

Eventually aimed at joint Jordanian-Israeli administration of the occupied territories, this plan was marketed under the false slogans of «supporting the masses' steadfastness», «stopping settlement-building», etc.

All these plans converged on one goal: eliminating the struggle in the occupied territories, for this threatens the ultimate Israeli aims of total control.

THE PALESTINIAN RESPONSE

The Palestinian masses have confronted all these plans, along with the occupation itself. The modes of struggle have varied. Any study of the forms of struggle should be based on the Palestinian revolution's understanding of the role of the occupied territories as a struggle arena. Regardless of the position of the Palestinian resistance organizations, the masses have been aware of the plans directed against them and their cause. Based on their own experience, they have realized that the battle was a question of existence. From this realization sprang their resistance and clear rejection of all plans which neglect their inalienable rights, i.e., their right to liberate their homeland using all means of struggle - social, cultural, economic, political and armed. In the course of their struggle, tens of thousands have been martyred. Hundreds of thousands of families have become refugees. Homes have been demolished and thousands imprisoned. All this only fueled the Palestinian people's determination to intensify the struggle. The Palestinian people have created a resistance movement that is unique, not only in the Arab world, but internationally as well.

In the course of the Palestinian national struggle, the prevailing objective conditions have served to reinforce the centrality of the struggle in occupied Palestine within the overall liberation struggle. The resistance movement outside Palestine has been subject to constant attack - in Jordan in 1970-71, and later in Lebanon, before and during 1982, and then the camp wars. The difficulties these attacks have presented for the Palestinian armed struggle, added to the decline of the official Arab policies and the Arab liberation movement - which led to Camp David for instance - plus the class nature of the Palestinian leadership, have all laid a heavy burden on the Palestinian masses under occupation.

Facing these difficult facts, the Palestinian masses have not yielded. Rather they have shouldered their responsibility and made life unbearable for the occupiers. Complementing the growth of the Palestinian popular resistance movement, the role of the PLO has grown to the point of becoming the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people everywhere.

THE PFLP'S ROLE

Since its inception, the PFLP's political strategy has posited the goal of the Palestinian national liberation movement as «the establishment of a democratic national state in Palestine where Arabs and Jews live as citizens with equal rights and duties. This state would constitute an inseparable part of a progressive democratic Arab order, living in peace with all progressive forces of the world.» Based on this, the PFLP defined its political, organizational, military and ideological strategy. The enemy camp and its nature was defined, as were the camp of friends, and the suitable forms of struggle for liberating the homeland and establishing an independent state.

The occupied land was a central part of the PFLP's programs. The armed struggle practiced by the Front, and the alliances it seeks, are aimed solely to achieve the Palestinian

people's goals. This was clear in *Tasks of the New Stage*, the political report of the PFLP's third congress in 1972, which pointed out that the PFLP's understanding of the prolonged and complex nature of the Palestinian struggle «should not distract us for one moment from the fact that the resistance movement, the daily struggle in occupied Palestine... is our top priority...» The PFLP's specific programs for work in occupied Palestine were based on the conviction that this arena should continue to be a hot spot for several reasons: First, because it is the arena where our masses are confronting the occupation on a daily basis. Second, because of the high Palestinian population density in this arena. Third, to obstruct the plans of the occupation authorities for liquidating the Palestinian cause. Fourth, to keep the resistance against the occupation at a high level, which would serve as a deterrent to any deviationist Palestinian trend. Finally, because any weakness in this arena would pave the way for the occupation authorities and Arab reaction to liquidate the Palestinian cause. From the start, the PFLP concentrated its efforts on the occupied land, acting as a militant vanguard example.

MILITARY STRUGGLE

The PFLP took the particularities of the Palestinian situation into consideration and practiced armed struggle based on this understanding. The most prominent features of the PFLP's pioneering military actions in the years immediately following the 1967 occupation were: (1) properly practicing the laws of guerrilla warfare; (2) creating underground bases, taking advantage of the high population concentration in the Gaza Strip and Hebron area; (3) broadening the field of operations, whereby attacks were carried out in the Gaza Strip, West Bank and the 1948 occupied territories; (4) establishing close contact with the masses; (5) directing the military struggle mainly against the Zionist enemy on a daily basis; (6) eliminating collaborators; and (7) spreading political awareness among the fighters, to create fighters with clear political goals.

Concentrating on the military aspect of the struggle in the first half of the seventies had some negative side effects. The Front did not expend much effort on creating popular frameworks. Nor did it give adequate time to establishing its party organizations that would guarantee the growth of the

Facing the occupation troops is part of the people's daily life

