

nationalist forces, waged the longest war in the history of the Arab-Zionist conflict. This change began to impose itself on the nature of the conflict. We can now say, without hesitation, that the uprising has for the first time given the struggle against the Zionist enemy the nature of a Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the framework of the Arab-Zionist conflict. There is no doubt that the 1982 war signalled the beginning of this transformation of the nature of the conflict, but this was not consolidated until the uprising. In other words, the uprising has restored the conflict to its primary nature and put the regional crisis in the correct perspective. Thus, the most important task is the struggle to resolve the Palestinian problem in all its aspects, not being satisfied with border arrangements between the Arab regimes and the Zionist enemy.

Since it is now clear that it is a Palestinian-Zionist conflict, the enemy will have to face up to its ultimate opponent. This means the collapse of the false Israeli claims, such as «a land without a people for a people without a land,» «Greater Israel» and so on, upon which the Zionist ideology is based.

Unfortunately, this new nature of the conflict did not come about as a result of scientific discussion about the dialectics between the Arab and Palestinian national dimensions. Under no circumstances should we belittle the importance of the Palestinian national dimension in favor of the Arab national dimension. Nor should we concentrate only on the Palestinian dimension, discarding the Arab one. What has happened is the increase of the Palestinian role and the retreat of the Arab role due to the decline and weakness of Arab officialdom.

In fact, a period of two decades has culminated in the heroic Palestinian uprising. These two decades were characterized by vacillation between the Palestinian and Arab national dimensions. Although the uprising has given the Arab-Zionist conflict new features, it is important to remember that the Arab national dimension is necessary as well. The Zionist enemy threatens not only the Palestinian people. Consequently, foiling the Zionist plan is not the responsibility of the Palestinian people alone. The future of this struggle for liberation, social progress and unity will join the Palestinian people together with the other Arab peoples.

The falsity of the nationalist slogans which had prevailed, coupled with the decline of the Arab regimes, made it imperative for the Palestinian people to take the initiative. This situation also requires that the Arab national liberation movement give top priority to overcoming its crisis.

The new features of the conflict brought about by the uprising, in conjunction with the official Arab decline, has led to the following new realities:

a. The Palestinian people are striving to crystallize the features of their national identity, and to create the basis for their independent national existence. Together with the Jordanian regime's relinquishing its ties with the West Bank, the uprising has provided the objective basis for this process which culminated in the declaration of the independent state on Palestinian land. At the proper time, this process will continue with the declaration of an independent Palestinian provisional government.

b. The Palestinian factor has become very strong. Whether on the battlefield in Palestine or in the diplomatic arena,

Palestinian presence has grown to where it cannot be contained by any other party or regime. The independence of Palestinian decision-making cannot be overlooked.

c. The Palestinian cause has imposed itself in the international arena, as a cause of self-determination for a people who have been deprived of their rights for more than 40 years. The traditional friends of Israel have been obliged to deal with the new realities. This is precisely the essence of the change that has occurred and the essence of the strategic threat posed to the Zionist entity and plan in the area.

d. These new realities have given our people, especially those under occupation, a glimpse of hope which further motivates their struggle. It is clearer than ever before that this struggle will not stop until the achievement of freedom and independence.

These significant new realities would not have crystallized as such if the decision-making power had remained in the Arab capitals. With the accentuation of the Palestinian role in confronting the Zionist enemy, the struggle in the area has entered a qualitatively new stage. There is no doubt that the outbreak of the uprising, and its escalation, played the major role in this transformation.

3. THE POPULAR NATURE OF THE UPRISING

The third significant feature of the uprising is that our masses in occupied Palestine, the creators of the uprising, gave this turning point a distinguished popular nature. This feature alone would make the uprising go down in world history, and for this reason, the uprising is a model to be emulated.

Before 1948, the Palestinian struggle against the Zionist invasion had a broad popular nature. The urban and rural population participated in a series of revolts against Zionist immigration and colonization. In most cases, these struggles had a broad popular nature, without minimizing the role of the political and militant vanguard forces who shouldered the main responsibility for mobilizing the masses, and were always in the forefront.

From 1948 until the uprising, the struggle against the Zionist enemy took the form of classical warfare waged by the Arab regimes against Israel, or self-defense. On the other hand, there was the guerrilla warfare waged for more than a quarter of a century by the Palestinian resistance organizations in occupied Palestine or from across the borders. During that period, there were moments of mass explosion, especially in Nasser's Egypt, in Jordan during the Palestinian resistance's presence there, and in Lebanon prior to the outbreak of the civil war. Throughout this period, there was increased mass participation in the struggle against the enemy. The Arab and Palestinian masses were always ready to struggle against the enemy. In most cases, they paid the price for this, at the hands of the Arab regimes. In the occupied territories, our masses have repeatedly confronted the Zionist enemy, proving their unlimited militant potentials and readiness. However, these positive manifestations in the state of the mass movement had not yet become concrete action. There had not been a direct continuous and comprehensive confrontation of the Zionist