

Mass Interviews



Ain al Hilweh residents

«Israel cannot destroy the revolution.»

Abu Hussein is 51 years old and has one daughter who is studying.

How was life under Israeli occupation?

I stayed in the camp during that period. The Zionists were very brutal; they broke into houses, broke doors, climbed the walls. They terrorized the people though more than 80% (of the camp's male population) was in prison. They used to throw flour, rice and oil on the ground in their searches.

How did you feel when the Palestinian organizations returned?

We were not surprised by this return. We had a great belief that this would happen, and we are very happy. I consider it a great victory and a proof to the world that 'Israel' cannot destroy the revolution.

Were there improvements since the Palestine National Salvation Front took charge of Palestinian affairs here?

After the withdrawal of the Zionist forces, there was a period of chaos, but after the establishment of the PNSF, there was a small step in the correct direction. We salute the PNSF for that, and we expect further movement forward.

How did people here see the Amman accord and King Hussein's speech?

The Palestinian people are not politically ignorant. They can clearly see the falsification and misguiding of the rightist PLO leadership. A small number, who draw benefits from King Hussein, support that line, but the majority are against Hussein's line and the line of cooperating with him. We believe the Amman accord should be cancelled by the rightist leadership if it wants to return to the nationalist line and make national unity possible.

«We were able to raise our heads again.»

Um Hussein is 55 years old, the mother of nine children - some married, some studying abroad and some still at home. Her husband was a member of the PFLP who was martyred in 1980.

How are living conditions?

The situation is very bad. The money we get is not enough. Everything is more expensive. UNRWA doesn't give me anything. They recently cut the help I used to get. I don't know why they only give to their friends and not to people who need it. Our youth have no opportunities for work. This is the life we live. I tried to get work but I couldn't find a job. I am responsible for five children.

How was life under occupation?

It was worse than now in all ways. We could not move about and finding jobs was even harder then. It was like a continuous nightmare.

How did you experience the return of the revolution?

We were able to raise our heads again. Even with no money, we feel more secure and the revolution did help to make life easier. The situation is better; we can sleep in security and we have our pride.

What did you think of the leaflet the Zionists dropped, warning against cooperating with the resistance?

We are not afraid of the Zionists. We did not care.

Are there any security problems now?

Yes, with Arafat people; they are very undisciplined. The PFLP members are the best disciplined. I cannot say how good they are and how much we like them.