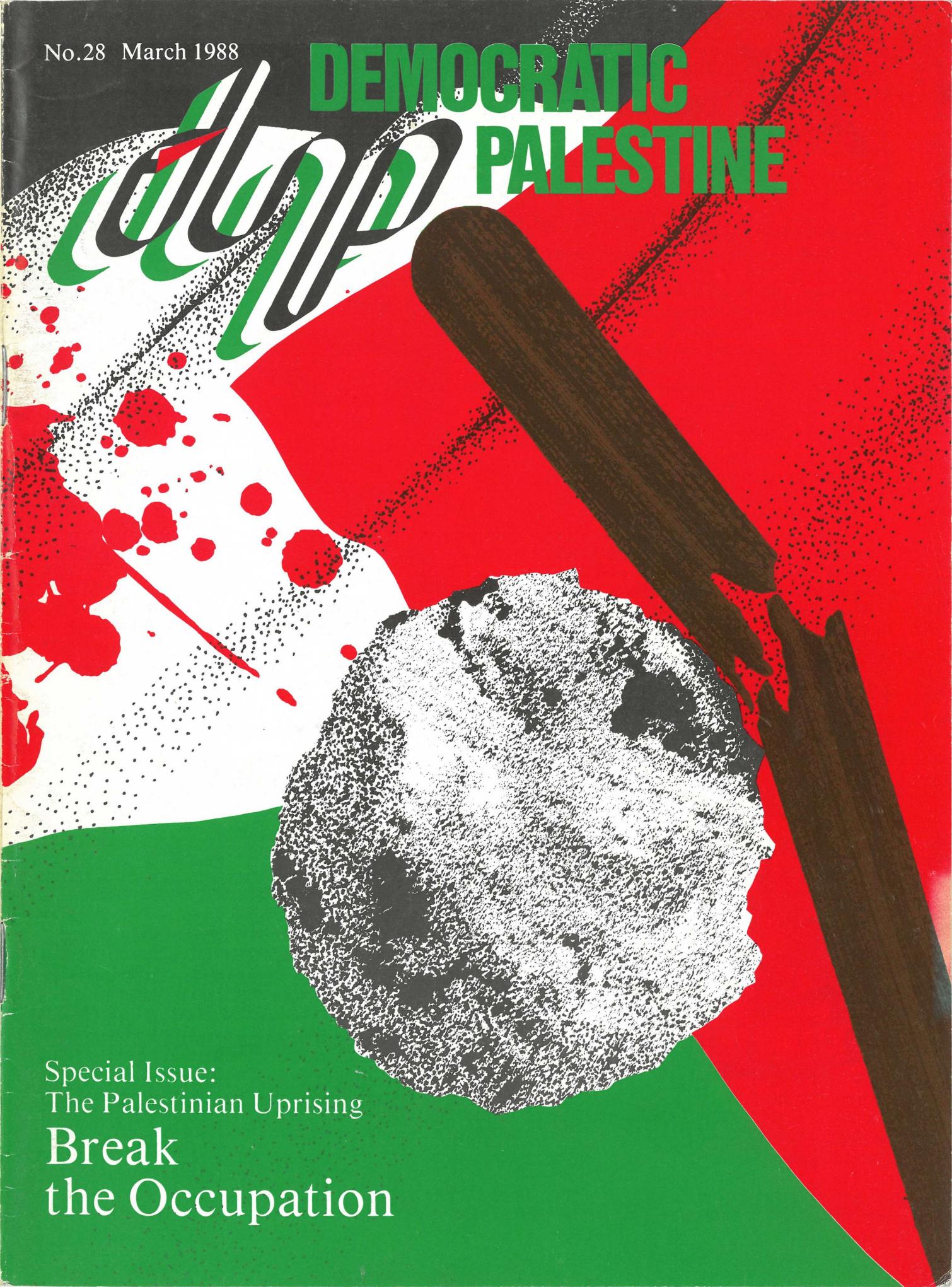


No.28 March 1988

# DEMOCRATIC PALESTINE



Special Issue:  
The Palestinian Uprising

Break  
the Occupation



*Democratic Palestine* is an English language magazine published with the following aims:

- Conveying the political line of progressive Palestinian and Arab forces;
- Providing current information and analysis pertinent to the Palestinian liberation struggle, as well as developments on the Arab and international levels;
- Serving as a forum for building relations of mutual solidarity between the Palestinian revolution and progressive organizations, parties, national liberation movements and countries around the world.

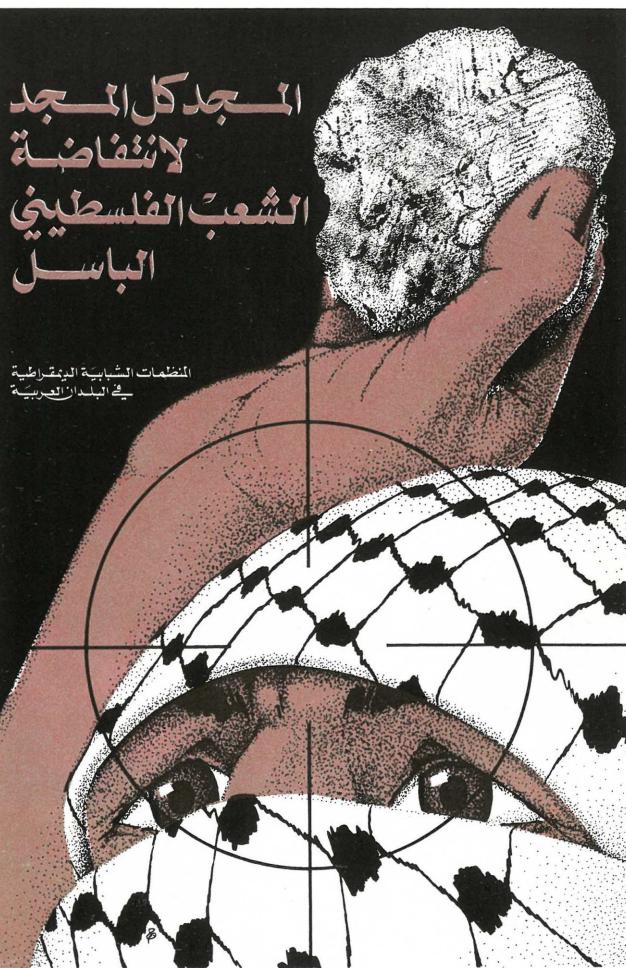
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«WE ARE ALL PALESTINIANS»  
- emblem of solidarity with the uprising made by Italian progressives.

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## Address Change

*Democratic Palestine* has a new address. All correspondence should be directed to:  
Democratic Palestine  
Box 30192  
Damascus, Syria

# Letters

The letter below and our answer should have been published in the last issue of *Democratic Palestine*, but we ran short of space. Since then, we have received a new letter from the Seattle Center for Palestinian Information, telling that they did open their office on December 1, 1987 just in time to begin providing information in line with the increased interest in the Palestinian cause generated by the outbreak of the uprising in the occupied territories on December 8th.

Dear Friends,

In response to the recent State Department order to close the Palestine Information Office in Washington, D.C., we are opening the Seattle Center for Palestinian Information. This action, which is also in response to the «Anti-P.L.O-Terrorism Act of 1987», is a joint effort by Semitic Women Take Action (SEWTA, a group of Jewish and Arab women), Palestine Human Rights Campaign (PHRC), and the Seattle Nonviolent Action Group (SNAG). We have secured office space in the Oddfellows Hall on East Pine in Seattle, and our intent is to open on December 1, 1987, the latest date of the ordered closure of the office in D.C.

As you know, the Palestinian people, now more than ever, must have their voice heard by North Americans. The daily humiliation, suffering, repression, death by starvation and guns, the attempted genocide of the Palestinian people - this can only continue if the people of the United States remain ignorant of, and thus complicit in, this crime. As the suffering grows in magnitude each day, so does the attempt to portray Palestinians as «terrorists» and thus discredit any bit of truth that may slip through and be heard by people in the U.S. By opening the Seattle Center for Palestinian Information, we intend to counter this distorted and destructive stereotype. Our purpose is to make available a wide variety of information by and about the Palestinians, as well as serving as a center for organizing projects related to peace in the Middle East.

We need your help with this project. We would very much like to have your publication available in our office. We are in the process of fundraising... Please write to the above address, and let us know how you can help support this project. With your help, we will not let the Palestinians remain «The Forgotten People». Their voice WILL be heard in this country.

With Hope for Peace with Justice,

Seattle Center for  
Palestine Information  
P.O. Box 85289  
Seattle, Washington, USA, 98145

October 24, 1987

from *Democratic Palestine*:

We send our best wishes and thanks to those who took initiative to establish the Seattle Center for Palestinian Information. Of course, we will provide some free copies of *Democratic Palestine* to the Center, and hope that others will support this effort however they can.

## Editor's Note:

# Every Day is Land Day

Just yesterday, the Palestinian people celebrated the Day of the Land. It was the 12th anniversary of the 1976 mass protests by Palestinians living under occupation since 1948, against Zionist land confiscation and racist discrimination. This year, the Day of the Land was marked by special circumstances. In the latest attempt to quell the current mass uprising which began in early December, the Zionist authorities imposed a virtual state of siege in occupied Palestine, according to a plan drawn up well in advance. For three days, the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip were declared closed military areas and off-limits to the press. The Zionist authorities slapped a round-the-clock curfew on the entire Gaza Strip, while restricting West Bankers to their areas of residence. According to the Zionists' admissions, over 3,000 Palestinians from all parts of the occupied homeland had been rounded up in a 'preemptive' arrest campaign that began in mid-March.

Still, Land Day was marked by strikes, demonstrations and confrontations with the Zionist forces in all parts of Palestine; in a direct extension of the ongoing uprising. On Land Day itself, five Palestinians were martyred and over fifty injured when Zionist troops opened fire on the people. In the three days Gaza and the West Bank were sealed off, 705 Palestinians were administratively detained. The Zionists' declarations and action showed that they had intended to make Land Day the test of their ability to quell the mass uprising no matter what the cost. They did not, however, succeed. Like every year since 1976, Land Day was celebrated in occupied Palestine, and this time even more strongly, coming in the context of the continuing uprising. Thanks to the determination and creativity of the Palestinian masses under occupation, every day has become Land Day.

Saluting their struggle, we devote this issue of *Democratic Palestine* exclusively to the uprising which has become the most sustained mass battle waged in Palestine since the creation of the Zionist state.

*This issue was sent to press March 31, 1988.*

# Interview With Comrade Habash

## «Our Masses Can No Longer Live Under Occupation»

In early February, Comrade George Habash, General Secretary of the PFLP, was interviewed by *Al Nida'a*, the Lebanese Communist Party's newspaper, on the uprising in occupied Palestine.

The uprising is the most prominent among current events, attracting great international attention. What are the main characteristics of this uprising?

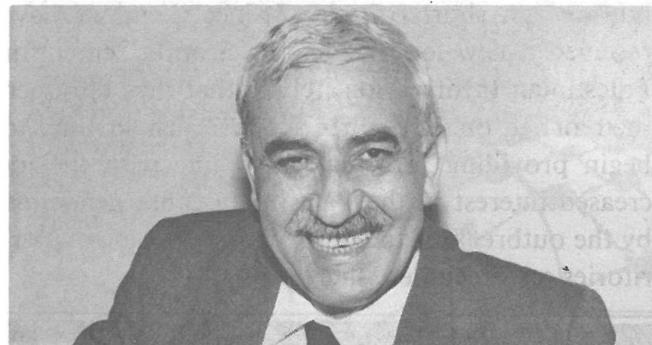
Scientifically speaking, this particular uprising has attained the highest level ever reached by any uprising over the past 20 years of occupation. The first basic characteristic of this uprising is its being inclusive and comprehensive. All classes of the people and all sectors of society have become integral parts of the uprising. All ideological trends are represented. Moreover, the uprising has spread all over the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Palestinian territory occupied in 1948... Every town, village and refugee camp... the entire Palestinian people, with no exceptions, are taking part in the uprising. There is participation by the old, the children, the Marxists, the fundamentalists, the merchants and the workers alike.

The second basic characteristic of the uprising is its quality and depth. This is mirrored in the political slogans raised by the people. In this particular uprising, the Palestinian people have raised the slogans of freedom and independence, the slogan of an independent Palestinian state. It is true that several other slogans were chanted, demanding the release of prisoners, the lifting of the iron fist and a stop to settlement building, along with various other demands. Yet all these are in line with the essential slogan, namely ousting the occupation, and freedom and independence.

The third basic characteristic of the uprising is its high level of organization. In the first period, there was some controversy about this issue. Yet, I believe that the continuity of the uprising has provided the real answer to this question. After this long duration, no reasonable person can describe the uprising as spontaneous rather than organized. Indeed, the uprising has developed even beyond the expectations of those who originally planned and ignited it. Since then, it has assumed a well-organized form. At present, there are popular committees organizing activities in towns, villages and refugee camps. Efforts are being made to form committees to cover every quarter and every street.

The fourth characteristic is the courage shown by our people in confronting the enemy. 'Israel' employs every available means of oppression. Despite all the brutal Israeli measures, the Palestinian children, women and old people stand firm and continue their acts of defiance.

The particularity of the uprising, then, is seen in these characteristics, namely its being comprehensive, deep,



organized and daring. These characteristics can be attributed to the huge sufferings of the Palestinian people at the hands of the Israeli occupation. Our masses have rejected the occupation and can no longer coexist with it. This is a big lesson that should be taken to heart by the Arab national liberation movements. Our masses now raise the slogan of victory or martyrdom. How do we interpret this? Our masses can no longer continue to live under occupation. They will risk death for the sake of freedom. These are the sole reasons for the uprising: the occupation, and the subjective condition which is the presence of the vanguards, the organizations that lead the masses in order to rid them of their suffering.

### TOWARDS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

What are the chances that the uprising can become comprehensive civil disobedience? Is the uprising capable of paving the way for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip?

At the present moment, the uprising is being stepped up towards total civil disobedience. It still lacks the prerequisites to be developed into total civil disobedience. The Palestinian masses and their vanguards are aware of the fact that several requirements should be fulfilled to make total civil disobedience a success. Foremost among these conditions is national concensus, i.e., agreement among the most important Palestinian organizations on this issue. Moreover, there must be agreement on this issue between the uprising's leadership inside Palestine and the PLO leadership abroad. It also requires popular committees everywhere. Finally, the conditions for survival must be provided.

Civil disobedience basically means total rejection of the occupation, refusing to deal with it in any way. Now, when the Palestinian masses boycott the occupation authority,

there has to be an alternative authority. It is essential to provide an alternative authority that shoulders the responsibility of forming popular committees to cover every town, village and refugee camp. The present growth of the uprising indicates an orientation towards meeting such conditions. Our masses are fully aware of the fact that such a great uprising cannot take place every day. Therefore, they exert every possible effort to keep the uprising going until its objectives are attained. Continuity is essential. Yet, continuity alone is not sufficient. The enemy should be confronted by further revolutionary means of struggle that force it to pull out. The most significant means is civil disobedience. The occupation forces have confronted the popular actions, namely the protests, demonstrations and sit-ins with increasingly intense oppression. They met the stones with cannons.

## NATIONAL RESISTANCE PROVIDED THE EXAMPLE

While proceeding with demonstrations, strikes, stone-and molotov-throwing, people should envision ways to force the occupation to pull out. Lebanon provided a good example. When the occupation authorities feel that their losses exceed their benefits, they will pull back. Civil disobedience represents a qualitative step in this direction. It is essential to understand that we are not able to stage such an uprising every day. Therefore, the uprising aims to fulfil the slogan of freedom and independence, or most of the demands closely related to this slogan, the result of which will eventually be freedom and independence. I feel very glad when I see that our masses and their vanguards are fully aware of these issues. In the recent days of the uprising, the political slogan was clearly defined and there was an obvious move towards civil disobedience.

### What is the PLO's role in fulfilling the uprising's slogan?

First of all, I would like to affirm that our masses inside Palestine consider the PLO, the institution, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In fact, the Palestinian people have a high degree of political awareness: They make a clear distinction between individuals and various names on the one hand and institutions and organizations on the other. Regardless of how certain groups of our people view this or that Palestinian leader, all Palestinians unanimously view the PLO as their only legitimate representative. I think that the Israeli enemy is well aware of this fact, as are the foreign correspondents covering the events of the uprising inside Palestine.

### What should the PLO do now to make the uprising a success?

First of all, the PLO must strictly abide by the provisional national program in order to assure the Palestinian masses who are offering their lives in defense of the homeland. They should feel confident that the PLO leadership will continue to fully abide by the provisional program, the program of repatriation, self-determination

and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. The PLO should also assure the masses that it will continue to adhere to the common denominators of unity, i.e., the resolutions that were adopted at the most recent PNC in Algiers.

The foremost service the PLO leadership outside Palestine should provide to the uprising is to bolster the morale of our people in this regard. The Palestinian people should have full confidence in the PLO leadership's adherence to the National Charter. Consequently, anything creating anxiety in the hearts of our people should be completely avoided. There is no need at present to propose or announce things like a government-in-exile. There is no need to hold contacts with the Egyptian or Jordanian regimes, because such contacts raise questions in the minds of our masses.

As I said above, civil disobedience requires meeting certain conditions. The masses should be provided with the essential means of sustenance, such as bread and medicine, to enable them to engage in total civil disobedience. Many of the luxury things might be overlooked, but the minimal living conditions should be provided. This is a task for the PLO.

## ARAB PARTICIPATION AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Moreover, the PLO should shoulder the responsibility of surrounding the uprising with the broadest possible Arab participation and international solidarity on both the popular and governmental levels. Take note of the fact that I have referred to *Arab participation*, and *international solidarity*. We do not accept only solidarity from the Arabs, whether it be the governments, the parties or the people. This is our chance; it is the opportunity for all those who consider the Palestine question an issue of pan-Arab struggle, to see this translated into concrete reality, so that our masses will not sneer at this slogan.

