

post in the occupied territories, was beaten by the occupation forces as he was stepping out of Al Aqsa mosque. Everyday gas bombs are thrown and shots are fired in the holy places. Almost everyday, the Zionist troops enter mosques to intimidate worshipers and suppress sit-ins. This should make all other Islamic trends face up to their nationalist conscience and follow the path of Islamic Jihad by deciding to participate in the uprising. It is sorrowful that the other religious organizations haven't taken such a decision yet, although their honest members have joined the uprising in practice.

What developments have you observed in the uprising since its beginning?

Actually, the uprising is a qualitatively new school within the realm of Palestinian struggle. While studying the school of the uprising, one could remember other great lessons from history: the Paris Commune, the Russian revolution of 1905, the Palestinian-Lebanese national coalition that expelled the Zionists from Lebanon... Also this uprising is a new school. The Palestinian masses are confronting the Zionist expansionist entity with their determination, with stones and the slogan of freedom.

During the first month of the uprising, before I was deported, I witnessed the great revolutionary capacity among the masses. I personally couldn't imagine that the masses would rise up this fast, under such a strong organization and with such precision and readiness to sacrifice. Daily, the uprising has been able to intensify and develop new methods of resistance. The gradual development in the relationship of the merchant to the consumer, the landlord to the tenant, and the process of developing home economy are all building the basis to assure the continuation of the uprising. Now we see the creation of dual power: the authority of the Palestinian masses and the authority of the occupation forces. The authority that is on the daily offensive now is the authority of the masses. On the other hand, the authority of the occupation is retreating.

I have had the opportunity to meet with some of the people who were deported from Palestine after I was. They started to talk about the unbelievable increase in the morale, consciousness, cooperation and sense of solidarity among the people. For instance, when the aid committees go to distribute food, milk and medicine to some families, the reply is: «We have supplies, go and give to other people.» When there is a siege on a village, the surrounding villages rise in support and offer whatever they have to save it.

There are basic prerequisites to insure achieving victory, i.e., organization, mass support and the realistic outlook of the leadership. One might think that the continuation of certain points of action in the calls issued by the United National Leadership, such as demonstrations, rallies, planting the land, medical aid, etc, are merely repetitions. In fact, the process of repetition means rooting the authority of the masses more deeply. The uprising is going in the right direction and is expanding the scope of its authority each day. When the United National Leadership calls for a rally, everybody runs to join.

Our people, by achieving national unity, by learning from many international experiences, by being steadfast in Sabra and Shatila for 3 years, have created the children of stones in

the occupied territories. In the womb of all of the miseries that our people have faced grew this great uprising.

How have the so-called Palestinian moderates reacted to the uprising?

You are surely referring to people like Shawwa, Freij, Siniora, Abu Rahmeh and Neseiba (respectively mayor of Gaza, mayor of Bethlehem, editor of *Al Fajr*, Gaza lawyer, professor at Bir Zeit University - all of whom have been named as possible 'acceptable' negotiating partners rather than the PLO - editor's note). These people are parasites who want to harvest the fruits of the uprising. This trend intends to divert the uprising from its nationalist aims. These people changed their position from one extreme to the other. Previously, they thought that the PLO doesn't represent the Palestinian people. Since the uprising, they moved to a position of considering the PLO the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Previously, they considered the masses who are making the uprising as a bunch of troublemakers. Now they speak of the uprising as a revolutionary way to implement changes.

Siniora, for instance, was going to run in the municipal elections in «unified» Jerusalem, entering the slate of candidates along with Teddy Kolleck (the Israeli mayor of Jerusalem). He called on the Palestinians to participate in these elections. Now somehow this person has become a defender of the uprising and also calls for civil disobedience. The same change occurred in the position of Sari Neseiba. Approximately a year ago, Neseiba considered using knives to attack the occupiers, which our people consider a form of struggle, as being contrary to the Palestinian heritage. He considered the people who used this tool as outcasts and troublemakers. This person, after the uprising, calls for civil disobedience. Simply put, these people are strangers to the uprising. The masses of the uprising are not theirs. The contents of the uprising are not theirs. Frankly, these people do not represent the uprising or even themselves. Our masses have confronted them since the beginning of the uprising, considered them as outcasts from the national line and warned them that committing any actions against the uprising would cost them dearly.

Would you comment on the Ship of Return?

I was one of the people who were deported from Palestine and who were supposed to be on the Ship of Return. I actually went to Greece in order to join this trip. I consider this project as an attempt to practice our right of repatriation and return to our homeland. With all sorrow, the Zionists had a better understanding of this project than the Palestinians. The Zionists consider that the right of return is limited to Jews. Thus they would prevent the return of the Palestinians by any means. Eventually this led the Zionists to abort the project by blowing up the ship. I don't consider that the project has failed, because for the first time in 40 years we worked to practice our right of return by renting the ship, gathering where the ship was supposed to embark and preparing for the trip. These were all basic steps towards practicing the right of return. As a result of the Zionist conspiracy together with the help of international imperialism, the ship was blown up; thus there was a decision to postpone the project but not to cancel it. The PLO is going to resume this project in the future by all means.