

said: «We look upon the Soviet position in calling for an international conference to resolve the Middle East crisis, namely the Palestinian cause, as a sound means for confronting US hegemony in the region. This is so because the Soviet Union is committed, in principle, to supporting the struggle of the Palestinian people on the basis of their national program....»

To the question: «Will you cease your resistance if 'Israel' returned the West Bank and Gaza Strip», comrade Abu Ali says: «No, we have full rights to Palestine. The majority of the Palestinian people who now live in exile did not live only in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Will they be allowed to return? Should they be allowed, that would throw a different light on the matter - but if they remain in exile then they reserve the right to return to their homeland - as stated in the UN resolutions. Let the UN, therefore, effectuate its resolutions. We

accept the UN resolutions but does 'Israel' accept them, too? We realize that 'Israel' fears the return of the Palestinian people to its homeland, because they would then constitute the majority within the occupied homeland. If this happened, we would establish a democratic state for all inhabitants.

The war of the camps

Comrade Abu Ali then answered a question about the Palestinian condition in Lebanon and the war of the camps. He said: «Over the past three years great developments have taken form in the Lebanese arena. Numerous contradictions were touched off, some of which regrettably were within the national ranks. Because the Palestinian masses do not live isolated from the political, social and security situation, they are inevitably involved in these contradictions. However, the main aim of our people in Lebanon is the realization of the PLO

national program. All the barriers and impediments arising in Lebanon as a result of internal or external influences will not preclude the right of our people in their struggle.»

As for the war waged by Amal against the Palestinians, comrade Abu Ali said: «We repelled Amal's encroachment on the camps. We were on the defensive because we did not wish to enter into such a war, especially since it meant fighting within the national ranks. We stated our position with regard to this war, politically and through mass media channels. Our efforts finally culminated in the Damascus agreement. We are still making efforts to overcome contradictions within the national ranks. We demand that all abide by this agreement... Nevertheless, we condemn those in Amal who breach this agreement and demand of its political leadership to enforce commitment to the Damascus agreement on all its forces.»

For a Palestinian People's Conference

In an interview excerpted below, PFLP Politbureau member, Abdul Rahim Mallouh, explains the PFLP's call for a Palestinian people's conference as it was announced by General Secretary George Habash in August.

«The main goal of the Palestinian people's conference is to try to unify the efforts and work of all Palestinian organizations, forces, institutions and nationalist personalities. This means those who are opposing and confronting the US solution and the deviationist line; those who are working to abrogate the Amman accord which was signed on February 11, 1985, by King Hussein of Jordan and Yasir Arafat.

«The convening of the conference has to be preceded by sufficient preparations. Regional conferences should be convened in the homeland and in the diaspora. This will facilitate the masses' participation which is vital. A prerequisite for such a conference is a dialogue among all Palestinian nationalist organizations, forces, institutions and personalities...»

«It is of utmost importance to pinpoint the fact that such a conference will not lead to an alternative to the PLO, or to parallel structures to its institutions. The people's conference will in no way contradict the PLO's sole representation of the Palestinian people. Rather it will reaffirm the PLO's sole representation. It will return the PLO to the correct line...»



«The people's conference is open to all nationalist forces, institutions and personalities... It is open to the nationalist cadres and elements of Fatah (Central Committee) - those who are opposed to the US solution and the deviationist line; those who reject the Amman accord...»

«The idea of a people's conference is being discussed in the Palestine

National Salvation Front (PNSF). I can say that it received preliminary acceptance... The Palestinian Communist Party welcomed the idea. In a joint communique between the PFLP and the PCP, issued on August 7, 1985, agreement on convening a people's conference was noted... The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) does not object to the idea. The DFPL raised some questions aimed at making the conference a success... We are contacting other forces and trying to reach a common understanding of this idea...»

«The PFLP delegation which visited Moscow recently discussed the idea with the Soviet comrades. They welcomed and supported it. They consider such a move as a form of confronting the US solution and the Hussein-Arafat accord... They stressed the point that all forces and political orientations have to participate in such a conference. They mentioned the importance of preserving the unity of the PLO and safeguarding the Palestinian national program which calls for the rights of the Palestinian people - to return to their homeland, exercise self-determination and establish an independent Palestinian state...»