

ship and the rights and duties this entails. The organizational structure of the party was also defined. The central bodies of the organizations include the national congress, the central committee and the politbureau. Then there are the leading bodies for the Arab region, i.e. the leadership, the central committee and the congress. This is followed by the district leadership and congress, the section leadership and congress and the unit leadership and congress. Finally there are cells and (study) circles.

The fourth national congress was held from April 28th to May 3rd, 1981, under the slogan: «The 4th national congress is an important step towards completing the PFLP's transformation into a Marxist-Leninist party; establishing a united Palestinian national front; stepping up the armed struggle; defending the revolution and reinforcing its militant positions; aborting capitulationist settlement efforts; and strengthening militant inter-Arab and international relations.» The congress discussed the reports proposed and elected a new central committee and politbureau. It re-elected Dr. George Habash as secretary general. The congress issued a political report which clarified the general Palestinian, Arab and international situation, as well as the tasks of the Front for the coming stage. In addition, it defined the strategic tasks and the lessons extracted from the experience of the Palestinian revolution. The most important of these are: the necessity of providing supportive operational bases for the Palestinian revolution; struggle in stages; and struggle against the settlement trend and its effects on the masses.

Fundamental Political Tenets:

1. The importance of political ideology

The PFLP emphasizes the importance of political ideology and a correct political line, and the role this plays in the success of the revolution: «A primary condition for success is a clear vision of matters, a clear vision of the enemy and of the revolutionary forces. In the light of this, the strategy for the battle is defined. Without this, the patriotic work would be spontaneous and improvised.»

2. The imperialist role of the Zionist entity

The primary aim of the Zionist invasion of Palestine was to entrench an armed population base on which imperialism could rely to confront the Arab liberation movement whose victory would pose a threat to imperialist interests in this vital region of the world. It is not true that the Zionist invasion was a result of the oppression of the Jews in Europe. It is also incorrect to separate this from imperialist plans for the region. Moreover, it is incorrect to separate the battle with the Zionist entity from the overall conflict between the masses and imperialism, because there is an organic bond between 'Israel' and the Zionist movement on the one hand and international imperialism on the other. The PFLP emphasizes the slogan: «No coexistence with Zionism». It stipulates that eliminating the Zionist entity is a precondition for establishing a just and lasting peace in the region. The Front also considers that confronting Zionism necessarily entails confronting imperialism as well.

3. The position of Arab reaction in the conflict

The PFLP considers the contradiction with Arab reaction as primary, not secondary. The PFLP does not advocate the slogans «Non-interference in the affairs of the Arab states» or «The Palestinian cause is above Arab conflicts». It considers

that the scientific specification of the position of Arab reaction in the enemy camp protects the Palestinian revolution from its maneuvers and plans. The absence of this specification rules out clear vision. This does not mean that the Palestinian revolution should shoulder the responsibility of inducing change in the Arab countries and overthrowing their regimes. Rather it means allying with the Arab mass movement and progressive forces to overthrow any regime which betrays the Palestinian cause.

4. The Arab bourgeoisie is unable to liberate Palestine

The developments which followed the death of Gamal Abdul Nasser in Egypt prove that the nationalist petit bourgeoisie, which starts out by confronting imperialism upon coming to power, gradually shifts to a position which converges with imperialism, because of the growth of the interests of this class while it is in power. Thus the relationship between the revolution and the national bourgeoisie and its regimes is one of alliance and conflict. There is alliance with this class and its regimes, because of their hostility towards imperialism and 'Israel'. There is conflict with them because of their strategy in the battle of confrontation.

According to the PFLP, there are two strategies: «The strategy of the petit bourgeoisie which, in theory and in practice, promotes the line of classical warfare by rebuilding the military institutions. In contrast, there is the strategy of the working class which, in theory and practice, is directed towards guerrilla warfare and protracted people's war fought by the masses and led by the working class.» These two strategies will coexist until the strategy of the working class finally triumphs in the Palestinian and Arab arena. The PFLP adopts this view of the bourgeoisie in order to protect the revolution and masses, by preventing exaggeration of the role played by this class. The PFLP cautions against the dangers involved if the bourgeois class leads the alliance of the masses confronting imperialism. It also stresses the fact that the bourgeoisie can remain in the nationalist ranks when the working class and its program lead the liberation battle.

5. The workers and peasants are the pillars of the revolution, its main class material and its leadership

The number of heroic deeds and sacrifices made by the Arab and Palestinian masses in the conflict with the Zionist enemy clearly negates the claim of those trying to blame the masses for defeat. The PFLP relates this defeat to the class structure of the leadership which headed the mass movement, and considers that only the working class is capable of leading the mass struggle to victory. The necessity of the Palestinian and Arab working class leading the liberation battle is the most important tenet of the PFLP. This does not, however, mean confusing the stage of liberation with the stage of building socialism. Nor does it mean ignoring the broad class alliance which includes, in addition to the workers and peasants, the petit bourgeoisie and sections of the national bourgeoisie.

6. The necessity of interlinking the Palestinian and Arab national struggle

It is wrong to merge the Palestinian struggle within the framework of the Arab national struggle. The slogan «For independent Palestinian decision-making and action» is correct when it pertains to protecting the Palestinian revolution from the efforts of the bourgeois and reactionary Arab regimes to