

What the US really wants is assurances that it will not be a PLO delegation: «We are counting on Arafat not endorsing 242», said a State Department official (*Middle East Policy Survey*, April 5). To sound out the precedent of a non-PLO delegation, Murphy met a group of about 40 West Bank Palestinians. More than 100 nationalist personalities of the West Bank and Gaza Strip condemned this meeting, calling for a boycott and emphasizing that anyone attending violates the will of the Palestinian people, for the US only aims to eliminate the Palestinian cause. Unfortunately, some of those who did attend have been considered part of the nationalist, pro-PLO ranks. Their attendance shows the confusing and divisive effect of Arafat's right-wing line on our people under occupation.

Murphy's visit precipitated new problems for the deviating Palestinian leadership. The Jordanian Prime Minister demanded a clear-cut written answer to the US conditions, to be delivered by Abu Iyad and Farouq Qaddoumi, or there will be problems in the PLO-Jordanian relations. Since these two are known for their criticism of the Amman accord, this is the regime's way of cornering Arafat. The Executive Committee meeting in Baghdad in mid-April was reported to be explosive, pitting Arafat and Hani Hassan against those who want to retain a role for the PLO. The official decision was to participate in a joint delegation only as the PLO and without recognizing 'Israel'. Yet a few days later in a radio interview, Hani Hassan termed the Murphy plan a positive advance; he said that the Palestinian delegation can be independents and that all Fatah accepts the Amman accord. Thus, from now until Schultz's visit is the final chance for those in Fatah's Central Committee, who profess adherence to the PLO's national role, to break with the deviating line.

Because of the anticipated mass reaction, the Palestinian right is careful not to reveal the depth of its deviation in public statements. However, there are indications that in their defeatism, they have opted for some kind of 'autonomy' plan, long ago rejected by our masses, as the only feasible solution. In the last issue of *Palestinian Affairs*, the PLO Research Center's journal, Sabri Jiryis provided the «theoretical» background for why such thoughts are now entertained. He basically concluded that the results of the 1982 Zionist invasion of Lebanon were a favor for the PLO: They

freed it of the armed struggle, «Syrian pressure» and internal opposition. Accordingly, the 17th PNC in Amman was the best of all sessions. With such arguments in print, we hardly need polemics as to how the right-wing bourgeoisie is incapable of continuing the Palestinian revolution.

### **«Land for Peace» means «autonomy»**

The Jordanian and, before it, the Egyptian regime launched the «land for peace» formula because of their class need for reactionary stability in the area. The Palestinian right has now followed suit, because its own class nature renders it incapable of continuing the national struggle. Due to the right-wing's attempt to cover its real intention, it is necessary to examine this formula to see how it links up with the 'autonomy' plan.

Of course, the basic fallacy of this formula is that it reduces the Palestinian cause and Middle East conflict to border questions, when in reality it is a struggle for the Palestinian people's very existence and nationhood. More broadly, it is a struggle over whether imperialism will succeed in dominating the area totally and perpetuating its forward base, 'Israel'.

Having said this, let us deal with the details of the «land for peace» formula. The Palestinian and Arab right are wagering on Labor's premiership in the Israeli government, so let us look at Labor Zionism's version of «land for peace» as it was outlined in the plan of Allon, foreign minister in the 1970s. While this plan was never officially adopted by the Israeli government, it did serve as Labor's guide in establishing 76 settlements in the 1967 occupied territories, and the encirclement of Jerusalem with Jews-only suburbs, up till 1977. Among these settlements are Maale Adumin and Kiryat Arba. Today these two compromise over one-half the total number of settlers in the West Bank. They combine the two demographic ingredients needed for permanent Zionist control: Maale Adumin is an urban center, attracting 'non-ideological' Jews who need cheaper housing and thus gain material interests in retaining the West Bank. Kiryat Arba is infamous as the home of the ultra-aggressive and expansionist-minded settlers whose terror attacks aim to empty the West Bank of the Palestinians, paving the way for annexation. In this light, it is

ironic that Labor is viewed as willing to exchange land for peace. Allon, like so many Israeli politicians, started his career in the military. His plan was designed to meet «defense» needs, i.e. plans for strategic control of land and water resources, outlining 'concessions' that would not impede these priorities.

While the Jordanian regime pretends that 242 means exchanging total peace for total land, the Zionists have a different interpretation. Zalman Shoval, former MK and aide to Moshe Dayan, has pointed out the wording of 242: «Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict» and not, as he notes, «the forces» or «the territories»: «In other words, while the resolution does indeed call for withdrawal of Israeli forces from 'territories' it does not indicate which or how many forces or which territories...there will be a withdrawal of forces-but only insofar as this does not make the boundaries insecure...Israel-also in accordance with 242-could 'withdraw armed forces' from areas not vital to its security and redeploy them in military camps» (*Jerusalem Post*, March 24th).

Thus, 242 does not contradict the 'autonomy' plan. Cabinet minister Ezer Weizman has stated that 242 is not a formula for trading land against peace, but for sharing the administration, as perceived in the 'autonomy' plan. To *Newsweek* (November 26, 1984), Weizman, a veteran of Israeli-Egyptian relations and billed as «understanding» towards the Arabs, stated: «I will stick to the autonomy formula we accepted at Camp David. I don't want the West Bank and Gaza annexed to Israel, and I don't believe in territorial compromise with Jordan.» Prime Minister Peres has said that 'autonomy' is the first topic on the agenda in future negotiations with Jordan. On March 21st, Defense Minister Rabin told the other side of this story: He assured settlers in the Gaza Strip that the territory «must remain an inseparable part of the State of Israel». In the light of all this, it is difficult to see the great difference between Labor policy and Begin's «autonomy for the people not the land».

Regardless of these realities, the Palestinian right endorsed the «land for peace» formula and all its anticipated consequences, trying to drag the PLO into Arab reaction's wagering on the Labor Zionist policy and US imperialism. There is an objective reason why the Palestinian and Arab right fall prey to such illusions: Their class nature pre-