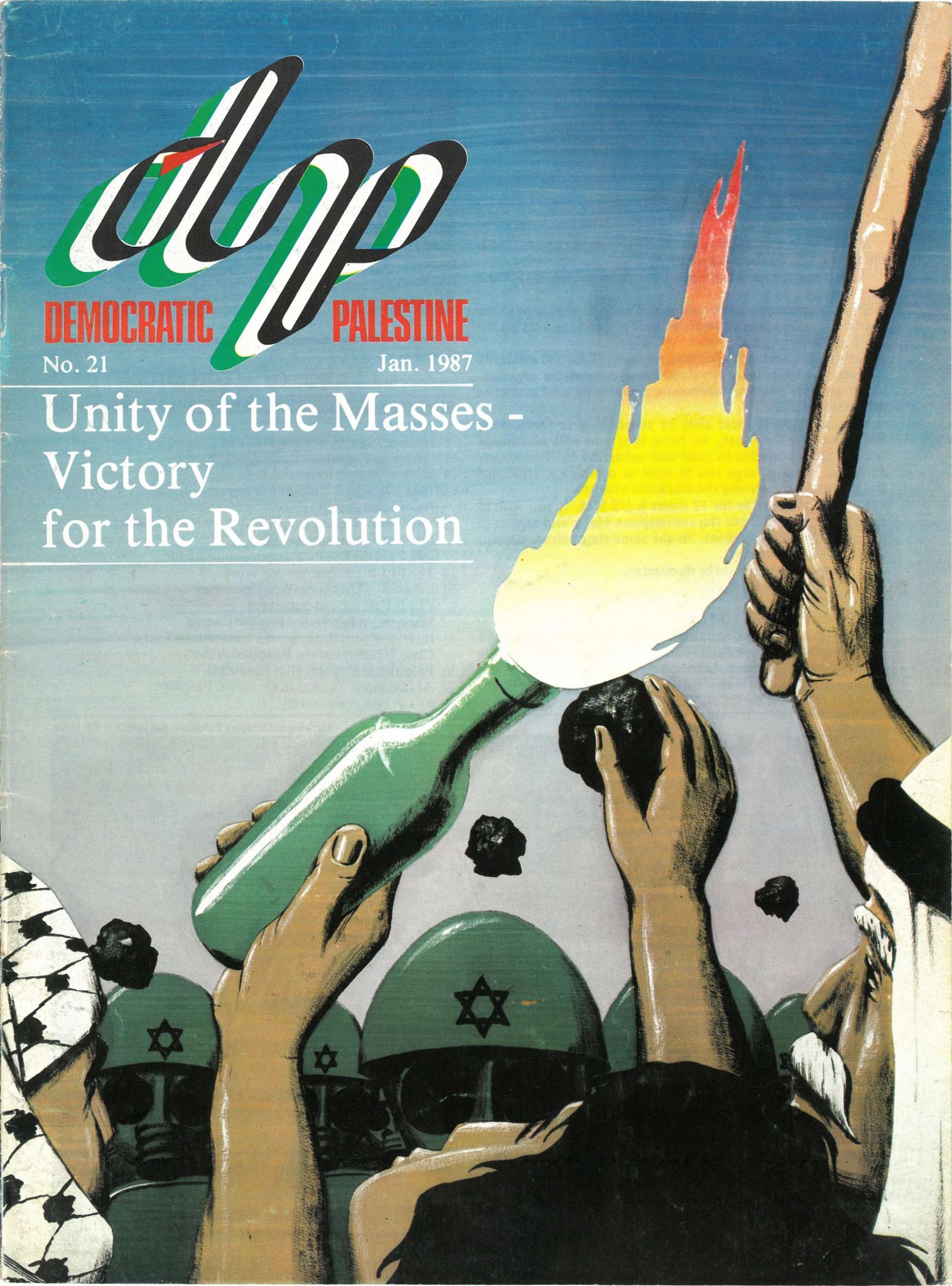


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DEMOCRATIC PALESTINE

No. 21

Jan. 1987

Unity of the Masses -  
Victory  
for the Revolution





**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.

You can support these aims by subscribing to *Democratic Palestine*. Furthermore, we hope that you will encourage friends and comrades to read and subscribe to *Democratic Palestine*. We also urge you to send us comments, criticisms and proposals concerning the magazine's contents.

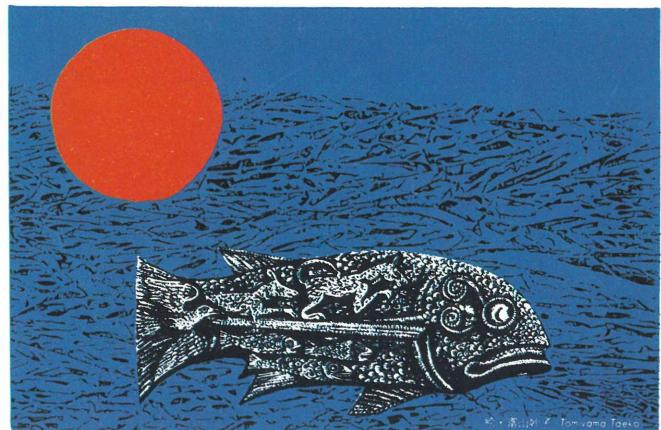
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from AMPO

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# Letters

We received the following letter from Cedip in Italy, which we reprint to call it to the attention of others who might want to cooperate in exchanging materials for their projects:

Dear friends,

As a new year approaches, we at Cedip find this an opportune time to reaffirm our continued work and update you on our present and future projects. There are now three studies underway: a study of the militarization of Sicily, a study on the 'why' of terrorism, and how this question is related to Western European government's Middle East policies. The third project is an historical analysis of 20 years of Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Any materials you have that can further the development of any of these projects would indeed be appreciated.

