

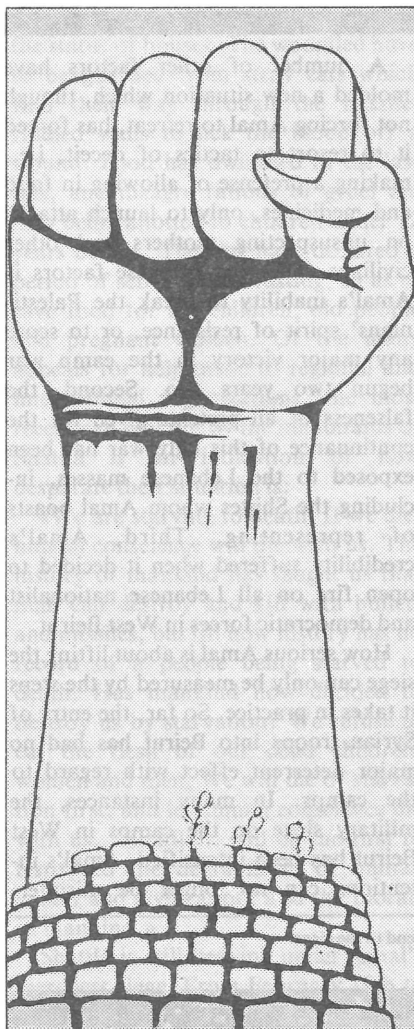
Striving for Palestinian National Unity

A series of intensive, inter-Palestinian meetings have been going on in the capitals of Algeria, Tunisia and Libya for some weeks now, aimed at restoring the PLO's unity. The reported agreement among some Palestinian organizations to convene the Palestinian National Council (PNC) gave these efforts added importance. Thus, it is necessary to once again examine the issue of the PLO's unity and on what basis it can be achieved.

The policies of the revolutionary democratic Palestinian forces concerning the PLO's dilemma, have been based on serious, consistent efforts to restore the unity of the PLO, while enacting the needed changes in its line and structure. To this end, a joint communique was issued on December 22, 1986, by the PFLP, DFLP and Palestinian Communist Party (PCP). The communique laid out the basis for restoring the PLO's unity, stressing that: «The main task which guarantees successful confrontation of the aggressive, liquidationist onslaught is the continuation of the efforts to reunite the PLO on an anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist and anti-capitulationist basis.» The communique reasserted the conditions for restoring the PLO's unity on a nationalist basis, especially «to cancel the Amman accord explicitly and officially» and «to stop relations with the Egyptian regime as long as it adheres to the Camp David accords.»

This joint communique was viewed as a unified position on the part of these three democratic forces, for confronting the rightist leadership and working to restore the PLO's unity on a solid political and organizational basis. Unfortunately, two of the parties who signed the communique, the DFLP and the PCP, did not adhere to its contents. As a result, the mid-March meetings in Tunis, between Fatah's Central Committee, DFLP, PCP, Arab Liberation Front (ALF) and the splinter group of the Palestinian Liberation Front (Abu Abbas), yielded only concessions to the right wing, strengthening its position. The Amman accord was considered 'dead', thus relieving the right wing of responsibility for abrogating it, at a time when relations with the Jordanian regime are being

revitalized (see article on an international peace conference). Moreover, the agreement reached in Tunis neglected the issue of the PLO rightist leadership's relations with the Egyptian and Moroccan regimes. It also labeled the next PNC as the 18th session, thus legitimizing the 17th session held in Amman without Palestinian national



consensus, which finalized the division of the PLO. This also means that the membership of the 18th session would be based on the composition of the 17th session, giving undue weight to rightist elements. The Tunis meetings were followed by announcements about convening the PNC on April 20th. However, if convened on such an unclear, soft basis, this PNC would

only serve as a forum for blessing Arafat's policies.

NEW DIALOGUE

In Libya, a dialogue is now in progress between six Palestinian organizations: PFLP, DFLP, the Palestinian Liberation Front (mainstream), PFLP—General Command, the Popular Struggle Front and Fatah-Revolutionary Council (Abu Nidal). These meetings are in response to Libyan and Algerian initiatives and directed towards formulating a unified position for restoring the PLO's unity on a solid political and organizational basis. As we go to press, the results of these meetings are unknown. However, given past experience, it is imperative to point out that real agreement requires adhering to the terms agreed upon not only in speeches, but in practice as well. The rightist trend's sincerity about achieving the PLO's unity is now being put to the test. If it fails to respond positively to the ongoing dialogue, another blow will be dealt to the PLO's role and its dilemma will be prolonged.

In conclusion, it is necessary to reaffirm the political and organizational basis without which any talk of Palestinian national unity is in vain. First is public, official cancellation of the Amman accord, and stopping relations with the Camp David regime in Cairo. Second is adhering to the resolutions of the legitimate PNC sessions, including the 16th session, on UN Security Council resolution 242. Third is adhering to all PNC sessions including the 16th and considering any others illegitimate. Fourth is applying real democratic reforms in the PLO, as outlined in the Aden-Algiers agreement, stressing the importance of collective leadership. All moves should be judged by these standards.

We are confident that the Palestinian revolution will eventually be able to overcome all divisive trends, whether coming from the right-wing deviationists or from the adventurists. This confidence stems from the fact that the Palestinian masses are well-versed in hard struggle. Sooner or later, the masses' struggle will impose the unity needed to achieve their legitimate national rights. ●