## THE UPRISE CAN FOIL POLITICAL SABOTAGE

Some say that certain Palestinian circles, both inside and outside the PLO, may try to exploit the uprising to activate diplomatic moves and prepare the atmosphere for a political solution, any political solution. How do you view this?

I hope not. The uprising with its scope and political slogans is, I believe, capable of bridling such moves. I am not speaking about the far-distant future, nor even the near future. Up to the present moment, the US moves overlook the PLO... The attempts to abort the uprising, as of now, are essentially coming from the US administration and its puppet regimes in the Arab world. The possibility you mentioned still exists. We have to keep our eyes open. Yet, at this political stage which we are speaking about, the uprising itself will be able to harness any move that might be made by certain Palestinian trends. At present we must be careful not to allow the US to carry out its attempts via

Arab regimes. In case we encounter US attempts being carried out via certain Palestinians, we know very well how to confront them.

## US AND ARAB REACTION

### ONE AND THE SAME OBJECTIVE

Rumors have spread about a US project in the making; some aspects of said project were revealed by the statement of Schultz to the effect that the US seeks the means to bring about deep changes in the quality of life in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in order to provide people greater opportunities for political activities. Do you have any information about this? What would such a project mean?

In fact, we do not have any specific information in this regard, yet we know a little about it from the international press. On February 4th, the Israeli press published long articles on this issue and the details of the US initiative. Up to the present moment, the moves of the US and the reactionary Arab regimes indicate one and the same objective, namely to abort the uprising, in an attempt to restore the initiative and predominance of the tripartite imperialist-Zionist-Arab reactionary alliance, and its final say in the Middle East problem.

The uprising constitutes a great event that surprised everyone and may have greater future effects. Hence, the enemy camp rushed into action and divided roles as follows:

- 'Israel' continues its brutal suppression to end the uprising by force.
- The US announces initiatives and makes moves aiming to: First, subdue international public opinion which is boiling with anger at 'Israel' and its supporters. Second, maintain a strong hold on the initiative in the Middle East problem. Third, avoid moves for the holding of an effective international peace conference. Fourth, to rescue the reputation of its agents in the region, such as Hosni Mubarak, King Hussein, the Moroccan monarch and others.
- Certain Arab regimes, unfortunately, attempt to abort the uprising by working to influence the PLO leadership.

We must be aware of the scheme being engineered by this tripartite alliance. We should rely on our masses in Palestine and on our Arab and international alliances in order to foil the hostile plans. So far, all the US proposals have failed to influence the masses.

Regarding the Schultz statement, the US, Jordan and 'Israel', prior to the uprising, were seeking a solution to the Palestinian question through joint Jordanian-Israeli administration and «improving the quality of life» in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Prior to the uprising, these parties believed that an improvement of living conditions in the occupied territories, together with granting of limited freedom to the Palestinians to run their own municipal affairs, would provide a solution to the Palestine question. In fact, this has been tried but gave no solution. The present US initiative offers nothing new except an in-

crease in the political share, either through allowing a return to municipal elections, or through 'autonomy'. What is essential for the enemy alliance now is to erect a barrier between temporary solutions to the uprising and a radical solution for the Middle East crisis. If they were to succeed in liquidating the uprising before it fulfills its goals, they will forget about finding a real solution. They would, moreover, regain the initiative in the area. At best, they would propose an international peace conference as a formality to be used as an umbrella for imposing their plans.

What about the Soviet initiative to be tabled at the UN Security Council's Foreign Ministers' conference?

The initiative was made public. It was contained in a message addressed to the UN Security Council. I hope it will be accorded sufficient attention. It proposes a mechanism for restoring the rights of the Palestinian people, namely the Palestinian state, the qualitative political issue currently on the agenda for the Palestinian people. The proposed mechanism is the international peace conference. The initiative outlines the Soviet point of view at this stage. The uprising has forced the world to speed up action towards a radical solution to the Palestine question by means of an international conference which would restore to the Palestinian people their right to self-determination. Consequently, we have welcomed the Soviets' initiative and we call upon them to propose further initiatives to contain and counter all the current US moves.

### A QUALITATIVELY NEW STAGE

What are your expectations of the uprising's future, and the results it might lead to on the Palestinian level, vis-a-vis the PLO and on the popular level? What are the effects of the uprising on the Arab and international levels?

We are currently working to make the uprising go on until it fulfills its political slogan. Our masses have no alternative. They can no longer bear coexistence with occupation. They adhere to the slogan: Victory or Martyrdom! I believe all evidence at present indicates that our masses are working seriously to materialize this slogan. On this basis, we might say that the uprising will have a major qualitative and positive effect on the structure of the Palestinian national movement. It will play a role in reforming the PLO's situation. The PLO can play the role it has previously played as an avant-garde of the Arab national liberation movement. Apart from its effects on the PLO, the uprising must have an impact on the Arab masses, parties and regimes, as well as on international public opinion.

The uprising has already scored a set of positive goals, regardless of what other results are attained in the coming days, weeks or months. First, the uprising made the Palestine question the number one issue of interest to the international community. Second, it succeeded in isolating 'Israel' in an unprecedented manner. Third, it consolidated the PLO's position, and I sincerely hope that the PLO will



Youth in Balata camp: «For us, the uprising is not a one-time event. As long as there is an occupation, there will be an uprising.»

benefit from the uprising. Fourth, it put an end to the Jordanian regime's ambitions to be an alternative or a partner of the PLO. Fifth, the uprising motivated Berri's initiative to lift the siege on the camps, which I hope will put a final end to the painful chapter of sufferings undergone by the Palestinians in Lebanon. Sixth, the uprising mobilized the Arab masses. Seventh, it raised with new urgency for the Arab communist parties, the issue of the Arab liberation movement, its crisis, and the necessity to find a way out of this crisis.

Eighth, it pushed forward the international conference

proposal. Ninth, it drove the UN Security Council to adopt several resolutions which for the first time include expressions such as the Palestinian land, and the just rights of the Palestinian people. I am speaking about the UN Security Council, not the UN General Assembly (which has previously adopted such resolutions). The passing of such resolutions by the UN Security Council is highly significant. I hope Palestinian and Arab history will in the future record that this uprising has brought about results, especially on the Arab level, to a greater degree than I have now enumerated. ●

## The PLO: Boycotting Schultz

The following is excerpts from the communique issued by the PLO Executive Committee in Tunis on March 5th.

*The Executive Committee began by noting the prominent characteristics of the uprising in Palestine - the participation of all, in all parts of the occupied territories, the people's unity and adherence to the PLO. The communique also took note of the exposure of Zionism's fascist, racist nature, and then addressed the issue of Schultz's arrival in the Middle East as follows:*

Schultz's visit to the area came in view of all of these variables created by our people's great uprising which has created great concern to the imperialist and Zionist circles. The US secretary of state came aiming to abort the uprising and contain its results. In an attempt to save Israel from its new crisis, Schultz carried with him old-new plans and settlements which are primarily based on denying the existence of the Palestinian people; rejecting their national rights, particularly their rights to return, self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state; insisting on dividing our people inside and outside (of Palestine); and refusing to recognize the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Schultz has tried to impose his plan by exerting all sorts of pressure on the Arab countries...

Our masses have expressed their rejection of the new US plan by boycotting Schultz and refusing to deal with his plans and dreams. All of our masses in all of the occupied territories demonstrated, condemning the US plan and demanding Israeli withdrawal from our Palestinian land, confirming their

adherence to their national rights and demanding that the US administration recognize these rights and the PLO, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

In confronting these conspiracies, the PLO... confirms that our people adhere to a just and comprehensive settlement through a fully empowered international conference, attended by the five permanent members of the US Security Council, and with the participation of all parties concerned, including the PLO on equal footing with other parties, in order to approve and fulfill the national rights of the Palestinian people to return, self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on our national soil...

The PLO warns of the danger of becoming entangled in the new US scheme, and calls upon our masses in our occupied homeland and in exile to be on alert and to continue their courageous struggle, relying on the broad support of the masses of our Arab nation and all the peace- and freedom-loving people in the world...

Hence, the PLO expressed its welcome and support to President Shazli Ben Jadid's initiative to hold an emergency Arab summit for the support of the courageous Palestinian uprising in the occupied land.

Our principled position is an expression of our true desire for peace, based on justice, international legitimacy and the UN resolutions. This is the way to peace that was approved by the Arab summits and the UN General Assembly. We abide by this and call upon all those who seek true peace to abide by it.. ●

# Palestinian Central Council

## Resolutions

The Palestinian Central Council held an extraordinary session in Baghdad, January 7-9th. There was only one item on the agenda for discussion: the heroic uprising of our people who remain steadfast in the occupied territories; the measures and decisions taken by the Executive Committee in this regard; and the requirements of future work programs. Following a thorough debate on the situation, the Central Council made a number of decisions to deal with the rapid developments and the need for supporting this uprising, which are listed below. The council also discussed the issue of a Palestinian government-in-exile, without adopting this concept.

1. To form a higher committee, in addition to the Executive Committee, to follow up on matters pertaining to the uprising and its developments. The committee is to be formed from members of the presidium of the Palestinian National Council (PNC), the General Secretariat of the Central Council, the Committee for the Affairs of the Occupied Homeland and representatives of the Higher Military Council. The committee will remain on the alert and is considered as being continuously convened.

2. To call upon Palestinian businessmen to shoulder their responsibilities for their people by extending

material and moral assistance to the steadfastness and struggle of our people...

3. To approve the Executive Committee's resolution on the allocation of an additional budget, and to ask the committee to take every possible measure to ensure that this budget meets the requirements of continuing the uprising.

4. To call upon all Palestinian institutions, and organizations to carry on with their work plans and efforts, and to continue contacts with all Arab and international institutions to serve this goal.

5. Specialized committees should con-

tinue to perform their daily duties towards the uprising and its development on all levels.

6. To consolidate and support the popular committees and national action committees in all positions of confrontation in occupied Palestine, in the refugee camps, villages, towns, universities, institutes, schools, popular organizations and institutions, etc.

7. To demand that the Executive Committee initiate a special fund to collect donations in support of the uprising.

8. To call upon all the Arab masses and their nationalist forces to form popular committees to support this uprising.

9. To demand immediate UN protection for our masses, especially children and women, and to act immediately to implement these resolutions for the sake of ending the occupation.

10. To urge the Arab countries to take a firm position and every possible measure to foil the policies of deportation, expulsion and the iron fist exercised by the Israeli occupation authorities. We should also call upon Arab countries to exert efforts and contact all friendly countries to stop these crimes.



# From Stones to Civil Disobedience

With stones and collective action, the Palestinian people are challenging the army of one of the world's top-ranking military powers, in order to end the occupation of their country. This article evaluates the current uprising in terms of its nature, organization, methods and political perspective.

The mass uprising in occupied Palestine that started on December 8, 1987, is the culmination of years of mass struggle. Our heroic people have been engaged in mass movements since the turn of the century. There were mass revolts confronting Zionist immigration to Palestine in the 1920s. In 1936, Palestinians staged the longest general strike in history (six months), beginning a three-year rebellion against British colonialism and the Zionist invasion of Palestine. After the establishment of the Zionist state in 1948, there was a lull due to the dispersion of the Palestinian people and their lack of an independent organization. After the PLO's establishment and the rise of the armed resistance, Palestinian struggle entered a new phase. The Zionists' occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967 was met by an upsurge of mass and armed struggle.

The Palestinian national liberation movement relies on two main bases of struggle: inside and outside occupied Palestine. There are objective differences between these two arenas of struggle. Due to the ferocity of the occupation, it has taken longer to develop an organized framework for the revolution inside Palestine. On the other hand, the role of the Arab governments and official politics has less impact inside Palestine. There is a high degree of militancy due to the direct, daily confrontation with the enemy, and the relative absence of the bureaucratic practices of the rightist trend in the PLO. Despite these differences, the relationship between the two bases is a complementary, dialectical one, due to the unity of the Palestinian people and their goals.

After the exodus of the PLO from Beirut in 1982, occupied Palestine took its rightful place as the main arena of confrontation. Mass activities and uprisings became a permanent feature of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in

particular. In 1987, there was a remarkable upsurge in mass action. The position of the Palestinians under occupation was a main factor mitigating for the reestablishment of Palestinian national unity in the PLO, as was achieved at the April 1987 PNC session in Algiers. Restored unity in turn spurred the masses to stage a series of demonstrations. These continued in June to mark Palestinian rejection of 20 years of occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In autumn, there were several weeks of uprising, in particular protests against US Secretary of State Schultz's visit to occupied Palestine, and the Amman Summit's neglect of the PLO. On this backdrop, confrontations with the Israeli army in early December unleashed the current uprising which has become the most sustained struggle since the 1936-39 revolt.

As of this writing in mid-March, over 140 Palestinians have given their lives to end the Zionist occupation; over 5,000 have sustained serious injury and thousands have been detained. (The divergence between Palestinian reports on the death toll and the count of 85 registered in the media is that the latter is based on deaths confirmed by the Israelis who count only those shot by their troops, while ignoring, for example, the many who have suffocated from tear gas, including a number of babies and elderly.) Though the occupiers' terror tactics have ranged from shooting to kill, breaking bones, maiming and mass arrests, to curfews, food blockades and economic sanctions, the Palestinian masses have persisted.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE UPRISING TOTAL PARTICIPATION

All classes and sectors of the Palestinian people are taking part in the uprising, if we exclude a negligible

minority of traitors, many of whom have fled to the Zionist state to escape the masses' wrath. Besides those who take to the streets to confront the Zionist troops, all are participating according to their place in society. Merchants have sustained a prolonged commercial strike despite the Zionist soldiers' attempts to force reopening. Palestinian landlords have announced that they will not collect rent for the first three months of the uprising. Trade unions are ready to make the needed repairs on houses and shops free of charge. Workers went on strike, and many are still boycotting work in 'Israel'. Students and teachers have turned schools and universities into battlegrounds for confronting the enemy. Churches as well as mosques hold funerals and services for the martyrs, which often grow into demonstrations. Christian as well as Muslim clergymen issue calls for solidarity in the uprising.

The uprising has included all age groups and both sexes. In the first month, the most visible participants were the youth armed with stones. Soon Palestinian mothers were seen in the streets, taunting the Israeli soldiers and trying to prevent the arrest of their sons. By the second month, young women participated almost equally with young men. Older women could be seen carrying loads of stones on their heads to provide ammunition to the younger. It became common to see elderly men attempting to compete with the youth in throwing stones. A look at the list of martyrs and injured makes clear the participation of all ages and sectors.

## ALL OVER PALESTINE

The current uprising differs from previous ones in its scope. All camps, villages and towns are involved. The leadership inside occupied Palestine has the ability to coordinate mass activities ►

throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and between the two. At a certain time, the people in the Strip confront the enemy with full force while those in other areas may take a breather. At other times, Nablus and the surrounding villages carry the burden of all-out confrontation, while others rest, and so on. However, on Fridays, Sundays and specially designated occasions like the Day of Rage held on February 16th, all of Palestine explodes to shake the Zionist state.

Perhaps most threatening to the Zionists in the long term is that the Palestinian masses in the 1948 occupied territories involved themselves in the uprising. The general strike of December 21st, when West Bank and Gaza workers stayed away from jobs in 'Israel', was also observed by Palestinians in 'Israel' itself. Their participation caused Israeli Prime Minister Shamir to say that the strikes were «in conformity with the PLO... Israeli Arabs have to decide whether to follow

the PLO or remain faithful to Israeli laws.»

The mayor of the heroic Galilee village, Um Al Fahem, gave a clear answer to Shamir. In a telephone interview with *Al Hadaf* magazine, he said, «We in Um Al Fahem expressed our feelings with our people in the occupied territories by our unanimous participation in the general strike... and by our participation in the Popular Rescue Committee (formed to aid the uprising)... We are part of the Palestinian Arab people... Israel must recognize the Palestinian people's national rights, withdraw from the land and enter into negotiations with the sole, legitimate representative, the PLO, via an active international conference.»

On December 23rd, two weeks after the uprising began, 30,000 Palestinians demonstrated in Nazareth in response to the call of the Committee of Local Arab Councils, and Rakah (the Israeli Communist Party). Ibrahim Nimer

Hussein, mayor of Shafa Amr and head of the committee, told *Al Hadaf* in a telephone interview: «I say to our Palestinian brothers wherever they are, that we are one people with one destiny. United, we must confront our enemy. Here (in Palestine), we are united.»

Villagers in the Galilee and Triangle areas collected food and smuggled it to Palestinians suffering under curfew in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Progressive National Movement, the Sons of the Village and *Al Nahdha* (Renaissance) movement called for mass support to the uprising. On January 25th, 25 Palestinian students were arrested in Haifa after clashes with right-wing Israelis, which began because the students had painted Palestinian flags in schools. Three days later, in the Wadi Al Nisnas quarter of Haifa, leaflets supporting the PLO were distributed and there was a confrontation with the Israeli police, with one policeman being injured. The following day, Palestinians threw

Palestinian strike force in Nablus





stones at the Khaderah railway station, injuring an Israeli soldier.

## ORGANIZATION

In the first weeks of the uprising, there was much talk about it being spontaneous. Antagonistic forces promoted such talk trying to create the impression of a separation between the masses inside and the PLO. In fact, this whole idea is built on a false premise. The masses in occupied Palestine have been among the first to rally around the PLO, and protect its reputation and unity. They are the PLO just as much as is the leadership. If the masses in occupied Palestine did rise up based on their national instincts and using their own resources initially, this is not at all in contradiction to the PLO which has served as their sole, legitimate representative and the rallying point of their struggle for years.

In any case, the prolonged continuation of the uprising has made all such talk irrelevant. Within a few weeks, it became clear who was leading the uprising. Call no. I was issued in the form of leaflets spread throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. As of March 8th, when the uprising entered its fourth month, nine such calls had been issued. (See call no.9 in this issue.) The calls outline the detailed program of action for a set period and give guidelines for organizing the uprising nationally and locally (the formation of committees, etc.).

