

time with the issue of Soviet Jewish immigration to Palestine. Naturally, I and all the other MP's dropped the discussion about the former and invested the allotted time to discuss the latter.

How would you describe the coordination among the nationalist forces within the parliament?

There is full cooperation among us on the major issues, such as democratic freedoms, economic issues and the Palestinian uprising. We disagree sometimes on minor issues, but only when these are raised suddenly. Obviously, during a session, we don't have time to coordinate before we're given the chance to speak. We have resolved this problem recently by sitting next to each other; we have also agreed that we will adopt the viewpoint of those of us who know the most about the topic. However, there should be even better coordination among the democratic forces. We must be more active and take initiative within the parliament.

What is the role of the Islamic forces in the parliament? Do you feel they're an obstacle to the democratic process?

So far we haven't disagreed with the Islamic forces on any of the issues discussed. Of course we expect points of disagreement in the future, but currently we're working toward better cooperation in the interest of democracy and the country. We're not looking for a confrontation and even if we run into problems, we want to try to contain them.

There have been statements by Jordanian officials about drawing up a charter for reorganizing political activities in Jordan. The king spoke about a charter to define Jordan's political, economic and social policy. What is this charter and how is it related to the constitution which can now function after the suspension of martial law?

We have neither seen anything in writing about this charter, nor officially heard anything about it. They just say that it will not be an alternative to the constitution. Unless this charter is an appendix or further defines the constitution, we will strongly reject it. Some officials stated that the purpose of the charter is to organize party-political work in Jordan, but this is only one point of view. Meanwhile, the parliament is ignoring this issue until it is officially proposed for discussion in the parliament. As far as holding a popular referendum on the charter, as some have suggested, I believe that the parliament represents the people and therefore it should have a major role in approving or disapproving the charter.

Do you believe that the government will fulfill its promise in regards to the abolition of martial law within six months, since this was the condition on which the parliament passed a motion of confidence in the government?

Inevitably, the government will, or else it should be ready for a fierce battle. Recently, the government abolished the anti-communism law, and I believe that it will not hesitate in the next stage to abolish martial law.

How did the democratic process reflect itself vis-a-vis the Palestinian uprising?

At the parliamentary level, during the first session, the democratic forces put forth a proposal to discuss means of supporting the uprising. Currently we are working to complete the process of forming popular committees for this purpose in every district. We are pressuring the government to open the Jordanian market to the products of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and to facilitate exporting their goods to the outside world through Jordan. Some positive measures have been taken to deal with the residents of the West Bank in Jordan, who were treated badly after ties were severed with the West Bank. Moreover, there were dozens of marches and forums that were held to commemorate the second anniversary of the uprising.

What has the parliament done in regard to the immigration of the Soviet Jews to Palestine?

Recently, the parliament decided to devote one of its sessions to discussing this threat and how to confront it. This means that the parliament should not only think of its political role regarding this issue but also of changing Jordan's strategy regarding the defense and building of the national economy, etc. The parliament also sent letters of appeal to the Soviet leadership, the US administration and the Arab regimes.

How do you view future relations between the Palestinian organizations and the regime in Jordan?

In my view, the reasons for the historical conflict with the regime no longer exist - mainly the issue of representation (of the Palestinians). Other problems will not be solved through alienation and enmity. Dialogue is necessary and possible, now that the main problem has been resolved. ●

Mubarak Caters to Israel

Recently, the Egyptian authorities handed over 10 Palestinian captives to the Israeli authorities. These 10 persons, whose names were not released, were allegedly involved in the attack on the Israeli bus near Ismailia on February 5th. This act occurred on Egyptian soil. Logically, if the Egyptian government considers it a crime, the 10 should have been charged and tried in Egyptian courts. Instead, they were simply handed over to Israel, despite its record of torture, arbitrary detention and lack of due process for Palestinians. The action of the Egyptian government flies in the face of all judicial logic, not to mention Mubarak's much proclaimed support for the Palestinian cause. One can only surmise this occurred as the result of a political decision aimed to cultivate favor with Israel and the US. ●