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common nationalist framework. Until now, the United National Leadership is calling on Hamas to work together, so that all efforts are united in accordance with a planned program. This is necessary for mounting the most effective confrontation of the enemy. All should work on the basis that the intifada is our main concern, in order to achieve our rights.

Aside from the Israeli repression, what are the obstacles to the intifada?

The silence of Arab officialdom constitutes a major obstacle for the masses of the intifada. Morale support from the Arab masses has also been inadequate, though we realize the obstacles which many regimes impose on the masses to fetter such support.

Moreover, the masses of the intifada are against overly hasty political moves. Our masses realize that the US administration is not truly concerned about our rights. The US could have showed its credibility by admitting the inadequacy of the Shamir plan, but it didn't. Therefore, betting on the US weakens our position and has negative effects on our masses' steadfastness. We have to realize that the relation between Israel and the US is one of partnership and common interests. The PLO must have a clearer and firmer position. The PLO must commit itself to the PNC's resolutions and adhere to our rights for repatriation, self-determination and the independent state. Our masses in the occupied territories insist on not giving any concessions.

What are the difficulties delaying total civil disobedience?

The intifada has to move towards this qualitative step of total disobedience; it is doing so gradually. However, gradual civil disobedience is not chiefly a question of how many strike days are observed. Basically, it means the degree to which the intifada has been able to establish national authority, boycotting the civil administration and fulfilling the subjective and objective conditions for total disobedience.

Civil disobedience basically means total rejection of the occupation and civil administration. The conditions for achieving this include organizing the provision of the needed financial support to our masses in the occupied territories, and organizing more and more popular committees and strengthening their activities. Achieving total civil disobedience is a long and hard process of struggle.

Would you speak about your experience of detention in Israeli jails?

In 1968, after the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, I was arrested for resisting the occupation and imprisoned for ten years. I was deprived of the most basic human rights. The Palestinian prisoners fought in the prison with all the means available to us - hunger strikes, refusing the family visits decided by the prison authorities as a protest, and refusing to go outside for our break as a protest. We were fighting for our human rights and for improving the conditions of

detention. In the prison we were prohibited to read books and deprived of medical care. Our living conditions were very hard. We had to fight. Struggle means to be organized, and we actually were very well organized. As a result of our struggle and sacrifices, including prisoners being martyred, we did make gains in terms of improvement of our daily life conditions. The prison authorities constantly tried to retract our gains, but our organized movement was capable of confronting their attempt via hunger strikes and other forms of struggle.

Prior to the intifada, it was mainly the members of the Palestinian organizations, and especially their active militants, who were arrested. Nowadays, in the time of the intifada, all the masses, whether members of an organization or not, are being detained. New interrogation and detention centers have been established. The detainees are being subjected to brutal repression in Dhahiriya, Fara, Ansar II and Ansar III detention centers. They are subjected to constant beatings, overcrowding and racist and fascist violations.

It may be, because of resisting the occupation, I was detained under very hard conditions and without charges being specified. I was in Tulkarm prison when I was notified of the deportation order against me. Expulsion is a political decision taken by the occupation authorities aimed to abort the uprising, like their other repressive measures. One is not expelled on the basis of specific charges; the decision is based on the fact that one is a militant resisting occupation which is considered to threaten Israeli security.

After the deportation order is issued, one has in theory the right to appeal to the Supreme Court which is a civil court. I did not appeal because I do not believe that the military appeal committee, the Supreme Court or any other Zionist legal body is truly democratic or just.

Can you tell about your expulsion?

Any militant about to be expelled should have the right to see his family, but I wasn't given this chance. On January 1st, the prison officers gave the prisoners an outdoor break, except for us (the ones to be expelled). We were informed that we would be expelled and told to get ready. We are all tense, confused and emotional. We refused to leave our cells unless we were given the chance to say farewell to our friends and comrades. There were moments of grief as we were leaving, with all the prisoners saying: «... we may die, but we will uproot death from our homeland.»

Many soldiers accompanied us to the prison administration building where our pictures were taken. We were handcuffed and blindfolded, thrown into a military vehicle and driven to a military camp. In the same humiliating manner, we were thrown into a helicopter that took us to South Lebanon; we were unable to tell whether it was an area under the control of the Lahd forces or the Israeli army. We refused to take the money they offered us. The soldiers threw us on top of each other on the floor of a truck, then threw buckets of water on us and shouted insults. When we approached Marjeyoun, we were pushed into cars that were waiting for us, and threatened not even to look back. There were many journalists waiting in Marjeyoun. After being interviewed, we asked to be taken to the closest PFLP post where we were warmly received. And here we are!