As Cedip's work continues to take on new dimensions, our appreciation grows for those who have and continue to support us by providing us with helpful and new resources. We'd like to encourage you to continue to do so, as *Democratic Palestine* is now a valuable part of our archives, documentation and research. Again, thank you for your contributions, and keep up the good work.

In Peace,

The Cedip staff

Cedip (Centro di Documentazione ed Iniziative per la Pace),  
Via Cantarella, 6 - 95125 Catania, Italy

## NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS

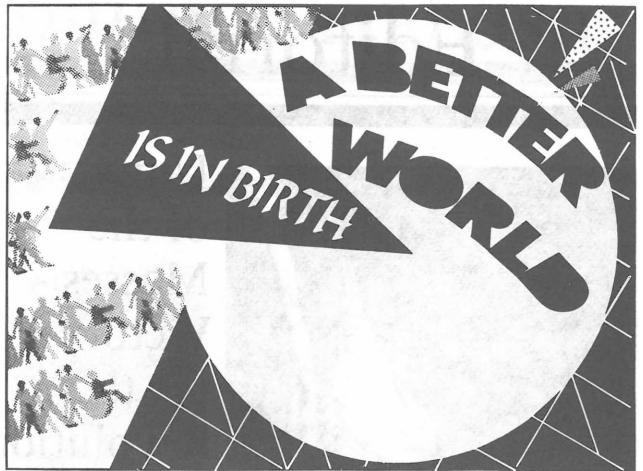
We would also like to say thanks to the Workers World Party in the USA, to the Left Socialist Party in Denmark, the Pacific-Asia Resource Center (PARC—AMPO) in Japan, and all others who sent us New Year's greetings.

The English edition of the Political Report of the PFLP's Fourth Congress, held in the spring of 1981, is now published and ready for distribution. It evaluates the political events from 1973 until 1980, and the development of the PFLP during this period.

The report begins with a general evaluation of the international situation and its main components - imperialism's crisis, the successes of the world socialist system and the victories of the national liberation movements. It also addresses specific subjects such as the PFLP's evaluation of China's foreign policy, Eurocommunism and the peaceful coexistence policy.

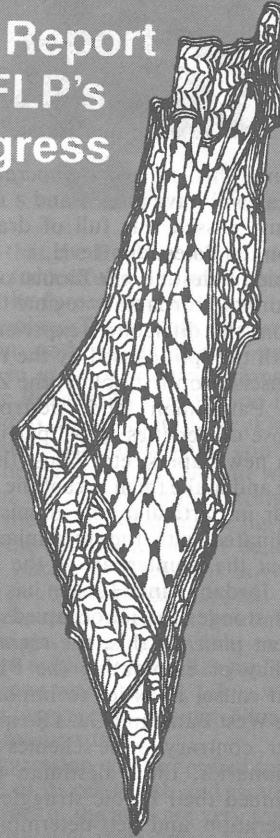
On the Arab level, the focus is on analyzing the background and ramifications of the stage of Camp David, and detailing the means for confronting the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary alliance thus forged. Another section deals with the Palestinian situation, especially the Zionist and imperialist plans for liquidating the Palestinian liberation struggle in Lebanon and occupied Palestine. There is an overall evaluation of the course pursued by the Palestinian revolution and the lessons that can be derived from this, such as the necessity of creating a supportive operational base in Jordan, and the struggle against the efforts to impose an imperialist political settlement in the Middle East.

On this backdrop, specific chapters review the PFLP's political positions in relation to the developments of the period. Shortcomings and wrong tactics are criticized, and guidelines charted for future struggle. One chapter is exclusively devoted to evaluating the progress made in the PFLP's transformation to a Marxist-Leninist party, while another deals with the military struggle.



from Workers World Party

## Political Report of the PFLP's 4th Congress



If you would like to receive the Political Report, write to Democratic Palestine, Box 12144, Damascus, Syria. The price for one copy is \$12 US. If you order five copies or more, you will receive each at the price of \$10. Payment should be deposited in the following bank account: 434027/840, Bank of Beirut and the Arab Countries, Shtoura, Lebanon.

When requesting copies of the Political Report, please note in your letter the date on which you have made the payment. We will send you the Political Report upon receiving both your letter and payment.

# Editorial



## Unity of the Masses - Victory for the Revolution

By the time this issue of *Democratic Palestine* reaches you, another year will have passed and a new year begun. The year that has just passed was full of dramatic, tragic and heroic incidents on the Palestinian level.

In occupied Palestine, the Zionist occupation authorities and the reactionary Jordanian regime have tried their best to benefit from the difficulties experienced by the PLO in connection with the split caused by the right wing's policy. Following the fascist iron fist policy, the Zionists have continued to confiscate Palestinian land, destroy homes, detain young people, close universities, expel patriots from their homeland, shut down newspapers, etc. Thus, the Zionists aim to passify our people and make them accept the occupation.

This year in particular, the Zionists' efforts have been closely coordinated with the Jordanian regime's moves. While carrying out the counterpart of the Zionists' iron fist against patriots in Jordan, King Hussein has been working fervently to bolster his stooges in the occupied territories via a so-called development plan. In this, the regime has complemented the Israeli policy of eliminating the PLO and concurrently the Palestinian cause, in order to impose joint Israeli-Jordanian rule on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

However, contrary to the schemes and wishes of the Zionists and reactionaries, the Palestinian people under occupation have continued their heroic struggle to achieve their national rights, liberation and self-determination in an independent Palestinian state. Our people under occupation have carried on their armed struggle, targeting the Zionist occupation army and its positions. Palestinians have stabbed Zionist soldiers with daggers, thrown stones at their military vehicles, and engaged in public protests, sit-ins and strikes. Moreover, young people of no more than 16 years have started chopping down those who occupy their land, wielding the axes they usually use for chopping diseased branches or parasitic plants off trees. That is our people's way of expressing their determination to survive in spite of all those who try to exterminate them.

