

Arab regimes. In case we encounter US attempts being carried out via certain Palestinians, we know very well how to confront them.

US AND ARAB REACTION

ONE AND THE SAME OBJECTIVE

Rumors have spread about a US project in the making; some aspects of said project were revealed by the statement of Schultz to the effect that the US seeks the means to bring about deep changes in the quality of life in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in order to provide people greater opportunities for political activities. Do you have any information about this? What would such a project mean?

In fact, we do not have any specific information in this regard, yet we know a little about it from the international press. On February 4th, the Israeli press published long articles on this issue and the details of the US initiative. Up to the present moment, the moves of the US and the reactionary Arab regimes indicate one and the same objective, namely to abort the uprising, in an attempt to restore the initiative and predominance of the tripartite imperialist-Zionist-Arab reactionary alliance, and its final say in the Middle East problem.

The uprising constitutes a great event that surprised everyone and may have greater future effects. Hence, the enemy camp rushed into action and divided roles as follows:

- 'Israel' continues its brutal suppression to end the uprising by force.
- The US announces initiatives and makes moves aiming to: First, subdue international public opinion which is boiling with anger at 'Israel' and its supporters. Second, maintain a strong hold on the initiative in the Middle East problem. Third, avoid moves for the holding of an effective international peace conference. Fourth, to rescue the reputation of its agents in the region, such as Hosni Mubarak, King Hussein, the Moroccan monarch and others.
- Certain Arab regimes, unfortunately, attempt to abort the uprising by working to influence the PLO leadership.

We must be aware of the scheme being engineered by this tripartite alliance. We should rely on our masses in Palestine and on our Arab and international alliances in order to foil the hostile plans. So far, all the US proposals have failed to influence the masses.

Regarding the Schultz statement, the US, Jordan and 'Israel', prior to the uprising, were seeking a solution to the Palestinian question through joint Jordanian-Israeli administration and «improving the quality of life» in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Prior to the uprising, these parties believed that an improvement of living conditions in the occupied territories, together with granting of limited freedom to the Palestinians to run their own municipal affairs, would provide a solution to the Palestine question. In fact, this has been tried but gave no solution. The present US initiative offers nothing new except an in-

crease in the political share, either through allowing a return to municipal elections, or through 'autonomy'. What is essential for the enemy alliance now is to erect a barrier between temporary solutions to the uprising and a radical solution for the Middle East crisis. If they were to succeed in liquidating the uprising before it fulfills its goals, they will forget about finding a real solution. They would, moreover, regain the initiative in the area. At best, they would propose an international peace conference as a formality to be used as an umbrella for imposing their plans.

What about the Soviet initiative to be tabled at the UN Security Council's Foreign Ministers' conference?

The initiative was made public. It was contained in a message addressed to the UN Security Council. I hope it will be accorded sufficient attention. It proposes a mechanism for restoring the rights of the Palestinian people, namely the Palestinian state, the qualitative political issue currently on the agenda for the Palestinian people. The proposed mechanism is the international peace conference. The initiative outlines the Soviet point of view at this stage. The uprising has forced the world to speed up action towards a radical solution to the Palestine question by means of an international conference which would restore to the Palestinian people their right to self-determination. Consequently, we have welcomed the Soviets' initiative and we call upon them to propose further initiatives to contain and counter all the current US moves.

A QUALITATIVELY NEW STAGE

What are your expectations of the uprising's future, and the results it might lead to on the Palestinian level, vis-a-vis the PLO and on the popular level? What are the effects of the uprising on the Arab and international levels?

We are currently working to make the uprising go on until it fulfills its political slogan. Our masses have no alternative. They can no longer bear coexistence with occupation. They adhere to the slogan: Victory or Martyrdom! I believe all evidence at present indicates that our masses are working seriously to materialize this slogan. On this basis, we might say that the uprising will have a major qualitative and positive effect on the structure of the Palestinian national movement. It will play a role in reforming the PLO's situation. The PLO can play the role it has previously played as an avant-garde of the Arab national liberation movement. Apart from its effects on the PLO, the uprising must have an impact on the Arab masses, parties and regimes, as well as on international public opinion.

The uprising has already scored a set of positive goals, regardless of what other results are attained in the coming days, weeks or months. First, the uprising made the Palestine question the number one issue of interest to the international community. Second, it succeeded in isolating 'Israel' in an unprecedented manner. Third, it consolidated the PLO's position, and I sincerely hope that the PLO will