The calls are signed by the United National Leadership of the Uprising, the clandestine leadership in the field,

composed of trusted Palestinian militants from the organizations who are active in the occupied territories. This leadership has evolved in direct confrontation with the enemy, and enjoys the confidence of the masses who abide by its calls. Above all, this leadership evolved from the existing underground framework of the PLO in occupied Palestine. In the West Bank, the component forces are Fatah, PFLP and DFLP. The Palestinian Communist Party is involved in unified coordination of the uprising at the local level. In the Gaza Strip, the Islamic Jihad is included in the United National Leadership, alongside Fatah, PFLP and DFLP. It is noteworthy that the Islamic Jihad has been part of the PLO since the last PNC session. Unlike some other Islamic tendencies, such as the Muslim Brotherhood which has at times attacked the progressive nationalist forces, Islamic Jihad gives top priority to fighting the Israeli occupation.

In addition to the national unity achieved in the uprising's leadership, unity prevails at the base where scores of mass organizations join efforts in adherence to the United National Leadership's guidelines. This includes trade and professional unions, women's and students' organizations, social service and cultural committees,

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Since the writing of this article, the Palestinian Communist Party has joined in the United National Leadership.

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etc., whether these are affiliated to a particular political organization, to the PLO as such, or were independently established.

The fact that the United National Leadership has evolved in direct confrontation with the occupier has lent it a high degree of political clarity and militant commitment which can guarantee the uprising's continuity. This gives the potential for the uprising to have a decisive impact on the PLO itself, in terms of consolidating its political line and internal democracy. The United National Leadership sets a precedent in terms of the fact that the Palestinian organizations enjoy influence in direct proportion to their active input in the uprising and their overall practice. The democratic forces in the PLO have long worked for such democratic reform, and its viability is now being proved in a pivotal struggle.

In their demonstrations, the masses are daily exhibiting their sentiments about national unity and indicating who the active forces are. It is commonplace in West Bank demonstrations to see the pictures of Yasir Arafat and George Habash raised side-by-side. A frequent chant in the streets and alleys of the Gaza Strip is «Unity, National Unity... Fatah, Jihad and Popular (Front)» - a slogan which in Arabic rhymes.

On the local level, there are several types of organizations and committees affiliated to the United National Leadership. Those we see daily on television throwing stones constitute the strike force of the uprising. In every village, camp and town quarter, Palestinians have organized a strike force responsible for confronting the Zionist soldiers and settlers on a daily basis. Round the clock, people prepare roadblocks, guard their areas and collect stones.

There are also the unknown soldiers organized in committees we don't see on the TV screen. There are supply committees that distribute and ration food. There are medical committees, affiliated to the existing Palestinian medical institutions, that provide first aid, take the injured to hospital and care for those who prefer not to be hospitalized. (There are numerous instances of Israeli soldiers breaking into ►

Palestinian hospitals and harassing, beating and arresting patients.) There are merchant committees that organize the strikes and provide for limited openings so the population can get food; they also enforce price control, and see that, whenever possible, Palestinian goods are sold rather than Israeli ones.

After the PLO United National Leadership's call for the formation of popular committees, these were formed locally with the initial task of co-ordinating the work of the already existing committees. With the uprising moving in the direction of mass civil disobedience, these popular committees can provide the infrastructure for the population's sustenance, while serving as a popular, alternative authority to the occupation authority.

### FORMS OF STRUGGLE

While a broad spectrum of forms are being used in the current uprising, they all have a common denominator which is mass participation. Direct confrontation of the enemy occurs via stone-throwing whether by hand or using different kinds of slingshots. Another widely used weapon is the molotov cocktail, thrown to burn Israeli vehicles. The strike forces barricade the entrances of the towns, villages and camps with burning tires, boulders and barrels, to delay the approach of the enemy soldiers, giving time to strike at them. Until now, the main trend has clearly been to fight with weapons, such as stones, which are accessible to the masses at large. The collective decision to concentrate the battle against military targets is equally clear. While the decision on targets is likely to prevail, future needs to protect the masses and to escalate the confrontation radically and quickly, may lead to the use of more advanced weaponry, relying on cadres experienced in military operations.

Demonstrations and sit-ins have been frequently staged, but the most effective struggle form used so far is the strike. Gaza workers stopped reporting for jobs in the initial week of the uprising, as students also went on strike. On December 21st, a general strike was called. Sectors of the Israeli economy were paralyzed as workers living in the

1967 and 1948 occupied territories stayed away. A total strike reigned for several days. Then, economic necessity brought some back to work, but some are striking until this day. One-day total strikes are held for special occasions. The January 31st edition of *Al Fajr* reported that nearly 70% of Palestinians working in 'Israel' had been on strike almost continuously since the uprising's start. A rotation system of sorts prevails, whereby workers take turns striking according to area, or those with a family to support return to work, while single workers continue the strike. At the same time, the local committees provide a support network for strikers and their families.

It is estimated that the strike cost the Israeli economy \$2 billion in the initial period. Israeli high school students were mobilized to harvest the citrus crop, while more south Lebanese villagers were commandeered to work in Israeli factories. While demonstrating the vulnerability of the Israeli economy to united Palestinian action, the general strike also provided a practical solution to a long-standing organizational problem for the Palestinian liberation movement. The Palestinian trade union federations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have been prohibited by the occupation from organizing those who work in 'Israel'.

It has moreover been difficult to organize these workers, since their long working hours and commuting time means that they literally are only at home for sleeping hours. Under the impact of the uprising, these workers were automatically organized in the framework of the United National Leadership. This has important implications for the future.

### POLITICAL DIRECTION

Clearly, the overall thrust of the uprising is to end the occupation. All the demands that have been raised point in this direction:

- respecting international law, especially the conventions pertaining to the protection of civilians and their property under occupation;
- immediate implementation of UN Security Council resolutions nos. 605 and 607, requiring that 'Israel' abide by the Geneva Convention, and calling for a just and permanent solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict;
- release of all those detained during the uprising, and annulment of the sentences of those convicted;
- a stop to the deportation policy and allowing all deportees to return to their families and homes; releasing all administrative detainees; annulling house arrest orders; approving all the applications for the reunion of families

Israeli soldier shot in Bethlehem March 20th - the first Israeli casualty in the current uprising.



that have previously been rejected by the occupation authorities;

- lifting the siege of the Palestinian camps in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and withdrawing the Israeli army from residential areas;
- conducting an official investigation into the conduct of the Israeli army and settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and in the jails and detention camps; taking appropriate measures against those who caused death or injury to unarmed citizens without reason;
- ending settlement-building and land confiscation; stopping the settlers' provocations and harassment of the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip; removing all provocative settler outposts in all Jerusalem, first and foremost the house of Sharon...
- refraining from any act against the Christian and Muslim holy places, which would damage them or change the status quo in Jerusalem;
- annulling the value added tax and all Israeli taxes imposed on Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including Jerusalem; stopping provocations against Palestinian merchants...
- annulling all restrictions on political freedoms, including those against meetings and conferences; free municipal elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with neutral observers;
- the immediate refund of the money deducted from the salaries of Palestinian workers in 'Israel' with the interest due; these sums should be returned to the Palestinian trade unions for just distribution;
- ending restrictions on permits for residential or industrial building, digging wells and agricultural development in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip;
- stopping the discrimination against agricultural products of the occupied territories, either by lifting the restrictions on transport of these products over the green line, or by imposing similar restrictions on Israeli products to limit their export to the occupied territories and their competition with local products;
- ending the prohibition of political relations between the people of the occupied territories and the PLO; allow-

ing people to participate in the Palestinian National Council.

On the background of the uprising's continuity and escalation, the United National Leadership is preparing for total civil disobedience, i.e., refusal to deal with the occupation. There have been tendencies in this direction from the beginning, especially the general strike and the Palestinian lawyers' boycott of the assembly-line, military trials of those arrested in the initial phase of the uprising. The United National Leadership has shown its political maturity and credibility in setting guidelines that are in line with the masses' wishes and their realistic possibilities at any given time. Therefore, the move towards mass civil disobedience has come gradually without being raised rhetorically. In call no. 9, the PLO/United National Leadership proposed mass refusal to pay taxes. In various parts of Palestine, tax collectors submitted their resignations. The boycott of Israeli goods is another task being gradually built up to.

While the main thrust of the struggle has targeted the Israeli occupiers, the Jordanian regime's long-standing plan to usurp the West Bank and replace the PLO, has made its agents in occupied Palestine the other losers in the uprising. In one instance, the United National Leadership called on journalists to stop working for *Al Nahar*, a newspaper established by the Jordanian regime. Soon afterwards, *Nahar*, offices were burned in many West Bank towns.

A related thrust of the uprising is to neutralize those who collaborate with the Zionist authorities. In late February, the hanging of a traitor sparked a string of recantations whereby former collaborators appeared before the people in mosques, pledging to cease their harmful dealings. The most recent development is the mass resignation of Israeli-appointed municipal and village councils, and of Palestinian policemen in mid-March. The majority of this policeforce, which dates back to the time of Jordanian administration of the West Bank, has resigned, irritating both the Israeli occupiers and the Jordanian regime.

While crushing the plans of King Hussein and Israeli Foreign Minister

Peres for joint Israeli-Jordanian administration of the 1967 occupied territories, the uprising's impact also mitigated against right-wing tendencies and illusions that the US plans being promoted contained any benefit for the Palestinian cause. Thus, Schultz was rebuffed when he tried to meet Palestinian dignitaries in Jerusalem.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

It is too early to chronicle the overall achievements of the current uprising because the masses are still in motion. However, some immediate results can already be recorded: The uprising has materialized the importance of Palestinian political unity. At the same time, with their daring, stamina and creativity, the masses have shelved defeatist trends, showing that it is possible through struggle to make the occupied territories ungovernable, and lessen the benefits drawn by the Zionists from their occupation. This in itself is a major contribution to the liberation of Palestine.

The uprising restored the centrality of the Palestinian cause regionally and internationally. In this atmosphere, the siege on the Palestinian camps in Beirut was lifted, while various Arab regimes got cold feet about trying to create an alternative to the PLO. There was a massive display of solidarity with the Palestinian people around the world, while 'Israel' has suffered unprecedented international critique and isolation, its similarity with the apartheid regime in South Africa finally becoming apparent worldwide.

Equally important, the uprising inspired the Arab masses, while strengthening the national democratic trend in the PLO, and its opposition to all imperialist and reactionary plans for the region. The uprising has demonstrated the viability of the PLO's national program for fulfilling the Palestinian people's rights to repatriation, self-determination and an independent state. It has made a positive contribution to shifting the balance of power in the region, which if continued will eventually enable a genuine international peace conference on the Middle East, under UN auspices, with the full and equal participation of the PLO.

# Document:

# Call No.9

This is the text of Call no.9 as it was distributed, in English translation, in the occupied territories:

## NO VOICE IS LOUDER THAN THE VOICE OF THE UPRISING ISSUED BY THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANISATION / NATIONAL UNIFIED COMMAND FOR THE UPRISING

We swear to escalate the popular uprising until the independent state.

Shultz! return to the PLO - there is no other choice.

To our struggling people:

Your glorious uprising continues and your heroic confrontation of the occupying army and the cowardly settlers increases. You have cost them great losses while at the same time you have daily made new accomplishments. The Zionist slaughterer Rabin can only indirectly admit the failure. He has finally admitted that our people are fighting a popular war. The occupation, oh heroes, has been defeated politically and only the imperialist Americans are trying to save them from a sure defeat. The occupation has been defeated economically. The official figures about the direct losses in the stock exchange, and in productive projects, as a result of our heroic workers' strike, has passed \$2,000 million. The occupation has lost militarily. The military machine has been incapable to confront the stones, molotovs and the will of a revolting people. Their soldiers and fascist settlers don't know what security means. Two-thirds of the soldiers who step on our homeland have to go to mental infirmaries for treatment.

You, the heroes of the uprising, are daily raising the cost of the occupation. You are increasing their losses. You are marching with confidence towards the establishment of your independent Palestinian state, led by our sole and legitimate representative, the PLO. Your steps don't know the meaning of retreat. This is your will, the will of the people of the uprising and the will of our leadership, the PLO, and its political and struggling wing, its natural organic extension in the occupied territories - the Unified National Command of the Uprising. This is the only will and the only decision - maker in our Palestinian land. We as a single and whole body are burying together the American imperialistic conspiracy. We are burying it from its birth. The [conspiracy's] hero Shultz will only reap failure in his attempt to sell the Camp David goods which our Palestinian people have rejected. The agents of the imperialists are hiding in their holes after the heroic uprising has defeated them. The occupiers and their supporters were defeated by the uprising.

From a position of daily struggle against the fascist occupiers, we take this opportunity to greet our brothers in the occupied Golan Heights. We greet their hands which inflicted painful blows to the occupation authorities. More power to you in your effort to end the occupation.

The Unified National Command of the Uprising calls on all the Arab countries, especially Syria, to correct its relationship with the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of our heroic people. [We call on Syria] to start dialogue on the basis of the unified struggle against imperialism and Zionism, and on the basis of mutual respect and the respect of [the PLO's] independent decisions.

To the heroes of the glorious uprising, to our vanguard students and academicians:

One of the pillars of Zionist policy is keeping our people ignorant and denying them the simplest rights that are engraved in international conventions and laws. The right of learning. The Israeli occupation authorities have thus closed all our educational institutions from colleges to schools. This policy has denied one-third of a million Palestinians from learning.

The Unified National Command of the Uprising has decided to challenge this racist occupation law by breaking the order. [We] call on our students, teachers and educational institutions and administrations to challenge, in unified way, and in all places, this law by organizing the educational process on a nationalist basis; thereby you can defeat the policy of keeping our people ignorant. The Command also calls on international institutions and organizations to support our people's struggle to defeat this policy.

To our merchants and technicians:

In compliance with the programs of the uprising and the comprehensive popular revolt, let us cut off the economic veins of the occupiers. Let us announce it loud and clear. No to all forms of taxes. [The taxes] are the channel that has provided for the occupiers their repressive machines and invading army. We repeat that the battle of the taxes has begun and all of you have to organise yourselves and your unified positions and all the people of the uprising are with you. The accountants have an important role in this battle. Let March be the month in which our money, that was stolen from us in the past, stops flowing into the treasuries of the occupiers. We are certain that your unity in refusing to bay taxes will produce one more defeat for the occupiers, to be added to the other defeats.

To our people:

In order to produce our goals from the uprising and regarding the boycott of Zionist products that we have an alternative to, and after discussions regarding many important issues, the Unified National Command of the Uprising has decided:

1. Keeping the same arrangement for opening shops between 2-3 hours daily as agreed to in every locality.
2. Our productive factories have to work at full capacity, with all the workers, so that we can produce the biggest amount of products, replacing the boycotted Zionist products.

These factories have to strike only in the days that full strikes are called for by the Unified Command of the Uprising - the command of the PLO.

3. Industrial shops outside the cities, like blacksmiths, garages, shops, etc., will open from the morning till 1 in the afternoon, except on full strike days.

4. Clinics and medical centers should be open all day.

5. Fines imposed on our arrested sons by the fascist Zionist military courts should not be paid.

6. We call on homeowners to show respect to our heroic people by reaching agreements with tenants affected by the uprising, regarding the rent of the last three months.

7. We call on our people in villages, cities and camps to establish donation funds for financial and in kind donations, to be supervised by national and popular local committees. These funds will be used for those in need in that particular locality. We warn, however, that no help should be given to people outside these committees which you have established yourself.

8. The Unified National Command calls for the revelation of any attempt to destroy or cause differences between our people which the enemy tries to do, like rumors and forged leaflets and burning cars.

9. Greetings to the people of the heroic Kabatya who gave a lesson to the traitors of their people and their homeland.

10. The Unified Command calls on the employees of the Civil Administration and the police to resign immediately and to join their people in their popular uprising.

To the sons of the independent state:

The Unified Command, the Command of the PLO, as it greets your struggle, pledges to escalate the struggle with you until the occupation ends and our state is established under the leadership of the PLO. we call on the people of the uprising, our heroes everywhere, to abide by the following:

1. To work by all possible means to bring down the appointed municipalities and local village and refugee councils. They are the agents of the surrenderist condominium plan. These committees are now standing against our people since they have refused to accept the will of the people of the uprising. They missed the chance of resigning before it was too late and have insisted on being traitors to the people and have instead served the occupation and its goals.

2. March 5, 1988 is the day of returning to the land and tilling it in large crowds.

3. Sunday, March 6 is the day of the Palestinian flag. Palestinian flags should be raised in every place and outside every home. In demonstrations the flag should be raised. The Unified Command calls on the Arab nation and Palestinians in the Arab World and everywhere to have solidarity demonstrations on this day, raising the Palestinian flag.

4. Teachers, students and administrations should go back to school, thereby breaking the closure order.

5. We call on our great people to conserve in their expenses and to concentrate on essentials. Not to spend much and to help out the needy.

6. Escalating the war of attrition against the occupiers, and cutting off the road to settlements. Signs in Hebrew should be painted over with black paint.

7. Celebrating March 8, Women's Day, by Palestinian



Demonstration in Jerusalem's Old City after Friday prayers

women conducting demonstrations to give the best example of confrontation to the occupying army.

8. Wednesday, March 9 is the Martyr's Day. It will be a full strike day. Everyone should go out in the streets on the occasion of the fourth month of the uprising and to remember the first wave of martyrs. This should be a new day of anger against the Zionists.

9. Demonstrations on Friday and Sunday in mosques and churches.

Glory to our martyrs

Long live the PLO, sole and legitimate representative of our heroic people

Down with the American liquidationist plans

Together on the way to liberty and the independent Palestinian state, led by the PLO, our representative

Note- anything published under the name of the Jordanian-Palestinian Group is the making of the intelligence services, be careful.

We are victorious

PLO/Unified National Command of the Uprising in the occupied territories.