In Lebanon, the Palestinian masses and fighters are facing one of the severest battles they have ever faced there. The reactionary, sectarian Amal militiamen have continued their unholy war against our people in the camps. To date, Amal has besieged Rashidiya camp for more than three months. In addi-

tion to shelling the camp daily, the Amal fanatics have prevented food and medical supplies from entering the camp in an effort to starve the people or let them bleed to death.

In an effort to destroy the morale of our people, Amal and their external backers have continued to bombard Shatila and Burj Al Barajneh to the point of demolishing 85% and 50% of these camps, respectively. Still, neither our people nor fighters are surrendering. On the contrary, the Palestinian fighters carried out a brave operation in Maghdousheh, to defend the Palestinian camps and armed presence. This should have proved to Amal and its external allies the extent of the Palestinians' determination to defend their armed struggle into order to liberate their homeland. This determination has proved to be stronger than the efforts of Amal or any other reactionary force to disarm the Palestinian revolution for the sake of making 'security' arrangements with the Zionist enemy.

In another field, efforts have continued to repair the damage caused to the PLO and Palestinian liberation struggle by the Palestinian right wing, especially with the signing of the Amman accord with the Jordanian monarch. The latest of such efforts was the meeting in Prague between the PFLP Secretary General, Doctor George Habash, and Arafat's deputy, Khalil Al Wazir (Abu Jihad). In this meeting, comrade Habash advised Abu Jihad to have Fatah's Central Committee cancel the Amman accord. Dr. Habash also tried to convince Abu Jihad of the dangers that face the Palestinian revolution and cause due to this accord. Abu Jihad promised the PFLP that good news would come at the January 1st anniversary of the Palestinian revolution, but the day passed, and there was no such good news. Until clearly and publicly cancelling the Amman accord, signed by Yasir Arafat and King Hussein, Fatah's Central Committee will bear part of the responsibility for the attacks on our people and revolution. The Fatah Central Committee's continued refusal to cancel the Amman accord leaves the PLO divided, which encourages antagonistic forces to try to implement their schemes against our people.

In spite of the tragedies experienced by our people this past year, they insist on maintaining their heroic steadfastness. Whenever hostile forces try to deprive the Palestinian people of an honorable life, our people renew their struggle like the phoenix which comes back to life everytime it is burned. This continual reassertion of the vitality and justice of the Palestinian cause is today being seen in occupied Palestine, especially with our people's militant uprising in December. It is being seen in the heroic defense of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon, and in the constant struggle to reunite the PLO, so that it can lead the people's struggle on a clear anti-imperialist line.

The past year's experience has clarified and reinforced a number of facts, among them:

— Our people's insistence on fighting the Zionist occupation of Palestine will continue until achieving the aims of liberation and an independent Palestinian state.

— All imperialist, Zionist and reactionary efforts to create proxies and alternatives to the PLO have come to naught.

— The Palestinians' right to struggle from all Arab countries surrounding occupied Palestine can only be guaranteed by a stable alliance with the Arab masses and progressive forces.

— Palestinian armed presence in Lebanon cannot be ignored or cancelled, despite the wishes of multiple enemies, or the stupid miscalculations of antagonistic trends.

— The unity of the Palestinian fighters and patriots in the field is stronger than any divisive or deviationist trends in the PLO leadership.

As the Palestinian people continue their revolution in the new year, we extend our best wishes for success in the struggle to all peoples of the world who are striving for liberation, social justice, peace, progress and socialism. We urge the strengthening of international solidarity in the common struggle against imperialism, Zionism and reactionary forces, to advance the cause of the national liberation movements, the socialist countries and progressive forces everywhere.

# Interview with Comrade Habash

In mid-December 1986, on the occasion of the PFLP's 19th anniversary, Secretary General George Habash gave an exclusive interview to *Al Hadaf* and *Democratic Palestine*.

The failure of the Reykjavik summit was a main international event of 1986. What is your evaluation of the summit? How does the failure reflect itself internationally and in the Middle East?

After the October Revolution was victorious, Lenin outlined the policy of peaceful coexistence. He put forth the clear, correct and comprehensive considerations that determined this policy. Among these considerations were the determination of the Bolsheviks to stabilize the first socialist experience, and their belief that this policy would provide the best conditions for the development of the workers' and revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries. Since then, most events have proved the correctness of this policy.

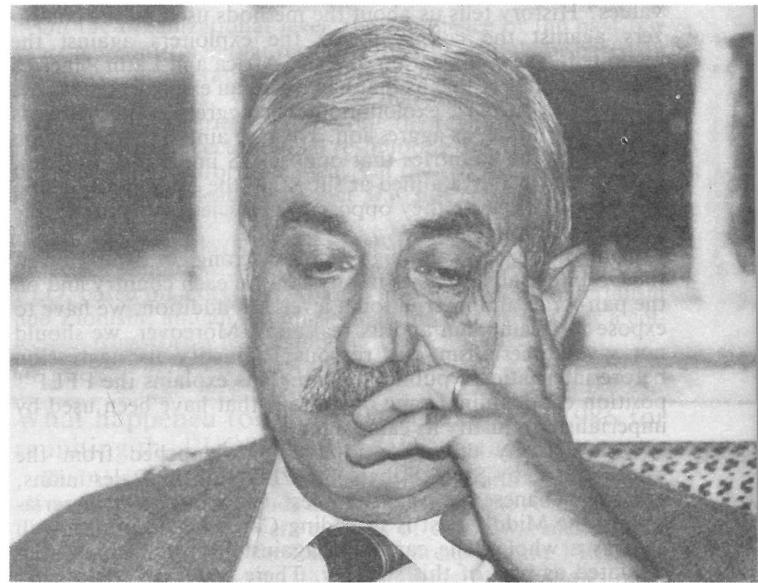
Today, in the nuclear age, there is an additional basic consideration for the coexistence policy, which concerns the fate of all humanity and civilization. The political report of the Soviet Communist Party's 27th congress, and Gorbachev's speech at the congress, confirmed that the fate of all humanity today depends on asserting the policy of international detente... One tactical mistake could lead to a nuclear disaster that could destroy human civilization. This explains the continuous initiatives of Comrade Gorbachev's leadership, from the Warsaw Pact's pledge never to initiate the use of nuclear weapons, to the Soviet Union's own moratorium, and its renewal, stopping nuclear tests until the end of this year.

