

the main parties to whom it was directed: 'Israel' and the Palestinian people.

## THE STEADFASTNESS COUNTRIES

The Arab nationalist regimes (Syria, Libya, Algeria and Democratic Yemen), have officially confirmed their total support to the uprising. Their media is daily broadcasting news about the uprising, and condemning the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary plans aimed at foiling the uprising.

Due to the increasing international attention focused on the Palestinian cause as a result of the uprising, the Amal movement felt called upon to lift the siege of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon that had lasted for 32 months. On January 16th, Nabil Berri announced that the siege would be lifted January 20th, «as a gift» to the Palestinian uprising. The prolonged siege, in conjunction with the camp war, has had disastrous effects on the ability of the Palestinian-Syrian-Lebanese nationalist alliance to confront their common enemy. The uprising served to reassert the unity of the Palestinian struggle whether inside or outside the occupied territories. It made the camp war and the siege a very embarrassing issue.

In Syria, the National Progressive Front organized a volunteer work day with the proceeds donated to support

the uprising. Government departments and shops closed all over Syria for two hours in compliance with the call of the United National Leadership of the Uprising. A number of mass demonstrations took place, such as the December 28th march of 6,000 people in Hama. In Yarmouk camp, 50,000 people demonstrated. Other activities took place, such as the children's sit-in at the Red Cross office in Damascus, and women's sit-ins in mosques. Memos were sent to international humanitarian organizations and to the UN, signed by children, and women's organizations.

There were strikes and demonstrations in the occupied Golan Heights, in solidarity with the uprising in occupied Palestine. In several instances, the Israeli army repressed the demonstrations, arresting many and preventing journalists from entering the area.

Although these acts of solidarity are positive, Syria's responsibility for confronting the common enemy requires that it move to reestablish relations with the PLO, bypassing past disagreements. This is very important in view of the new stage of the Arab-Israeli conflict ushered in by the uprising. Although there have recently been a series of PLO-Syrian contacts, there are no concrete results as yet.

In Algeria, the government opened a special bank account for financial support to the uprising, and called upon all citizens to deposit donations.

The party and mass organizations sponsored activities in all districts of the country, in coordination with the PLO office. Thousands of people marched through the streets of the main cities, carrying Palestinian flags and raising slogans condemning the Israeli occupation. Thousands of women signed a petition to the UN General Secretary, demanding the placement of UN forces in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, to protect the Palestinians, and Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab land.

President Shadli Ben Jadid launched an initiative for the convening of an extraordinary Arab summit to deal only with the uprising. This initiative was warmly welcomed by Palestinian leaders. PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat, PFLP General Secretary George Habash and DFLP General Secretary Naef Hawatmeh met to discuss means of supporting the uprising on March 14th, and afterwards met with the Algerian President Ben Jadid. A joint Palestinian-Algerian committee was formed to follow up the efforts to convene such a summit, aiming to convene it in early April. As of this writing, the necessary quorum of Arab states willing to participate exists.

The Arab People's Conference held its first session for 1988 in Algeria, and discussed the uprising at length. In the closing statement, the conference

Demonstration in Yarmouk camp

