funds and b) it diverted attention from the peace process.

We (also) opposed the establishment of the special unit on Palestinian rights in 1977." The above letter by Andrew Young was in fact a response to a previous letter by Senator Abraham Ribicoff in which he urged the United States Ambassador to the United Nations to "not participate in the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People."

Andrew Young's statement did not affect the United Nations' decision to celebrate the Day of Solidarity. A different statement was made by Young on January 17, 1979, when he was quoted by the New York Times as saying, "The Palestine Liberation Organization must be viewed realistically because it has captured the imagination of the Palestinian people and become a tremendous influence in Arab countries." He went on to say "we may not like it; we don't recognize it. But. . . that will not make the organization's stature among Arab nations any less true." Young went on praising the PLO representatives to the United Nations as 'very skilled politicians and very intelligent decent human beings." In order not to raise the hopes of some people who may think that there was a change in the United States policy towards the PLO, Hodding Carter, the spokesperson of the State Department said that Andrew Young "was making a personal observation." Young, Hodding Carter said, "understands and supports our policy."

For the sake of true peace in the Middle East, it would be helpful to have the United States recognize the PLO as the only organization that really speaks for the Palestinian People. It is so because it has been proven that no peace can be achieved there without the consensus of the Palestinians through their legitimate representatives, the PLO. But since the United States continues refusing to have a dialogue with the PLO (mainly because of Zionist pressure against such moves) the PLO must go on with its just struggle until

victory.

The recognition by the United States of the PLO could further the cause of peace in the Middle East, but the absence of that recognition doesn't necessarily hurt the Palestinian cause. The more determined the Palestinians are in establishing a Palestinian state on the land of Palestine and the greater difficulties they undergo, the more respect and recognition the world will bestow upon them, and this includes the United States. The U.S. Government's behavior in the cases of Southeast Asia, the People's Republic of China, and Iran, as difficult as it is to draw such analogies, shows that the United States does change its policy depending on how convinced the people are in their cause and how much they are willing to sacrifice for it. The changes that occurred in each one of the above examples were beyond imagination a few months before the United States made such a policy change. It did nevertheless revise policy due to changing realities.

The Jerusalem Post, reflecting Israel's worry about the United States decision to recognize the People's Republic of China and to abrogate the U.S.-Taiwan defense treaty, wrote on December 17 that the "Taiwan decision should be a warning to Israel." The article quoted an Israeli Minister as having said "the U.S. decision on Taiwan must flash a red warning light in Israel and could have repercussions on the Middle East negotiations." Begin, in a cabinet meeting, replying to a minister's question about the United States decision on Taiwan said he was "watching the situation very closely."

The General Assembly of the United Nations recognized the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in 1969. The declaration of the General Assembly read as follows: "recognizing that the problem of the Palestine Arab refugees has arisen from the denial of their inalienable rights under the charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, gravely concerned that the denial of their rights has been aggravated by the acts of collective punishment, arbitrary detention, curfews, destruction of homes and property, deportation and other repressive acts against the refugees and other inhabitants of the occupied territories. . . reaffirms the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine; (and) requests the Security Council to take effective measures in accordance with the relevant provisions of the charter of the United Nations to assure the implementation of these resolutions."

In 1970 the U.N. General Assembly reasserted its demands for Israeli withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied in 1967, for the Palestinian right of return to their homes and for the ending of the violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people. The General Assembly also in accordance with the charter of the United Nations declared "that the people of Palestine are entitled to equal rights and self determination." Similar resolutions were passed by the General Assembly in 1971-72. The Assembly, however, went a step further in 1973 when in a resolution regarding the situation in Africa, and which could implicitly apply to the Palestinian issue, recognized the legitimacy of armed struggle as part of liberation movements. The General Assembly in the 1973 resolution "reaffirmed the inalienable right of all people under colonial and foreign domination and alien subjugation to self-determination, freedom and independence."

The resolution also "reaffirms the legitimacy of the people's struggle for liberation from colonial and foreign domination. . . by all available means including armed struggle." The same resolution condemned "all Governments which do not recognize the right to self-determination and independence of peoples, notably the people of Africa. . . and the Palestinian people." In October, 1974, the United Nations General Assembly invited the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in the annual Assembly debate. The support for inviting the PLO was overwhelming, 105 voting in favor and 4 against, with 20 abstentions. In November of the same year the full recognition of Palestinian rights was declared by the General Assembly and the PLO was granted an observer status at the United Nations. On November 13, 1974, Yassir Arafat, Chairman of the PLO, addressed the U.N. General Assembly.

