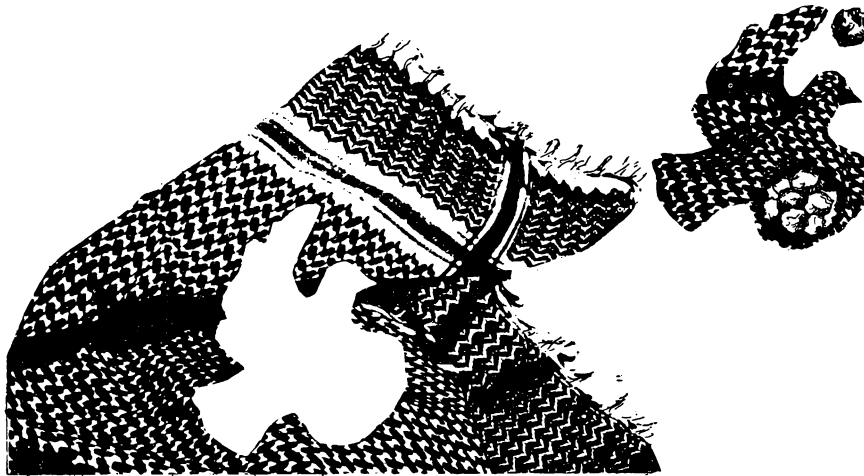


Solidarity with the Palestinians

Less Talk, More Action

This article was written in December by Alexander Smirnoff, professor of history, and Middle East deputy manager of the Soviet news agency, Novosti.



It is not my hobby to write about outstanding occasions, but the second anniversary of the Palestinian intifada is not merely a time for festivals. Rather, it is an occasion for rallying the supporters of the just Palestinian cause in the Soviet Union. I cannot imagine celebrating the third anniversary of the intifada with the balance of forces not having shifted in favor of the Palestinian cause in the occupied territories, or with solidarity with the Palestinians having decreased on the Arab and international levels. Meanwhile, with every new day of the uprising, there is more death among unarmed Palestinian children and youth, more injured and maimed, more torture, terror and economic hardship.

Hence, it is the duty of noble people all over the world to double their efforts to support the Palestinian cause, so that the intifada will not be suppressed, nor the world become accustomed to the scenes of killing and destruction. With the support of the

Arab world and at least part of the international community, the intifada should be enabled to overcome the obstinacy of the Shamir government, and pave the way for achieving Palestinian rights.

Many experts are trying to give a real definition of the intifada but, in my opinion, they have not succeeded, for the intifada is an unprecedented phenomenon. It is not only civil disobedience, but a new social and class reality in the occupied territories. If we examine the social aspect of the uprising, we find that class contradictions have decreased under the influence of the common struggle of the Palestinian community against occupation. On the instructions of the United National Leadership, wealthy people voluntarily contribute to the fund for supporting the poor and those who have had their property confiscated by the occupation forces. Prices have been reduced, as have bridal dowries; many negative traditions have disappeared.

Though the Palestinian people as a

whole are resisting occupation, not all Palestinians are firm militants; there are some collaborators among them, who are subject to hard punishment. The situation is quite different from the time of the Palestinian struggle under the British occupation, for the collaborators now are merely individuals, rather than whole classes or political parties.

What were the antecedents that led to the present uprising? One of them was the 1936-39 revolt, with the famous six-month general strike, which was aborted as a result of the intervention of the Arab rulers. They called for an end to the strike after the British promise to meet Palestinian demands... (a promise that remained unfulfilled). The 1936 revolt combined civil disobedience and armed resistance.

Recently, we celebrated the 35th anniversary of the Algerian armed resistance. As part of the liberation struggle, there was a confrontation in the Algiers *casba* between civilians and