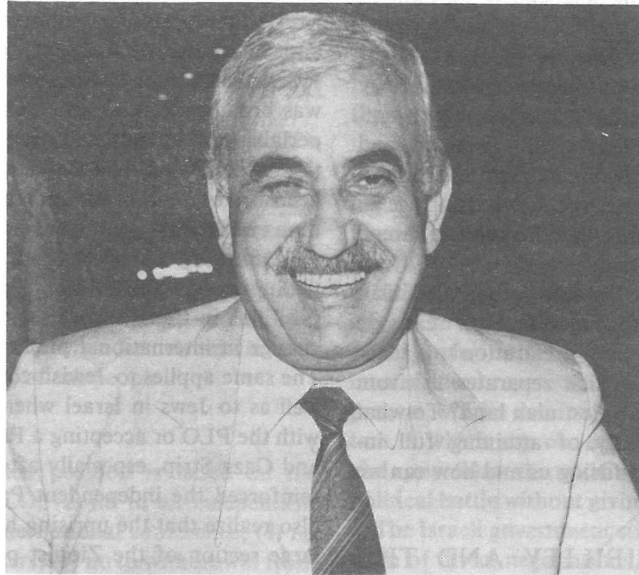


Dr. George Habash

The Uprising Has Made the Palestinian State a Realistic Possibility



The achievements of the intifada, since it began in December 1987, are many. The crucial positive effects of the uprising have extended to all levels of the Arab-Zionist and Palestinian-Zionist conflict, putting the Palestinian cause in a better state than it has been in for the past two decades. The most important of these achievements is that the intifada succeeded in advancing the slogan of freedom and independence from the realm of historical possibility into the realm of realistic possibility. This is perhaps the first time our people experience such conditions and have such a historical opportunity.

When the United National Leadership of the Uprising declared, in call no. 3 of January 18, 1988, its demand for freedom and independence, this could have seemed to be a noble ambition or an attempt to mobilize the people to continue their brave struggle against the Israeli occupation. Encompassing all the classes, strata and sectors of the Palestinian people under occupation, the uprising continued to make changes in international public opinion in favor of our people and their legitimate struggle to attain their rights to repatriation, self-determination and an independent state. The ongoing uprising which is deeply rooted in the occupied land, started its second year with great certainty that it will continue until achieving its aims. The enemy leaders and intelligence service also reached the same conclusion and were obliged to admit that the uprising is an expression of the Palestinian people's aspirations, and will not stop unless there is a political solution for the crisis.

Although the Palestinians started to think of the slogan of freedom and independence a long time ago, the uprising makes this slogan realistic, especially after the intifada succeeded in imposing the Palestinian option, making King Hussein sever the legal and administrative ties to the Palestinian West Bank... There is no doubt that King Hussein's step is among the most important historical achievements of the uprising.

The slogan of freedom and independence now has a concrete field of action. The world came face to face with the logical question: What is the future of the occupied land and who will have sovereignty over it?

The answer was direct and conclusive: This is occupied Palestinian land as was confirmed for the first time by the UN Security Council in resolution no. 605. Israel must withdraw from this land as confirmed by international laws and norms, UN resolutions and other regional and international bodies. On this land, the Palestinians must begin to exercise their sovereignty and build their independent state in the framework of comprehensive arrangements which insure their rights to repatriation, self-determination and an independent state. By the brave uprising, this position has acquired great international support, as seen in UN resolutions and in the partial change in the official European position and the deep change in international public opinion, including in the US. In addition, the intifada has affected the Zionist state on the political, economic, social and psychological levels.

Much can be said about the decline of the official Arab order, the inability and collusion of many Arab regimes. Much can be said about the deep crisis of the Arab national liberation movement. Nonetheless, no one can ignore the effects of the uprising on the Arab arena. At the Amman Summit (1987), there was near consensus on the denial of the rights of the Palestinians and favoring the Jordanian option. Then, the Summit of the Uprising in Algiers rearranged Arab priorities in favor of the Palestinian cause and achieving an Arab consensus on the Palestinian slogan of freedom and independence. Concerning the crisis of the Arab liberation movement, the uprising came to pose the big question: Who among these regimes can guarantee its own internal front? How long will the Arab masses remain silent in Egypt, Jordan, etc? What is the responsibility of the Arab liberation movement which should serve as a lever to bring about change in the Arab arena? ►