Recognition by the United States of the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and its willingness to negotiate with the PLO on behalf of the Palestinian people will not change the international status of the PLO. As it can be seen in the brief U.N. history outlined above, the international organization, whose resolutions reflect a consensus of mankind, has repeatedly recognized the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinians and the legitimacy of their struggle. Staying outside of this consensus merely puts the U.S. in the minority.

# Healing the Children: A Visit to the House of Somoud

Lee O'Brien, who wrote the following article, visited Lebanon as part of an American delegation in January of 1979. She is a member of COPME, the Committee on Palestine and the Middle East in San Francisco.

A crucial test of a society is how it cares for its children. In this respect, the fall of Tal al Zaatar in the summer of 1976, which left thousands of Palestinian children homeless, without parents and with tragic memories, was a testing ground for the Palestinian revolution, its ideals and its institutions. In a visit to the House of Somoud, where 110 children from Tal al Zaatar now live, I witnessed how these ideals were put into practice.

Tal al Zaatar, once a refuge for 27,000 Palestinian and poor Lebanese, is now a symbol of resistance. One man who survived the siege told me: "Despite the fact we were dying of hunger and thirst, we did not surrender. The reason for that is that the masses at Tal al Zaatar appealed to us to stay and fight." Here the woman interrupts us and says: "But Brother, you must explain that of course the fighters were the people themselves."

The children of Tal al Zaatar, then, are not called orphans, but "the children of fallen patriots," in the recognition that the people of the camp, who risked their lives to get water, to tend the wounded, who fought against appalling odds, are heroes. These children emerged from the rubble of the camp with great needs. They needed to be healed, not only in their bodies, which often suffered from extreme dehydration and malnutrition but in their minds and spirits.

In response to these needs, plans for the House of Somoud (Somoud means "stead-fastness"), began nine months after the fall of Tal al Zaatar. The General Union of Palestinian Women, which is part of the PLO, sponsors and administers the school, located in West Beirut. The 110 children, whose ages range from 1 to 15, are divided into 15 families, each with their surrogate mother. Siblings and close relatives are kept together in the family unit. Those who are over five attend the school in nearby Shatila camp, while the younger ones stay home with their mothers and attend the kindergarten at the house.

Mothers and teachers are also survivors of Tal al Zaatar and have thought long and carefully about what direction Somoud should take. One teacher told me: "We have both political and educational reasons for sending the children out of the house to school. One is so that the children do not



Children at House of Somoud

feel they are in an orphanage or a prison. Another is so that they will interact with other Palestinian children and their own society and learn and feel the spirit of the Palestinian revolution." Children who go out to school also receive an additional hour and a half of school in the house each day, in an effort to make up for the years of the war. Teaching focuses on history and geography, especially that of Palestine, as well as Palestinian artistic and cultural heritage.

At the house of Somoud, the victims of Zionism and fascism are slowly being healed. The paintings and drawings of the children reveal the depth of their anguish and suffering. For the first year, all the pictures the children painted had the same theme: recurrent images of blood, death, tanks, guns and most of all water. Since water had become scarce during the siege as fascists had deliberately shelled and destroyed virtually all the water pumps. There are many stories of groups of heroic women going to try to get a cup of water from a dripping pipe, and only one returning. One mother at Somoud told me that there had recently been some shooting outside the house and one of her adopted children woke up screaming and had clutched her saying: "Mother, please don't go to get water they will kill you: Please don't go for water!"

One five year old boy gave me a picture he drew. He told me that the three people at the top of the picture are his mother, father and best friend, "who are dead and in heaven." Underneath are the bombs, and beneath the bombs are the houses of Tal al Zaatar where he and his family once lived. A seven-year old interrupts to say "Please tell the children of America about Tal al Zaatar — and about Palestine."

The children are healing at the House of Somoud. The artwork is changing: the children now draw pictures of roses and picnics. But most of all they draw pictures and tell stories of Palestine, the homes that they dream of returning to. Although they have no parents, they have many models: Palestinian fighters, poets, artists and workers visit the house frequently and develop close relationships with the children. A doctor comes twice a week, and a nourishing diet is provided. The mothers and teachers provide stability, strength and love. The children have not only the dream of Palestine, but the love and support of the Palestinian revolution. One teacher from another Palestinian school commented: "Palestine will be liberated as long as these children dream of it and of their revolution."



