

# vision of Functions Plan

1948. Both parties agreed not to publicize the agreement.(1)

Israeli officials had already declared, on September 17th, that 'Israel' will allow the reopening of the bank in the West Bank in October. Needless to say, the bank reopened within the framework of the Israelis' continuous efforts to increase their control and Jordanian influence in the occupied West Bank at the expense of the PLO. General Shlomo Goren, head of the 'civil' administration of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, said: «This step will consolidate relations with Jordan and will create good political results.» At a press conference, he added: «Israel will close the bank if we discover that it finances anti-Israel groups... Israel will have the right to conduct security and monetary inspections of the bank, to guarantee that it will not finance guerrilla activities.» Meanwhile, he elaborated, Jordan will take care of the administrative aspects.

It is worth mentioning that the Jordanian government owns 10% of the bank's shares; Cairo owns 12%, while the rest are owned by individual Palestinians and Jordanians. Midhat Kana'n, who will resume his position as the manager of the branch after 19 years, said that the bank will mainly supervise the process of transferring money from Jordan to the different institutions in the West Bank.(2) This bank reopening is obviously an attempt at giving the Palestinians imaginary power in line with the plan for 'improving the quality of life'. At the same time, it legalizes Israeli inspection of the transfer of funds. 'Israel' can use this condition as

a loophole for closing the bank at any time it perceives that its functioning is not to Israeli advantage. In the meantime, while only a limited strata of Palestinians will derive any benefits from this bank, the Israelis will use their supervisory position for further harassment of Palestinian national institutions.

## APPOINTED MAYORS

Immediately after the Cairo-Amman Bank step, 'Israel' appointed Palestinian mayors in Al Bireh, Ramallah, and Al Khalil (Hebron). Israeli army officers had been administering those cities since 1982, when the elected mayors were dismissed for refusing to cooperate with the Israeli authorities. On September 28th, 'Israel' appointed Hassan Al Tawil as mayor of Al Bireh, Khalil Musa Al Khalil as mayor of Ramallah, and Abdul Majeed Al Zeer as mayor of Al Khalil. These appointments come six months after the execution of Zafer Al Masri who the Israeli authorities appointed mayor of Nablus.

A spokesman for the Israeli Defense Ministry said that «due to these appointments, the last three cities of the West Bank, that were still administered by Israeli officers, will be now administered by Palestinian personalities.»(3)

The occupation authorities are expected to take similar steps to appoint mayors in all West Bank and Gaza Strip municipalities. These appointments aim at achieving two goals: first, to normalise relations between 'Israel' and Jordan on the political and economic levels, and consequently normalise the Israeli occupation; and second, to prepare a delegation from the West Bank and Gaza Strip to participate, when the time comes, in direct negotiations under an international umbrella. The Israeli closure of *Al Mithaq* and *Al Ahad* papers was one of the steps taken to pave the way for the propaganda campaign by pro-Jordanian papers, such as *Al Nahar*, to support the two aims mentioned above.

The Israeli radio said that these appointments were made immediately after approval by the Jordanian government. The Jordanian government had taken a decision to invalidate the signatures of eight legitimate mayors of the occupied West Bank: Bassam Shakaa of Nablus, Ibrahim Al Tawil of Al Bireh, Hilmi Hannoun of Tulkarem, Hamid Hamdallah of Anabta, Amin Al Naser of Qalqilya, Hijazee Rasheed of Deir Debwan, the mayor of Jenin, and the deputy mayor of Ramallah.

Mr. Al Zeer, the appointed mayor of Al Khalil, told reporters that he enjoys the approval of Jordan, and he «will work to improve the daily services of the municipality of Al Khalil, and will

not interfere in politics.» (Zeer, incidentally, is a prominent member of the Muslim Brotherhood with close links to his counterparts in Jordan.) Mr. Hassan Al Tawil, the appointed mayor of Al Bireh, said: I accepted the post solely to aid in the economic expansion of Al Bireh, and will have no political activities.» He also said that he enjoys the approval of Jordan and «expected» tacit endorsement from the PLO.»(4) Even taking these statements at face value, «not interfering in politics» in an occupied country is in itself a policy - at best, acceptance of occupation, at worst, collaboration. In reality, the three who accepted to be appointed as mayors have agreed to cooperate in joint Israeli-Jordanian rule of the West Bank, which is part of the attempt to liquidate the Palestinian cause.

## WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

With all of these steps, the features of the Israeli-Jordanian plan are getting clearer and clearer. The plan for 'improving the quality of life' is only a new name for the self-rule plan, that 'Israel' was unable to implement for years. By taking Jordan as a partner, the Zionists hope to break the united Palestinian resistance that previously blocked attempts to impose the 'autonomy' plan. 'Improving the quality of life' is really an effort to cultivate a strata of the Palestinian bourgeoisie willing to link its political and economic future to Jordan's monarchy. 'Israel' is now calling on Jordan to take the final step in the scenario for which it was created: absorbing the independent Palestinian identity in order to protect Zionist occupation.

'Israel' did not await an official statement from Jordan declaring its acceptance of this role. It is well known that 'Israel' and Jordan have had indirect, secret coordination, which explains the Jordanian approval of the mayoral appointments. 'Israel' focuses on the Palestinian personalities that reject armed struggle, and are connected with the capitulationist Jordanian policies.

After King Hussein decided to cease coordination with the PLO in February, Peres proposed the so-called Marshal plan for the Middle East. The plan theoretically assumes a state of comprehensive peace in the Middle East and concretely entails an economic development plan for the area, financed by the US and western Europe. Although the plan is supposedly drawn up for the whole Middle East, it focuses on the West Bank as a sample. Yet, the plan is costly and would burden 'Israel'.

The plan for 'improving the quality of life' necessitates a huge sum of money-150 million dollars, according to the Jordanian prime minister, Zeid ▶

