

tional consensus shared by organized forces and the masses.

THE INTERNAL FRONT

A high degree of internal unity and security has been essential for bringing about the current state of civil disobedience and popular authority. The calls always refer to this question in one aspect or another. One is warning collaborators and others who are not following the program concerning resignations and strikes. Another is alerting the people to rumors, false calls, provocations and other devices used by agents and the Shin Beth to plant division.

On another level, the calls deal with the need for unity of action despite the existence of different political trends. Calls no. 23 and no. 24 appeal to the national and progressive forces behind the green line (Palestinians living under occupation since 1948) to end their differences and unite for the sake of the uprising and Palestinian national rights, in reference to the disagreements that have prevailed between Rakah and other groups, such as the Sons of the Village, on how to best support the uprising. In this case, the call does not «take sides» or prescribe a specific solution, but leaves this up to the forces involved.

The approach is different in the case of groups in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, who make divisive actions or challenge the uprising's unity and adherence to the PLO. Here the problem is addressed via internal discussions, as in the case of Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement) with whom there have been discussions both inside and outside the occupied territories, aimed at preserving the maximal degree of unity. Still, the problem reached the point of being dealt with openly in one call, no. 29, which condemns Hamas' decision to declare a three-day strike in Al Khalil (Hebron), separate from the uprising's stated program. Here the call alerted the masses to the problem posed by this, whereas direct discussions are continuously conducted to try to get Hamas to join the UNL, or at least agree on the joint program of action.

The calls consistently link the uprising with the Palestinian revolution outside of Palestine, stressing the unity of the PLO. Accordingly, call no. 15

asserts that the new situation created by the uprising allows for the return of all Palestinian organizations to the PLO, based on the 18th PNC. Calls no. 20 and 21 contain strong statements against the inter-Palestinian fighting in the Beirut camps. This elicited the first explicit condemnation of another Palestinian force by name: «We condemn the savage bombing of Shatila and its destruction by the renegade group of Abu Musa, because this is a stab in the back to the PLO.»

POLITICAL VISION — NATIONALIST AND INTERNATIONALIST

The UNL's firmness in political line but flexibility in tactics is apparent in all its calls. The second call sets out interim demands such as withdrawal of the army from populated areas, release of detainees, an end to the iron fist, settlement-building, land confiscation and unjust taxation, etc. These are maintained but never confused with the ultimate goal of ending the occupation and establishing «a free Palestine - a united land, people and cause» (call no. 4). Throughout, it is clear that there can be no compromise on the Palestinian people's right to repatriation, self-determination and an independent state. Equally important, the calls expound the link between tactical and strategic goals as being an ongoing struggle, in view of the nature of the Zionist enemy. Call no. 29 expresses the basic similarity of the Labor and Likud blocs in uniting on repressing the uprising, adding after the Israeli elections: «we expect four more years of the rule of the most racist extremist trends in the Zionist entity. But this does not scare us.»

Even with the euphoria of what the uprising has achieved, the calls exhibit no illusions that victory can be quick, or that the US can be begged into supporting the side of justice. Those who argue that the PLO should make concessions for the sake of the people under occupation have perhaps not read call no. 17 which affirms Palestinian rejection of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, while asserting that in the eyes of the uprising, Security

Council resolution 605 (Dec. 22, 1987) cancels the council's earlier resolutions because it «expresses an international consensus; it deals with our people's cause as one of a people with legitimate rights to live on their land, and calls for sending international observers to the occupied territories.» As stated in call no. 26, it is the US that should offer concessions, not the PLO.

At the same time, the calls express a mature and concrete concept of political and diplomatic work, and how to widen the Palestinians' circle of friends and concurrently Israeli isolation. This is coupled with explicit support to the PLO's work to translate the uprising's achievements into international achievements, as expressed in call no. 27, prior to the PNC's 19th session. Call no. 28 expressed the dialectical relationship between struggle and diplomatic gains: «The enemy understands only the language of violence. Therefore, the more the flames of the uprising rage, the closer we are to victory, and the more our leadership and cause gain diplomatic status.»

Call no. 23 notes the three UN Security Council resolutions passed during the uprising (605, 607 and 608) which «spoke for the first time about the occupied *Palestinian territories*» as opposed to previous resolutions which referred to the «territories occupied by Israel since 1967,» without specifying their Palestinian identity. The call lists these three resolutions and the international exposure of the occupation's racist and fascist face as main achievements of the uprising, on a par with the Israeli economic losses, the fragmentation of the civil administration's apparatus and Jordan's decision to sever ties with the West Bank. The UNL carefully defines the uprising's demands to the international community in accordance with the adopted principles and responsibilities of the UN, such as enforcing the Geneva Convention of 1949, seeing this as a protective support to the Palestinian people, but always retaining the idea that the responsibility for advancing the struggle rests with the Palestinians