

Editorial

The Arafat-Mubarak meeting, which took place on December 22nd in Cairo, raised varying and controversial reactions all over the world. Some circles cheered loudly, while others condemned the meeting and rejected any probable results beforehand.

The United States administration expressed support for the meeting, as did west European officials. The pro-US circles in the Arab world applauded the Cairo meeting. Such stands are substantial indications of the nature of this meeting. Yet the Palestinian response remains as the most important. It is the sum of the Palestinian reaction which will decide what the Cairo meeting will lead to.

Dr. George Habash, General Secretary of the PFLP, condemned Yasir Arafat's meeting with Mubarak, defining it as "a step into the Camp David agreements". He called for Arafat's immediate resignation from his post of Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, because of this dangerous deviation from the decisions of the Palestinian National Council. Furthermore, Comrade Habash urged all Palestinian resistance organizations, all mass organizations and all PNC members to work together in order to oust Arafat.

Condemnation of Arafat's step has come from a broad spectrum of Palestinian patriotic personalities, resistance organizations, trade unions, mass organizations and PNC members. (See following pages for examples.) It is now clear that the overwhelming majority of Palestinians condemn this step and reject its consequences.

Why this meeting?

The Cairo meeting, which took place directly after the departure of Arafat and his troops from Tripoli, was no mere ceremony. Nor did either party enter into it spontaneously or naively. Rather it is a clear expression of the political line of rightist circles within the Palestinian nationalist bourgeoisie; it is an indicator of the future path chosen by influential rightists in the PLO, and a result of Arab reaction's cultivation of this trend.

Arafat's visit to Cairo was an announcement that he has decided to yield to US pressure, to accept the Reagan plan and give a mandate to King Hussein of Jordan to negotiate the future of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Such a political line was rejected by the PNC at its 16th session held in Algiers, in February 1983. The PNC explicitly rejected the Reagan plan because it denies the Palestinian people their right to self-determination and to establish an independent state, and, moreover, because it ignores the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In other words: Reagan's plan aims to liquidate the Palestinian national struggle and cause. It is a supplement to the Camp David accords signed by Sadat in 1979. These accords were the result of Sadat's capitulation to the US-Israeli conditions. Capitalizing on the results of the 1967 war, which led to the occupation of the Sinai, Golan Heights, Gaza Strip and West Bank, the US and 'Israel' planned for liquidating the Arab national liberation movement in order to totally dominate the area. The Camp David accords were the first revenues collected by the US and 'Israel'. However, this agreement remained confined to the Egyptian front, contrary to the expectations of Sadat, Begin and Carter. This was due to the

steadfast stand taken by Syria, the PLO, Algeria, Democratic Yemen and Libya. They decided to counteract Sadat's capitulationist step and managed to isolate it at the Baghdad Summit. Continuing Palestinian resistance in the occupied land and in common struggle with the Lebanese national forces blocked Camp David on the Palestinian level.

The US and 'Israel' had provided for 'resolving' the Palestinian issue through an annex to the Camp David accords, calling for "administrative self-rule" in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, under Israeli or Jordanian auspices. Such a solution would obviously mean liquidation of the Palestinian cause, but it was moreover planned as the bridge for spreading Camp David in the rest of the area. With the Palestinian people united behind the PLO, the US and 'Israel' planned the invasion of Lebanon. The goal, as expressed by Shamir on June 8, 1982, was to "destroy the PLO which is the obstacle preventing the peace process to go on in the region."

On September 1st, Reagan came up with his proposals, once again seeking to use liquidation of the Palestinian issue as the bridge to the rest of the area. Based on the idea that the PLO had been greatly weakened and was thus in no position to confront the Camp David trend, the proposals had the same contents.

The rightist circles in the PLO started to push for the adoption of these proposals. However, this political line was checked by the democratic struggle that took place in the 16th PNC session. Yet the rightists in the PLO's Executive Committee, led by Arafat, didn't commit themselves to the decisions of the PNC. They kept their contacts with King Hussein and the Egyptian regime, trying to find a way of getting around these decisions.

The siege of Tripoli and of the Palestinian camps in this area elicited Palestinian and Arab sympathy for Arafat as Chairman of the PLO. This provided Arafat with the opportune moment to divert from the political line adopted at the PNC. He did it. He paid that visit to Al Quba palace, where he discussed with Mubarak their joint plan. Thus, Arafat breached the moral and political contract he had signed with the other Palestinian organizations. He deviated from the political line decided by the representatives of the Palestinian people. Above all, Arafat stabbed the Palestinian national struggle and cause in the back by yielding to the US, Israeli and Arab reactionary conditions. His visit was an announcement that he had given up the aims for which our people have given great sacrifices in the past eighteen years. Organizationally speaking, this step by Arafat is illegal to the point of depriving him of legitimacy as Chairman of the PLO's Executive Committee.

This situation puts new demands on the political struggle of the democratic forces within the PLO, to combat this deviation. The democratic forces are now mobilizing the broadest possible sectors of the Palestinian people against Arafat's step, with the following aims:

1. To preempt any probable results of this visit.
2. To take the necessary organizational measures against Arafat, namely to oust him from his post.

The Palestinian people will continue their struggle with the same zeal and patience. Based on long experience, they know that long-term struggle against imperialism and Zionism is the only way to fulfill their national rights and goals.