

Prospects of the Amman Accord

Why we reject the right-wing leadership

Since Arafat signed the Amman accord with King Hussein, events have proven that the Palestinian right wing is determined to continue its deviating course. Faced with overwhelming condemnation, Arafat and his lieutenants made a semblance of backtracking. Arafat tried to avoid admitting that he had endorsed Security Council resolution 242, for he knows this violates repeated PNC resolutions. However, the Jordanian regime had the last word, publicizing the terms of the accord while the Palestinian rightists were still equivocating about its contents. The acting Jordanian information minister confirmed that the accord includes acceptance of 242.

The accord was approved by the PLO Executive Committee formed at the illegal Amman PNC, on condition that it be adopted as a united Arab position. Hiding behind the mantle of 'Arab solidarity', the illegal Executive Committee revealed its true position, for such consensus can only be achieved by breaking the firm position of the nationalist regimes opposed to the imperialist plans, especially Syria. To cover their deviation, this Executive Committee issued a statement decorated with the PLO's adopted positions: an independent state, rejecting 'autonomy', Camp David, the Reagan plan, 242 and any sharing of the PLO's representation.

In another face-saving maneuver, a PLO delegation was sent to Amman in early March to 'amend' the accord. Not only were their proposed amendments insubstantial in the overall context of the accord; King Hussein immediately announced that the accord had not been amended.

In late February, Mubarak of Egypt announced his initiative for pushing the Amman accord forward: a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation to Washington as a prelude to talks with 'Israel', to be sanctified by an international conference. This was met by the criticism of Fatah Central Committee and PLO Executive Committee members. As these protests have not turned into any move to abrogate the Amman accord, it is difficult to take them seriously. After all, it was Mubarak's adviser, Osama al

Baz, who announced the Amman accord in Cairo, after playing a significant role in Arafat and Hussein's talks.

The special danger of the accord is that it is a key element in Arab reaction's efforts to push the Camp David process forward, by reactivating the Reagan plan, establishing the «land for peace» formula for negotiations and in the end imposing the 'autonomy' plan. The Amman accord was timed to coincide with intense Egyptian diplomacy to renew negotiations with the Israelis, at the same time Egyptian, Saudi and Jordanian officials pled for an active US role in reviving the «peace» process.

The dilemma of the Palestinian right

The Amman accord is doubly dangerous because it is being taken seriously by US imperialism and the Labor wing of the Zionist leadership. The latter has been trying to open such avenues for some time now. Influential Israelis have pointed out that the major element in their government no longer opposes the Reagan plan which was originally rejected out of hand by Begin. This does not mean that US imperialism or Zionism is willing to meet King Hussein, much less Arafat, halfway. Rather the enemy has eyed the chance to have the PLO acquiesce in liquidating the Palestinian cause and resolving the Middle East conflict through Israeli-Jordanian negotiations. This is the reason for US Assistant Secretary of State Murphy's touring the region in April, to prepare for his boss Schultz's coming in May. Arafat's meeting with King Hussein and the new Jordanian Prime Minister, just before Murphy's tour, is yet another proof of the right wing's determination to be involved in imperialism's plans.

Yet the equivocation of Arafat and his lieutenants is not all playacting, for they are in a genuine dilemma. To be useful to Arab reaction, they must appear as the legitimate leadership; this means hiding the extent of their concessions from the masses. At the same time, they *must* give these concessions and more to appear acceptable in imperialist eyes. King Hussein is giving

Arafat no leeway for covering his treachery. In reality, the reactionary regimes are trying to corner the PLO. They know full well that the settlement offers nothing to the Palestinian people, and that the US and 'Israel' will refuse to deal with the PLO. This refusal will give the reactionaries the excuse for disposing of the PLO altogether, in order to enter direct negotiations with 'Israel'.

The fallacy of alignment with Arab reaction

By opting for deviation, Arafat and his lieutenants have trapped themselves in Arab reaction's historical dilemma. US imperialism considers 'Israel' its primary, irreplaceable ally in the region; any US solution will resolve the conflict on Zionism's conditions. The US response to the latest overtures of Hussein and Mubarak is a confirmation of this trend. Despite encouraging statements, the Reagan administration continues to propound the age-old formula of direct negotiations to be sure that Zionist occupation is legitimized from the start.

Especially after the defeat of its policy in Lebanon, the Reagan Administration wants Arab reaction to do all the work. When the PLO's role is eliminated, the US will gladly preside over the fait accompli of negotiations. The Zionists adhere to the same tactic. As stated by Abba Eban, former Israeli foreign minister, now influential MK, «It is up to President Mubarak and King Hussein to grapple with the problem of forming a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation with which Washington and Jerusalem would find it possible to hold dialogue» (New York Times, March 17th).

Murphy's visit- Trapping the PLO

In his mid-April tour of the area, Murphy conveyed the US conditions for discussions with any Palestinian-Jordanian delegation: A PLO-Jordanian delegation is acceptable if the PLO accepts 242, 338 and explicitly recognizes 'Israel'. Otherwise, Palestinians in the delegation must not be PLO members, representing or delegated by the PLO.