# An Insider's View of U.S. Policy

Decades of Decision: American Policy towards the Arab-Israeli Conflict 1967-1976, William B. Quandt, University of California Press, 1977

Recent months have marked several watersheds in American policy towards the Middle East. The massive effort mounted by the U.S. at Camp David and elsewhere, spearheaded by the American president, to negotiate peace between Egypt and Israel has thus far ended in deadlock. U.S. policy towards Iran has collapsed in ruins in the massive popular rebellion against the U.S.-supported Shah and the Carter Administration is under attack for its "pa: alysis and confusion" in dealing with the upheaval. Thus, an appraisal of the premises and practice of American policy in the last decade is of particular interest.

William Quandt, who served one term on the National Security Council in 1972-74 and is currently on the Council as its reigning Middle East expert, has attempted such a study. Decades of Decision is a readable, insider's study of American policy as forged in the cauldron of the last decade, encompassing the 1967 war, the Jordan crisis in 1970 and the October War and its aftermath. Although rich in informative detail, Quandt's book is almost equally weak in in-depth analysis. However, given the author's influential position in the inner sanctums of American policy, it can be argued that an examination of what is weak or absent from the book's analysis is itself revealing of U.S. policy at this juncture.

Quandt himself gives a good explanation of the faults of his book when he notes that "the obstacles to understanding American policy in the Middle East stem less from a paucity of data and information than from the failure to ask appropriate questions."Quandt dismisses a whole range of fundamental questions that would relate the thrust of U.S. policy to U.S. society and the U.S. economy as "vulgar Marxism." He also wages a vendetta against what he calls "abstract forces." As a result, there is no examination of the force or influence of historical forces like nationalism or national liberation, or of economic forces and motives. Thus, among the actors on the Middle East stage we do not find, for example, the oil companies, and we barely perceive the Palestinian people and the PLO in the body of the book. Quandt concedes there are underlying motifs in U.S. policy containment of the Soviet Union, access to Middle Eastern oil, and support for Israel but he refrains from examining these in any systematic way.

Quandt does note that there are different possible frameworks for understanding American policy and he names four familiar

ones, which he calls the national interest perspective (viewing policy as dictated by U.S. global and regional interests), the domestic interest perspective (policy dictated by pressure groups and public opinion), the bureaucratic perspective (policy dictated by government departments like State Department), and the presidential leadership perspective. It is the last that Quandt adopts as his framework and defines as policy dictated "less by the personality of the president... than the way he and his advisors view the world and how they reason."

This perspective leads to an unsurprising conclusion: Quandt believes strong presidential leadership is the key to an effective Middle East policy and states: "No one, perhaps unfortunately, is better suited for the role of peacemaker between Arabs and Israelis than the American president." In the light of the dominant sentiments towards the U.S. among the peoples of the region, this seems rather like recommending an objective team of Anaconda Copper and the CIA to make peace between the Chilean junta and its opposition.

Quandt presents us with a curiously value-free U.S. policy. Carter's favorite word "human rights" is not mentioned, let alone viewed as the "cornerstone" of U.S. policy. Quandt does state that the United States seeks "stability" and to "preserve status quo moderate powers." But as Noam Chomsky aptly notes in his review of Decades of Decision in The Nation of July 22, 1978, Quandt neglects to define these terms, although he does mention that "moderate" is often equivalent to "pro-American" for policy makers. Another implied definition could be added: "stability" is synonomous with American control. In one telling incident, Quandt describes how Kissinger aborted the Egyptian-Israeli negotiations after the October War by persuading the Israelis to reverse their position abruptly. "Kissinger felt the talks were proceeding too rapidly," Quandt states, and he wanted to "demonstrate that a United States role was essential for sustained diplomatic process."

By presidential leadership, then, Quandt does not mean moral leadership. Watergate, for example, is treated simply as a stumbling block in the implementation of the Kissinger-Nixon policies, although Quandt allows himself one irresistible anecdote in a description of the 1974 visit of Nixon to Israel: "When discussing terrorism

with the Israelis, Nixori startled his hosts by leaping from his seat and declaring there was only one way to deal with terrorists. Then, Chicago-gangland-style, he fired an imaginary submachine gun at the assembled cabinet members." Disturbing presidential behavior aside, however, discussions in the inner circle are free of the principles of sovereignty, self-determination and so forth, that color public statements. In the 1967 war, for example, Johnson and his advisors felt that "by the time it was known that Israel had struck the first blow it no longer seemed to matter" because the "U.S. was off the hook."