# Background for the Uprising

## 20 Years of Dispossession, Exploitation and Brutality

The uprising in occupied Palestine has entered the fourth month with an intensity that causes political analysts to include it as a major factor in the balance of power in the region. The popular revolt has spread throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and involved the Palestinians living in the Zionist state itself. The current uprising has a dual cause:(1) the objective reality of the Zionist occupation with the political, social and economic repression it entails;(2) the subjective Palestinian factor, i.e., the structural development of the Palestinian vanguard organizations that are united in the PLO, enabling them to sustain and coordinate an advanced popular uprising. The following article focuses on the objective factor: the Israeli occupation policy against which the Palestinian people are struggling.

The Zionist occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip dates back to the 1967 war. Over the past 20 years, the occupation has altered all aspects of life for the Palestinian people living in these territories. Daily they experience social, economic and political repression. A whole generation has grown up under occupation; they also grew up parallel to the growth of the PLO, as their sole, legitimate representative and leader of the struggle for an independent Palestinian state.

### THE PALESTINIAN POPULATION — DEMOGRAPHY

Before the 1967 war, there were 981,000 Palestinians living in the West Bank. Forced emigration resulting from the war reduced the number to 599,000. Since then, lack of job opportunities and political repression has caused further emigration, but this was more than balanced by natural increase. According to a 1986 estimate, there were 835,000 Palestinians in the West Bank; 542,000 in the Gaza Strip; and 125,000 in East Jerusalem.

The Palestinian population in the 1976 occupied territories is a very young one. In the West Bank, 46% are under the age of 14; in the Gaza Strip, the percentage is 48%. This means that more than half the people in the 1967 occupied territories were born under occupation. To them, any solution that entails «returning» the West Bank to Jordan, or Gaza to Egypt, is totally alien. Population forecasts show that by 1990, there will be 900,000 Palestinians in the West Bank and 600,000 in the Gaza Strip. By the year 2000, the combined population of these areas is expected to be 1,986,000.

### LAND CONFISCATION

Confiscating Palestinian land has been the fulcrum of Israeli policy in the occupied land - the first step in creating settlements. Land confiscation has deformed the natural development of the Palestinian society, destroying the peasantry in order to create a reserve labor force to do degrading work in the Zionist state at substandard wages. Today 'Israel' controls 52% of the land in the West Bank and 40% in the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, 2,268,000 dunums have been confiscated by 'Israel' (41%), while another 570,000 dunums (11%) are controlled by virtue of the restrictions imposed on their use. Of the Gaza Strip's 360,500 dunums, 40% have been designated Israeli state land. Not only has the Gaza Strip's

agricultural sector been undermined by land confiscation, this has made the Strip one of the most densely populated areas in the world: 5,440 persons per square mile. In contrast, something over 2,000 Zionist settlers in 18 settlements have access to the «state land».

Recently, the pace of land confiscation slowed down. This is not, however, due to a change in Israeli occupation policy. Rather, 'Israel' has acquired sufficient land for the settlers it is able to bring to the 1967 occupied territories and for its military requirements. Only 7% of the confiscated land is designated for housing, but this can accommodate 800,000 to one million settlers, based on a gross population density of two families per dunum.

### STEALING WATER

Combined with land confiscation, Israeli robbery of the water resources of the West Bank is a main factor in the decline of the Palestinians' agriculture and standard of living. The water potential of the West Bank is 600 million cubic meters per year. 'Israel' confiscates 475 million cubic meters, i.e., 80% to cover 20% of the state's annual consumption of 1,900 million cubic meters. Meanwhile, West Bankers consume 115 million cubic meters of water annually. 'Israel' overpumps the water table, exploiting it to the utmost. The Palestinians can only tap 20 million cubic meters from the water table, with their remaining consumption coming from wells and springs. Of this water, 100 million cubic meters goes to irrigation and the rest to domestic consumption. Thus, the Zionist state acquires its water needs at the expense of the West Bank, avoiding more costly solutions such as desalinization, while the Palestinian peasant has a hard time irrigating the land he has left; any expansion of cultivation is ruled out.

It is expected that by 1990, 30 Israeli agricultural settlements will have 60 million cubic meters of available water, while 400 Palestinian villages will have 100 million. Annual water consumption by the end of the decade will be 50 cubic meters per Palestinian city dweller, 25 cubic meters per Palestinian villager and 90 cubic meters per Jewish settler. (For the purpose of comparison, the annual rate of water consumption in western Europe is 83 cubic meters per person.) Approximately one million Palestinians will be consuming 136 million cubic meters, while 100,000 Jewish settlers will have 100 million cubic meters at their disposal.

## SETTLEMENT—BUILDING

Throughout the 20 years of occupation, the Israeli government has stressed the importance of creating new realities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The overriding aim was creating a situation which would rule out Israeli withdrawal from these territories, or at least insure Israeli control if limited military withdrawal was required at some point. Thus, the most obviously threatening aspect of Israeli occupation policy has been the construction of settlements. In 1975, there were 2,581 settlers in the West Bank. Today, there are more than 60,000. (These figures and those in the article in general exclude Jerusalem.) See table no. 1 for the increase in settlers.

TABLE NO. 1

Year	No. of settlers
1975	2,581
1976	3,176
1977	5,023
1978	7,361
1979	10,000
1980	12,424
1981	16,119
1982	20,600
1983	27,500
1984	42,600
1985	52,000
1986	60,000

During the term of the Labor Alignment government (1968-77), the average annual increment of settlers was 770. During the Likud's term (1977-84), the average annual increment was 5,400 settlers. The difference in these figures should not lead to any mistaken political conclusions about fundamental differences between Labor and Likud policy on the matter of increasing settlers. In the first year these two blocks joined to rule 'Israel' in a coalition government (1984), there was an increase of 15,000 settlers. The decline in the annual increment in 1985-6 is not due to policy change, but to Israeli economic difficulties.

By 1986, there were 104 settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Israeli government, in view of international pressure to limit the construction of new settlements, is now concentrating on thickening the existing settlements with the aim of having 100,000 settlers in the territories. This goal was to be met in 1986; at the current rate, it will be met in the early 1990s.

## PALESTINIAN WORKERS IN 'ISRAEL'

There are 436,000 Palestinians aged 14 or older living in the West Bank. Of these, 154,000 are in the labor force. One-third of the labor force works in 'Israel'. In the Gaza Strip, the comparable figure is 264,000, of whom 87,200 are in the labor force, half of them working in 'Israel'. Figures vary since many are hired on a daily basis and illegally, but an estimated 100,000 Palestinians sell their labor power in the 1948 occupied territories. Half of them work illegally, without a work permit. The workers from the territories can be divided as follows: 48.3% work in construction; 19.5% in services including low



Gaza youth line up for daily work in Tel Aviv.

status jobs such as cleaning, dishwashing and gardening; 18% in industry and 14.2% in agriculture.

These workers must commute daily. They work long shifts (12 hours) and are paid less than half of an Israeli worker's wages (\$133 as opposed to \$333-533 average monthly wage). The Histadrut (Israeli Labor Federation which is simultaneously a corporation) collects dues from those who work legally, but without providing the benefits received by Israeli workers. Palestinians from the territories pay 20% of their wages in taxes directly to the Israeli state treasury, whereas this deduction from an Israeli worker's paycheck goes to the National Insurance Institute. The amount saved by the Israeli economy due to wage differences between Palestinian and Israeli workers has increased from \$4.7 million in 1968, to \$390.2 million in 1984. The Israeli economy saved a total of \$3049.8 million between 1968 and 1985. See table no. 2.

TABLE NO. 2

Year	Workers from occupied territories in 1000s	Israeli annual savings in millions of dollars
1968	4.0	4.7
1969	9.5	12.7
1970	19.8	34.1
1971	33.1	53.7
1972	50.8	76.3
1973	59.3	118.3
1974	66.5	145.4
1975	63.9	141.3
1976	63.2	142.9
1977	62.0	160.2
1978	67.0	172.3
1979	73.0	209.9
1980	73.2	231.8
1981	73.9	254.9
1982	76.6	268.1
1983	84.3	274.8
1984	86.9	390.2
1985	86.1	256.2
	total	3049.8

The Israeli state saves 15% of the Palestinian workers' total wages which is what would ordinarily be paid to an Israeli worker in benefits such as retirement and National Insurance ►

services. Between 1969 and 1985, this savings amounted to over \$350 million, since the total wages paid to workers from the territories in that period was \$2,260 million. Added to this, the Histadrut gained \$1,489 million between 1968 and 1985, from direct deductions from these workers' wages, plus employers' contributions to the National Insurance Institute and the interest compiled on these funds (average rate 8.7%). This means that the total profit derived by the Israeli economy from West Bank and Gaza labor in the years between 1969 and 1985, was \$4890 million. (This does not include the amounts saved with the employment of illegal labor.)

In addition to this economic exploitation, thousands of Palestinian workers have to spend the night in 'Israel' even though this is illegal. They are housed in subhuman conditions and subject to harassment by the Israeli authorities and to racist attacks.



Armed settler waits for bus to West Bank settlements

## ECONOMIC SUBORDINATION

In analyzing the economic conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, two main trends stand out. The first is the gross inequality between the settlers and the local population. The second is the persistent Israeli drive to integrate the economy of the occupied territories into the Israeli economy on the basis of subordination. In this way, the territories serve primarily as a cheap labor reserve and a market for Israeli products, and secondarily as a source of certain products which would be more expensive to produce in 'Israel'. This aims simultaneously at strengthening the Israeli economy, while undermining any independent Palestinian national economy which would provide the material base for Palestinian statehood.

The economic activity of the 60,000 settlers accounts for 35% of the gross domestic product of the West Bank, although they constitute less than 7% of the total population. The Palestinian gross domestic product in the West Bank has not changed in the last years. Added to the distortions in the indigenous economy by land confiscation and restrictions on trade and industry, the stagnation of the Israeli economy has kept the Palestinian gross domestic product stagnant (estimated at \$810 million in 1983). Palestinian disposable income was \$1,300-1,500 million in 1984. This amounts to \$1,450-\$1,650 per capita, 30% of per capita consumption in 'Israel'.

Of the Palestinian gross domestic product, 7% is derived from industry, 27% from agriculture, 16% from construction, 36% from transport, commerce and private services, and 14% from public services. The agricultural sector has declined further in recent years. From contributing 40% of the gross domestic product in 1980, it fell to 27% in 1983. Industry is a marginal sector with little possibility for development due to the overall economic situation and specific Israeli-imposed restrictions.

Military occupation has allowed the Israeli state to control the trade of the occupied territories to its own advantage, making this a major factor in economic subordination and integration. In 1984, Palestinians in the West Bank sold \$100 million worth of goods to 'Israel' and bought \$363 million worth of goods from the Zionist state. Trade with 'Israel' accounted for 55% of the West Bank's export and 90% of its import. In 1984, the West Bank and Gaza Strip received 10.6% of the Israeli export, making the territories the second-ranking market for Israeli goods, after the USA. In 1985, the Israeli surplus in the balance of trade with the West Bank and Gaza Strip was \$420.2 million. See table no. 3.

TABLE No. 3

Surplus in the Israeli balance of trade with the West Bank and Gaza Strip in millions of dollars

Year	Gaza Strip	West Bank	Total
1967	—	—	12.7
1968	—	—	38.2
1969	18.8	39.0	57.8
1970	23.9	38.4	62.3
1971	32.0	39.6	71.6
1972	41.9	55.6	97.5
1973	51.0	76.7	127.7
1974	79.7	109.2	188.9
1975	113.8	134.1	247.9
1976	103.7	145.0	148.7
1977	143.3	166.0	309.3
1978	106.8	139.2	246.0
1979	115.3	208.6	323.9
1980	118.8	239.2	358.0
1981	123.5	252.2	375.7
1982	132.6	257.3	389.9
1983	154.6	272.9	427.5
1984	161.0	263.2	424.2
1985	176.8	243.4	420.2

It is noteworthy that 61% of the surplus was accumulated in the period after the Camp David agreements (1979-85). The bulk of the occupied territories' export to 'Israel' consists of manufactured goods, in line with the Israeli policy of allowing limited industry to meet its own needs. In the years 1983-85, more than 85% of the territories' exports to 'Israel' were industrial products. This is both due to the relative industrial development in the territories and to the heavy restrictions on agricultural products.

## OCCUPATION TAX

The Israeli expenditures in the occupied territories are allocated from the budget of the Military Administration. In the year 1983/84, these amounted to \$105 million; in 1984/85, they were \$70 million. Direct taxation from the West Bank covered 58% of the 1983/84 budget, and 67% of the 1984/85 budget. The deficit of the Military Administration thus appears to be \$44 million and \$23 million for these two years respectively. Looking at these figures alone, it would appear that the occupation is a fiscal burden on the Israeli budget. This is not, however, the case, since 'Israel' collects a number of taxes in the occupied territories which go directly to the Israeli treasury.

The Israeli income from the 15% value added tax, levied on the products which the West Bank and Gaza Strip import from 'Israel' currently amounts to \$100 million; in 1985, it was \$90 million. The income of the Israeli treasury from 112% tariffs on imports from abroad is \$85 million per year; average annual imports are valued at \$20-80 million. Assuming a 35% (Israeli state) subsidy on agricultural imports to the West Bank and Gaza Strip not exceeding \$100 million, and making a simple calculation, one sees that the Palestinian people have to pay an occupation tax of over \$100 million annually. (This is actually a conservative calculation because it does not include every single tax.)

Over the last 20 years, the Zionist state has not only deformed the natural development of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but also integrated the economies of these territories into the Israeli economy on an unequal basis, creating a new form of dependency. 'Israel' has not only abused Palestine's natural resources, but also subjected the people to extreme economic exploitation, based on racist discrimination. As a result, the living standard of Palestinians under occupation is one-quarter that of Israelis.

## IRON FIST

Parallel to economic exploitation, the Palestinians under occupation experience severe political repression. The Zionist authorities' iron fist policy aims not only to abort any resistance, but to stamp out all Palestinian nationalist expression and activities. Especially for Palestinians living in the refugee camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, daily existence is similar to that of a forced labor camp.

Zionist repression is both systematic and arbitrary, based on military decrees issued at will and on the Emergency Regulations of 1945 imposed by the British Mandate. Palestinians are stopped at random and subject to search; they may be detained for things like carrying a pocket knife or wearing clothes in the colors of the Palestinian flag. In addition to shooting at

demonstrators, Israeli soldiers and settlers harass the population at large, causing frequent death and injury.

Curfews and the closure of schools and universities are common forms of collective punishment. More brutal is the demolition of a whole family's home due to allegations against one family member. Palestinians are arrested arbitrarily, tortured to obtain false confessions and tried in military courts without due process of law. Others face administrative detention without being charged or tried, for up to six months renewable. Still others are confined to their homes or villages. Since 1967, thousands have been deported from their homeland.

Statistics from the first eight months of 1987, issued by the Palestine Human Rights Information Center in Jerusalem, give a concrete impression of the results of the Israeli iron fist: In this period, 17 political killings of Palestinians by the Israeli army or settlers were reported; 111 were seriously injured; 13,000 olive and fruit trees were uprooted by the occupation forces; universities, schools and unions were closed 48 times; six community leaders were expelled; 109 Palestinians were put under town arrest; 84 houses were demolished or sealed; approximately 4,500 Palestinians were in Israeli jails.

The facts described above should give ample explanation for why the people of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have risen up in revolt. Yet they also demonstrate the deep economic interest the Zionist state has in retaining these territories, even aside from historical Zionist expansionist dreams. The importance of the current uprising in this context is that it is an enormous step in the direction of making the occupation so costly that the Zionist state may be forced, eventually, to rethink its occupation policy.

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Burhan Karkutli



# Eyewitness «People Are

Louise is a progressive American who works with a human rights organization. In late February and early March, she visited occupied Palestine. Afterwards she shared her impressions about the uprising with Democratic Palestine.

I took a group of ten American women to Palestine to investigate the situation. It was a fact-finding delegation composed mainly of journalists, although we also had nuns among us. We spent a very intensive week, looking at the situation of the Palestinians during the uprising. We worked with groups in the occupied territories who helped us on our tour. We went to the West Bank, Gaza Strip and the 1948 occupied territories. We met families of martyrs; we were in camps, villages and towns. At various times, they were under siege while we were there. Every member of the delegation was tear-gased at least once and, I believe, shot at also.

We went to hospitals and viewed the wounded, people who had been shot and people who had been beaten to brutal degrees. We saw people who had been slashed with razors by soldiers, a 14-year-old girl who had boiling water poured on her by soldiers, people hit in the eye by rubber bullets, young children who are crippled for life because they were shot in the spine... We visited Al Ittihad hospital in Nablus, and saw some pretty bad things there. Two hours after we left, the hospital was attacked by Israeli soldiers. Patients and their families were beaten, as were doctors and nurses. Six patients were taken out and beaten and then brought back. We thought the attack might have been a sort of retaliation for them having talked to us, because the last thing the Israelis want is for anybody to communicate to the outside world...

## NEW POWER BALANCE

But despite all these atrocities, the spirit of the people was tremendous, absolutely tremendous. Although they lamented their sufferings, they knew that these had to happen and that nothing would stop them from continuing. So, actually, it was a very uplifting experience. I have been there before. This time I saw that people are not afraid. They are not afraid to hoist the Palestinian flag on top of their house or a building, or to carry it with them... One day I was in Ramallah, and people tied 2,000 Palestinian flags to helium balloons; the whole sky was filled with Palestinian flags... You could see Palestinian flags everywhere, on houses, telephone wires, mosques and in the Old City of Jerusalem. People are not afraid to do this anymore. I mean, in the past, it was illegal, so you didn't do it, even though people resisted. Now there is no fear. Areas become liberated for a day or two, or for a week... People are not afraid to throw stones. They are not afraid to confront the soldiers, to hit soldiers. They are just not intimidated anymore. It's so obvious that the Palestinians are now in control of their lives as much as possible, and the soldiers try and try and try to break this, but they just can't do it. There are new strategies

every week by the Palestinians, to force the schools open, to stop buying Israeli products, to force the collaborators to give in.

The issue of the collaborators is a good sign of the change of the power balance. There were collaborators before and everybody hated them, but it went on. Why do the collaborators give up their arms now? Because they can see who is in power, and it's the Palestinians, not the Israelis.

