

Concerning this, I would like to remind the Executive Committee of the latest PNC's resolution calling for reevaluating the formation of the PLO's committees, offices and departments, on the basis of front relations.

The last point I will address concerns the PNC's recommendation for the unions to study the issue of proportional representation and present the results of their study to the Executive Committee. Taking a decision on this issue would resolve the wrong forms of competition (between the different organizations), which sometimes cripple the unions' work...

JUDGING THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK

On the political level... the importance of this meeting undoubtedly stems from its being a forum for evaluating the Executive Committee's work. This is particularly true since gains can only be made by overseeing and holding accountable... The criterion for judgement in the PLO is the degree of adherence to the PNC's resolutions. We expended great efforts to arrive at these resolutions... To this end, I would like to address three topics on the political level...

RELATIONS WITH EGYPT

The first is how the Executive Committee implemented the PNC's resolution concerning relations with Egypt. I will discuss this issues from three angles... The first angle is the text of the resolution. The second is what we have gained and lost with these relations. The third is connecting this issue with our vision of the future. Through these three angles, the position of the PFLP will be understood. Those who attended the comprehensive dialogue and the PNC's unifying session know the nature of the various opinions on this issue, as well as the difficulties we faced in reaching a common understanding. The importance of this issue requires that all of us adhere completely to the text of the resolution. If I am an Executive Committee member, it is my duty to rely on the text which was adopted unanimously, not on my own convictions...

The text states that relations with Egypt should be based on the resolutions of the consecutive sessions of the PNC, the 16th session in particular.

This point created sharp arguments threatening the success of the session. The text also states that Palestinian-Egyptian relations should be based on the resolutions of the Arab summits related to the issue. We all know that the most important summit dealing with this issue was the Baghdad Summit in 1978. The resolutions adopted there concerning relations with Egypt were clear to all.

Were our relations with Egypt based on this text? The period following the PNC witnessed extensive and high-level contacts with the Egyptian regime. Brother Hani Al Hassan visited Cairo several times. Brother Arafat met twice with President Husni Mubarak. Father Elias Khouri (EC member) visited Cairo once and declared that his visit was on behalf of the PLO. I wonder, if you have an opinion pertinent to this issue like mine, would you accept what has happened?

I am not only discussing whether or not there was adherence to the text... If we don't take a serious stand on this issue, given that a major Arab country has official relations with the Zionist state, what can we expect from friendly nations concerning relations with 'Israel'?

Let us put the text aside, and discuss what we have lost and gained from our relations with the Egyptian regime. Then we can compare. Did we have definite assurances from the Egyptian regime that it would adopt the concept of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital? Or clear support to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people? Or confirming the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people? I don't think so. The greatest proof of this is the official Egyptian policies... The latest was Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismat Abdel Maguid's speech at the 42nd session of the UN General Assembly. He called for the formation of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and mentioned the rights of the Palestinian people without specifying what these are. What Egyptian officials tell Hani Al Hassan behind closed doors is not important... What is important to us, what we judge by, is the declared policy of the Egyptian regime.

In contrast, what are the negative aspects of these relations? We can mention many - the negative effects on national unity... The weakening of the credibility of the PLO which decides

one thing, then acts differently, and the negative effects on our relations with forces that reject relations with such a regime.

Concerning the third angle, this subject can only be thoroughly understood by relating it to our future conception of the Palestinian revolution... Suppose the international conference were to be convened tomorrow, and that the PLO was represented. Arguments might continue for ten years without Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, unless there was a shift in the balance of forces in favor of the Palestinian and Arab forces. Consequently, we should develop a conception about the near future and the way to affect the balance of forces, to shift it to our advantage. In addition to intensifying the struggle in occupied Palestine, we should safeguard our second operational base in Lebanon. This requires consolidating the Palestinian-Lebanese nationalist alliance and dealing patiently with the issue of the PLO's relations with Syria.

This conception of the future should guide our tactical stands. Although we are confronted with Syria's stand concerning the Palestinian-Lebanese-Syrian national alliance, we should still shoulder responsibility for outlining the correct national position on this alliance... Any comrade or brother who rejects my argument could give another view, but should bear in mind that this is a matter which concerns the revolution not only for a month or a year, but in the long run.

Reviewing the political situation, I deduce that safeguarding our second operational base in Lebanon requires pursuing a specific political line towards Syria, whether there is immediate success or not... The Palestinian-Lebanese-Syrian nationalist alliance is a response to an objective need, and this need should be clear to all...

CONTACTS TO ISRAELIS

Since the PNC in April, there have been several contacts between prominent Palestinians and Zionist Israelis. In addition, there were news reports that at the NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine, held in Geneva in September, PLO Chairman Arafat gave a letter to Charlie Biton (MK of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality) to be forwarded to the Israeli government. Subsequently, the PLO ►