Quandt shares more than he differs with his predecessors like Henry Kissinger, but there are a few interesting contrasts. Quandt underplays the role of Israel as a guardian of U.S. interests. Writing about the 1970 Jordan crisis, he noted: "Kissinger and Nixon had convinced themselves that Israel had played a vital role in helping to check the Soviet-inspired Syrian invasion of Jordan and might play a comparable role in thwarting Soviet designs in Egypt." Quandt himself places more emphasis on internal Syrian politics as prompting the Syrian withdrawal. This also leads him to disagreement with the Kissinger assessment of the "global" (U.S.-Soviet) dimension of the crisis.

In other words, Quandt is cautioning the U.S. to include the regional actors instead of seeing everything solely through the lens of the U.S.-Soviet confrontation. This, of course, fits with the more sophisticated global analysis that characterizes recent policy thinking by the Trilateral Commission and other agencies and thinktanks, analysis aimed at maintaining U.S. dominance in the post-Vietnam era of shifting alliances and growing turmoil in the Third World. The influential 1976 Brookings Report, which Quandt as well as Zbigniew Brzezkinski signed, typifies this approach. Outlining broad principles for reaching a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, the report recommends that "the Palestinians, provided they are prepared to accept the right of Israel and Jordan to selfdetermination should be accorded the same right."

Clearly, the 1977 Carter declaration that Palestinians should have a "homeland" and the 1977 U.S.-U.S.S.R. joint communique were in line with these recommendations, although "self-determination" was reduced to the cautious notion of Palestinian

(Continued on page 15)



#### I ITERATURE

This month marks the second anniversary of the death of the Palestinian poet Rashid Hussein. Hussein's poetry, which had painted a vivid image of the anguish, exile and struggle for freedom of the Palestinian people, was well known and loved by not only Palestinians but people virtually all over the Arab world.

Following are various representative poems by Rashid Hussein:

#### A GIRL AND A POEM

He promised to write me a poem and now, every morning I say Mother! I'll go to the news-stand.

My mother does not know that every morning

I steal a piece of my brother's food and with it buy a newspaper, hoping to find the promised poem there.

It is now two months and I buy papers with food,

but the poem is never there.

Only today he phoned, and when I asked he answered:

he wrote the poem long ago

The poem was written the moment he promised it

and that waiting for the poem was the poem itself.

And now I feel empty!

Now I don't want to go to the news-stand.

Mother! Why did he phone this morning,
and stop the poem?

#### TO MY BROTHER FATHI

For your sake, Fathi,
I broke the lock of my lips.
For you
I slaughtered silence in my heart
to write these lines
to build a wall in the face of death.
For you Fathi, believe me,
I cast the letters to make a sentence.

Fathi.

The sun that bathes the wounds of the fig trees

its rays are dyed in blood by the executioners of Auares

that same sun toasts the wheat into gold in the fields of China.

It wrings tears form the foreheads of peasants in our village.

You may not understand Fathi, but tomorrow you shall grow up and the field will grow a green root before your eyes

and the lungs of the brown planter's sun will be crucified.

Who knows-

You may accept or reject the present reality;

If you reject you shall grow up, If you acquiesce you become smaller.

Fathi

You may not understand why the East is tired of silence or why the dead vomited, and gave death a bridge.

Or why your feet cried or why I wrote this.

But tomorrow you shall grow and understand.

For your sake—for the children—Believe me.

#### TENT #50 (SONG OF A REFUGEE)

Tent #50, on the left, is my new world, shared with me by my memories: Memories as verdant as the eyes of spring. memories like the eyes of a woman weeping,

and memories the color of milk and love.

Two doors has my tent, two doors like two wounds.

One leads to the other tents, wrinkle-browed

like clouds no longer able to weep; and the second—a rent in the ceiling, leading

to the skies, revealing the stars like refugees scattered, and like them, naked.

Also the moon is trudging there downcast and weary as the UNRWA, yellow as though it were the UNRWA under a load of yellow cheese for the refugees.

Tent #50, on the left, that is my present, but it is too cramped to contain a future. And—"Forget!" they say, but how can I?

Teach the night to forget to bring dreams showing me my village and teach the wind to forget to carry to me

the aroma of apricots in my fields! and teach the sky, too, to forget to rain.