The shops are closed except for three hours a day. In Nablus, they are open from 7 to 10; Ramallah is open from 8 to 11; Jerusalem from 3 to 6, etc. Many foreigners assumed that the closures were imposed by the Israelis. It was news to them when they learned that the Palestinians decided on the closures. This shows you the real change in the power balance.



# SS Report

## Not Afraid»

At the beginning, the soldiers tried to force open the shops. Now they don't even try, because they can't. The Palestinians set the schedule. When I was in Nablus, I was just getting out at 10 a.m. and I heard stones being thrown in the air and bouncing off the tin roofs. It was a warning to anyone who still had his shop open. It's amazing how people live up to these closing times. The soldiers are dictated by the closing times. When the shops open, everyone arrives, and so do the soldiers.

### THE PALESTINIAN SECTOR

The shops are closed for a number of reasons. First of all, it shows that the situation is not normal and not acceptable to the people. It hurts the sale of Israeli products. It gets the business sector involved in the uprising. That is one thing that is different from before: This is not a revolt led by students, for example. Every sector is involved. Of course, things like pharmacies, hospitals and bakeries stay open - sometimes 24 hours a day. The workers are striking in Israeli factories, but those who work for Palestinian concerns do not strike, because they want to increase the use of the Palestinian sector, and decrease

the use of the Israeli sector. I spoke to people working in the Palestinian sector, who told me that they don't keep their salaries. The money is redistributed by the local committees in their villages, to whoever is most needy. So those who are working are helping those who aren't.

The last week I was there, the Israelis imported about 2,000 Portuguese workers to replace Palestinian strikers. They were put in a settlement in the Gaza Strip to live. But this is not going to work. The Palestinian workers have to provide their own food and shelter. For imported workers, the Israelis have to pay.

When it comes to relief efforts and people want to send medical supplies, the Palestinians now say, «No, we want money so that we can buy from our own factories.» In terms of medicine and medical care, there is enough available if there was enough money. The hospitals are there and there are a lot of Palestinian doctors and nurses. There is only some shortage in specialized areas like physical and occupational therapy, because the many people whose hands have been broken by the Israeli soldiers need this in order to regain their abilities. The Palestinians don't want foreign therapists to come and do the job. They want them to come and train the people there; that's a very clear demand. They want financial relief, not supplies; there are Palestinian medical supply companies there.

### CONTROL OF THE STREETS

The Palestinians pretty much control the streets and roads of the occupied territories. One day we were traveling in Gaza on a day of general strike. Since we were a delegation, we wanted to see what was happening, but some children started stoning our vehicle, since no one should be moving on a strike day. It was interesting to see a 50-year-old Palestinian get out of the truck to negotiate with the five-year-old boy who was manning the roadblock. Finally, the man convinced the boy that we should pass. So now there are Palestinian roadblocks where you must get permission to pass, not only Israeli roadblocks.

In a lot of ways, these are for the Palestinians own protection. The soldiers and settlers are quite violent and will spare no lives. By Palestinian roadblocks I mean huge stones placed ►



in the middle of the road. This stops soldiers from entering in military vehicles. They have to enter on foot. The soldiers come in busloads to demonstrations. You can see that the bulk of the forces of the Israeli army is in the occupied territories. The soldiers have to get out of their buses. They come running to the demonstration and are confronted by fearless Palestinians who throw stones at them. The soldiers are actually afraid of the stones and they back off. They start shooting tear gas and depending where it is, they pretty soon open up with live ammunition.

I witnessed a confrontation at Ramallah hospital one day. It was Women's Day, and there were demonstrations all over the territories. In the afternoon, women and others gathered at Ramallah hospital because we had heard there was a killing in Mazraah Al Sharqia village. They gathered to honor the martyr. On top of the hospital, there was a large Palestinian flag. I watched the soldiers advance, and the people throw stones at them; the soldiers would retreat and then advance once more, and the Palestinians would advance and throw more stones. Sometimes the soldiers would throw the stones back and then they used tear gas... This went on for hours. The people were on all sides, so the soldiers would have had to confront them from ten different streets to actually stop this demonstration. More wounded and dead were coming into the hospital...

### «NON—LETHAL» WEAPONS

I understand now that in the Nablus area, the Israelis have used a new, so-called non-lethal weapon, a halftrack tank that spits gravel all over. It's like a cement mixer that shoots. This was used one time before I left. I did not see it, but I was told that it breaks every window, everything in sight. It is different from the other weapon they use to throw rocks back at demonstrators.

There is a lot of concern now about the gases being used, which are made in the USA. Different gases are being used and people can tell the difference by the smell. I was in Jerusalem one day when tear-gasing went on twice in a row. It was very clear that the second gas was somehow different - you started vomiting. Now there is a large problem with trimester miscarriages. It has been showing up since December. It's quite severe, particularly in Gaza. It is very clear that this is the result of the gas, and there is research being done now to prove it. We have to use this in the USA to show people what their tax dollars are doing. The Palestinians have the data and they have analyses done on these gases. It's clear it's causing miscarriages. It's also causing the death of young children and old people. You can pick up a cannister, because they are everywhere in the streets, and it says: «Made in USA, 1987 -Warning, do not use in closed places - can be lethal.» It's all written right on the containers. Tear gas is also used from helicopters; there are many methods.

### RAIDS AND ARRESTS

One night I spent in a village, Kafr Al Diq. At 5 a.m. we were awakened by helicopters over the roof. The Israeli military brought two helicopters, two busloads of soldiers and two patrol jeeps of soldiers to raid the village. They were looking for fifteen people; they arrested five and couldn't find the other ten, so they left messages for them to show up at the

military headquarters. They took the flag from the top of the mosque and the loudspeakers from the mosque.

These things are very common. They are trying to cut off the head of the uprising, and they never seem to do it, no matter how many people they put in prison or administrative detention. Nothing stops, so they go for another layer and another and another... But my view is that no matter how many people they arrest, it will not change anything. Everybody knows what's happening; everybody is aware of the strategy. It's the main topic of conversation among old women, among children, among all. The uprising is unified and highly coordinated. There is no dissent. I did not hear one person say that it is wrong what they are doing. There is total unity and total willingness to continue. Although the deaths and the injuries are upsetting the people, they know that's the price they have to pay for freedom, and they are not afraid to pay it.

### SCHULTZ'S VISIT

We were there during the week Schultz came. Three-year-old children were saying: Schultz, Schultz. It was amazing. Everyone knew Schultz was coming, and everyone knew what that meant. The day before he came, Jerusalem was heavily fortified. I was in the Old City the day of his visit, and soldiers were everywhere. What I saw most was beatings. They would take any young boy or man on the streets, and just beat him. You know, Ariel Sharon took a house in the Old City by the Damascus Gate. They actually take people in there and beat them. We saw it happen: This is what this house is being used for.

There were total general strikes all week; nothing was open. There were days when I was walking through Jerusalem and all of a sudden you would hear all this noise - bottles breaking and gunshots. You get used to these sounds - You hear a certain sound and you assume there are beatings. You hear another sound and you know its shootings, another sound and it's tear gas. There will be tires burning in the streets of Jerusalem, and the next day it happens again. It's so obvious when you walk down the streets, the soldiers are just waiting for something to happen, but they don't know what, where, how, when... They have to put all their forces into Jerusalem, because they are afraid of what will happen next.

### WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

The uprising comprises all sectors, all classes, and the women have a very prominent role. One thing is that they have to make do and feed their families on very little, because there is only very little available. Another thing is that whenever a soldier grabs a boy, whatever women are around, one of them will start screaming, «That is my son, you can't take him.» All the women in the area will come and swarm the soldiers and start screaming and kicking the soldier, telling him to release the boy. It works most of the time, so they are really protecting a lot of people. They are very active, and they are fearless; they are everywhere, and many have been shot.

The different women's committees are together, united, holding demonstrations and sit-ins at the Red Cross; then they march. A lot of time and attention is being focused on medical relief right now. Some of the other activities generally sponsored by the women's committees, such as day care, are not so important now when nobody is working. There is no school, so

some of the training and day care these committees were doing is now being deemphasized. Instead, the women are going to villages and camps to find out where the needs are greatest. They are providing a real source of information to the medical committees as to where the needs are.

The existing women's groups have been reoriented to the needs of the uprising. For example, many women are teachers, so many of the women in the committees are now working with the teachers' union to convince them to open the schools, as has been called for by the United National Leadership of the Uprising. It is not easy to force the schools open. You need the cooperation of the teachers and parents, to say that they are ready to open the schools by force.

Now in many places, the schools have been occupied by the soldiers, since so many forces are needed in the occupied territories. It is no longer such that they are soldiers by day and go home at night. They are sleeping in the schools. In Nablus, I saw whole schools occupied by soldiers. In Gaza, I saw camp after camp where soldiers now live. In East Jerusalem, they have taken over a hotel.

To get back to the role of the women: Another thing they are doing is sewing flags, as these have to be produced quickly and in big quantities. Almost all the flags I saw were handsewn. There was a women's demonstration in Jerusalem on International Women's Day. It lasted only five minutes because the soldiers came immediately and started shooting at the women. It shows how threatened they are. They arrested five women who stayed under interrogation for five days. By the way, I didn't see any Israeli female forces in the territories at all.



## CONDITIONS FOR SURVIVAL

There is no difference between the West Bank and Gaza Strip in terms of the people's goals, but the situation in the Gaza Strip is different, because the people don't have land, and a higher percentage work in 'Israel'. I think that who is going to survive the Israeli blockade best is the *felâheen* (peasants). Even from my own experience, I could see how conditions had become more difficult. Before, when you went to a village, the people brought all the food they possibly could. Now you get what they themselves are producing or able to pick. In the cities and camps where the people have no land, it's going to be more difficult to survive because they have to buy commodities.

There are differences between the situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It took longer for the West Bank to become totally involved in the uprising, but it's very clear that this has happened. In the West Bank, there is a large business class, a large bourgeoisie, but these people are now clearly part of the uprising, and I think that is the real critical point in the strikes. In the Gaza Strip, the people are under constant attack, but they are constantly revolting. We had more trouble travelling in the Strip than in the West Bank. Even though they are more besieged, they are also more in control of their area. You cannot move in Gaza without getting Palestinian approval.

The hospitals in Gaza are really incredible. We saw horrible things. Al Shifa, the major hospital, has been raided and tear-gassed; wounded have been taken out. We also saw Ansar II prison camp which was built for maximum 200 people, but now holds 800. In the hospitals, it is really horrible to see people with casts from their fingers to their shoulders because of beatings where the soldiers just hold their arms out and beat them. In fact, the soldiers have new clubs now, made of plastic, so they won't break.

## THE NEW FASCISTS

The women in our group were all different in some way; they had different levels of knowledge. One of them was a pretty well-known writer in the USA, who happens to be Jewish. On this trip, seeing the victims of the beatings, the razor cuts, boiling water poured on children, she broke down at one point, crying and saying that she was ashamed to be a Jew, and that the Israelis' reign of terror reminded her of Nazi Germany. One day we went to Al Khalil (Hebron). The city was curfewed and she went up to the commanding officer and asked why he was doing this. He said he was just following orders, and she said, «That's what the Nazis said». This is not the kind of woman who would randomly make such a comment; she really believed that what she saw was Nazi-like treatment. Everyone is a potential victim, the soldiers enter any house at random and beat whoever they want. There were people who had been beaten with rifle butts and clubs; then the soldiers take them to military areas and start to slice their backs with razors - this is sick.

About the little girl who had boiling water poured on her: The soldiers were looking for her brother in a Gaza camp. They went into the house and couldn't find him, so they poured boiling water over a four-year-old. I was in one house in a village near Nablus. Soldiers were chasing some children and claimed they were in this particular house, but couldn't find them. Nonetheless, they beat the mother, three of the daughters and one of the sons of the family. The mother suffered a broken wrist; they all had to receive medical treatment. This is the same village where soldiers dropped a couple of kids from their helicopter.

When the group left, they were all strip-searched, even the nuns, and interrogated separately for two hours each. Their notebooks were taken and kept for a long time. I left later, and was escorted by several agents from the airline counter to the plane. I couldn't even say good-bye to the friends who had brought me to the airport. Every single thing in my luggage was taken apart. It was disgusting, and this is what some call «the only democracy in the Middle East.»!!!



# Rumblings in the Zionist State

The Palestinian people's heroic uprising has led to further polarization in the Zionist state. Labor-Likud friction has escalated, and there are realignments among Israeli parties. New dissenting groups have surfaced, as has discontent in the army. At the same time, polls show a move toward the small parties of the extreme right, and it is yet unclear which of the two major blocs in Israeli politics will come out ahead in the event of elections.

## CONSENSUS ON REPRESSION

In terms of how to deal with Palestinian unrest in the immediate situation, the Israeli coalition government has displayed a high degree of unity, fully backing the army's repression. On December 24th, the cabinet approved the methods used to suppress the uprising, including shooting to kill, the banning of the Palestinian press and mass arrests hitting Palestinians as young as ten years of age. In late December, the inner cabinet met to consider stronger measures to halt the uprising, ordering the deportation of nine Palestinians. Four of them were deported on January 13th.

On January 17th, the whole cabinet endorsed the brutal measures being implemented by the occupation army, which had escalated to include sealing about 300,000 Palestinians in their West Bank and Gaza Strip camps, causing food shortages, and the policy of «beating not bullets,» i.e., the deliberate breaking of bones and other forms of maiming.

As the government followed the typical Zionist pattern of closing ranks in the face of any real or supposed threat, polls showed that this position reflected public opinion. As reported by the Israeli newspaper, *Yediot Aharanot*, on December 25th, 96% of the Israelis polled by the Dahev Institution concurred with the army's measures. Later, Gallup conducted a poll for *Newsweek* magazine, which was printed in the Israeli daily *Haaretz* on January 18th; 86% of those who responded supported repressive means to end the uprising; 81% supported the expulsion policy; 40% thought the measures being taken were lenient and

insufficient, while 46% judged them to be sufficient.

There did seem to be some hesitancy about restricting the press from the occupied territories, because the Zionist leadership was loath to make the obvious parallel between itself and the apartheid regime in South Africa. However, parts of the Gaza Strip were declared off-limits to the press in January, and the press was barred from the West Bank in early March, after worldwide viewing of the CBS film of four Israeli soldiers brutally and deliberately beating two tied Palestinians in Nablus. Israeli Labor Minister justified the ban with the absurd claim that: «... the presence of the media causes the riots.»

Labor's convergence with Likud on beating down the uprising with brute force did have internal repercussions in the party. Member of Knesset Abdul Wahhab Al Darawsheh (a Palestinian living under occupation since 1948) withdrew from the Labor Party on January 23rd, under the impact of the huge Nazareth demonstration in solidarity with the uprising. He charged that Labor policies would never bring peace or equality between Arab and Jew in 'Israel' and further targeted

Rabin's tough policy and the broad support this enjoyed in the party's ranks. Darawsheh went on record with his own position of recognizing the PLO, and demanding Israeli withdrawal to the pre-1967 borders and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

Dovish forces in the Labor party argued for a course other than that set by Rabin, and articulated by Peres as follows: «First of all, the fire in the occupied territories must be put out, using as much force as necessary.» Such people were pressured by the party not to participate in Peace Now events. After Rabin was received in a hostile manner by a group of fellow Laborites, many of them Oriental Jewish activists, Labor rightists held a meeting of their own and threatened to cause a split in the party «if the dovish rampage is not stopped» (*Israel and Palestine Political Report*, January 1988).

## LABOR—LIKUD COMPETITION

Differences did sharpen between the Labor and Likud blocs on the means to a political solution to the crisis caused by the uprising. The two blocs traded accusations as to the uprising's causes. Laborites accused the Likud of driving the Palestinians to revolt by rejecting means to a political solution, such as an international conference. Likud and other extreme rightists claimed that Labor's «defeatism» had encouraged the Palestinians to revolt. To put this war of words in perspective, let us look at an example of Labor's «defeatism»: On December 26th, on Israeli army radio, Defense Minister Rabin, lifelong





Protest in Washington D.C. against Shamir's March visit to the USA.

Laborite, described Israeli withdrawal from the (1967) occupied territories as a «first class defeat» which would lead to more «terrorism», and declared his unconditional support to the continuation of Israeli military rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

As the uprising escalated, Peres took the opportunity on January 18th, to call for early elections. Friction has continued between the two blocs, focusing on the Schultz plan which Shamir has refused to bring to a vote in the cabinet, because in his words, «...people in Israeli are divided» (Associated Press, March 16th). A poll published in the Israeli newspaper *Hadashot* a few days earlier indicated that 46.2% of Israelis support the US plan, while 36.7% oppose it. Aides to Shamir are reportedly worried that negotiations with King Hussein of Jordan are irrelevant, since he has no control over the Palestinians (*International Herald Tribune*, March 3rd). In any case, by early March, Shamir had indicated that the Likud too was ready for early elections.

As of this writing, polls show that the Israeli electorate is almost evenly

divided between the two major blocks; several polls indicate a shift towards the smaller parties on both ends of the political spectrum, with the extreme right gaining most. On January 26th, the results of a straw poll conducted by a Tel Aviv institute showed that Likud would receive 33.6% of the votes versus the 31.9% it received in 1984. KACH would gain six Knesset seats versus the one it has now. The Tehiyeh Party would gain five seats versus the two it has now. (This ultralight party had three seats, but lost one when Rafael Eitan withdrew to form his own party, Ometz.)

Another poll was published by the Israeli daily *Maariv* on February 9th, also indicating that the shift to the extreme right was more pronounced than that to the left. This poll showed that the Tehiyeh Party would gain nine seats in the event of new elections. KACH would gain six, while HADASH (Front for Peace and Equality) and the Progressive List for Peace together would gain seven seats as opposed to the six they have now. The Citizens Rights Movement would gain six seats as opposed to the three it now has.