It is important to confirm that the initiatives of the Soviet Union and the socialist community are serious and genuine. At this historical juncture, the Soviet Union feels a responsibility towards humanity, for protecting the world from the nuclear threat. Some call this policy the peaceful offensive policy; they think it aims at splitting the imperialist camp, provoking the contradictions within it, and gathering forces around the Soviet Union's peaceful policies. During my last visits to a number of the socialist countries, I felt their sincere and responsible position of protecting the world and international peace from a nuclear disaster. I remember certain phrases that made me feel the deep concern of the socialist countries about the nuclear threat, and their genuine willingness to reach agreements that protect the world from nuclear disaster and restore detente in the international arena. This explains the 'surprising' proposals of Comrade Gorbachev in his meeting with Reagan at Reykjavik. These suggestions truly surprised various circles in the West, and were welcomed by international public opinion.

Achieving international detente does not depend only on one side... Two main forces are needed: the Soviet Union and the socialist community on one side and imperialism, especially the USA, on the other. Gorbachev's deep feeling of responsibility must be complemented by Reagan's resolve to give up NATO's strategic military superiority, for this would not be accepted by Gorbachev and the socialist countries, despite their deep sense of the importance of adopting a consistent peaceful policy.

The failure of the Reykjavik summit is due to Reagan and his administration's particularly aggressive policy for reversing history, in order to solve imperialism's crisis. In the seventies, the national liberation movements were able to achieve many victories. The people of Vietnam were victorious, as were the peoples of Laos, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Afghanistan and Iran, where the Shah was toppled. Also in the seventies, the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact countries were able to achieve defensive strategic parity with NATO. The socialist community continued to achieve a 4% annual growth rate in the economy. Meanwhile, the economic crisis continued in the capitalist camp. In the late seventies, the growth rate in the USA was 5%, and then fell to zero.

This is the essence of the international situation at present, which gives great weight to the peaceful offensive policy of the



Soviet Union. It is true that the Reykjavik summit failed but, at the same time, it was successful in the sense that the results broadened the scope of the forces, countries and international opinion supporting this policy. This was an embarrassment for Reagan's administration and its aggressive policies. The summit also succeeded in creating contradictions within the imperialist camp and the Reagan Administration itself, to the point where the latter had to declare that the Reykjavik summit would not be the last, and that meetings would continue.

The main reason for the failure of the summit was Reagan's insistence on adhering to the SDI program through which he wants to deal a blow to the defensive strategic parity achieved by the Warsaw Pact in the seventies. I don't believe that the failure of the Reykjavik summit will lead the Soviet Union to reconsider the peaceful policy that was adopted at the 27th congress. However, it is expected to lead to the continuation of the US nuclear experiments and aggression on all levels, against the peoples of the world. During Reagan's term, Grenada was occupied, Lebanon was invaded, Libya was bombed; there has been ongoing aggression against Nicaragua, and preparations to launch a major attack.

It is natural that this aggression will be applied specifically in the Middle East, because of its oil wealth and strategic significance. The natural resources in the area are very important for the imperialist forces, although they pretend they could do without them. The aggressive policy will reflect itself on the Arab region specifically, because it represents a special market for US goods. It is also important because the Arab world is located on the southern borders of the Soviet Union.

The talk about dividing the world into spheres of influence is unjustified. When applying the peaceful policy, the Soviet Union is determined that its implementation would not lead to reversing the course of history. Experience has proven that there are principal issues on which the Soviet Union stands firm. It has also proven the falsity of the allegations of the Arab and Palestinian right wing, that peaceful coexistence and international detente are only other terms for dividing spheres of influence.

What are the aims of the US and Britain's international campaign against 'terrorism'? How can this campaign be confronted?

US imperialism and Britain claim that this campaign is waged based on 'values' and aims at protecting innocent lives. A person has to be really stupid to believe this! Where were these values when the US and Britain used their veto power to prevent condemnation of the Zionist enemy that daily terrorizes the Palestinian people in occupied Palestine, and the people in Lebanon? When all of humanity, as represented in the UN and Security Council, condemned the barbaric Israeli terror, the US used the veto to save 'Israel'. Who could believe that the US is launching this campaign to uphold human values? History tells us about the methods used by the colonizers against the colonized, by the exploiters against the exploited. The colonization of Asia, Africa and Latin America took place under slogans that had a human exterior, but whose essence was barbaric exploitation. The aggressor always needs a cover for hiding its aggression. The true aim of this campaign is to strike the countries that oppose US imperialist policies. The attack on Libya aimed at subduing the Libyan leadership and people, because they oppose US policies in the area - the policies of Camp David.

Confronting this campaign requires strong confrontation of the US imperialist policies in our area, in each country and on the pan-Arab and international levels. In addition, we have to expose this campaign and its real aims. Moreover, we should not give imperialism any reasons to justify its aggression before international public opinion. This explains the PFLP's position condemning some operations that have been used by imperialism to justify its campaign.

Today, many talk about 'terrorism' launched from the Middle East, by Syria, Libya, the PLO and the Palestinians, and the Lebanese nationalist forces. The strategy of imperialism in the Middle East is spreading Camp David in the Arab area as a whole. The campaign against 'terrorism' has been escalated as part of this strategy. There are Arab forces that oppose the Camp David policies, especially the PLO, the Lebanese people, Libya and Syria. It is logical that imperialism accuses them of terrorism in order to find a justification for attacking them to remove the obstacles to Camp David.

In 1986, the two most prominent attempts to spread Camp David, normalizing relations between 'Israel' and the Arab states prior to a treaty, were the Ifran and Alexandria meetings. What is your evaluation of these attempts? What obstacles remain?