Only then, I may forget my country.

#### **Iran...** (continued from page 4)

This solidarity is clearly a matter of common interests, common goals - and common enemies. In a front page article on January 18, the Christian Science Monitor. commenting on the possibility of a coup to restore the Shah to power that "A number of Iranians believe that. . . the conspiracy is the work of Israeli agents in league with hard-line Iranian generals... Israel's Mossad secret service is reported to have close links with Iran's Savak secret police, which it helped set up." One "usually well-informed Iranian" told the Monitor: "They (the Israelis) are trying to do here what they achieved in Lebanon. The Israelis have everything to gain by bringing down a government pledged to shifting Iran's support to the Palestinians.

Clearly, the departure of the Shah and the removal of Bakhtiar is only a first step, and the Iranian people will need international support and solidarity to build a democratic and independent Iran. At the recent meeting

of the Palestine National Congress, the Congress confirmed its stand with the Iranian revolution, and "wished this young revolution overall victory, which would enable it to place Iran's potential and its heroic people within the ranks of the struggle against imperialism and Zionism."

## **PNC...** (Continued from page 7)

movements, especially those in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

• In the organisational field, the program declared that all Palestinian factions participate in the PLO's institutions in accordance with the principles of democracy, and that "the Palestinian leadership is a collective one," i.e. decision making is the responsibility of all.

If you would like the complete text of the unity program, as well as speeches and documents of the PNC, please send \$1.00 for our booklet "The Palestine National Council."

#### **Insiders.** . . (Continued from page 14)

"participation in their own future." That this notion was once again reduced — this time to Begin's "self-rule" plan — after Sadat changed the rules of the game, demonstrates that a desire to control all the options, rather than devotion to principle, has the uppermost hand in U.S. policy. With the Camp David approach in shambles, we may once again see the comprehensive settlement activated, and Carter may once again discover the Palestinian people.

Quandt, who has written studies on Palestinian and Algerian nationalism, may have a slightly better grip on the concept of nationalism and national liberation than his predecessors, but he still assumes these are forces that can be managed or co-opted to accommodate American interests. Arab leaders like Sadat give a temporary boost to these assumptions. That these assumptions have survived at all, after being dealt a mortal blow in Indochina, attests that U.S. policy makers have still not learned some very fundamental lessons.

## The Palestinians... (Continued from page 9)

surprised us, because ours is a culture that goes back at least a thousand years, and has accumulated a great deal of profound esthetics and developed on a level of sophistication that rivals anything, anywhere. Therefore, those of us who are isolated, living in America, tend to forget that the role of the revolution in Palestinian society transcends its political and military role and that one of its major contributions has been these social, cultural and economic projects.

Q: What lies ahead for the Palestinian people and their revolutionary struggle?

A: History, especially in a vibrant region like the Middle East, is a dynamic, not a static, process of self-transformation. There is a constant emergence of new political facts, new geopolitical realities and of the ascendency, or abeyance, of certain power blocks friendly or hostile to the struggle of the Palestinian people. The role of our revolution is to respond dynamically to this process of self-transformation. Our struggle, being dynamic, does not view the future in a linear, or hierarchical manner. We have set our goals for the future — the liberation of our homeland and the establishment in it of a secular, free, and democratic state. Should our struggle take ten years, we are prepared for the next ten years. Should it take a hundred, we are equally prepared to sacrifice and draw on our optimal resources. Ours is a revolution till victory.

### Clergy Affirm Palestinian Rights

Citing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, over 450 American clergy have called on Israel to recognize the right of exiled Palestinians to return to their homes and the right of Palestinians to self-determination, including an independent state, if they so decide. Signers of the petition, who came from thirty-two states and twenty-five denominations, included William Wipfler (Director, Human Rights Office, National Council of Churches), Roman Catholic Archbishop

James Casey, Daniel Berrigan, Rabbi Elmer Berger and Greek Catholic Archbishop Joseph Tawil.

After a press conference on January 3, three of the signers attempted to present the petition to the Israeli Embassy but the Embassy refused to meet with the clergy. The petition, which was organized by Search for Equality and Justice in Palestine, is still being circulated.

For more information, please contact, Middle East Resource Center, 1322 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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FEBRUARY 1979 Vol. 1, No. 10

Monthly Magazine published by

PALESTINE INFORMATION OFFICE P.O. Box 57042 Washington, D.C. 20037 BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Brentwood, MD

Permit No. 3039