

I think that, in the mid-seventies, the enemy forces reached the conclusion that it was difficult, if not impossible, to crush this revolution from outside. Then they opted to wait for internal problems to arise, and you know the internal problems you inherited from the British colonial rule. The enemy forces said that this revolution promises progress, comfort and happiness to the masses; let us see what they can do, let them fall victim to the development process they speak of.

We ourselves know that the progress and development process is as difficult a task as the armed struggle, if not more so. The revolution underwent internal problems in 1978, involving how to understand and apply the development process, and what kind of international alliances would help in this. At this point, the revolution faced the events of 1978*, and at the same time, the Yemeni Socialist Party was formed. It clearly defined the theoretical, strategic guidelines for the development of the revolutionary process in the economic, social and cultural fields, and for Arab and international alliances. The documents of the founding congress of the Yemeni Socialist Party were a comprehensive study. They were evidence that the revolution had precisely defined its theoretical guidelines and path. The first congress defined the main choices of the revolution. It settled many issues ranging from economic, social and political development; to how to apply the slogan of proletarian internationalism; and how to define the historical, enduring alliance between the Yemeni October Revolution and the great October Revolution of the Soviet Union. After this, the revolution will not stop. As (the famous Egyptian singer) Um Khaltaoum says: «You are rebels, rebels, rebels, forever rebels.»

You have spoken of the Yemeni revolution until the birth of the party. Would you continue up to the present, with the party's 3rd general congress?

After formulating the main documents of the first congress in 1978, you were faced by the task of applying these. We all know that documents, no matter how important, will only be complete through application. This is natural. In fact, I disagree with any pessimistic view concerning the obstacles that your revolution has faced. All scientific revolutionaries know that, despite the importance of theoretical guidelines, these await the correct application. When we find the correct way theoretically, we have come half the way. This is great, but what about the second half? This depends on whether practice is in accordance with the documents...The correlation between theory and practice is not automatic or instantaneous. Revolutionaries must be scientific in order not to lose patience. The problem has confronted the Yemeni revolution and every revolution; after outlining the theoretical guideline, application must be in accordance with this guide whether in the internal platform or the political documents.

I personally think that all the predicaments the revolution confronts are natural. If you say there are no predicaments, I would conclude that the revolution has ended. Life is always progressing; this progress occurs through contradictions and solving problems. One who doesn't expect or want problems, doesn't want to progress. I think that comradely dialogue, the principle of criticism and self-criticism, and collective leadership are the best means for solving the predicaments that arise. We can be confident that the achievements of the revolution will continue. We, as Arabs and Palestinians, can feel sure that Democratic Yemen will always be a fortress for the Arab working class and its protracted struggle. The aims of this

struggle are the liberation of all Palestine, uniting the Arabs from the Gulf to the (Atlantic) Ocean, then the Arab national democratic revolution, then the united Arab socialist society.

How do the factions of the Arab liberation movement, specially the Palestinian revolution, view the Yemeni Socialist Party's 3rd congress?

It is indeed a significant event, and you in this country should view it as such. All the Arab liberation movement, especially the progressive factions, are looking forward to its results. Holding this congress on time is a victory and source of glory for all the Arab liberation movement's factions, and for all national and democratic Palestinian forces. At the same time, it will be a blow to the enemy camp that was anxiously waiting for news of its being postponed or disrupted, so that they could indulge in their dreams and say that this fortress is crumbling.

The congress gives you a chance to lay down the theoretical guideline and the economic construction program for the next five years. It will give the masses and the party cadres a chance to absorb and understand these documents. That will lead to a responsible leadership, committed to working on the basis of these documents.

Holding the congress proves the slogan that General Secretary, comrade Ali Nasser Mohammad has spoken of: Preserving the unity of the party. I read the work program proposed by the General Secretary. I noted in particular the points about the unity of the party and its leadership. The principled unity of the party and leadership on holding the congress is the best evidence of success in applying this slogan, but the struggle cannot and will not stop. After the congress, you will face many tasks, but I am confident that the revolutionary leadership of your party will be able to accomplish all aspirations.

Allow me to say that after this congress, it will be our right to come to your leadership and ask for its important, leading role concerning the Palestinian question. We will ask for its role vis-a-vis the Steadfastness Front, the Arab popular movement and the progressive nationalist forces who are facing the imperialist attacks. I don't think this will burden your leadership or party with new worries. I believe in the dialectical relationship between your success in tasks of political, economic, social and cultural development, and our success in stopping the imperialist attack, saving the PLO and reactivating the Steadfastness Front and the Arab popular movement.

The doctor took a quick glance at his watch and I looked at mine. The designated hour has, without our knowledge, become an hour and a half. The cold coffee is still in front of us. The talk itself has been spreading warmth in the air-conditioned room. The doctor stood up slowly and walked across the room without using his walking stick to support his right leg. Then he sat facing me and asked for coffee, and we conversed.

The picture of his mother is still in my thoughts. She was absolutely right when she insisted on his becoming a doctor. As if reading my thoughts, he said, «My daughter too chose the medical profession, and she is now in the fifth year of medical college.» His daughter loves him as a father and human being, and chose medicine in order to cure him of his illness. His mother loved him as a son, and chose medicine for him before he became ill. His people love him as an outstanding, militant, courageous leader. Our Yemeni people love him as a long-time comrade of our revolution, party and homeland.

* On June 26th, 1978, the opportunist left attempted a coup d'état.