

agreement, specifically by Arafat. In the light of this, the PFLP sent a special memorandum to the Fatah Central Committee, calling on them to abide by the agreement they had signed. However, the Central Committee did not abide by the agreement concerning relations with Jordan and Egypt. On the organizational level, they contributed to the split in the Palestinian Writers and Journalists Union, and didn't respect the agreement in terms of PLO offices abroad or financial matters; the National Fund withheld the sums to be paid to the military forces.

Not once did the Central Committee issue a statement condemning the breaches of Arafat. They only insisted on convening the PNC on September 15th. Since nothing was achieved in terms of overall unity, the natural step would have been to continue the efforts to achieve this, then hold the PNC. The date was not sacred, but the right-wing, by insisting on this date, was striving to use the Democratic Alliance as a cover for continuing its political course and consecrating the split in the Palestinian arena.

Problems arose anew in the Joint Leadership and the Democratic Alliance. Instead of abiding by the Aden agreement, the DFLP abided only by the Aden-Algiers agreement, regarding it as the platform of the Joint Leadership and Democratic Alliance. In the light of this, the PFLP began to feel the danger of being drawn towards the right-wing, because of the stands taken by the DFLP.

The PFLP called another meeting in Aden between the Democratic Alliance and the three Arab communist parties. Almost all those present agreed that convening the PNC at that particular time would mean negating the Democratic Alliance's Aden agreement. The PFLP, PCP and PLF stressed the importance of strengthening the Democratic Alliance and continuing efforts to unify the Palestinian arena. The DFLP was adamant about holding the PNC on September 15th. The meeting resulted in agreement that the PNC should be postponed and stressed the importance of adhering to the Aden agreement. In short, the DFLP was more dedicated to alliance with the bourgeoisie than to the Democratic Alliance's platform. Despite this, the PFLP continued to consider the Joint Leadership and Democratic Alliance as the basis for its Palestinian alliances and the point of departure for solving the PLO's crisis, adhering to the Aden document.

The suspension of the Joint Leadership

When the right-wing decided to convene the PNC in Amman in November 1984, strong differences arose in the Joint Leadership and Democratic Alliance. The DFLP considered this PNC to be legitimate, while the PFLP considered it and everything built on it to be illegitimate. As a result, the DFLP unilaterally announced the freezing of the Joint Leadership on November 20th.

The DFLP's decision was coupled with a virtual propaganda war on the PFLP. We were falsely accused of revoking our commitment to the Aden-Algiers agreement and held responsible for destroying the chance to block the Central Committee's unilateral convocation of the PNC. By comparison, the DFLP's comments were mild concerning the right's breaches of the Aden-Algiers agreement and its decision to convene the PNC in Amman before the achievement of comprehensive Palestinian unity.

The PFLP was forced to clarify that we had never swerved from our commitment to the Aden-Algiers agreement. However, such commitment never meant abandoning the struggle against the dominating rightist leadership and its destructive

policies, in order to restore the PLO's unity and relations with Syria. We pointed out the alternatives we had presented for having the PNC postponed until overall unity could be achieved, such as immediately convening the PLO Central Council. Events showed that the rightist leadership was not at all interested in such alternatives, for it blocked the needed quorum for an Executive Committee meeting which the DFLP was ready to attend in return for postponing the PNC. The reality was that the right-wing had made a political decision to hold a PNC with whoever would attend, in order to provide a show of support for its chosen policy. In this context, the right wanted the Democratic Alliance to provide a cover for its efforts.

Frankly, the PFLP was both surprised and disappointed by the DFLP's suspension of the Joint Leadership. The DFLP thus disregarded the strategic perspective of this experiment in favor of a tactical reaction to immediate events and differences. It was surprising that the DFLP did so without consultations, despite a prior agreement on a meeting to evaluate the overall experience of the Joint Leadership. In so doing, the DFLP not only delayed a strategic task of the Palestinian left. It also delivered a gift to the right-wing just as the Amman PNC was convened, by opening conflict among the forces opposed to the right-wing policy.

The PFLP continued trying to preserve the Democratic Alliance and calling for the unity of the PLO despite the PNC session. However, the differences had become very serious. This situation continued until the signing of the Amman accord.

The PFLP considered the Amman accord a serious turning point with dangerous implications - a point at which the Palestinian right had irrevocably determined its final direction. All organizations in the Democratic Alliance agreed on the necessity of struggling to annul the accord, but there was hesitation or refusal on the part of some about initiating an organizational framework to this purpose. Nor was there consensus on the necessity of removing the right-wing from the leadership as a prerequisite for restoring the PLO's unity and national line. The PFLP called for the broadest possible Palestinian front to confront the deviationist leadership, but the DFLP was of a different opinion. This difference was serious enough to spell the end of the Democratic Alliance as a coalition of four organizations. As a result, the PFLP worked for the formation of the PNSF, including the PLF and the organizations of the National Alliance.

Prospects

The PFLP remains committed to the unity of the revolutionary democratic forces as a step towards comprehensive left unity and the formation of a united Palestinian communist party. Until this level of unity is attained, serious obstacles will continue to exist and we are required to continue to struggle to overcome these. These obstacles resulted in the collapse of the Joint Leadership after less than one and a half years. This goal will, however, remain as the basis of our work to upgrade unity between Palestinian left forces. In future unity initiatives, the PFLP considers all the other revolutionary democratic organizations as possible partners (DFLP, PLF, PSF) as well as the PCP and all other progressive Palestinian organizations and forces. Currently, in the occupied territories, we are engaged in concrete cooperative work on the mass level with both the DFLP and PCP. This cooperation may give forms and ideas for overcoming the obstacles to left unity. We also hope that the struggle against the right-wing deviation in the PLO will generate new opportunities for left unity which is sorely needed for the continuation and final victory of our revolution. ●