## REALIGNMENTS

This picture is further blurred by a series of political realignments, with Likud taking the brunt of the losses. In late January, Moshe Amirav, Central Committee member of the Herut Party (of Begin and the main component of the Likud), tore up his membership card, claiming that thousands concur with his position of searching for a new, practical path to peace, and would leave Likud as well.

Earlier in January, the mayor of Tel Aviv, Shlomo Lahet, a Likud member, had called on the government to «return» the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Jordan, in order to find a political settlement.

On February 1st, a new party was formed - the Center Movement, composed of Moshe Amirav and twenty other former members of Herut, and 363 persons from Shinui, the Independent Liberals and the Liberal Center Party. The president of this new party declared that it would be a centrist party, between the Likud and Labor, and would not be a partner in the Likud, but would ally with the party that calls for peace negotiations via an interna-

tional conference, with the Palestinians participating in a joint Jordanian delegation.

On the other hand, efforts to merge the Citizens Rights Movement and Mapam failed, but the two agreed on electoral coordination. These parties call for Israeli withdrawal from the (1967) occupied territories lest 'Israel' become a binational state.

## ISRAELI PROTEST

Beyond the realm of official party politics, there have been a series of protests against Israeli brutality in the territories. Peace Now and Down with the Occupation organized the biggest demonstrations in 'Israel' since the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. On December 19th, 3,000 marched in Tel Aviv in protest of the government's measures in the occupied territories. Again in Tel Aviv, during the seventh week of the uprising, 100,000 Israelis demonstrated in support of a political solution. On March 12th, in Tel Aviv, 100,000 Israelis marched, demanding Israeli withdrawal from the (1967) occupied territories. Peace Now leader Tzali Rashiv delivered a speech, emphasizing that peace could not be established between occupier and occupied, but between two equals.

Since December, there has been a wave of smaller-scale protests as well, some of them expressing direct solidarity with the Palestinians under siege. Another significant expression of dissent was the statement, signed by over 600 Israeli academics, including the former president of the Hebrew University, expressing grave concern about the future of 'Israel'. According to the *Jerusalem Post*, February 2nd, these academics have joined in a campaign to end the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and are working to spread the campaign to all the Israeli universities.

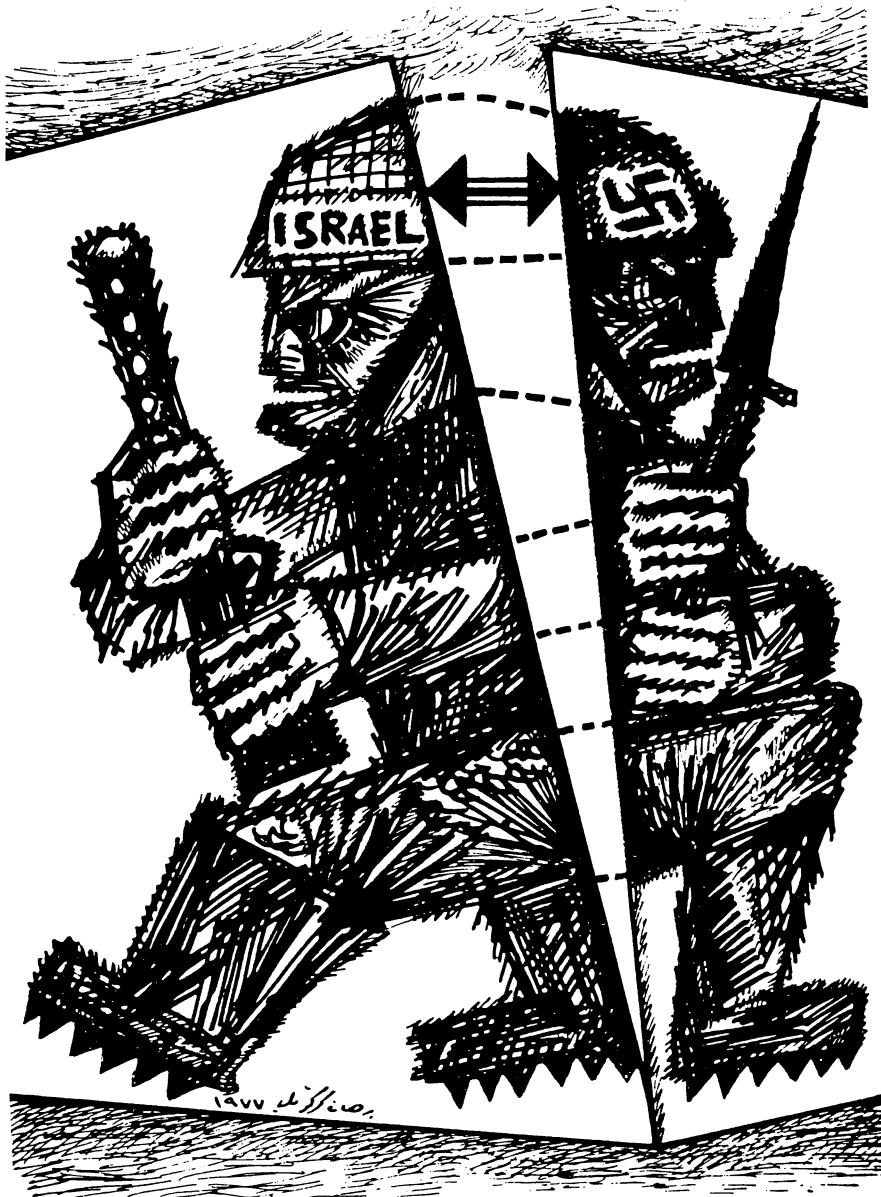
Perhaps the most important dissent was that which emerged among soldiers. By the third week of the Palestinian uprising, over 160 reservists and new draftees had refused to serve in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. There is a Limit, the movement that emerged among soldiers during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, distributed a statement declaring that they would not

be «blind weapons in anyone's hand.» Israeli soldiers were called upon to desist from participation in repression. The statement noted that twenty years of occupation and repression had not stopped the Palestinians from struggling, and that the uprising had exposed the high price extracted by the occupation and the absence of a political solution.

By this time, there were more Israeli soldiers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip than at the time of their capture in 1967. Zeev Schiff, foremost Israeli commentator on military affairs, told *Newsweek* magazine (February 8th edition), that Israeli soldiers are «confused and frustrated... doing demoralizing police work, confronting

women and children.» He characterized the Israeli army's performance during the uprising as a failure: «Despite the great military might we've built up over the past 40 years... the IDF has been a powerless giant in the face of this uprising... events of the last few weeks have written the darkest chapter in the history of our military forces... Worst of all, by stooping to indiscriminate beating of hundreds of people, it widened the cycle of Arab-Israeli hostility and violated moral borders that should never have been crossed.»

In the same interview, Schiff castigated the Israeli intelligence service's failure to predict the uprising as «even worse than their failure to foresee the 1973 Yom Kippur war. At



that time, our intelligence people failed to understand what was going on in Cairo and in Damascus. This time, they didn't read the situation in our own backyard.» Schiff noted the future security implications of failure to find a political solution: «If a war breaks out in the future, we will have to keep more forces in the territories to safeguard the settlements, the roads and our military supply depots... And unless we move fast and vigorously to satisfy the demands for equality by the 700,000 Israeli Arabs, we will have an enemy in our very midst. Our security position could become precarious.»

## NEW GROUPS

Under the impact of the uprising, a number of new groups have emerged in opposition to Israeli government policy vis-a-vis the occupied territories:

- Israelis by Choice was formed by a group of old and recent immigrants who consider that the repression exercised by the Israeli army is a betrayal of the ideals which prompted them to come to 'Israel'. This group issued a leaflet saying: «We chose to be Israelis, and therefore we are struggling against the occupation.» They demand a political solution via immediate negotiations with the Palestinians.

- Bridge for Peace was also formed in opposition to official policy and has organized a campaign of blood donations to West Bank and Gaza hospitals.

- The National Circle was formed on January 13th, demanding a political solution for the West Bank and Gaza Strip in view of «the demographic threat and the potential threat of Israel becoming a binational state.»

- People with Conscience was formed the same day by Arab Jews who sent a food convoy to the besieged Gaza Strip, and began a hunger strike to last until the trucks entered the Strip.

- Red Line - Jews and Arabs Against Occupation was established on February 13th, to unify Israeli and (Palestinian) Arab protest and reach out to public opinion in order to end the occupation. The founding convention, held at a settlement in the Galilee, planned peace marches and a petition campaign.

- Year 21 was established in Jerusalem by residents who will not serve in the

Israeli army in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; 1,000 people, including prominent Israeli professionals, have signed the Year 21 petition, condemning the occupation and calling for a boycott of Israeli products manufactured in the settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Year 21 members assert that 21 years of occupation have created a new mentality and behavior among Israelis.

## MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF OCCUPATION

The moral and material costs of maintaining Zionist security in the face of all-out Palestinian revolt raised new questions as to the very future of 'Israel'. Several factors contributed to this, not least of which was that Palestinians who have lived under Zionist occupation since 1948, joined in the uprising. Such questions, actually raised by the first Day of the Land in 1976, posed themselves with new weight. Israelis may have become somewhat accustomed to displays of Palestinian nationalism in Nazareth and Um Al Fahem, sites of high Palestinian concentration. This time they were shocked when the small Palestinian communities left in Acca, Lydda and Jaffa, now considered Israeli cities of mixed population, also staged mass demonstrations.

Another factor contributing to Israeli uncertainty is the specter of international isolation presented by disillusionment with 'Israel' and its supposedly democratic character among the US public and American Jewish community. Such concern was evident at the mid-February protest in Tel Aviv by Israeli intellectuals, where playwright Danny Horowitz read aloud a foreign newsclip describing how Israeli soldiers had tied Palestinian boys on the hood of their jeep to ward off stone-throwing.

In an unprecedented public display of criticism, Rabbi Schindler, leader of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, called on Israeli Defense Minister Rabin to stop the beating policy (*Los Angeles Times*, January 25th). In the same week, the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress protested the Israeli army's use of force. In March, Michael Lerner, pro-Israeli editorial writer for

the Jewish magazine, *Tikkun*, wrote that the uprising has «precipitated the greatest crisis facing the American Jewish community since the Holocaust.» The director of the Middle East section of the American Jewish Committee, Dr. George Gruen, stated that American Jews are overcome by «feelings of anguish» not only for Palestinians but for Israeli soldiers as well (*The Guardian*, March 15th). This last statement illustrates that much of this type of critique is based on the idea of saving 'Israel' from itself.

The flurry of criticism and dissent elicited by the Zionist state's brutality against Palestinian civilians has not, however, crystallized into clear, new alternatives. The platforms put forward by the new Israeli groups, like that of the largest movement, Peace Now, do show that a broad sector of Israeli society opposes occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and longs for a political solution. However, the reasons for this position are varied, and the solutions proposed by these groups generally fail to address the fundamental causes of the problem, i.e., the nature of Zionism and 'Israel' on the one hand, and the totality of the Palestinian cause on the other. Despite the new movements, the genuinely democratic Israeli forces remain small and isolated, though the current uprising certainly gives them opportunities for growth. The Israeli forces of influence who do propose an alternative to Israeli government policy, such as Rakah (the Israeli Communist Party), are highly dependent on support from Palestinian Arabs living in the Zionist state.

In the overall picture, the sector of Israeli society that yearns for peace may be overwhelmed by the opposite move to the right, a common tendency in reactionary states whose underpinnings are being challenged. There are signs of the electorate moving to the extreme right-wing fringe, along with the increasing participation of settlers in the army's repression against Palestinians. Prolongation of the uprising will undoubtedly lead to a clearer crystallization of the contradictory tendencies in the Israeli society, allowing for more precise analysis in the future.

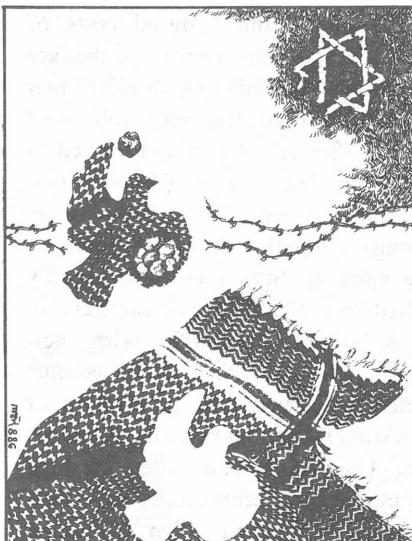
# Impact of the Uprising on the Arab World

There is no doubt that the current uprising in occupied Palestine is a major turning point on the road to achieving the goals of our people. This article covers the major effects of the uprising on the Arab level and the most urgent tasks of the Arab liberation movement.

First, the uprising restored the prominence of the Palestinian cause and the Arab-Israeli conflict, after these issues had been purposely marginalized, as at the latest Arab summit in Amman. Second, the uprising served to stimulate Arab officialdom. The Arab foreign ministers met especially to discuss means of supporting the uprising. Third, the uprising forced the Amal movement to lift the 32-month old siege on the Palestinian camps in Beirut. Fourth, on the popular level, the uprising ushered in a new stage of revolutionary action. The effects of the uprising have spread to the whole Arab arena. This is particularly the case in Jordan and Egypt, where the regimes continue maneuvers to foil the uprising on the pretext of preparing the atmosphere to search for peace. These two regimes have suppressed mass demonstrations with methods similar to those used by the Israelis.

## THE OFFICIAL ARAB POSITION

The extraordinary Amman Summit of Nov. 8-11, 1987, was a dangerous step backwards for the official Arab position. For the first time since the initial Arab summit in 1964, the Arab-Israeli conflict was a secondary issue. This contrasted sharply with the whole tradition of Arab summits, which arose from the need to discuss the Arab-Israeli conflict and the means of confronting the Zionist threat that encompasses the Arab countries in general, not only Palestine. This threat has materialized in Israeli participation in the British-French aggression on Egypt in 1956. In 1964, 'Israel' began a plan to divert the Jordan River waters. Then came the 1967 aggression that resulted in the occupation of the rest of



Postcard issued in solidarity with the uprising by the Union of Iraqi Democrats.

Palestine, and parts of Egypt and Syria as well. The biggest threat was the bilateral treaty signed between Egypt and 'Israel' in 1979, that was followed by the annexation of Jerusalem and the Golan Heights in 1981. 'Israel' invaded South Lebanon in 1978 and major parts of Lebanon in 1982, occupying Lebanese territory. 'Israel' has even raided distant Arab capitals: Baghdad in 1981 and Tunis in 1985.

Yet, the Amman Summit disregarded the Arab-Israeli conflict, moving it to third place after the Iran-Iraq war and settling inter-Arab disagreements in order to restore «Arab solidarity».

One of the most dangerous results of the Amman Summit was dropping the slogan of an independent Palestinian state, raised in the Rabat Summit in 1974 and officially adhered to since then.

Another extremely dangerous move was the decision that: «diplomatic relations between any Arab League member state and the Arab Republic of Egypt is a sovereign matter to be

decided by each state in accordance with its constitution and laws.»

At the Baghdad Summit in 1978, the Arab countries had agreed that «it is an essential, inviolable principle to prohibit any Arab party from signing a separate agreement regarding a solution to the Palestinian problem in particular, and the Arab-Israeli conflict in general. The accords signed by the Egyptian regime at Camp David were considered «a violation of the rights of the Palestinian people and the Arab nation» and as having been concluded «outside the framework of the Arab consensus and in conflict with the resolutions of the Arab summits and not leading to the just peace aspired to by the Arab nation.» Egypt was subsequently boycotted.

Until this very day, the Egyptian regime adheres to the Camp David accords. Moreover, the vice-president of the ruling National Party flew to occupied Jerusalem shortly after the Amman Summit, to celebrate with the Israelis the tenth anniversary of Sadat's visit to 'Israel'. Meanwhile, nine Arab states resumed diplomatic relations with Egypt in less than a week. The only Arab countries that have not resumed relations with Egypt are Syria, Lebanon, Libya and Algeria. (Democratic Yemen resumed relations with Egypt in February 1988).

## NEW FOCUS ON PALESTINE

The results of the Arab foreign ministers' council, held on Jan. 23-24, 1988, in Tunis, attest to the repercussions of the uprising on the official Arab position. True, the meeting was convened late - six weeks after the uprising began. However, it was evident that the uprising had imposed the Palestinian cause on Arab officialdom, serving as a direct retort to the Amman Summit that completely neglected the Palestinian question. In the meeting, the Arab foreign ministers expressed their countries' strong support for the Palestinian people's uprising and continuous struggle against the Zionist occupation. The council took several

decisions in this regard: Condemning Israeli oppression; calling for international sanctions against 'Israel'; providing material and moral support to the Palestinian people; starting an international media campaign to expose the true nature of 'Israel'; calling on the UN Security Council to adopt resolutions to end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab land; and putting the Arab League's Secretary General in charge of gathering information on Israeli human rights violations. The council also formed a seven-state committee, composed of foreign ministers, the responsible of the PLO's Political Department and the Arab League's General Secretary, to draw up a plan for an Arab initiative.

There is no doubt that the council's resolutions expressed the will of the Arab masses and their nationalist forces, who imposed this position on their respective governments. The Arab governments' new position is the opposite of that taken exactly two months earlier, in the Amman Summit. The uprising forced the Arab governments to promise not only moral, but material support.

Although these resolutions are positive, as of yet there is no proof that any of them has been implemented. So far, moral support from the public opinion and progressive governments in other parts of the world has been more effective than the support given by the Arab governments. While one resolution of the foreign ministers' council clearly emphasized «mobilising the Arab popular forces to support the uprising», this was not materialized in the form of demonstrations and rallies in many Arab countries. On the contrary, in several instances, the authorities fired on Arab citizens who attempted to demonstrate peacefully. Moreover, while 'Israel' strove to suppress the uprising with violence, several Arab regimes, particularly those in Egypt and Jordan, engaged themselves in political maneuvers at the US's behest, attempting to abort the uprising.