First, please allow me to explain the phrase: normalization prior to signing a treaty... The Egyptian regime signed the Camp David accords in 1979, which aimed at normalizing diplomatic, economic, political, social and cultural relations between Egypt and 'Israel'. This was a preparation for implementing US imperialism's larger strategic goal of establishing a coalition grouping the US and all its allies in the area, to confront the popular movement in the region, and the Soviet Union as well. This year, the US conducted the Bright Star military maneuvers in Egypt, and it seeks to stage maneuvers that include Egypt, 'Israel', Jordan and the whole Arab area by 1995. Although the Camp David accord was signed by the Egyptian regime, it is still facing difficulties due to the position of the Egyptian masses and nationalist forces. The most recent example is the Egyptian doctors' union's refusal of the Israeli government's offer of medical and scientific exchange.

The Jordanian regime is with Camp David, but benefitting from Egypt's experience, it seeks to enact the normalization policy in practice first, in preparation for signing an agreement. It wants to make an expanded Camp David a reality before signing an agreement. This is the real threat: Secret normalization is more dangerous than overt normalization. Therefore, it is dangerous to give any sort of political cover to the Jordanian regime while it is normalizing relations with 'Israel'.

The Ifran (Peres-Hassan II) and Alexandria (Peres-Mubarak) meetings were not the only attempts to spread Camp David. Before 1986, the US made many attempts to spread Camp David, such as the May 17th agreement between Lebanon and 'Israel', that was abrogated by the heroic Leba-

nese people. Then, there were attempts to draw the Jordanian and Palestinian link into Camp David via the February 11, 1985 accord signed by Yasir Arafat and King Hussein. US imperialism was hoping that these attempts would succeed. Now, US imperialism talks about direct negotiations as the last resort for the Arab countries, after itself failing to draw the Lebanese link and the PLO into Camp David.

While the Soviet Union advocates an international conference to resolve the Middle East conflict, the US talks about separate, direct negotiations. The continuous attempts to spread Camp David prove that the US is determined to exclude the Soviet Union from the Middle East negotiations. The US wants direct negotiations between countries, which means eliminating the PLO from the negotiations as part of liquidating the Palestinian cause. This will enable imperialism to achieve its dream of an imperialist-reactionary coalition to confront the masses...

One of the obstacles facing Camp David is Israeli obstinacy and the extent of the concessions that 'Israel' is demanding of the Arab reactionary regimes, and the difficulties involved in the regimes' giving such concessions. Another obstacle is the position of the Arab masses and nationalist forces refusing and confronting the Camp David policy. There is also the position of the official and popular steadfastness forces, that we must reinforce. The role the PLO has played is also very significant. The Palestinian revolution became a phenomenon that filled the vacuum left by the end of Abdul Nasser's role in confronting the imperialist policies in the area. The PLO was the core of the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front which constituted the biggest obstacle to spreading Camp David from 1978 until 1982. Focusing on the role of the PLO does not mean neglecting to draw up a complete confrontation program aimed at gathering all the Arab forces that are confronting the Camp David alliance.

The Arab situation is deteriorating as seen in the absence of Arab solidarity and the Steadfastness Front's role, and in the weakness of the Arab popular movement. What is the way to overcome this?

This is the main characteristic of the Arab situation, but it is not the only characteristic. The other characteristic is steadfastness. There are forces of steadfastness in the Arab world that have expressed themselves on more than one occasion, and that were successful in foiling the imperialist schemes which aimed at increasing the deterioration of the Arab situation. Otherwise, how do you explain the Marines' departure from Lebanon, or the Israelis' withdrawing from the mountains, Beirut, Sidon and Tyre, without having extracted any political price, officially or publicly? How do you explain Reagan's shameful failure in his challenge to Qaddafi? How do you explain the failure of the Israelis and the Jordanian regime to create an alternative to the PLO, or to liquidate the PLO? How do you explain the popular mobilization around the PLO as the symbol of the Palestinian national identity, and the increasing support to the PLO, despite the deviation of the leadership and the splits this led to?

In order to overcome this reality, we must analyze it correctly. In our analysis, the primary factor is the nature of the leaderships in power in most of the Arab countries. These regimes' class nature harmonizes with the Camp David policy. It is in their class interests to end the conflict with the Israeli enemy. If the conflict continues, this will deprive them of enjoying the oil wealth. Most of the regimes, then, are deteriorating. The deterioration that hit Egypt, when it withdrew from the struggle with the Zionist enemy, hit other countries as well. The Egyptian regime that joined Camp David was made an outcast by the Arab masses, but is no longer isolated on the official level. There are Egyptian-Jordanian relations and Egyptian-Iraqi relations. The Steadfastness and Confrontation Front, despite its class and ideological make-up, could have initiated a national response. The coherence of this front in the first period enabled it to have the Baghdad Summit resolutions adopted. However, things turned out otherwise due to the program of the nationalist regimes, their nature and mistakes, and due to the division of the PLO which was the main

unifying factor. What remains is the role of the Arab popular movement. To put all this in perspective, we should discuss the role of the Arab working class parties, but that is a topic in itself.

After King Hussein's speech in February 1986, suspending cooperation with the PLO leadership, the PLO's crisis entered a qualitatively new stage. What are the main characteristics of this stage, and what are the means for resolving the crisis?

After King Hussein's speech, the PFLP made a public statement that new objective conditions had been created, making the thought of restoring the PLO's unity possible and realistic. This is because King Hussein's speech, delivered on behalf of the US, demanded that the PLO leadership give more concessions in addition to the dangerous concessions already given in the Amman accord of February 11, 1985. It is difficult for the PLO to give the newly demanded concessions. The Amman accord itself was a dangerous concession for the PLO.

