

unifying factor. What remains is the role of the Arab popular movement. To put all this in perspective, we should discuss the role of the Arab working class parties, but that is a topic in itself

After King Hussein's speech in February 1986, suspending cooperation with the PLO leadership, the PLO's crisis entered a qualitatively new stage. What are the main characteristics of this stage, and what are the means for resolving the crisis?

After King Hussein's speech, the PFLP made a public statement that new objective conditions had been created, making the thought of restoring the PLO's unity possible and realistic. This is because King Hussein's speech, delivered on behalf of the US, demanded that the PLO leadership give more concessions in addition to the dangerous concessions already given in the Amman accord of February 11, 1985. It is difficult for the PLO to give the newly demanded concessions. The Amman accord itself was a dangerous concession for the PLO.

Along with all the Palestinian and Arab national democratic forces and our friends on the international level, we considered the Amman accord to be a new program of the PLO leadership. It was an alternative to the program for return, self-determination and the establishment of a Palestinian state. It replaced this program with one for confederation with Jordan, giving up a sovereign Palestinian state. After this, the PLO leadership has shown willingness to give another concession, that of recognizing 'Israel' in return for Israeli recognition of the PLO. All Arafat's statements about recognizing resolution 242 as part of recognizing all UN resolutions mean, in fact, the readiness of the PLO leadership to give another concession, recognizing 'Israel'. Despite these two main concessions, 'Israel', US imperialism and Jordan continue to demand more concessions of the PLO leadership. This temporarily closed the door of the US settlement in the PLO leadership's face. It meant opening the door for the PLO leadership to return to the national program.

This is exactly what the PFLP meant by saying that after King Hussein's speech, new objective conditions were created, making the restoration of the PLO's unity on a nationalist basis possible. We used the expression 'new objective conditions' and not 'new subjective conditions,' based on realization that the new conditions were not the result of the PLO leadership's having reviewed its previous policies. Nor were they the result of conscious intention to retreat from the course of seeking US solutions. The new situation was a result of conditions that the PLO leadership did not want. The new conditions closed the door to the US solution in its face. This situation reminds of a phrase I heard on my last political tour in the socialist countries, that «Israel gave you a new chance to unite the PLO. How are you going to benefit from this chance?»

Some may say that the PLO leadership's unwillingness to give more concessions is a subjective condition that contributed to closing the US gate. That is true to a certain extent, but the primary factor in closing the gate was Israeli and imperialist insistence on their conditions. Based on all of this, the most prominent characteristic of this stage is that restoring the PLO's unity has become possible.

Our view on remedying the PLO's situation is being courageous enough to benefit from the objective conditions, in order to restore the PLO's unity, benefitting from the major lessons of its crisis. To restore the PLO's unity without stopping to examine the lessons of the past four years would mean eliminating a very basic experience in the history of Palestinian national struggle. During those four years, our masses were torn by the crisis of the PLO. I don't believe they will forgive any Palestinian leadership for ignoring these important lessons. Our masses hope for a PLO with a decisive political line opposed to imperialism, Zionism and all their schemes. The PLO has been an influential force in mobilizing the energies and capabilities of the Palestinian and Arab people, but only when it had a decisive political line confronting imperialist schemes.

Even our international allies don't just talk about restoring the PLO's unity; they link this with a firm anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist, political line. The PFLP had made it clear that the

political line should be based on closing the gate to the US settlement in the area, i.e., closing the Jordanian gate by official and public cancellation of the Amman accord, and closing the Egyptian gate by binding the PLO to the Baghdad Summit resolutions on isolating and boycotting this regime until it denounces Camp David. This is how we restore the PLO and benefit from the objective chance that was provided after King Hussein's speech. This is how we benefit from the bitter experience we have been through. This is what needs to be done on the political level.

On the organizational level, the experience of the past few years has confirmed that restoring the PLO should be based on collective, democratic leadership that is committed to the PNC's resolutions. We all know that the resolutions of the 16th PNC in Algeria(1983), despite the reservations that were recorded, are correct national resolutions that our masses and our allies are comfortable with. Yet the crisis occurred due to the individualist leadership that was not committed to these resolutions.

Our slogan today is hard work to benefit from the new objective conditions, and struggle to restore the unity of the PLO, based on a decisive political line opposed to imperialism and Zionism, and an organizational line that establishes a collective, trustworthy leadership.

What happened to the initiatives made in 1986 for reuniting the PLO? What are the obstacles?

The Algerian initiative, the Soviet efforts and the efforts of all our international friends and the forces of the Arab national liberation movement, were a result of deep awareness of the importance of uniting the Palestinian arena and the PLO, as a main factor in achieving the aspirations of the Palestinian people. Our masses will always appreciate the efforts of the Soviet Union, Algeria and all Arab and international forces that support us. There is no doubt that these efforts have pushed forward the issue of Palestinian national unity by continuously raising the issue before the Palestinian masses and organizations. This in itself is a very positive and influential factor.

Still, restoring the PLO's unity on a correct political and organizational basis depends primarily on the Palestinian forces themselves, and especially on those within the PLO. History will record the role of every Palestinian force, organization and leadership, whether it facilitated or hindered the unity process. When we think about the goal of Palestinian national independence, the necessity of adhering to it and achieving it, we will clearly see that this goal in the present international, Arab and Israeli conditions, demands long and serious struggle. The Reagan Administration, for instance, represents the US military-industrial complex that was brought to power especially to confront the people's victories. It will not easily allow the Palestinian people to achieve national independence. We must give many difficult sacrifices. In view of the present Arab conditions, it becomes very clear that a Palestinian state will not be established without the Palestinian struggle playing a role in awakening the Arab area and creating Arab national conditions that will be supportive of the Palestinian people's achieving their goal of national independence.

If we add the Israeli condition to the international and Arab ones, the picture becomes even clearer. 'Israel' is making huge material gains from occupying Palestinian land. Today 'Israel' is exploiting half the labor force of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This part of the Arab labor power is being exploited by Zionist capital. The 1967 occupied land is the second biggest market for Israeli goods. Added to this is the value of the Palestinian land expropriated by the occupation authorities. Why would 'Israel' give up all these gains? I don't aim to say that the goal of Palestinian national independence cannot be achieved, but to confirm that it will only be achieved through a process of long and serious struggle that forces the enemy to give in to the Palestinian people's right to national independence.

What is the instrument for achieving this goal? The answer is the PLO. That is why we are determined to restore the PLO's unity on a basis that will enable it to be this instrument. Based