

work. These shortcomings occurred in the context of harsh objective conditions experienced by the revolution after the September 1970 massacres in Jordan. The outcome of the conflict with the Jordanian regime was that the longest border with occupied Palestine was closed to the Palestinian fighters, while quiet prevailed on other fronts. This left the resistance in occupied Palestine alone in its confrontation of the occupation forces.

Since that time, the PFLP has worked to consolidate its political and mass work in the occupied Palestine, to fill the gaps noted above. At the same time, the armed struggle remains a daily concern for the PFLP based on conviction that it is the highest form of struggle against the Zionist enemy. Developing the armed struggle against the Zionists' fascist violence has been accompanied by broadening it as a popular trend. Stonethrowing, using knives and the now extensive use of molotov cocktails have become common features of the Palestinian masses' war against the occupation.

The importance of the armed struggle has been discussed in all of the Front's congresses. In *Tasks of the New Stage*, the PFLP outlined some negative aspects of the revolution's work prior to 1972:

1. The resistance movement in general relied on purely military action, sending commando groups from the outside, without consideration for working among the masses in occupied Palestine, to create secret cells and bases capable of continuing the organized-armed struggle.
2. This way of working neglected the political aspect of the struggle whereby the masses could be organized to create a revolutionary climate that would obstruct the enemy's plans.
3. The resistance's political absence in the occupied land resulted in the existence of three forms of political activities: (a) spontaneous nationalist activities; (b) actions led by reactionary and traditional forces; and (c) collaborators' activities.
4. The Israeli occupation authorities exploited the situation; they based their program on pushing the resistance gradually eastwards (1967-70), as a prelude to liquidating it after isolating it from the masses. They succeeded in this in the West Bank, but failed in the Gaza Strip.
5. Meanwhile, the occupation authorities focused on creating

Among those released in the 1985 prisoner exchange were many of the cadres who pioneered the armed resistance after the 1967 occupation.



daily living problems so that the masses would be absorbed in solving these. Again, the aim was to isolate the resistance movement from the masses, so that the former could be crushed by the military and security forces; this was the rationale for the open bridges, employing Arab labor, etc.

On the basis of this assessment, the Front outlined its understanding and programs to confront these problems.

A DISTINGUISHED POLITICAL LINE

From the beginning, the PFLP was distinguished by its mature, farsighted political thinking. It confronted every attempt to weaken the masses' steadfastness or to obscure the main battle. The Front's main slogan has always been to unite all efforts against the occupation. It was on the forefront in rejecting all plans that aimed, directly or indirectly, at liquidating the Palestinian cause. In the recent period, the Front was the first organization to expose the danger of the plan for joint Israeli-Jordanian administration and the Jordanian regime's policy of normalizing relations with 'Israel' prior to signing any agreement. The Front has also exposed and confronted the Jordanian regime's plan for «improving the quality of life» of the people in the occupied territories.

The unity of the people, the land and the cause has been basic in the Front's positions. Any weakness in this dialectical unity dilutes the essence of the Palestinian cause. Despite the particularities of the Palestinian people living in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, 1948 occupied territories or abroad, the PFLP views the people and their struggle as one. Any call for distinguishing between these communities would serve the enemy's plans. Likewise, attempts to repartition the Palestinian homeland serve the interests of the occupation.

This understanding does not contradict with the PFLP's understanding of the policy of stages and interim goals in the Palestinian struggle. As stated in the PFLP's 4th congress political report, the Palestinians' goals will not necessarily be achieved all at once. However, the policy of pursuing interim goals should not replace the strategy of the struggle. Establishing an independent Palestinian state in any liberated part of Palestine would be a great advance in the context of a comprehensive strategy for liberating all of Palestine.

The PFLP realizes the importance of unifying all nationalist efforts to confront the occupation and defeat all conspiracies. Accordingly, the PFLP was among the pioneering forces in the establishment of the Palestinian National Front in 1973. The PFLP exerted great efforts to help the National Front become the arm of the PLO in the occupied homeland, based on conviction that confronting the occupation is the job of all the resistance organizations and the masses, and that division among the Palestinian forces would only be to the occupation's advantage. The Zionist enemy is united in its strategy against the Palestinian people, so no Palestinian party should stand in the way of uniting all against the occupation, for such disunity would weaken the resistance.

The biggest weakness in the Palestinian arena is the political differences that exist in the leadership of the resistance movement. Although these differences have objective, class roots, they should not be allowed to divide the base of the revolution and cripple the struggle, as happened in the division after 1982. The differences should never obscure the objective conditions, especially in the occupied land where the enemy is clearly identified, so there is no reason for not unifying to confront it. With their spontaneous nationalist instinct, the Palestinian masses have always overcome these differences and united in