King Hussein Doesn't Speak for Us

King Hussein's February 19th speech, attacking the PLO and trying to divide the Palestinian people, was massively condemned in occupied Palestine. Following is a sampling of the response:

Bassam Shakaa, elected mayor of Nablus

«What has occurred was expected, for the matter is not so much related to relations between two parties as to a trend that links its future with imperialism. The PLO was founded in the midst of Arab conflicts and at a time when the Palestinian cause was almost forgotten. The start of the armed revolution restored respect to the Palestinian cause and identity. Then the deviation started and with it came setbacks...The king's wrong presentation of the course of the Palestinian cause was an accumulation and one of the results of this deviation...Those who call for 242 will not be able to change the position of Zionism and US imperialism. Did any of them hear of Israeli willingness to withdraw from the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jerusalem or the Golan Heights, abandon the settlements and then permit our people to establish an independent state?

«What has occurred should embarrass those who deviated from the revolution abd our people's national struggle. The king's step provides an opportunity for unifying positions, reconsidering what has happened, initiating discussion and deep criticism, and returning to national unity in the framework of the PLO...

«It was evident that the king would abandon Yasir Arafat in view of the policy that is being implemented in the occupied land, aimed at a practical policy of adapting to occupation. The prime example of this was the joint Palestinian-Jordanian Committee's acceptance of the (Israeli) appointments to the municipalities....

«The intention of the king's speech was to bring up side issues, far removed from the main issues, in order to bury national interests...This underscores the necessity of beginning serious and speedy efforts to unite the PLO on a militant basis, hostile to imperialism and Zionism. The results of the ongoing polarization will ultimately benefit the national forces.»

Haider Abdel Shafi, head of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in Gaza

«The scene which we are now facing proves the validity of the principled position of the national factions who rejected the Feb. 11th accord, and adhered to the 16th PNC's decisions, calling for national unity between all factions, in the framework of the PLO, on a militant basis, opposed to imperialist and Zionist schemes...»

Bashir Barghouti, editor of «Al Talia» newspaper, Jerusalem

«This underscores the positions of those forces who refused the trend of the Amman accord. It accentuates the fact that there is no hope for a just solution, that guarantees the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, through accords with reaction and relying on imperialism. The correct trend is adopting the resolutions of the 16th PNC...»

Dr. Farouq Al Saad, head of Al Hadaf Committee in Um Al Fahm, statistics teacher at Al Najah University in Nablus

«King Hussein is no different from his grandfather. What happened in 1948 is repeating itself in a different form — the same mentality, the same sell-out. I don't believe Hussein can find a substitute for the PLO. Nor do I believe that anyone would accept such a *Hussein*.»

Mustafa Abu Salem, secretary of the Timber Workers Union

«It is of utmost necessity to reject the Amman accord and the sequence of concessions offered by the PLO leadership, and to return to the national line by commitment to the PNC charter and the decisions of its legitimate sessions. The illegitimate session should be cancelled as should all the ensuing steps which have retarded the Palestinian national struggle...We call on all the struggling patriotic forces to take the reins and confront the obvious efforts to split the Palestinian people...We are confident that our people can foil all plans of liquidation and preserve national unity.»

Mansour Khalil, head of the municipality of Deir Al Ghusson villages

«What is going on now in Jordan is an attempt to return to the situation which existed before the PLO became the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinians. Jordan's main worry is to push the Palestinians' sole representative out in the cold politically, and clear the coast for its own selfish interests. The era of the Ariha (Jericho)[1] conference is over. Those who think like their forefathers, of going back to it, will not achieve their aim...In my opinion, the response should be for Palestinians to close ranks, and readopt the Aden-Algiers decisions[2] and those of the 16th PNC session.»

Khader Al Marnikh, secretary of the Public Service Workers Union

«The king's speech came as no surprise. It was intended to intimidate and pressure (the PLO leadership) to extract more concessions at the expense of our cause. It was in accordance with the US imperialist and Zionist conditions for implementing capitulationist settlements. The king's speech is the cue for his puppets to start moving in the occupied territories. The speech is a result of the Amman accord which has put the PLO in its present deplorable situation.»

Dr. Taysir Maraqa, M.D.

«The king's speech aims at creating a substitute for the PLO...in the West Bank — something every Palestinian rejects. This step was taken so as to enter peace negotiations on the basis of UN resolutions 242 and 338...We repeat: No one represents us in the West Bank except a united PLO committed to the decisions of the PNC's legitimate sessions.»

Odeh Al Jabari, member of the executive board of the Shoe Industry Workers Union

«The contents of King Hussein's speech indicate that he is trying to create a popular support base for himself, that would call on him to go ahead with direct