## SUPPRESSING THE POPULAR WILL — JORDAN

In Jordan, the authorities repressed all attempts by the people to express

support to the uprising. Moreover, the intelligence services arrested scores of nationalists and trade unionists. On December 31st, 28 people were arrested, including Hamdi Matar, member of the Palestinian National Council and of the PFLP's Politbureau. In the following days, more patriots were arrested, including many Jordanian and Palestinian writers and journalists. Reports from Jordan say that the security forces are deployed on all the main roads and in the Palestinian camps to abort any mass movement. The tense atmosphere created by the security forces is comparable to that which prevailed immediately after the 1970 massacre of Palestinians in Jordan (Black September).

Government agents are spread everywhere to sabotage mass gatherings, such as the rally that took place in the professional and trade unions' headquarters on Dec. 23rd, when agents created disorder, ejecting the speaker from the stage and dispersing the audience. The authorities also suppressed a demonstration in the Palestinian camp, Baqa'a, on Dec. 25th, and prevented the 1,500 demonstrators from reaching the main street outside the camp.

During the solidarity week that commenced on Jan. 23rd, the intelligence forces interfered to guarantee the failure of all the planned events. On Jan. 24th, people gathered at midnight to march in a demonstration, but the intelligence forces attacked them and arrested many. Despite the authorities' threats, hundreds of people marched through the streets of Amman and the city of Zarqa'a.

The uprising has proven that our people reject all King Hussein's plans such as joint Israeli—Jordanian administration and «improving the quality of life» (for Palestinians under the 1967 occupation). The uprising has also foiled King Hussein's attempts to usurp the PLO's representation of the Palestinian people. It has served as a popular referendum, confirming that the Palestinian people rally around the PLO, their sole legitimate representative. They are struggling for the PLO's program of repatriation, self-determination and an independent Palestinian state, which was disregarded by the king.

As the uprising escalates, King Hussein's crisis gets deeper. He is no longer capable of going forward towards direct negotiations with 'Israel'. At the same time, he is unable to persuade the US and 'Israel' to accept an international conference with enough substance to provide a cover for direct negotiations. For this reason, he toured the West European countries to convince them to pressure their allies in Washington and Tel Aviv to accept such an international framework for direct negotiations. Incidentally, the Jordanian regime has again begun to speak about the PLO's participation in an international conference, preconditioned on the PLO's acceptance of UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, renouncing «violence» and agreeing to discuss the Palestinian problem in all its aspects, i.e., that the solution arrived at be a final one.

King Hussein has recently made statements of willingness to resume relations with the PLO, based on the February, 1985 Amman accord, after having himself halted coordination with the PLO in February 1986. Clearly this position came about as a result of the uprising that promoted the PLO's position locally and internationally.

## EGYPT

As in Jordan, demonstrations broke out in Egypt in support of the uprising, and were oppressed by the security forces. In Cairo, hundreds of students demonstrated at universities and Al Azhar mosque, but the central security forces prevented them from marching in the streets. Several students were arrested on campus. The demonstrators raised slogans in support of the uprising, and demanded that their government break relations with 'Israel' and expel the Israeli ambassador in Cairo. On Dec. 30th, a group of Egyptian nationalist lawyers burned the Israeli flag in a massive rally outside the Lawyers' Guild headquarters in Cairo.

On Jan. 5th, thousands of Ain Shams university students clashed with riot police. The demonstrators were commemorating the anniversary of the martyrdom of Suleiman Khater, who assassinated Israeli tourists in the Sinai in October 1985, and died under torture ►



Demonstrations at Ain Shams

in an Egyptian jail in January 1986. The demonstrators clashed with the police for over three hours, throwing stones, while the police fired gas bombs and arrested 30 people. Immediately after this incident, Egypt's interior minister issued a decree prohibiting demonstrations in all parts of Egypt.

Meanwhile, on the same day, over 200 Egyptian lawyers organized a sit-in in their guild headquarters. The building was surrounded by the security forces. On Feb 10th, many lawyers

were arrested after holding a press conference. On February 12th, thousands marched from the mosque after Friday prayers, chanting slogans in support of the Palestinian people, and demanding that the government abrogate the Camp David accords.

The Egyptian authorities also repressed a Palestinian demonstration in Canada camp, in the Egyptian half of Rafah. (This Palestinian town in the Gaza Strip, on the border with Egypt, was divided down the middle by the

provisions of the Camp David accords, whereby the Sinai was returned to Egypt. Rows of houses were bulldozed, leaving a no-man's-land, divided by barbed wire fences.) The authorities opened fire on the demonstrators who were trying to cross the barbed wire to take food to the besieged Palestinians on the other side. Many were injured. Moreover, the Egyptian authorities have restricted media coverage of the uprising. The main TV station broadcast short news, but without pictures, to avoid further inciting the Egyptian masses.

The uprising has caused the Egyptian regime a great deal of embarrassment. After the Amman Summit allowed Arab countries to resume relations with Egypt, Mubarak's regime was attempting to play a new role, reentering the political arena with a new settlement, in order to regain the leading role Egypt had lost. Then came the uprising, but Mubarak did not even withdraw the Egyptian ambassador from 'Israel' in protest of Zionist brutality. Instead, Mubarak forwarded a new initiative calling upon all parties to halt «acts of violence» for six months, and a moratorium on settlement-building in the same period, in order to begin the search for a solution to the Palestinian problem. The worst part of this initiative, reminiscent of the role of the Arab rulers in aborting the 1936 revolt in Palestine, was that it equated the mass revolt with the occupiers' brutality.

Mubarak flew to Washington to present his peace plan to the US government. In an interview on American television, Mubarak explained his plan. He did not mention an independent Palestinian state, but said that he wanted to «restore the pre-1967 situation in the occupied territories under the Jordanian administration... Other details will be discussed later on...» at an international conference. While trying to convince the US administration to accept his plan, Mubarak called for discarding the words *Camp David accords*, because these are not accepted by the Arabs. For «psychological» reasons, he suggest to use another title for the same formula. There is no doubt that his initiative was stillborn. It was rejected by

the main parties to whom it was directed: 'Israel' and the Palestinian people.

## THE STEADFASTNESS COUNTRIES

The Arab nationalist regimes (Syria, Libya, Algeria and Democratic Yemen), have officially confirmed their total support to the uprising. Their media is daily broadcasting news about the uprising, and condemning the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary plans aimed at foiling the uprising.

Due to the increasing international attention focused on the Palestinian cause as a result of the uprising, the Amal movement felt called upon to lift the siege of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon that had lasted for 32 months. On January 16th, Nabil Berri announced that the siege would be lifted January 20th, «as a gift» to the Palestinian uprising. The prolonged siege, in conjunction with the camp war, has had disasterous effects on the ability of the Palestinian-Syrian-Lebanese nationalist alliance to confront their common enemy. The uprising served to reassert the unity of the Palestinian struggle whether inside or outside the occupied territories. It made the camp war and the siege a very embarrassing issue.

In Syria, the National Progressive Front organized a volunteer work day with the proceeds donated to support

the uprising. Government departments and shops closed all over Syria for two hours in compliance with the call of the United National Leadership of the Uprising. A number of mass demonstrations took place, such as the December 28th march of 6,000 people in Hama. In Yarmouk camp, 50,000 people demonstrated. Other activities took place, such as the children's sit-in at the Red Cross office in Damascus, and women's sit-ins in mosques. Memos were sent to international humanitarian organizations and to the UN, signed by children, and women's organizations.

There were strikes and demonstrations in the occupied Golan Heights, in solidarity with the uprising in occupied Palestine. In several instances, the Israeli army repressed the demonstrations, arresting many and preventing journalists from entering the area.

Although these acts of solidarity are positive, Syria's responsibility for confronting the common enemy requires that it move to reestablish relations with the PLO, bypassing past disagreements. This is very important in view of the new stage of the Arab-Israeli conflict ushered in by the uprising. Although there have recently been a series of PLO-Syrian contacts, there are no concrete results as yet.

In Algeria, the government opened a special bank account for financial support to the uprising, and called upon all citizens to deposit donations.

The party and mass organizations sponsored activities in all districts of the country, in coordination with the PLO office. Thousands of people marched through the streets of the main cities, carrying Palestinian flags and raising slogans condemning the Israeli occupation. Thousands of women signed a petition to the UN General Secretary, demanding the placement of UN forces in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, to protect the Palestinians, and Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab land.

President Shadli Ben Jadid launched an initiative for the convening of an extraordinary Arab summit to deal only with the uprising. This initiative was warmly welcomed by Palestinian leaders. PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat, PFLP General Secretary George Habash and DFLP General Secretary Naef Hawatmeh met to discuss means of supporting the uprising on March 14th, and afterwards met with the Algerian President Ben Jadid. A joint Palestinian-Algerian committee was formed to follow up the efforts to convene such a summit, aiming to convene it in early April. As of this writing, the necessary quorum of Arab states willing to participate exists.

The Arab People's Conference held its first session for 1988 in Algeria, and discussed the uprising at length. In the closing statement, the conference

Demonstration in Yarmouk camp



greeted the steadfast Palestinians in occupied Palestine, and expressed full support for the PLO.

The politbureau of the Yemeni Socialist Party held an extraordinary meeting to discuss means of supporting the uprising. It established a special committee for this purpose, divided into several subcommittees: the political and media committee to work in coordination with the PLO office in Aden; an activities committee to organize rallies and demonstrations in all districts; and a financial committee that started its work by printing a postage stamp symbolizing the uprising.

Despite all these positive activities, Democratic Yemen's recent decision to resume relations with Egypt remains unjustified.

In Libya, Colonel Qaddafi directed several televised messages to our people in occupied Palestine, encouraging them to be steadfast. Rallies were held in support of the uprising, and Libya made large donations to support the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

All in all, the uprising had a positive impact on the Arab level. Still, the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front countries must shoulder their national responsibilities in a more serious fashion. The front should develop coordination among its members in preparation for convening a summit, in order to play the distinguished role it is expected to play in confronting the imperialist-Zionist-Arab reactionary plans against the liberation struggle.

## ARAB COMMUNIST PARTIES AND LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

In several Arab countries, the communist parties and national liberation movements were active in arranging demonstrations and other forms of mass support to the uprising. However, some of these parties and forces contented themselves with issuing verbal support. This is unfortunate in view of the overall impact of the uprising. Since its inception, the Palestinian liberation struggle has been in the forefront in the struggle against the imperialist-Zionist enemy. The Palestinian revolution has been a catalyst and inspiration for the Arab national liberation movement.



Egyptian lawyers demonstrate.

The uprising did unleash the revolutionary spirit among the Egyptian masses, enabling the movement to wage a battle against Camp David. This provides the basis for developing the popular rejection of the regime's policies, i.e., Camp David and the attempts to foil the uprising, but the national movement still has a long way to go to build the struggle required to abrogate Camp David.

Arab communist and worker's parties signed two communiques saluting the Palestinian uprising that foiled the Israeli-Jordanian schemes, condemning the Israeli practices, and confirming that the only way to a lasting and just peace is an international conference that guarantees Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, and fulfills the rights of the Palestinian people to repatriation, self-determination and an independent state. (Statements to this effect were signed on December 15th and January 12th, by the Communist Parties of Palestine, Jordan, Sudan, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Syria and Egypt; and the Progress and Socialism party in Morocco, the National Liberation Front of Bahrain, the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman, and the Socialist Vanguard Party in Algeria.

The Arab national liberation movements, located in Algeria and Libya, issued statements in support of the uprising, saluting the PLO and the United Leadership of the Uprising. The Arab communist parties dealt with the uprising in all of their publications.

## LEBANON

Based on the long tradition of joint Palestinian—Lebanese struggle, the

Lebanese nationalist forces joined with the Palestinians in organizing mass activities in support of the uprising. In December, 75,000 Lebanese and Palestinians marched in Sidon. On February 12th, a huge mass rally was organized by the Progressive Socialist Party at Ba'aqleen in the mountains. It was well attended by other parties as well: the Communist Action Organization, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, the Lebanese Communist Party and the Nasserite Unificationist Movement, in addition to the PLO delegation led by Salah Salah, secretary of the Palestinian National Work Committee in Lebanon, and PFLP Politbureau member. Walid Jumblatt, president of the Progressive Socialist Party, delivered an important speech which impressed the audience and Arab political circles. He emphasized that any formula that disregards the PLO will be foiled, and urged the revival of the Palestinian—Syrian—Lebanese nationalist alliance.

★ ★ ★

In a short period, the uprising has achieved great victories on the political and mass level. This confirms that the masses are a decisive force in all the battles waged by the Arab liberation movement. Therefore it is the responsibility of the Arab liberation movement to mobilize broadly to motivate the masses to become a primary and effective party to the battle.

There are other tasks awaiting the Arab liberation movement, in order for it to recapture its leading role among the Arab masses, and to mobilize political and material support for the uprising and the PLO.

The first task is developing the cooperation among the different movements and moving from a minimal program to a revolutionary one. This step will enable the Arab liberation movement to enter this new stage of struggle, and achieve the goals of the Arab masses: genuine independence, freedom and social progress. The second task is the serious work needed to reestablish Palestinian-Syrian relations, in preparation for reviving the Palestinian — National Lebanese—Syrian alliance on a militant basis, to confront the US—Israeli schemes in the area.

# The Uprising Makes Waves Internationally

The Palestinians under occupation have turned the tables on US imperialism's plans to monopolize the search for a political settlement of the Middle East crisis. Under the impact of their prolonged, united uprising and the resulting exposure of Israeli brutality, it is not easy for the US to rally support for Schultz's plan.

US Secretary of State Schultz's plan is the first programmatic initiative on the Arab-Israeli conflict to emerge since September 1982, when President Reagan forwarded his plan for harvesting the political fruits of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. After the Reagan plan failed in its aim of expanding Camp David, the US administration refrained from sticking its neck out, finding ample excuse with the diversions of the Gulf war, the decline in official Arab politics and the PLO's division. US envoys often stressed that they were merely seeking means for solutions in coordination with the local parties to the conflict - excluding the PLO, of course.

Now, the Palestinian uprising has forced the US out of the bushes. At the onset, the US administration counted on the Israeli authorities to suppress the Palestinian masses quickly and efficiently. However, with Israeli brutality glaring on television screens around the world, the US did not dare to use its veto to protect 'Israel' as usual. The US abstained on December 22nd, when the Security Council strongly deplored Israeli actions against demonstrators, especially the shooting of civilians. The Reagan Administration found it necessary to rebuke 'Israel' for using live ammunition against the unarmed Palestinian population. On January 15th, the Security Council passed a new resolution condemning the deportations ordered by the Israeli authorities. The US voted for this resolution - its first vote against 'Israel' since the 1981 annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights, and one of few votes against 'Israel' ever. In this situation, the US found it most convenient to remain on the sidelines diplomatically. Rather

than taking the initiative, it backed Egyptian President Mubarak's plan for a «ceasefire» in occupied Palestine, letting this serve as a trial balloon.

The Palestinian uprising did not, however, bend to the Zionists' neofascist methods. Escalating their uprising, the Palestinians hardly listened to Mubarak's insidious irrelevancies. With 'Israel' coming under increasing international pressure, and Arab reaction sunk in deep embarrassment, the US was forced to make its own move and the Schultz plan emerged.

## INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY AND THE EUROPEAN POSITION

The courage and stamina exhibited by the Palestinians in their uprising has elicited broad international solidarity. In addition to socialist countries, national liberation movements and progressive forces in capitalist countries,

that have long supported the PLO, new sectors joined this solidarity as well. Perhaps most interesting is the number of long-standing friends of 'Israel' who were shocked to the point of issuing strong public condemnations of Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights. This phenomenon occurred in both America and Europe, but had more prominent effects in Europe.

The Socialist International, an old friend of the Zionist state and which includes the Israeli Labor Party in its membership, sent a delegation to occupied Palestine in late February, simultaneously announcing that it plans to recognize the PLO. Members of the delegation returned to their home countries, expressing outright horror at what they had seen of Israeli brutality. Neil Kinnock of the British Labor Party personally brought up with Prime Minister Shamir the Israeli use of dum-dum bullets which expand on contact and are internationally forbidden by the Geneva Convention, presenting Shamir with specimens acquired in the occupied territories.

On March 8th, the European Parliament, meeting in Strasbourg, rejected an EEC financial aid package for 'Israel' to protest Israeli treatment of the Palestinians under occupation, the first time the parliament has turned

February demonstration at the Israeli embassy in Tokyo, protesting the destruction of the *Ship of Return* and the assassination of three Palestinian leaders in Cyprus.



down such an agreement since it was empowered to ratify foreign treaties. Many deputies have criticized 'Israel' for breaching a pledge to allow Palestinians to export their farm produce directly to Europe.

These tendencies hark back to the time of the Venice Declaration when western Europe recognized that the Palestinians had to be party to a solution to the Middle East conflict. This does not mean that the European bourgeoisie is prepared to recognize, much less fulfill, the full range of Palestinian national rights. The view of most western European states concerning an international conference still to a large extent mirrors that of the US - a less than fully empowered conference without the PLO being represented on an equal footing with other parties. Still, there are those in official European politics, who see that the course pursued by the US administration and 'Israel' will not bring peace to the Middle East. Even if the new tendency is ultimately nothing more than an alternative imperialist tactic to protect the Zionist state, it does mean that the US cannot count on Europe to merely tail behind on the diplomatic scene. This reality, coupled with the problems which the uprising has caused Arab reaction, was a factor motivating the Schultz plan.

## STILLBORN US PLAN

Schultz introduced his plan with sugar-coated phrases such as: «Palestinian participation is essential to success in the peace process. Palestinians must achieve control over political and economic decisions that affect their own lives» (*International Herald Tribune*, March 3rd). Regardless of his attempted 'pro-Palestinian' veneer, the US plan is only a new device for resurrecting Camp David and 'autonomy' which the Palestinians rejected long ago. According to US sources, the process proposed by Schultz is as follows:

- «Six months of negotiations, to begin May 1, for the election of an administrative council to represent Palestinians on the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip during an interim phase of self-administration.
- «An international conference to be convened in April with the participation of Israel, Syria, Egypt, a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

- «Talks to begin in December for one year between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation on the final status of the territories. Interim self-administration to go into effect once those talks begin.

