

independent movements and parties. In the fifties, *Al Ard (The Land)* nationalist organization was founded, but it was savagely repressed and its leaders imprisoned. On July 24, 1964, a law was issued banning its activities.

After the June War of 1967, the nationalist relations between the Palestinians in the 1948 occupied land and those in the newly occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, became more direct and deeper. The emergence of the organized armed Palestinian revolution, and its military struggle, had deep effects in terms of crystallizing the masses' national awareness, especially after their disappointment with the Arab bourgeois regimes. These developments greatly curtailed the influence of the mukhtars and other traditional figures who couldn't compete with the new generation of nationalist intellectuals in the 1948 occupied area. This new blood headed the election lists for town and village councils. The trend of struggle for improving the conditions of life increased and grew into struggle for legitimate national rights and full political rights. The new generation formed several independent political movements - the Sons of the Village, the Druze Initiative Committee, the Progressive Nationalist Movement, the Movement for Organizing the Ranks in Nazareth, the Arab Academics' Union, Union of Arab Students' Committees, the Arab Students' League, etc. Other groups were established such as the Committees for the Defense of the Land, the Regional Committee of the Heads of Local Councils - 1982. Some of the groups formed sprang from political movements, but publicly adopted demands concerning living conditions in order to be considered legal.

UNITED PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE

Regardless of the stated goals of these movements, from the time of their formation, all dealt with the political issues that concern the Palestinian people as a whole. They have continuously expressed their adherence to the PLO and solidarity with the struggles of Palestinians everywhere through statements and demonstrations against attacks on the Palestinian cause. These movements and organizations have mass roots, as does Rakah whose influence has grown among Palestinian Arabs. All rejected the Camp David accords. They made large demonstrations against the 1982 Zionist invasion of Lebanon, calling for a stop to this expansionist war and immediate withdrawal of the invading troops. On September 20, 1982, Palestinians protesting the Sabra-Shatila massacre clashed with the Border Patrol and police; there were scores of wounded on both sides.

These organizations and movements also refused the Reagan plan, while declaring their support to the national consensus resolutions of the 16th PNC and the national unity which resulted from that session. At the same time, they warned against the PLO leadership's policy of saying 'yes' and 'no' at the same time, and its attempts at hegemony. They had a clear position against inter-Palestinian fighting at the time of the internal fighting in Tripoli in 1983. They also expressed support to the Program for Unity and Reform in the PLO, presented by the Joint Leadership of the DFLP and PFLP in 1983. With the Palestinian right-wing increasingly betting on US solutions and Arafat's visit to Cairo, these movements and organizations declared their position that this visit did not serve the Palestinian people's cause. They also voiced their opinion against the convening of the 17th session of the PNC in Amman, and against the Amman accord. They spoke out for national unity between the organizations of the Palestinian revolution on a political and organizational basis rejecting illusions about a 'peaceful' settlement, rejecting hegemony and in favor of a collective leadership.

The recent years have witnessed more cohesion between the struggles of our people in the 1948 occupied land and those in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Their unity has found expression in joint voluntary work on community projects and in yearly celebrations like the Nazareth festival for volunteer work. The Day of the Land, celebrated all over Palestine, clearly demonstrates the unity of the Palestinian struggle. There is a joint position against Zionist settlements and settler terrorism, especially the attempts of Kahana to intrude in Um Al Fahm in the Galilee, Taibeh in the Triangle and Duheisheh camp in the West Bank. The Palestinians of the 1948 occupied land initiated committees for the defense of Duheisheh and of the Palestinian revolutionaries who are imprisoned in Zionist jails. They have repeatedly protested against the attempts to burn Al Aqsa mosque, and other attacks on Islamic and Christian holy places. The national progressive movements in the 1948 occupied land have rejected all conspiracies faced by West Bank and Gaza Palestinians - self-rule, the Israeli-Jordanian division of functions, the Jordanian 'development's plan, etc.

ATTEMPTS TO DISRUPT THE PEOPLE'S UNITY

The growing struggle and unity of the Palestinian people, and the increasing influence of Rakah and the progressive nationalist movements, didn't exactly please the Zionists. For this reason, one could hear Zionist voices proposing to issue licenses for establishing 'independent Arab parties' on the supposition that it would be easier to eliminate public work than to search out secret movements. Obviously, the intent was to give the Palestinians a chance to let off steam, channeling their political activities into frameworks considered less dangerous. However, the Zionist-sponsored attempt to establish the 'Arab Party' in 1955 failed. Zionist attempts to support some Arab candidates for Knesset elections succeeded only partially. Also, there were calls for assimilating some Arabs into the Zionist parties or forming Arab chapters for these parties, focusing on figures known for loyalty to their own interests and privileges. Some such figures were presented for Knesset elections.

The Zionists have also resorted to attempts at inciting the nationalist parties and forces against each other. More recently, there were attempts to use new groups, such as the Progressive List for Peace, headed by Moh'd Miary, to weaken the progressive nationalist forces and parties. (The Progressive List for Peace obtained political and financial support from the right-wing PLO leadership when running for the 11th Knesset.) This weakened Rakah's electoral force and dispersed the Arab vote, increasing the votes to Labor and Likud.

Another effort to break the people's unity has been inciting local Arab councils against their heads or Druze, Islamic and Christian councils against each other, by discriminating in the budgets allotted to each. Some small councils receive amounts much larger than those received by some big councils. This policy also aims to incite the population against the councils in order to break the strong mass adherence to their local lea-