Along with all the Palestinian and Arab national democratic forces and our friends on the international level, we considered the Amman accord to be a new program of the PLO leadership. It was an alternative to the program for return, self-determination and the establishment of a Palestinian state. It replaced this program with one for confederation with Jordan, giving up a sovereign Palestinian state. After this, the PLO leadership has shown willingness to give another concession, that of recognizing 'Israel' in return for Israeli recognition of the PLO. All Arafat's statements about recognizing resolution 242 as part of recognizing all UN resolutions mean, in fact, the readiness of the PLO leadership to give another concession, recognizing 'Israel'. Despite these two main concessions, 'Israel', US imperialism and Jordan continue to demand more concessions of the PLO leadership. This temporarily closed the door of the US settlement in the PLO leadership's face. It meant opening the door for the PLO leadership to return to the national program.

This is exactly what the PFLP meant by saying that after King Hussein's speech, new objective conditions were created, making the restoration of the PLO's unity on a nationalist basis possible. We used the expression 'new objective conditions' and not 'new subjective conditions,' based on realization that the new conditions were not the result of the PLO leadership's having reviewed its previous policies. Nor were they the result of conscious intention to retreat from the course of seeking US solutions. The new situation was a result of conditions that the PLO leadership did not want. The new conditions closed the door to the US solution in its face. This situation reminds of a phrase I heard on my last political tour in the socialist countries, that «Israel gave you a new chance to unite the PLO. How are you going to benefit from this chance?»

Some may say that the PLO leadership's unwillingness to give more concessions is a subjective condition that contributed to closing the US gate. That is true to a certain extent, but the primary factor in closing the gate was Israeli and imperialist insistence on their conditions. Based on all of this, the most prominent characteristic of this stage is that restoring the PLO's unity has become possible.

Our view on remedying the PLO's situation is being courageous enough to benefit from the objective conditions, in order to restore the PLO's unity, benefitting from the major lessons of its crisis. To restore the PLO's unity without stopping to examine the lessons of the past four years would mean eliminating a very basic experience in the history of Palestinian national struggle. During those four years, our masses were torn by the crisis of the PLO. I don't believe they will forgive any Palestinian leadership for ignoring these important lessons. Our masses hope for a PLO with a decisive political line opposed to imperialism, Zionism and all their schemes. The PLO has been an influential force in mobilizing the energies and capabilities of the Palestinian and Arab people, but only when it had a decisive political line confronting imperialist schemes.

Even our international allies don't just talk about restoring the PLO's unity; they link this with a firm anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist, political line. The PFLP had made it clear that the

political line should be based on closing the gate to the US settlement in the area, i.e., closing the Jordanian gate by official and public cancellation of the Amman accord, and closing the Egyptian gate by binding the PLO to the Baghdad Summit resolutions on isolating and boycotting this regime until it denounces Camp David. This is how we restore the PLO and benefit from the objective chance that was provided after King Hussein's speech. This is how we benefit from the bitter experience we have been through. This is what needs to be done on the political level.

On the organizational level, the experience of the past few years has confirmed that restoring the PLO should be based on collective, democratic leadership that is committed to the PNC's resolutions. We all know that the resolutions of the 16th PNC in Algeria(1983), despite the reservations that were recorded, are correct national resolutions that our masses and our allies are comfortable with. Yet the crisis occurred due to the individualist leadership that was not committed to these resolutions.

Our slogan today is hard work to benefit from the new objective conditions, and struggle to restore the unity of the PLO, based on a decisive political line opposed to imperialism and Zionism, and an organizational line that establishes a collective, trustworthy leadership.

What happened to the initiatives made in 1986 for reuniting the PLO? What are the obstacles?

The Algerian initiative, the Soviet efforts and the efforts of all our international friends and the forces of the Arab national liberation movement, were a result of deep awareness of the importance of uniting the Palestinian arena and the PLO, as a main factor in achieving the aspirations of the Palestinian people. Our masses will always appreciate the efforts of the Soviet Union, Algeria and all Arab and international forces that support us. There is no doubt that these efforts have pushed forward the issue of Palestinian national unity by continuously raising the issue before the Palestinian masses and organizations. This in itself is a very positive and influential factor.

Still, restoring the PLO's unity on a correct political and organizational basis depends primarily on the Palestinian forces themselves, and especially on those within the PLO. History will record the role of every Palestinian force, organization and leadership, whether it facilitated or hindered the unity process. When we think about the goal of Palestinian national independence, the necessity of adhering to it and achieving it, we will clearly see that this goal in the present international, Arab and Israeli conditions, demands long and serious struggle. The Reagan Administration, for instance, represents the US military-industrial complex that was brought to power especially to confront the people's victories. It will not easily allow the Palestinian people to achieve national independence. We must give many difficult sacrifices. In view of the present Arab conditions, it becomes very clear that a Palestinian state will not be established without the Palestinian struggle playing a role in awakening the Arab area and creating Arab national conditions that will be supportive of the Palestinian people's achieving their goal of national independence.

If we add the Israeli condition to the international and Arab ones, the picture becomes even clearer. 'Israel' is making huge material gains from occupying Palestinian land. Today 'Israel' is exploiting half the labor force of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This part of the Arab labor power is being exploited by Zionist capital. The 1967 occupied land is the second biggest market for Israeli goods. Added to this is the value of the Palestinian land expropriated by the occupation authorities. Why would 'Israel' give up all these gains? I don't aim to say that the goal of Palestinian national independence cannot be achieved, but to confirm that it will only be achieved through a process of long and serious struggle that forces the enemy to give in to the Palestinian people's right to national independence.

What is the instrument for achieving this goal? The answer is the PLO. That is why we are determined to restore the PLO's unity on a basis that will enable it to be this instrument. Based

on this, I am convinced that the main obstacle to the initiatives to reunite the PLO is the PLO leadership, its wagering on the US solutions and its individualist style of leadership that prevent the mobilization of all our people's energies in a serious struggle for national independence. Up till now, the PLO leadership did not cancel the Amman accord. The most we can say in this regard is that the PLO leadership declared it had frozen - not cancelled - the accord. What guarantees us that this infamous accord is not going to be revived? What guarantees us that the PLO leadership won't go back to wagering on US solutions? Don't we have the right then to say that the right-wing trend is the primary obstacle blocking these initiatives?

