

the Palestinian strategic priorities, this does not mean omitting the distinguished role of the armed struggle in this strategy.

From this perspective, we have a series of responsibilities to shoulder in order to shorten the distance between declaring and achieving independence. The focus of these responsibilities is how to protect the uprising and guarantee its continuation and escalation, for it is the Palestinian people's primary asset in this period of the national struggle.

I. PROTECTING THE UPRISING POLITICALLY

«The uprising will go on for years, and nothing can put an end to it except a political solution.» This is a quote from the annual report of the Israeli intelligence, which was presented to the cabinet. This means that not only our friends, but our enemies as well, are convinced of the futility of a military solution, and convinced of the Palestinian people's insistence on continuing their legitimate resistance until achieving freedom and independence.

It is now obvious that even massive savage repression will not stop the intifada. Since the uprising has become part and parcel of the Palestinian people's daily life, they will not allow things to return to the status quo prior to December 9, 1987. This is the situation in the occupied territories. It shows that our fears about the future of the uprising are not related to Rabin's repressive measures. Rather, our fear arises from deficient political protection of the uprising and from the political battle being conducted on the basis of trying to make hasty gains from the uprising, and thus giving concessions without getting anything in return.

Over the previous months, we have faced many situations which reflected the haste of some Palestinian circles - from the premature call for forming a government-in-exile, to the document of an adviser, to brother Yasir Arafat's press conference in Geneva and its aftermath - Arafat's expressing readiness to engage in direct, bilateral negotiations. These and other similar positions weaken the revolutionary vigilance of the masses of the intifada. They cause confusion in their ranks and serve to weaken Palestinian national unity, because they are a clear violation of the resolutions of national consensus.

The Palestinians have passed many crossroads of this type, and managed to maintain their unity and cohesion. Yet this does not mean that the dangers of this policy have diminished, for the believers in this logic insist on trying again and again. Moreover, we may face situations which would lead some Palestinians to lower the minimum platform of our legitimate rights if we do not begin working from now to block such policies and practices. Hence we call for adhering to the invariable principles of the Palestinian struggle, as well as to the PNC's decisions, because the road of concessions is endless, and our obstinate enemy will not be defeated unless we show more firmness and adherence to our basic goals.

II. CONSOLIDATING THE INTIFADA

Consolidating the uprising means first of all maintaining the war of stones by reinforcing its organizational and socioeconomic structure. This entails work on two levels.

The first level: The organizational structure of the uprising can only be reinforced by developing the United National Leadership of our people under occupation, which is the embodiment of the broad national coalition represented by the PLO which reflects the interests of all classes and strata of our

people. Reinforcing the organizational structure of the uprising requires bolstering it with more popular committees which are the auxiliary leadership of the UNL in every street, alley, village, town and camp; and the broad popular base which carries out its militant activities and programs. It also entails reinforcing and enlarging the strike forces, the militant arm of the UNL for confronting the enemy and its agents. It entails developing popular voluntary work in the fields of health, education, social services and family solidarity. It also means that the UNL should be complemented with trade unions and popular organizations, so that the termination of the uprising would mean an unprecedented termination of a whole people. One Israeli leader has already had to admit that arresting the activists of the popular committees means arresting a whole people; it amounts to the same if they are considered outlaws. This truth must be enshrined in the minds of the Zionist leaders until their fascist measures are abolished forever, and they are obliged to recognize our people's legitimate aims.

The second level: Consolidating the socioeconomic base of the uprising can be achieved in part by returning to the land, developing agriculture and spreading the «victory gardens» (homegardens) experiment. It can also be fulfilled by encouraging local industry, developing self-sufficiency, rejecting consumptive habits, adopting a policy of austerity, being satisfied with necessities and working to disengage from the Israeli economy as much as possible. Successfully increasing self-reliance not only guarantees the continuation of the intifada, but also shortens the life of the occupation, because the enemy will someday discover that the price of occupation is much greater than the benefits.

III. ESCALATION OF THE INTIFADA

We must not give the enemy the chance to adapt itself to the uprising as might be the case if the uprising continues at a set level. Although we have succeeded in maintaining the intifada's momentum and broad scope throughout the 1967 occupied territories for over a year, nevertheless we have not succeeded in moving to the stage of total national disobedience. This has both subjective and objective reasons, but we must not give up trying. The second year of the intifada should witness a qualitative escalation through partial, interim and gradual disobedience which would pave the way for total national disobedience. This is the primary means for seriously harming the enemy - politically, economically and in terms of morale, making the costs of occupation much too high. The Israeli losses in the first year, estimated at 1.5-2 billion dollars, must be doubled in the second year.

Moreover, escalation of the uprising entails the use of military force, in addition to other forms of resistance, in order to benefit maximally from the enemy's sensitivity to human losses in its own ranks. This is our legitimate right as acknowledged by international laws and conventions. It is our right to defend ourselves and to struggle for liberation and independence. This is not terrorism as the hostile Zionist and imperialist media try to portray. The uprising and the armed struggle are two faces of the same coin. There is no contradiction between them except to those who have tired of the armed struggle and prematurely announced the end of this stage. In order to keep the necessary mass character of the uprising out of danger, we must practice armed struggle outside the terrain where the uprising is taking place, i.e., from across the Arab borders and inside the 1948 occupied territories. ►