

when the May 17th agreement was foiled, these forces continue to try and implement their plans to 'Zionize' Lebanon, hinder its democratic development and national independence. The enemy camp stands united against a nationalist Lebanon. This requires that the nationalist Palestinian-Syrian-Lebanese alliance be strengthened in order to be able to defeat the enemy plans.

The congress stresses the necessity of developing this alliance, and preserving the social rights of the Palestinian people and guaranteeing their security. It also stresses the necessity of enabling the Palestinian revolution to play its role in: (1) Fighting the Zionist enemy from Lebanese soil, alongside the Lebanese nationalist; and (2) protecting the masses from all attacks.

On the Arab level, the congress noted the deteriorating conditions in the Arab ranks and that the political initiative has now shifted to Arab reaction. The congress calls for solidifying the ranks of the progressive nationalist Arab forces and uniting their efforts against imperialism, Zionism and reaction.

The congress calls on democratic Arab youth organizations, as well as all progressive youth organizations, to

intensify their mutual cooperation. These organizations should increase their militant efforts in order to enforce democratic freedoms in Arab countries, and multiply the forms of solidarity with the popular movements striving to develop the conditions for a mass resurgence in the Arab region.

On the international level, the congress stressed that imperialism, led by the US, continuously strives to escalate tension, pushing the world to the verge of a destructive nuclear war. US imperialism has taken a negative stance towards all the initiatives proposed by the Soviet Union for easing international tension and limiting nuclear arms deployment, as a first step towards eliminating them. Despite these initiatives, the US has continued nuclear testing and moreover spread the nuclear arms race into space. The PYO totally supports the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and calls on all international democratic youth organizations and unions to stand against US imperialism's aggressive plans and policies. The PYO congress also notes imperialism's violation of the people's rights and sovereignty, trying to impose its domination. US imperialism has become an international terrorist force as seen in its direct interven-

tion in Nicaragua's internal affairs, its support of counterrevolutionaries in Afghanistan and all fascist regimes and dictatorships, its brutal attacks on Libya, and its threats against Syria and the Palestinian revolution. All this serves to emphasize the fascist aspect of US imperialism in this period.

The first congress of the PYO strongly denounces the brutal US attack on Libya, and calls for a broad campaign of solidarity with the heroic Libyan people. It calls on the Arab youth, and youth around the world, to take a firm stand against US imperialism's aggressive policies which show the new fascist tendency on the international level.

The first general congress of the PYO members will be persistent militants working to restore the PLO's unity, opposed to Zionism and imperialism. They will work as unifying elements in the Palestinian youth movement until a united democratic youth union is established. The congress also pledges to serve as a bridge of friendship between all Arab and international democratic youth organizations.

Damascus, April 28, 1986

Arab Trade Unions Repressed

The International Union for Arab Workers' Trade Unions Exposes the Role of the Regimes in Violating Union Freedom and Harassing Militant Leaders.

The General Secretariat of the International Union for Arab Workers' Trade Unions distributed a document to international, Arab and local trade unions. The document included a briefing on the continuous violations of the rights and freedoms of the trade unions in the Arab countries. These violations have reached the point of direct suppression of the unions' every move, imprisonment of their leaders and confiscation of their possessions. This is an outright violation of all the agreements that the governments of these countries have previously signed. The General Secretariat called upon all trade unions to support its struggle to confront these violations and guarantee the rights of the Arab working class. Following is the text of the document:

The trade unions are going through a difficult stage, characterized by the authorities' increasing interference in union affairs, and setbacks for trade union freedom and rights. During the

past few years of dealing with the Arab Labor Organization, a fall in the level of cooperation was noted. The reactionary governments' agents are continuously trying to eliminate the workers' achievements by controlling the voting power in the Arab Labor Organization and the Administrative Council. They veto any resolutions that would further the achievement of the Arab working class. This regression affects the life of the Arab working class and its trade unions. There are increasing cases of violations of their freedom and rights. There are also many attempts to abort any effort to form genuine trade unions in some of the Arab countries. Increasing numbers of trade union leaders are in prison.

The trade union movement has to face this difficult reality with firmness and courage. The movement has to depend firstly on its own force and potentials, secondly on the support of Arab nationalist and progressive forces, thirdly on the international forces of liberation

and progress and other friendly organizations, and fourthly on the abilities of international and regional organizations whose constitutions enshrine the principle of protecting the working class, its organizations and potentials, and protecting human rights.

The General Secretariat presents this issue to Arab public opinion, emphasizing the following points:

VIOLATION OF FREEDOM

1. The charter of the existing Arab Labor Organization states:

"The organization aims at achieving social justice, raising the level of the Arab working class and standardizing working conditions for all Arab workers." In spite of this fact and the existence of the Arab agreement no. 8, that deals especially with the freedoms and rights of trade unions, the organization's committee on trade union freedoms has been unable to achieve any progress during the past few years. In addition, the committee was unable to stop the continuous violations of the trade union's freedoms and rights. This committee's existence has been reduced to a formality.

In the Arab and International Labor Conference, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Oman each have delegations of three representatives, whereas trade unions are non-existent in these countries.

The General Secretariat was able to reach agreements with the regimes of both Bahrain and Jordan, for protecting the freedom and rights of trade unions. ▶