

Comrade Habash's Press Conference

While the PFLP delegation was in Moscow, the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee organized a press conference for Comrade George Habash. Below we print the main part of his opening address.

When we read the Soviet media concerning the Middle East and the Palestinian issue, we feel great comfort in the fact that its analysis closely corresponds to that of progressive Arab and Palestinian forces...Before answering questions, allow me to brief you on the PFLP's analysis of the present conditions of the Palestinian revolution...

The aggressive policies of the United States, and the Reagan Administration in particular, are based on several dangerous themes: deteriorating international relations, destroying detente, accelerating the arms race, and determined refusal to respond positively to the Soviet proposals aimed at preventing the militarization of outer space. Naturally this aggressive policy also applies concerning the Middle East and Palestinian cause, militarily and politically.

From the military angle, the US has recently conducted a new round of the Bright Star maneuvers with Egypt and other reactionary Arab states. On another front, the US has consolidated the strategic cooperation agreement with 'Israel'.

From the political angle, the US imperialist attack aims at drawing the Arab countries into a set of bilateral «peace» settlements with 'Israel', in order to spread the Camp David accords throughout the Arab world. It also aims at preventing the Soviet Union from becoming a partner in any solution to the Middle East crisis. The central aim of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, was to force the politics of Camp David upon Lebanon, as the first step towards imposing it on other Arab fronts. The May 17th agreement between 'Israel' and Lebanon was designed as the embryo of the second link in the Camp David process. The patriotic Lebanese and Palestinian forces, in alliance with Syria and supported by the Soviet Union, were able to force the cancellation of this agreement. The Camp David policy failed at the second link, but US

imperialism immediately attempted to force it on other Arab fronts.

Inevitably imperialism's efforts were directed against the Palestinian-Jordanian front. Please try to grasp the importance of the Palestinian link, considering that the Palestinian cause is the core of the anti-imperialist struggle in the entire region. Through this link, the extent of imperialism's aggressiveness appears, directed not only against the Palestinian people but against the peoples of the world.

Dangers of the Amman accord

I am sorry to say that the Amman agreement signed February 11th, between King Hussein and Yasir Arafat, has paved the way for the imperialist moves to implement a new Camp David. Regardless of how much the bourgeois strata in the PLO attempt to conceal the reality of this agreement, it is clear that it represents a foothold for imperialist policy in the Middle East. This agreement has become the main tool utilized by imperialism to sharpen inter-Palestinian differences and extend these differences to the Arab countries, in order to divide and weaken the anti-imperialist forces and states. Hence, resistance to the new link of Camp David is minimized.

The PFLP is convinced that the Amman agreement heralded the most dangerous stage for the Palestinian national struggle since the PLO's establishment. It means that the Palestinian right has involved itself in the US's bilateral peace settlement trend. The Arafat-Hussein agreement differs significantly from the official PLO leadership's previous incorrect policies. In the past, we accused the deviationist leadership of adopting a conciliatory policy towards US imperialism. However, this agreement, which has been massively refuted, is not a mere flirt with the Reagan Administration. It is actual involvement in the US's «comprehensive peace settlement». Of course, Reagan welcomed this agreement as a

positive first step, as did the Camp David regime of Mubarak in Egypt.

After the announcement of this agreement, the PFLP defined our position on the new conditions for the Palestinian revolution as follows: (1) Struggling without any leniency against the Amman agreement, and the political trend and leaders that brought it about; clarifying that this agreement means liquidation of the Palestinian and Arab liberation movement. (2) Uniting all nationalist and democratic Palestinian forces within the PLO to confront this agreement. (3) Confronting this agreement is the correct basis for unifying all nationalist and democratic Palestinian forces; it is ultimately necessary to eliminate the deviationist trend in order to achieve true national unity based on a firm anti-imperialist line.

We warn against downplaying the dangers of the agreement, for it threatens the essence of the Palestinian cause. Some argue that the agreement was stillborn, and indeed there are three major obstacles facing it: (1) appointing the Palestinian half of the Jordanian-Palestinian joint delegation; (2) determining the next step after the proposed US-joint delegation discussions; (3) the real problems involved in any actual meeting between the joint delegation and 'Israel'.

These obstacles are real. Yet we should not downplay the dangers of the agreement or the political trend that engineered it. Sadat was able to eliminate the major obstacles to the Camp David accords, and the signatories to the Amman agreement are just as capable of the same. Thus, continued resistance is necessary to prevent the success of the agreement and entrench the obstacles.

Finally, we cannot view the Palestinian cause or plan for victory in isolation from our nationalist and internationalist ties. While refusing the deviationist trend, Palestinian democratic forces in the PLO must propose the correct alternative program for achieving our people's national aims. We put forth our national program: an independent Palestinian state established without conditions, the right of our people to return and exercise self-determination in their country, drawing strength from progressive Arab unity and international solidarity to accomplish these aims. It is impossible to achieve a just solution to our cause without the direct involvement of the Soviet Union, the true friend and supporter of our cause. ●