This does not mean that it is the only obstacle. There are others that must be taken into consideration, but we must distinguish between the main obstacle and other obstacles that can only be removed after the main one is removed. One of the other obstacles is the extremist trend in the Palestinian arena. The extremists build their analysis and positions regarding the PLO's crisis on unrealistic premises. Another obstacle is the Arab states that see the PLO's crisis as a chance to contain the PLO, or liquidate it if it refuses to be contained.

Despite these obstacles, we feel that the conditions today are suitable for seriously thinking about restoring the PLO's unity. Moreover, the efforts of the Palestinian masses and their national democratic forces, the Arab national liberation movement, and our loyal friend, the Soviet Union, and the socialist community will be able to achieve this central link in the Palestinian national struggle: regaining the PLO's unity on a correct political and organizational basis.

The PFLP had a position rejecting contact with Fatah's Central Committee before cancellation of the Amman accord, but recently you met with Khalil Al Wazir (Abu Jihad). What was the motivation and what was achieved?

First, it is important to explain the difference between comprehensive national dialogue and contacts, political meetings or dialogue with Fatah's Central Committee. When we say comprehensive national dialogue, it is understood to mean the dialogue that aims at ensuring the success of an upcoming PNC. The PFLP sees the necessity of publicly and officially cancelling the Amman accord in order for the comprehensive national dialogue to start. This dialogue aims at serious preparation for the upcoming PNC session which will culminate in restoring unity to the PLO. The comprehensive national dialogue will discuss a number of political and organizational topics. One of these topics is reviewing the past three years experience, discussing whether the present political situation could possibly produce a settlement for the Palestinian cause, and what sort of settlement would be possible in the present balance of forces. Additional topics to be discussed are the PLO's official Arab alliances, the distinguished position of Syria in these alliances; organizational topics concerning the composition of the upcoming PNC - the number of members, the ratio of independents, the ratio of the resistance organizations' representatives; and the amendments we demand in the PLO's internal rules, including that the organizational section of the Aden-Algiers agreement should be taken into consideration, etc.

The PFLP will submit all of these topics for discussion. The PFLP advocates an immediate, direct and open dialogue right after official and public cancellation of the Amman accord. Why do we consider this cancellation an important issue? It is not to complicate things, as some say. The PFLP's point of view is that the Amman accord is a dangerous issue, and to be frank, this point of view is not subject to discussion. The Amman accord replaced the program of national consensus for the right to return, self-determination and an independent state, with a program for confederation with Jordan. For God's sake, is it permissible to discuss such an issue?! There are issues that are not up for discussion, and one of them is national independence. We say clearly and publicly: We are not ready to give up this right.

A large number of our cadres have studied in party schools in the socialist countries. They studied about the subject of

compromise and the necessity of compromising on many issues in order to ensure the continuation of the revolution. At the same time, they learned that there are principal issues that should never be bargained with. The Amman accord is such an issue. Moreover, we all know that the Amman accord was not signed by the 16th PNC or even by the 17th PNC that we don't recognize as a legitimate session. Why, then, is there talk about cancelling it in the next PNC session? Don't we have the right to demand that the party that signed the accord cancel it? That party is Fatah's Central Committee. Don't we have the right to consider it dangerous to say that the accord will be cancelled in the next PNC?

We have been through bitter experiences we can't forget. One of these is that once the comprehensive national dialogue begins, the individualist leadership feels that this is to its interest and the first step towards holding the PNC. Then, as has been the case before, this leadership will insist on its position and keep insisting. Then, for the sake of national unity and the PNC's success, everybody will be forced to submit to their position. We could see that this leadership would agree to freeze the Amman accord, but not cancel it. It will accept a formula similar to that of the Prague Declaration, that concerns freezing, not cancelling. Here we must ask ourselves and our masses: Do we accept that the Palestinian position on a dangerous and principal issue like the Amman accord is general, vague and subject to different interpretations?! There is a big difference between freezing and cancellation. We cannot be lenient when it comes to a principal issue. This is why we say that the Amman accord should be cancelled officially and publicly first. Then we can begin dialogue on other issues.

Some may ask: What is the difference between cancelling the Amman accord and boycotting relations with the Camp David regime in Egypt, since both are gates to the US solution? There is a big and qualitative difference. The Amman accord is a signed document. It cannot have an unknown fate. Up till now, the Jordanian regime continues to declare, as in the prime minister's speech at the UN, that the accord is not cancelled either by the regime or by the PLO.

There is one last point concerning the comprehensive national dialogue and the unifying PNC. We were asked the following question: «If we publicly and officially cancel the Amman accord, will the whole problem be eliminated?». Our answer was frank. Besides the Amman accord, there are two issues to be decided. First is the political issue about closing the Cairo gate and commitment to the political section of the Aden-Algiers agreement. Second is the organizational issue, i.e., commitment to the organizational section of the Aden-Algiers agreement, which stipulates a collective, democratic leadership for the PLO.

Now I will answer the specific question about what motivated the contacts with Fatah's Central Committee. It is our genuine wish to seek chances to unite the Palestinian arena. Although we know the Fatah Central Committee's position from the newspapers and their statements, we wanted to know their point of view first-hand on specific issues, such as why they don't want to publicly and officially cancel the accord, despite knowing that this is needed for uniting the Palestinian arena. We wanted to know if this was because of organizational considerations. We wanted direct and specific answers to these questions in a frank and brotherly atmosphere, aiming at motivating responsible national thinking at this stage of the revolution.

