

In order to preserve national unity and further consolidate the uprising, it is necessary to abide strictly by the resolutions of the PNC which did not call for confederation with Jordan prior to the establishment of a Palestinian state, nor for direct negotiations with Israel. The PLO must rather strive for its dialogue with the US to be in concert with the international consensus which is for peace through an effec-

tive and fully empowered international peace conference with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council and all parties to the conflict, including the PLO.

The new realities born out of the intifada and the international support it has engendered should be utilized to consolidate and broaden it, in order to advance to the next phase of total civil disobedience. By providing the

necessary support to the intifada - materially, militarily, morally and politically, we can contribute to its continued escalation which is the only real guarantee for Israeli withdrawal and the achievement of freedom and independence. ●

1 Associated Press, December 20, 1988.

2 ibid.

3 ibid.

4 Associated Press, February 20, 1989

George Habash

The Ultimate Challenge of the Intifada

The Palestinian popular uprising will go down in history, not only Palestinian and Arab history, but international history as well. The uprising, as acknowledged by the vast majority, will have the same significance as other great historical events, such as the Paris Commune, the victory of the Iranian revolution and the great independence battles of colonized and semi-colonized countries. This is no exaggeration. The uprising, which has entered its second year, is the first of its kind in the area. The results of its first year put it in the forefront of the events and battles in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The effects of the uprising in different fields are continuing, bearing all kinds of possibilities.

The uprising could not have maintained its momentum had it not possessed the mechanisms for escalation and renewal, based on a set of qualities and features. These give us confidence that we are witnessing a new way of life, especially for our masses under occupation. Thus, the uprising will continue and escalate until achieving freedom and independence.

Organization is an essential factor for continuing and escalating the uprising. This concerns not only the United National Leadership of the Uprising (UNL), but also the tens and hundreds of popular and working committees, and strike forces, which constitute the base of the UNL, and in whose ranks thousands of our people will be organized. Even the enemy leadership has been forced to admit that if they want to put an end to the popular committees, this means arresting all the people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Such advanced organizing has had a noticeable effect in guaranteeing the continuation of the uprising, in accordance with a calculated program which takes into consideration the daily needs of our people on the one hand, while keeping the flames of the uprising burning on the other. Such organizing would not have been possible without the accumulation of militant experience, and the crystallization of the Palestinian subjective factor in the occupied territories. This is clear if one views the extent of the development which has occurred in the effectiveness of the Palestinian nationalist and democratic organizations, and the mass organizations affiliated with them, such as the unions and committees for workers, students, women, youth and professionals, and the voluntary work committees.



Our satisfaction with the developed organizing of the uprising, which has been created by our masses and vanguard forces, should not, however, rule out the need for exerting more efforts to bridge the current gaps and any gaps which may arise, especially concerning the UNL in the occupied territories. It should not eliminate the necessity of striving to form more organs of popular authority to organize all the people in this long, militant process, and to derive formulas that guarantee the participation of all groups, forces and individuals, in the uprising, despite differences. The democratic organizations and the PLO should continue to focus on this task.

Comprehensiveness is the second distinctive feature of the uprising. We don't mean comprehensiveness only in the geographic sense, but in the demographic sense as well. The uprising includes all the people, of all ages, professions, classes and strata. All our people are participating in their own way or field, according to their potentials and special skills. Thus, the influence of agents and reactionaries has decreased, and a new set of values and social standards has evolved in accordance with the characteristics of the new stage. Individualism, selfishness and consumptive tendencies have given way to self-reliance, self-confidence, social solidarity, austerity and productivity. The woman's view of her role has changed markedly, as has the man's view of the woman's role, in the course of ►