

and cause. The uprising has drawn international support and awakened the conscience of the world. It will enable us to achieve freedom and independence, in tandem with the efforts and struggle of our people in exile, and the support of our friends and allies on the regional and international levels.

TOWARDS A THEORY OF THE UPRISING

The Palestinian uprising continues to pose a series of questions. Some of these concern the political strategy of the Palestinian national movement; others concern tactics, slogans, compromises and political moves. During the last year, the Palestinian arena has been preoccupied with direct and tactical political questions related to the uprising, such as the international conference, the prerequisites for its convention, the supportive Arab environment, the Algiers Summit resolutions, Palestinian-Syrian relations, the evaluation of the Egyptian position, the status of UN resolutions, the European position on the Palestinian-US dialogue, etc.

Of course, these are important questions to which we were required to give answers. Otherwise, in the absence of a Palestinian role, the political arena would have been filled by other players eagerly awaiting our banishment from the political scene. We have previously stated our position on all these matters, so there is no reason to repeat what has already been said. Rather, the subject to be specifically discussed is related to the strategic questions raised by the uprising, such as: How shall we crystallize the theoretical framework upon which our political positions and slogans are based? Is it true that we have succeeded in creating the theory of the uprising? Have we created its ideological framework? How shall we link tactics and strategy, politics and theory?

Our response to these questions must be negative. The Palestinian and Arab organizations and intellectuals are still preoccupied with examining daily events and very far from deriving theories for the uprising. In spite of our conviction in the importance of immediate tactics and political thinking, our loyalty to the uprising and its repercussions requires efforts to formulate the theory of the uprising, and to discuss its strategic direction. For example, is it enough, when examining the effects of the uprising on the Zionist society, to confine ourselves to the number of seats and votes gained by the peace camp? Or to monitor Israeli leaders' statements which recognize the Palestinian people's rights to repatriation, self-determination and, maybe, an independent state and, maybe, the need for dialogue with the PLO? Is this really sufficient? In fact, the uprising has posed questions about Israel's ability to absorb the results of the 1967 war, and consequently questions about the Israeli theory of expansionism, settlement-building and security; it has shaken the fundaments of Zionist ideology and, for the first time ever, seriously posed the possibility of destroying these fundaments.

Has not the uprising posed the question of the Israeli future and demographic destiny more seriously than ever before? In response, some have spoken of the need for Israel to withdraw from densely populated areas, which would mean the beginning of the defeat of the Zionist project as a whole. Others have emphasized the need to resort to transfer (of the Palestinians), which would lead to other problems, not confined to the Mid-

dle East. Let's not forget the question related to the future of the Zionist project. What does the formation of an independent Palestinian state mean for the Zionist plan of expansion and settlement-building? Does it mean the beginning of the final countdown for this scheme? Or will we be faced by a miniature of the Zionist scheme? We must devote more time to responding to these questions in line with our immediate goals.

On the other hand, did not the uprising pose important questions related to the nature of the Palestinian national movement, its forms of struggle, the changes in the degree of influence exerted by its social forces? Did not the uprising pose a question as to the crisis of the leadership and the alternative to this crisis? Did not the uprising raise the problem of the relationship between the struggle inside and outside of Palestine, and about the revolution's need for a supportive base, and the strategic relationship with Jordan in terms of its people? Did not the uprising pose a question concerning the needed change in Palestinian political thinking and the actual change in this after the uprising?

In fact, the uprising also raised the question of the crisis of the Arab national liberation movement after the decline of the official Arab policies and the adjustment to the Camp David stage. It also accentuated the historical crisis of the Arab national bourgeoisie which controls the course of this movement. The uprising also highlighted the crisis of the Arab revolutionary alternative forces, including the Arab communist parties, after their failure to benefit from the objective opportunity offered by the uprising to reawaken the Arab mass movement and transform the Palestinian uprising into an Arab uprising.

Did not the uprising expose all the faults of the Arab regimes - their subordination, their repressive, anti-democratic nature, their backwardness which has destroyed the structure of the Arab society, turning it into a consumer market for the latest technological inventions in weaponry and consumer goods, serving only to keep these regimes in power?

This is only part of the many questions and strategic concerns posed by the uprising. The organizations, leaders and revolutionary intellectuals have a very important duty to start offering scientific answers if we are truly faithful to the uprising. This article cannot give answers for all these questions, but rather aims to encourage attempts to arrive at theories for this turning point.

A NEW STAGE

Since the first month of the uprising, two points-of-view have crystallized in the Palestinian arena concerning this qualitative phenomenon. The first point-of-view is that which governed the positions of the bourgeois trend, and its policies in the revolution and the PLO. The advocates of this view also included some of the democratic forces and individuals. This trend strives for realizing quick political gains from the uprising. The positions taken by this trend reflect the Palestinian bourgeoisie's lack of faith in the masses on the one hand. On the other hand, some of the democratic forces have become impatient, fearing that the uprising will end without having produced any gains.