

have to examine the most outstanding points of this process. As far as our particular experience is concerned, we will deal with the two most significant lessons drawn from the experience of the ANM.

1. The required exact scientific balance was lacking in our view of the dialectics of the Palestinian and Arab national dimensions; we put greater emphasis on the Arab national factor. Then, after the 1967 defeat, we seriously reconsidered our attitude and expressed our new outlook through the PFLP.

2. In the period of the ANM, we lacked a class view for distinguishing among the classes of the people within the Arab liberation movement, and the roles of these classes.

More than twenty years after our conversion into the PFLP, we are increasingly convinced that we made the correct choice and reached the proper conclusions on these matters. It is true that we still are at the stage of the national democratic revolution, even at its elementary steps. It is also true that all the classes of the people should be capable of participating in this revolutionary process, including the bourgeoisie. However, it is equally true that the different classes have different roles in the struggle process. Any glance at contemporary historical experience points without failure or ambiguity to the fact that the class nature of the leadership of the Palestinian national movement at its different stages has been at least partly responsible for the results we have had. That is what happened in 1936-39 and was repeated in 1948. No one can deny that the present class leadership bears part of the responsibility for what has happened, whether negative or positive.

Out of our review of the lessons and mistakes in the course of our struggle, we have clearly seen the essentiality of the emergence and consolidation of a firm political line in the confrontation against the enemy, both for checking right-wing tendencies and for resisting the nihilist, adventurist orientation. The revolution as well as the PLO have, for more than two decades, faced a series of stages and turns which have shown the importance of such a firm line. The last five years have witnessed the intensification of the tendencies of squander of our people's achievements on one hand, and the emergence of the adventurist, nihilist orientation on the other. Exactly at this juncture, the revolutionary democratic forces have played a decisive and vital role. Further, the increased role of the revolutionary democratic trend is the basis for maintaining and consolidating the entire national line of the revolution, and thus an indispensable condition for achieving our ultimate goals.

WHAT THEN?

Forty years have elapsed since the occupation of Palestine and the establishment of the Zionist entity in our homeland by force of iron and fire, blood and massacres... Forty years have passed with a record full of struggles and sacrifices on the part of the Palestinian and the Arab people. As noted above, the enemy has succeeded in scoring a whole series of strategic objectives, while the Palestinian and Arab militant movement remained incapable of achieving comparable results.

We have mentioned the points of strength of this entity and briefly specified the most salient ones. We have also referred to the points of weakness which have accompanied our militant process. Through both, we have aimed at refuting the prevalent simplistic attitudes. At the same time, we have been aware of the enemy's weak points as well as our own strong points. Due to the lack of space for broader discussion, we will limit ourselves to two essential points:

1. While the Zionist entity has emerged and developed because of the support of the West, as well as its own wise investment of this support according to a well-defined strategy, there is no doubt that the same West will be this entity's fatal point of weakness. It has been possible for this entity to develop throughout the last four decades in relatively favorable conditions. It is true that it has waged six wars but most of them, except the 1973 and the 1982 wars, have been very cheap compared to the results scored. The enemy has been capable of making decisive advances in building a socioeconomic structure and reaching the level of a great regional power.

The reversal in the process is bound to begin when 'Israel' finds itself incapable of continuing the same path. Needless to say, such a thing is not going to occur spontaneously or due to the internal development of this entity. An action on the part of the Palestinian liberation movement, closely interconnected with the Arab national movement, is needed to contribute to the frustration of the Israeli strategic schemes, rendering the price of occupation unbearably high, so high that it cannot be paid from the 'Israeli pocket'. This would be a step towards rendering the very existence of 'Israel' so costly as to be intolerable even for the imperialists.

The enemy's strong points are themselves the ones we can convert into fatal points of weakness. Through their racist aggressive policies, the enemy is digging its own grave. Even as 'Israel' tries to annihilate the Palestinian people and erase their identity, play the role of imperialist gendarme in the region, and work to be the spearhead against the camp of peace, liberation, progress and socialism in the world; it is catalyzing the energies of the Palestinian people who refuse to be annihilated and adhere to their rights. The enemy is also catalyzing the energies of the Arab nation whose development it tries to arrest, as well as the energies of the forces of peace and progress all over the world. By so doing, the enemy is in fact creating its own grave and concretely proving that it is swimming against the current of history.

This obviously requires Palestinian, Arab and international action different from what is going on now. This brings us to the second point.

2. It is necessary to draw up a supreme Palestinian-Arab-international strategy of confrontation, which makes use of all the energies of the Palestinian people at home, in Jordan and all other places of exile, at all the levels and in all fields -political, military, diplomatic, economic, informational and cultural, together with the energies of the Arab nation and national liberation forces, in close strategic alliance with all the forces of freedom, progress, peace and socialism in the world. The crystallization of such a strategy should be based on a deeper and more exact understanding of the Zionist entity... as well as a scientific comprehensive review of the process of our struggle over the last forty years.

While referring to the most outstanding, though not all, of the lessons/mistakes of our past experience, and without pinpointing all the aspects of the comprehensive confrontation strategy, we do consider that the main features of such a strategy are already present in the PFLP's literature and the documents of its successive congresses, especially the 4th National Congress.

This article is only one effort in the process of enriching and crystallizing the strategy... It is a call to a comprehensive and deep dialogue among all forces and tendencies involved in Palestinian and Arab national democratic action in order to reach the stage of formulating such a common strategy.