

Commerce refused the civil administration's proposal in May to hold elections under occupation, because of the political implications. On this background, it is all the more disturbing that some of the PLO leadership appeared to have given a green light for Hebron merchants to go to the polls. The need for a clear-cut PLO policy on such issues is made more urgent by the fact that the occupation authorities are continuing this attempt, coupling the offer of elections with economic incentives. On July 2nd, there was a meeting between civil administration officials and Jericho merchants about such matters.

Moreover, the occupation authorities are inching towards the political aspect of their plan. Call no. 72, July 1st, noted that agents previously appointed as mayors, after Israel dissolved the elected municipal councils, are now being replaced by new faces «in an attempt to restore the authority of the occupation on these councils once again... The UNL reiterates its established position of rejecting appointment in principle... The problem of the councils can only be solved by restoring all the elected councils, pending suitable circumstances that allow us to conduct new elections in which freedom of expression and choice is guaranteed – removed from the occupation authorities.» The UNL called on the people to confront the phenomenon of appointments and prohibited accepting them.

Reassessment

Due to the flagging of the intifada's initiative, serious debate is underway both in the occupied territories and in the ranks of the Palestinian organizations in exile. The calls of the UNL have lately included increasingly direct references to improper behavior that must be stopped. Call no. 72 warned of «attempts to abort the intifada and rob it of its militant substance, by associating it with some wrongdoings...»

In June, a number of prominent Palestinians in the occupied territories publicly called for reassessment. Most notable were the calls of Faysel Husseini, Riyadh Malki and Zahira Kamal, because they are associated with the three major organizations of the PLO – Fatah, PFLP and DFLP, respectively; all three are prominent in the work of national institutions in the occupied territories, and have been among those to meet with Secretary of State Baker.

Faysel Husseini noted that he had pointed to the dangers surrounding the



Self-sufficiency: Poultry-raising coop in Shufat camp, near Jerusalem.

intifada one and a half years ago, especially the attempt to militarize it. He called for rebuilding the economic and educational structures of the intifada, restoring its popular character and reviving the village and neighborhood committees based on criteria of efficiency, rather than factionalism between the UNL organizations.

Riyadh Malki stressed reassessing the intifada so as to guarantee its continuity with the participation of all the national movement in the broadest sense. He called for criticism and self-criticism, to insure that mistakes are corrected and a new program drawn up to develop the intifada.

Zahira Kamal identified the serious problems the intifada is undergoing with the national movement's failure to carry out a program capable of facing up to the occupation. She pointed to the negative effects of factionalism. In her view, the transformation of the intifada into military groups has led to its decline, by reverting to the model of individual heroism rather than collective action.

The calls of the UNL have consistently stressed ending factionalism in favor of national unity as the key to

resolving the intifada's problems. In call no. 70, this was related to the need «to rectify the course of the Palestinian struggle via providing the intifada with the means of continuing, enhancing its internal and external influence, escalating its activities, strengthening its capacity and dynamism of linkage...» The same call designated this year as a year of construction wherein all capacities should be devoted to reconstructing and developing Palestinian economic, educational and social institutions. The UNL also stressed the need to provide jobs for workers barred from Israel, at the same time encouraging workers to «return to the land, increase agricultural production and confirm steadfastness on our land...» It called for reviving several pursuits which have been lax in the past year, particularly the boycott of Israeli goods (for which there are Palestinian substitutes), local production and popular education.

Successive calls condemn those who use political action as a cover for serving their own personal or family interests. Call no. 71 stressed rehabilitating