- «Whatever solution is produced by these talks to take effect three years after the interim period has begun» (*International Herald Tribune*, March 15).

These points, supplemented by Schultz's own arguments for his plan, make it obvious that the international conference proposed by the US not only intends to exclude the PLO, but is simply window dressing for direct negotiations whereby Arab regimes would be drawn into the game of containing the Palestinian quest for genuine independence and statehood. Far from meaning real «control over the political and economic decisions that affect their own lives,» this model would mean Palestinian administration of daily municipal affairs under the watchful eyes - and cannons - of the Israeli and Jordanian regimes.

Putting «The Case for America's Mideast Peace Plan» in *The Washington Post*, Schultz had the following to say about the international conference: «The United States is a firm and consistent supporter of direct, bilateral negotiations between Israel and all of its neighbors as the means to achieve a comprehensive peace. At the

same time, the United States has always been willing to consider any approach that could lead to direct negotiations, including an international conference... All those attending the conference will be required to accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and to renounce violence and terrorism. The conference will be specifically enjoined from intruding in the negotiations, imposing solutions or vetoing what had been agreed bilaterally» (*International Herald Tribune*, March 19-20).

In essence, the US plan is but a way of saving 'Israel' from its crisis by circumventing the PLO, the expression of the Palestinian people's national identity and efforts to take control of their lives. It is but another imperialist plan to cement the dispersion of the Palestinians, dealing - and superficially at that - only with those in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This means negating not only the many Palestinians driven from their homeland, but also those remaining in 'Israel' proper, in order to liquidate the Palestinian cause and national liberation movement.

The greatest proof that the US plan essentially aims to save 'Israel' is seen in the interaction between the US and the Israeli leadership. Besides Schultz's holding separate meetings with Prime Minister Shamir and Foreign Minister Peres, due to the internal Israeli disagreements, the US further pampered 'Israel' even though

January demonstration in support of the uprising, in Hamburg, West Germany.



Shamir's position appeared early on as a main obstacle to the US plan. During the Israeli prime minister's mid-March visit to Washington D.C., a senior State Department official quoted Schultz as telling Shamir: «No one should consider any differences that we may have as deeply divisive.» This official said that the US was not disturbed by Shamir's rejection of Schultz's land-for-peace formula... «That's not the Israeli position,» the official said, «It's the position of one of the parties» (Associated Press, March 16th).

Though the Reagan Administration is intent on regaining the initiative in the Middle East, it is highly tolerant of Israeli obstructionism. This reveals the Schultz plan to be, at least in part, a maneuver to buy time whereby 'Israel' has a second chance to beat down the uprising. Concurrent to these political maneuvers, 'Israel' has added strangulation to its violent methods, imposing permanent night curfew on camps, cutting telephone lines between the occupied territories and the outside world, banning travel between the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and imposing a fuel blockade.

Prospects for the Schultz plan appear dim in view of the fact that only the Egyptian regime has supported it unconditionally, while the PLO rejected it outright. The Arab response has been generally cool. On March 13th, Syria's foreign minister, Farouk Al Sharaa, declared, «We have studied the American proposal and we think the plan, as presented to us, is not acceptable. We also believe that it is not acceptable to any other Arab side.» So far, official responses have not been delivered to Schultz. While the Jordanian regime has joined in criticizing points of the US plan, there are indications that hesitancy about publicly supporting it is a tactical stance, due to the impact of the uprising. The rhetoric being broadcast from Amman about PLO participation in an international conference, etc., is most likely also a tactic, rather than a new Jordanian position. This analysis is confirmed by the contents of a March 16th speech by Jordan's ambassador to the US, delivered to a Jewish synagogue group in Washington D.C. March 16th. The ambassador went on record as saying that Jordan is against a Palestinian state, and accepts direct negotiations with 'Israel' even in the absence of an international conference and PLO par-

ticipation, as has been proposed by the US (quoted in the Israeli newspaper, *Yediot Aharanot*).

In conclusion, it is important to note that Shamir's rejection of the Schultz plan is a veto against peace in any form except total Arab surrender and liquidation of the Palestinian cause. The Arab nationalist and Palestinian rejection of the plan is, on the other hand,

based on the plan's injustice, while positing the alternative - a fully empowered international conference with the PLO participating on an equal footing with other parties. At this writing, Schultz is scheduled to return to the Middle East in early April, but the uprising continues, appearing as the most weighty factor in rendering the latest US plan stillborn. ●

## UN Security Council Resolution 605 Document

On 22 December 1987 the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 605 (1987), which reads as follows:

On 22 December 1987 the UN Security Council adopted resolution 605 (1987), which reads as follows:

The Security Council,

Having considered the letter dated 11 December 1987 from the Permanent Representative of Democratic Yemen to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chairman of the Arab Group for the month of December,

Bearing in mind the inalienable rights of all peoples recognized by the Charter of the United Nations and proclaimed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Recalling its relevant resolutions on the situation in the Palestinian and other Arab territories, occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, and including its resolutions 446 (1979), 465 (1980), 497 (1981) and 592 (1986),

Recalling also the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,

Gravely concerned and alarmed by the deteriorating situation in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem,

Taking into account the need to consider measures for the impartial protection of the Palestinian civilian population under Israeli occupation,

Considering that the current policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied territories are bound to have grave consequences for the endeavors to achieve comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East,

1. Strongly deplores those policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power, which violate the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, and in particular the opening of fire by the Israeli army resulting in the killing and wounding of defenceless Palestinian civilians;

2. Reaffirms that the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, is applicable to the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem;

3. Calls once again upon Israel, the occupying Power, to abide immediately and scrupulously by the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and to desist forthwith from its policies and practices that are in violation of the provisions of the Convention;

4. Calls furthermore for the exercise of maximum restraint to contribute towards the establishment of peace;

5. Stresses the urgent need to reach a just, durable and peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to examine the present situation in the occupied territories by all means available to him, and to submit a report no later than 20 January 1988 containing his recommendations on ways and means for ensuring the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians under Israeli occupation;

7. Decides to keep the situation in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, under review. ●

# The Revolution of the Stones and Palestinian Culture

An essay on the significance of Palestinian national consciousness by Faysal Darraj.

Upon arrival in Palestine, the Zionist project claimed «a land without a people for a people without a land.» After the establishment of its state, Zionism did not change its attitude. Once Golda Meir said, «Palestinians do not exist.»

Years later, Rafael Eitan declared, «A Palestinian is no more than a cockroach.» Quite extraordinarily, this «cockroach» has been occupying the political stage in the Middle East for more than twenty years. I'm not going to quote the German saying that: «In the mirror, an ape can only see an ape,» to avoid a possible racist trap. Yet, I would say that the struggle of the Palestinian militant does clearly show that Zionism has just been raving. Cockroaches can never throw stones.

The tragedy of Palestine stemmed from the emergence of the Zionist project, more exactly, from the position and function of the Zionist entity in the imperialist strategy for the Middle East. It is impossible to talk about the present, past or future of the Palestinians without reference to the history of the

Zionist movement. The Palestinian or militant Arab fighting against imperialism is incapable of scoring victory without defeating the Zionist project. Palestinian victory, when realised, doesn't mean more than enabling the Palestinians to restore the conditions of their existence as ordinary human beings, with the right to freedom, peace, security and happiness in a democratic state.

Zionism is not only a racist political movement, it is the movement in which the Palestinians read the whole history of their innumerable tragedies: Deir Yasin, Kafr Qassem, Samuu', Sabra and Shatila, the bombardment of peaceful camps, the siege of Beirut, etc. Thus, the struggle of the Palestinian against the Zionist project is a moral necessity and defense of human values like freedom, dignity, reason and independence. The Zionist entity is not a state in the traditional sense of the term; it is the political expression of an obscurant, racist, colonial ideology, which confiscates land, ruins people and violates all standards of democracy and rationalism. In

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such a situation, the Palestinian does not fight for land, statehood and a flag alone, but primarily against a series of inhuman ideas and practices, because the Palestinian cannot acquire a democratic state without defeating Zionism with all its consequences. For sure, the Palestinian does not fight for abstract principles. Nevertheless, to forget principles while fighting renders the struggle meaningless.

Since Zionism is the incarnation of racism, fascism and colonialism, its opponent political project can win only if it constitutes the antithesis, the real personification of human fraternity, democratic mentality and true freedom. This is why we say that the Palestinians defend their homeland to the extent that they defend humane, revolutionary ideals. Those who are busy throwing stones are in their daily struggle manifesting ideals; with creativity, they convert stones into revolutionary weapons.

There's no room for formal debate in the Arab-Zionist conflict. Formalism deletes man and limits itself to abstract symbols. It may say, «The Palestinian has lost his land, and is in need of one; he has no state, he needs one; he lives in camps; he needs cities.» The problem, however, is not that simple. When the Palestinian lost his land, he became a refugee; he became a miserable person living on the outskirts of urban centers, waiting for alms; he became the ugly element which detracted from the beauty of cities; he is different, and being deprived is the reason for his difference. When the Palestinian lost his independent political entity, he became dependent, impotent and unable to settle his own affairs, in urgent need of a protector. That is, he lost his freedom as well as his own aspirations. Through life in camps, the Palestinian has become completely alienated. He became the defeated, the ignorant, the backward, the outlaw who understands only the language of violence. When the Palestinians revolted against the misery of their camps, refused mandates and raised their rifles, they were given new names such as terrorist, troublemaker, degenerate communist, dishonest armsdealer, while maintaining the old negative titles as well. The fedayeen, in the eyes of the enemies of the Palestinian, became a representative of the mafia.

The Palestinians don't fight Zionism because of superficial speculations based on land. They fight based on their own history which is well aware of oppression, alienation, persecution and annihilation, well aware also of Arab Zionism which sees danger not in the Zionist entity, but in the Arab who supports the Palestinian. For forty years of exile, the Palestinian has known classical Zionism as well as new Zionism, i.e., Arab Zionism represented by the reactionary Arab regimes which are against freedom and maintain an open and disguised alliance with Zionism in order to fight all Arabs who call for freedom.

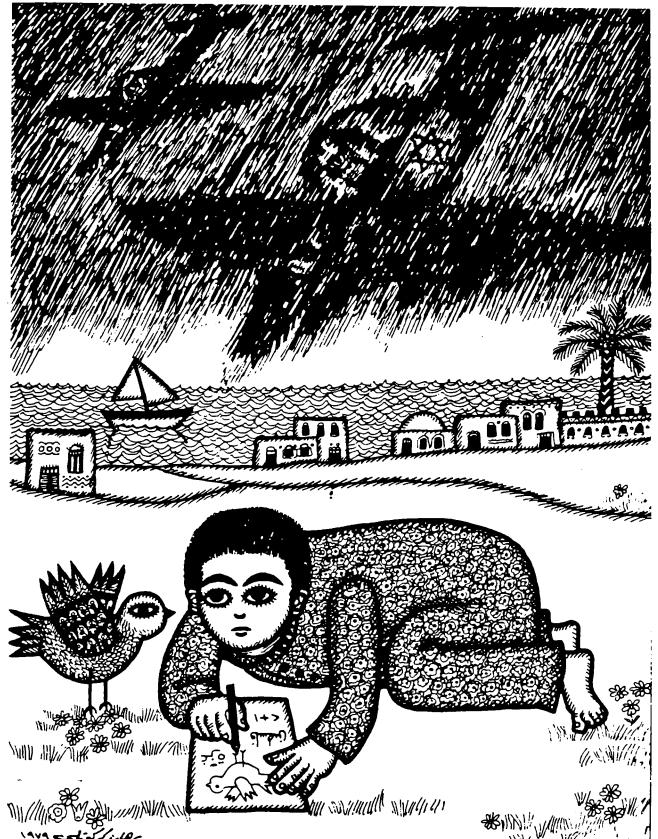
Palestinian consciousness has not come about as a result of abstract meditation, or sheer yearning for a remote homeland, as if the problem was the fact of their existence on land which is not theirs. This consciousness has been built up within the old, permanently renewed conflict between the Palestinian and the Zionist, between the Palestinian and the Arab reactionary forces who are based on oppression and persecution. Such consciousness has evolved within the framework of practice and practical confrontation, leading to the reformulation of the Palestinian as an oppressed person fighting oppression, racial discrimination and dependence. Within this framework,

the difference between the Zionist and the Palestinian is not manifest in the problem of usurped land, but on the level of values, practices and world outlook. The Palestinians are fighting for their land and right to exist, but this fight does not acquire its full meaning unless it is a revolutionary struggle for national liberation and social revolution, and against the imperialist project in the Middle East. This is why Palestinian consciousness constitutes the direct antithesis of Zionist consciousness, why the defeat of Zionism is the essential precondition of the realisation of a democratic Palestinian state.

The Palestinians do not fight for an abstract political form, a formal entity or a dependent institution. They are fighting for a state in which they can materialise their free human existence; hence, the impossibility of reducing the legitimate Palestinian aspirations into a false political settlement, Camp David-style. Their legitimate rights stem from the very nature of their tragic experience which has three dimensions:

First is the moral one since the Palestinian cannot be a human being with character unless he resists occupation and fights to restore his homeland. Fighting for one's homeland is a positive human value in itself. Patriotism in this sense is the image of developed human consciousness in its noble form. Second is the emotional dimension which is universal human aspiration. To become what he now is, the Palestinian who is throwing stones has gone through decades of pain and persecution, becoming aware of the significance of the misery of the tent, the ugliness of occupation, of babies dying because of thirst, of the savage Arab persecutor, etc. The Palestinian has become the image of the accused a priori - the terrorist in some western countries, the saboteur in some Arab countries, the anti-religious in some Islamic countries, etc. He is con-

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In early February, Al Ard folklore ensemble performed in the United Arab Emirates, on the invitation of the Social Society in Al Sharjah

sidered evil. To punish him does not require any evidence... All this put together motivates the Palestinian to resist, but it also leads to revenge, tension and frustration. The Palestinian remains the innocent accused person. The third dimension, perhaps the least complex, is the political one, The Palestinians do not fight seeking sympathy or death in battle. They are fighting for their legitimate right to an independent state. The Palestinians are a people with an identity, language, culture and history, elements which make them a people entitled to have their own state where they can exercise their national rights.

In the Palestinian reality, there is a set of paradoxes. Zionists as well as Zionized Arabs deny the Palestinian people their right to an independent political entity. Zionists resort to the easiest way. They claim that the Palestinians do not exist, that 'Israel' is a gift from God and nobody has the right to go against his will. Americanized Arabs, on the other hand, say that Palestine is an Arab affair. When the Palestinians fight, the Arabs stop them because, fighting independently, they betray Arab unity. What an irony of history! A national cause is being betrayed in the name of sublime pan-Arab unity! This paradox does not apply to Palestinian culture which, contrary to political struggle, compels recognition, although the two are united in significance and objectives. Zionists do accept Palestinian culture as an Arab culture belonging to the pre-Zionist state period. The Arab regimes also accept it, as long as it does not threaten the Zionist-Arab reactionary ambitions to convert the Middle East into a politically homogeneous region under US control.



Reactionary recognition of the Palestinian culture does not, in fact, offer anything. This culture hardly needs such recognition. Through the pages of the Palestinian culture, one reads the entire patriotic experience with all its moral, emotional as well as political aspects. It remains the culture of the persecuted who fight against despotic forces, and create a democratic culture to counter all cultures of despotism. Thus, this culture has emerged as an act of resistance. The patriotic culture in the occupied territories is a political-cultural act which confirms Palestinian national identity, and contributes to the struggle against occupation. It is a culture that is born and developed on the background of the colonized who refuse colonization, who join their present with their past, and keep

the present open for the perspectives of freedom and human progress. Under occupation the Palestinian culture preserves the Arab language and folklore.. aesthetic, democratic and nationalist values. It transcends to express the experience of both Palestinians and others fighting colonialism in the world. It is a Palestinian-universal culture, because it bases itself on the history of Palestine as well as of all democratic mankind.

Under occupation, Emil Habibi, raises Arab prose to the most beautiful, sensitive and genuine level it has ever attained; he writes one of the most important and innovative novels in the history of the Arab novel. Samih Al Qassem conquers the realms of poetry, the lyrical and the epic, confirming his existence as one of the most outstanding Arab poets. Salman Natour writes humorous literature in a creative way. Ali Mahmoud Taha's stories become collective national memory. Asa'd Al Asa'd renders poetry and writing a limitless field of thought, analysis and provocation. These are no more than cultural facts directly transformed into political realities. For the Palestinian, the written word always begins with drawing his reality and motivating himself. Yet, the word is concretized as a cultural act only within the context of militant, patriotic practice.

Now, the people of the stones have redefined culture, or have restored culture to its authentic basis. If culture is an act of transformation, of revolution, then those who are throwing stones are practicing and creating culture in its highest form. Such action shatters the idealistic, elitist and academic definition of culture, to proclaim that real culture is human action in

the struggle for freedom and liberation of the colonized peoples.

Under repressive regimes, ignorant masses are distinguished from the educated elite, common language from classical language, the language of life from that of books, erudite culture from folklore, the technocrat who monopolizes knowledge from the common man who monopolizes ignorance. The current uprising of the Palestinian people undermines such dichotomies and lays the foundation of a new meaning for culture. Culture is not defined as the relation between the written and the read, the writer and the reader. It is primarily defined by the cultural action which fights racism, occupation, colonialism, repression, obscurantism, etc. which struggles for a new world of genuine values and ideals. In such a battle, it is impossible to draw a demarcation line between the writer and the reader, because both are fighting for the same cause, and because writing can only become realized at the moment of reading.

Revolutionary cultural authority is not in books, classical teachings or abstract thought. It is there in the objective reality which the Palestinian is fighting to change. In this sense, Palestinian culture in all the occupied Palestinian territories is a patriotic political action. This Palestinian cultural action calls for support just like the legitimate Palestinian political aspirations. Palestinian culture is an essential aspect of the Palestinian people's present and future, because it constitutes the antithesis of the Zionist culture and all other reactionary cultures.



