

OCUPAZIONE PALESTINA

form in the late sixties. Concurrently, the idea is promoted that armed struggle is outdated, or that the occupation can be ended without it. Indeed, the political and geographical terrain on which Palestinians under occupation struggle differs markedly from the situation in which the freedom fighters rose to prominence, first in Jordan and later in Lebanon. However, the contents of the UNL's calls show that the distinction is not one of principle. The fact that the masses of the uprising have thus far mainly employed what could be termed «non-military» weapons, from stones to homemade devices like firebombs, does not reflect rejection of forms of struggle that are more advanced in the military sense. Rather it reflects keen awareness of how to capitalize on what is possible at a given time, how to balance between mass and military struggle whereby the broadest segments of the people are involved in militant struggle, meanwhile steadily building towards other potentials.

The other side of this coin is using available resources to maximize the enemy's losses, not only materially where the main damage is being inflicted by economic boycott and civil disobedience, but also in the war of nerves whereby a people with few resources are driving the world's fourth-ranking army to distraction. In this context, one understands the significance of the UNL's declaring April 21st as the Day of the Palestinian Molotov in response to the Israeli authorities officially permitting settlers to fire on molotov-throwers, showing that the masses are not afraid but rather capable of escalating in step with the occupation's escalating brutality. Firebombs have indeed been the most prevalent weapon next to stones. From the beginning of the uprising until the end of October, 1275 firebombs were thrown against Israeli military targets, as reported by the Jerusalem daily *Al Shaab*, based on the statements of Israeli military sources.

Perhaps the most effective selectively employed weapon, in terms of inflicting material damage and loss of morale in the enemy's ranks, has been setting

fires. Call no. 7 (February 14, 1988) declared a war of attrition against the occupation and settlers, including «burning the land under the feet of the invaders.» In the spring, this was literally implemented, as 400 fires damaged over 40,000 acres in the Galilee and Jerusalem areas, and signalled the involvement of Palestinians living in the 1948 occupied regions of Palestine.

In fact, the calls put no restrictions on the means of struggle to be employed; on the contrary, they routinely urge escalating the uprising with all revolutionary means. They also express an integrated view of the different stages and forms of struggle required in the liberation process. Call no. 10 states: «Our comprehensive and tremendous uprising - the stones,

molotovs and various means of popular struggle, first and foremost the legitimate armed struggle against the occupiers - is drawing the picture of our homeland with the free Palestinian will.» Call no. 17 states: «The uprising has confirmed that there is no alternative to struggle and protracted people's war, as the way to achieve our rights,» while call no. 14, issued after the martyrdom of Abu Jihad, pledges to all the martyrs that «the day will come when the sound of the kalashnikov rings out in every part of Palestine...» Call no. 18 demands that the Arab leaders permit the Palestinian commandos to operate across the Arab borders towards occupied Palestine. Obviously, the role of armed resistance is included in the UNL's vision of the liberation process.

October 16th demonstration in Yatta to protest

