

Despite talk about cancelling the Amman accord and closing the gate to Cairo, there are still statements by Yasir Arafat and his political advisor, praising the Egyptian regime. What is your response? Do you think that the right wing in the PLO will abide by the PNC's decisions, or as usual try to escape from them?

Undoubtedly, a number of statements have been made contradictory to the PNC's resolutions. Being represented in the PLO's highest organizational body, the Executive Committee, we will raise this for discussion at the first meeting. The resolutions of the PNC should be respected by all. I don't think these attempts will stop totally. This is common practice for the Palestinian right wing. These statements are an attempt to exploit the period separating one stage (division) from another (total unity). In summary, I can say that in as much as the previous period has affected us all, moving into a perfect situation is an idealistic vision. This period can be a recovery period that follows being seriously wounded and precedes being healthy. Such a period requires adhering to the adopted resolutions... We certainly never doubted, whether during the dialogue or the PNC, that there would be differences once national unity was achieved.

IMPOSING ADHERENCE TO RESOLUTIONS

The political and social differences in the Palestinian arena will continue to be expressed in one way or another. Such differences will sometimes take a dangerous direction. Our duty is to curb this on the basis of the PLO's unity. It is important to understand that unity does not mean ending all conflicts over political stands or practices or interpretations of these stands. Our patriotic duty does not end with the declaration of the political resolutions. We must work to impose adherence to these resolutions and to improve the political and organizational situation of the PLO.

Several Palestinian organizations have taken a position opposing the PNC resolutions. In addition, there are different evaluations of these resolutions by every organization. How do you characterize the post-PNC situation? What are the prospects of a future consolidation of Palestinian national unity?

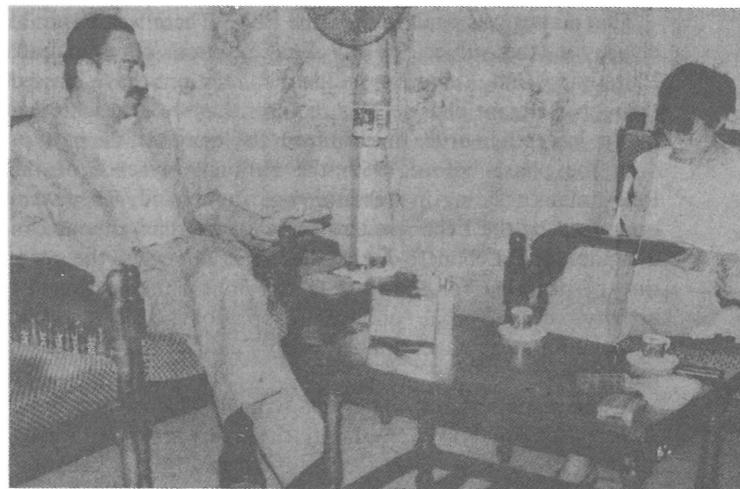
Every Palestinian organization is free to express its views concerning the PNC's results. We should not obscure anyone's views that are based on their convictions. Every organization undoubtedly expresses its convictions on the basis of patriotism, regardless of whether this expression leads in a positive direction. This is natural given the plurality of political and social positions in the Palestinian arena which includes both leftist and rightist poles. Undoubtedly the dilemma experienced by the PLO for years caused the accumulation of negative consequences. Some of these were big, and we don't imagine that they will vanish in a few days. This needs time. Therefore, we are opposed to imposing restrictions on any organization's freedom of expression.

With respect to the second part of your question, what was achieved in Algiers was restoration of the PLO's unity. However, this achievement should not be viewed as everything. We fear two mistakes in dealing with Palestinian affairs. The

first is playing down the value of the political and organizational achievements made. The second is ignoring those who did not participate in the unification process. A great achievement was made in restoring the PLO's unity. Politically it was achieved in favor of the entire Palestinian patriotic work, but it needs consolidation and dialogue and positive relations between the PLO leadership and all Palestinian organizations, in particular those who did not participate in the unification process. During the short Executive Committee meeting (held at the end of the PNC session), this issue was discussed, and a number of Palestinian leaders were charged with following up the matter with our brothers in the other organizations.

CONFLICT WITHIN UNITY

The unity of the PLO has never obstructed any organization's freedom to express its own convictions. There is, however, a qualitative difference between disputing on a divided basis and disputing within a framework of unity. Our experience has proved that conflicts aimed at improving our struggle, not nihilistic conflicts, can contribute to the PLO's political and organizational development and its ability to struggle. This is contrary to the division that brought nothing but harm to all, aggravating the dilemma.



Comrade Abu Ali Mustafa interviewed by «Al Nida» journalist

This does not mean playing down the political differences behind the PLO's division. It does not mean saying that the differences were inconsequential and could have been resolved by reasoning, etc. The differences represented two political trends. One trend adheres to the national program and struggles to achieve the program's goals. The other trend bets on illusive policies, thinking that they will achieve something, only to discover that their course led to a dead end. This trend aggravated the dilemma of those who advocated it, and aggravated the dilemma of all Palestinian nationalists. We are all required to extract the lessons. In the end, it was clear to all that unity, rather than division, had the potential to protect the PLO, the national program and our people's struggle.

What is Libya's real position on the PNC and its resolutions?

Libya did not boycott the PNC. There was a Libyan representative present, brother Ahmed Al Qaddafi. Moreover, months before the convening of the PNC, Libya played a role in the drive for Palestinian national unity. Libya's role, especially the efforts of Col. Moammer Qaddafi, had a