

organizational to achieve the unity of these forces. To that end, the Front has expended great efforts since the 4th national congress (1981) to pave the road for the Palestinian Left's unity.

The Islamic trend is growing fast inside and outside the occupied territories. Do you think this trend will have the chance to control the PLO?

First I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the phenomenon of the «Jihad Islami» (the Islamic Jihad) in occupied Palestine for the many painful blows it dealt to the Zionist enemy. And we extend our hands for cooperation against the Zionist enemy. I agree with the evaluation that this trend is growing inside and outside the occupied homeland. And this phenomenon does not apply only to the Palestinian arena. It is rather a phenomenon that is extending to many areas in the Arab world and some developing countries.

The causes for this trend's growth lie in the problems and difficulties that face the socio-economic liberation process, the development problems and the weakness of the working class parties. This situation forces the masses to turn to any path they think could achieve their aspirations. During the Nasserite era, this trend had no chance of growing this fast, because the masses saw in Nasser's leadership the mean to achieve their aspirations. But when this leadership failed to conclude the socio-economic liberation process, the masses turned to other trends.

We could add to these factors the victory achieved by the Iranian revolution. This experience was an inspiration to the masses, and its effects extended to parts of the Arab and Islamic world. Another factor was the imperialist and Arab reactionary encouragement of the fundamentalist forces to serve their interests, mainly to face the growing influence and strength of the nationalist and Marxist forces in the area. Saudi Arabia poured material support to these forces. The Egyptian regime of Anwar Sadat encouraged the Islamic force's growth for some time in Egypt. The Jordanian regime facilitated the activities of the Islamic Brotherhood and other forces in Jordan. But it is worth mentioning that the Islamic Jihad is different from those other forces. While the other Islamic forces direct their activities against nationalist and progressive forces in occupied Palestine, the Islamic Jihad concentrates its activities against the Zionist enemy.

In the light of the results of the April 1987 unification session of the PNC, the PLO should continue the political and organizational reforms. This would promote the PLO's role, status and forms of struggle, namely escalating the armed struggle. The Islamic trend has the chance to control the Palestinian scene once the PLO stops the armed struggle and deviates from its nationalist program. In addition to the working class inability to be an alternative leadership. Palestinian masses would undoubtedly turn towards the forces the masses think could achieve their aspirations.

What is the PFLP's understanding of the «Palestinian Entity» and «independent Palestinian decision-making»?

Concerning the Palestinian Entity in this particular stage of our struggle, the PFLP views that confronting the imperialist-Zionist-Arab reactionary plan requires emphasizing the in-

dependant Palestinian entity and identity and insisting on establishing the independent Palestinian state on our national soil. The Zionist project is based on negating the existence of the Palestinian people and to assimilate the Palestinians in the state of «Israel» to become Israelis, while those Palestinians in the 1967 occupied territories be assimilated with Jordan. As for the Palestinians outside the occupied Palestine, they should according to the Zionist plan, assimilate in some Arab society or other societies. Confronting this project necessitates emphasizing the independent Palestinian identity and entity.

Despite our deep convictions that our fight against this Zionist enemy has pan-Arab national dimensions, there remains the peculiarity of this Zionist danger against the Palestinian people. This peculiarity resulted in the materialization of a Palestinian national identity and entity. And this can be clearly seen in the Palestinian masses', whether in the 1948 occupied territories, 1967 occupied territories or elsewhere, adherence to the PLO as their sole legitimate representative. Thus, safeguarding the PLO as the materialization of this Palestinian entity becomes a necessity.

Concerning the slogan of the independent Palestinian decision-making, it was raised in contrast to the strategy of the Arab regimes, the classical war strategy and against the Arab regime's logic of waiting until preparations for this war are completed. Despite that, the Palestinian people realize well that liberating Palestine is a task for the whole Arab nation. And that the process of liberation could only be developed through the joint efforts and capabilities of the Arab nation in this struggle. Therefore, the decision of peace or war is an Arab national decision that is taken by the Palestinian revolution in cooperation and coordination with all sincere Arab forces.

The PFLP is viewed as a hard-liner towards the Palestinian positions. It is also viewed as an organization that accepts what has been rejected in the past. What is your explanation?

As a national liberation movement, all Palestinian classes and strata, and the nationalist political forces representing them, join in the battle against the common enemy. But there is a law that governs the relationship between all these forces. It is the law of conflict and alliance. Understanding this scientific law draws to the conclusion that we as a national liberation movement have our internal differences, but are united against the enemy.

I agree with your question that the PFLP is a hard-liner towards the Palestinian positions. The Front attempts by that to gain the broadest mass support in order to steer the conflict in a direction that would achieve the minimum level of success. But after that, the circumstances force the Palestinian forces to unite. Misunderstanding this law sometimes makes the PFLP's positions unclear, and thus questions are raised.

It should be understood, that by joining the unity framework, the PFLP does not accept those policies it had rejected in the past. An example to this is the conflict period that the Palestinian political arena had lived through from 1983 until the PNC's unification session in April 1987. Is it true that the PFLP accepted in April 1987 the policies it rejected before that? The answer naturally is no. The Palestinian national unity achieved in April 1987 was based on the cancellation of the ►