

Amman accord, specific organizational reforms and other PNC resolutions. The PFLP wages the conflict on strength and principles, and unites on the same basis.

In addition to the law of conflict and alliance, another reason lies behind this phenomenon. The PFLP sometimes makes mistakes and misjudgements, and based on these misjudgements the Front takes wrong stands. The PFLP courageously admits those errors, unlike other organizations which have the illusion that they never make mistakes. We make mistakes, but when we discover them, we correct them publicly.

An example was our stand after the rightist trend in the PLO signed the Amman accord with the Jordanian regime. We thought that the rightist trend had accepted the Jordanian conditions and that a bilateral settlement with «Israel» was destined. But after King Hussein's February 19th 1986 speech, in which he ceased the coordination with the rightist trend, we realized that the settlement road was a rocky road and that the new objective conditions have paved the road for restoring the PLO's unity on clear political and organizational lines.

I would like to clarify another point. The political movement is a vacillating one. Consequently the PFLP formulates its stands with the new political developments in mind. This vacillation requires that the PFLP's stands change as well.

What became of the slogan «liberating all of Palestine»? What are the prospects for such a slogan given the fact that «Israel» now is a nuclear power?

The world has known for a long time that «Israel» owns nuclear weapons. We also realize the great development in the Zionist military strategy and technology. And we realize that these facts will reflect themselves on our struggle and would add more obstacles.

The most important goals of this nuclear blackmail is to create the willingness to surrender in the Arab and Palestinian minds. But at the same time several considerations should be taken into mind. First, the US nuclear deterrence strategy failed in Vietnam. And Washington failed also in preventing other nations during the detente era from gaining their independence and liberation. Second, the Israeli nuclear blackmail strategy will become not only a problem for the Palestinian people but an international problem as well, threatening world peace. Third, «Israel» realizes that using nuclear weapons would undoubtedly be a threat to itself as well. I am not playing down the danger of this situation, this weapon or the obstacle it adds to our struggle path, but I believe that this threat will never prevent the process of liberating all of Palestine. This is our principle line, but at the same time we cannot be dogmatic in our analysis. We cannot predict the solutions for future problems. We are dialectical, and we take stands in accordance with the circumstances.

Don't you think that there is a big difference between the US military presence in Vietnam and the Israeli presence in Palestine? The US had two choices, either stay or withdraw. But «Israel's» two options are survival or death. Don't you think that these options would prompt «Israel» to use the nuclear weapon?

As I said before it is a difficult task to outline a precise scenario for future events. But there is a possibility that «Israel» might find itself one day faced with a big question: faced with the options of death or life, what kind of life do we want? Is it the expansionist presence or the peaceful coexistence presence? Isn't it possible, given the possibility of shifting the balance of forces in the area in the Palestinian people's favor, that a change in the present thinking of the Zionist state might take place? Where it will consider maintaining its «citizens» in a democratic Palestinian state might be the safest method to survive.

These and other questions emphasize the difficulty of giving detailed answers in advance. These questions after all belong to a future era in the Arab-Zionist conflict. And given the present decline in the official Arab policies, one cannot give answers in advance. For this will certainly lead to mistakes and misjudgements.

How can the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights be achieved given the present world formula that seeks to solve the Palestinian problem in a way that might bypass the minimum level of these rights?

I strongly believe that the Soviet Union is committed to the Palestinian people's inalienable rights as the minimum level required for any solution to the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Zionist conflict. The Soviet Union will continue adhering to these rights as long as the Palestinian side maintains its adherence and struggle. During my last visit to the Soviet Union, this commitment was clearly outlined. A senior Soviet official said that the only change in their stand is their willingness to talk with the Israelis. The official added that in these talks the Soviet Union has reaffirmed its well-known positions towards the Middle East crisis and the Palestinian problem, which emphasize the Israeli withdrawal from the 1967 occupied territories, self-determination for the Palestinian people and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, through the international peace conference with the participation of all concerned parties, the permanent members of the UN security council and the PLO on equal footings.

During the past 20 years of Struggle, to what extent did the concept of operational bases prove itself scientifically sound?

By no way, should the concept of operational bases be assessed in the light of the present conditions of the Palestinian Revolution outside occupied Palestine. The difficulties and the obstacles facing the Revolution's second base, in Lebanon, should not be taken as evidence to the *fall* of this concept, which is scientifically and practically correct and appropriate for the Palestine question, with the Palestinian people's status of «diaspora» and the nature of the battle mounted against the Zionist-imperialist enemy, kept in mind.

The major part of the Palestinian people are living outside their homeland, and that is why the concept of operational bases was adopted. It was further crystalized and developed by our deeper understanding of the nature of the enemy and of our determination to achieve victory.

The Palestinian Revolution has faced a great deal of dif-