Restoring the PLO is a crucial responsibility. We don't want to be responsible before history and our masses, for having hindered unity when there is a basis for unity. We want to stress this deep feeling of responsibility. We want our cadres, ranks, masses and friends to feel that we don't waste any chance to reach this goal. For these reasons, we had contacts with Fatah's Central Committee. It is true that we want to keep our conscience clear, but that is not everything. Our only aim is to benefit from any chance to regain national unity on the basis agreed upon by our masses and allies. After these contacts, responsibility becomes clearly designated. In fact, it was designated before, but now it is more accurately designated. Having made the distinction between comprehensive national dialogue and contacts with Fatah's Central Committee, it is in our interest and the interest of restoring the PLO's unity that

we communicated with Fatah's Central Committee.

Answering the question about the results of our contact will be possible after Fatah's Central Committee discusses the PFLP's true point of view. Our talks with Abu Jihad included many issues, but concentrated on cancelling the Amman accord publicly and officially, and the many benefits this would mean for Fatah, the PLO, the Palestinian masses and our allies. Brother Abu Jihad promised to convey our point of view to Fatah's Central Committee in its first meeting, and to inform us of the results. I hope to hear the results in the radio before hearing them at the meeting we agreed to hold to find out the Central Committee's decision. The whole issue now depends on our brothers in Fatah's Central Committee. The meeting was beneficial in many ways, but politically speaking it will be judged by the answer to the following question: Will Fatah's Central Committee cancel the Amman accord? Is the Central Committee going to ask the chairman of the PLO executive committee to officially cancel it? We are waiting for the results and we hope that they will fulfill our masses' hopes: cancelling the Amman accord and removing this obstacle to comprehensive national unity.

**What is your evaluation of the Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF) in the light of the fact that it has suffered from paralysis since its establishment? There has been no progress towards its main goal: restoring the PLO to the national line.**

In previous interviews I have evaluated the PNSF and reviewed the problems it faces. Again, I reiterate that the main problem we have faced is that some of its members wanted the PNSF as a substitute PLO, or a preliminary to a substitute PLO. Their analysis was based on the idea that the deviation of the right wing would end with sitting down at the negotiations table with the Zionist enemy, under the supervision of imperialism. According to this idea, the role of the PNSF is to speak and act as the Palestinian people's national leadership.

The PFLP agreed that in the case where the official PLO leadership sits at the negotiating table with the Zionist enemy, under US supervision, we would then say publicly that this leadership is not the PLO or the Palestinians' leader. This is also what we have told our international allies. However, until this happens, it is our duty to prevent it through broad mobilization of the Palestinian masses, and our Arab and international allies, to prevent this deviation from going all the way.

This difference of views was the reason for the paralysis of the PNSF's role. When we raised the slogans of a popular conference and national alignment, we in the PFLP had in mind that the PNSF would lead the broadest popular framework, an effective Palestinian framework that would besiege the deviation and isolate it. This would have been a step towards aborting the deviationist policy so that the PLO could be united on a nationalist basis. Every time we raised the slogans of a popular conference or national alignment, we were faced by those who wanted this conference or alignment to result in a substitute PLO, or as a step preceding the formation of a substitute PLO. These are the main problems, though not the only ones, that the PNSF has faced.

The political developments of 1986 have made clear that the door to the US solution is closed for the PLO leadership, though we have no doubt that this leadership tried to enter the US solution. Facing this new development, it became the duty of all nationalist and democratic Palestinian organizations to exploit this chance to reunite the PLO on a nationalist basis, which would mean achieving the primary goal of the PNSF. The PNSF's future depends on some of the member organizations dropping the idea of a substitute PLO and taking a new stand, utilizing this chance to reunite the PLO. If the political conditions of 1985 encouraged the idea that the US solution would be opened to the PLO, and thinking about establishing a substitute PLO, then the conditions of 1986 should encourage the dropping of this idea and instead thinking seriously about reuniting the PLO. Reuniting the PLO does not only depend on the national alignment of the Palestinian organizations present in Damascus. Rather such national alignment aims at uniting both centers of the Palestinian revolution's organizations: Damascus and Tunis. We call upon the organizations in

the PNSF to face these facts, because this is necessary for achieving the PNSF's main goal.

As for the experience of the PNSF, I am still convinced that it has played a positive role, despite some critical moments it has experienced. In Lebanon, there is a plan to eliminate the Palestinian armed presence, not only Arafat's weapons as Amal claims, but the weapons of the PNSF and all Palestinians without exception. The formation of the PNSF deprived Amal of its main pretext and exposed Amal's real goals, because the PNSF was formed with a clear political line against imperialism, and repeatedly called for solidifying the Palestinian-Lebanese-Syrian nationalist alliance. This was a supportive factor for us in the eyes of the Palestinian, Lebanese and Arab masses, and our international allies.

Developments have stressed that there are two trends in confronting the right - the realistic revolutionary trend, and the reckless, nihilist trend. What are the points of agreement and disagreement between these two trends? Moreover, is there a chance for uniting the democratic forces in view of recent joint statements and meetings among them?

When talking about tactical disagreements in confronting the Palestinian right, we should constantly remember that the conflict in the Palestinian arena is against the rightist leadership of the PLO. Tactical contradictions between the nationalist and democratic forces should not be allowed to predominate over the main contradiction with the rightist policy which is the cause of the PLO's dilemma. Of course, there are several other factors that played a role in the PLO's dilemma, such as imperialist aggression, the loss of the central leadership position in Beirut, the dispersion of the fighters, the determination of surrounding Arab states to benefit from these new conditions to contain or eliminate the PLO, etc.

Among these factors, it is necessary to scientifically pinpoint the main cause of the conflict in the PLO. Maybe the PFLP bears a degree of responsibility; maybe the democratic and nationalist forces do. However, if we ask what is the main reason for the conflict, we should get a clear answer that it is the policy pursued by the influential leadership of the PLO, betting on US solutions and consolidating relations with reactionary regimes. This policy ignited the Palestinian arena and paved the way for the other factors to play a role. I concentrate on this point because of my conviction that it is correct. When we think of how to reunite the PLO, this analysis leads us to define our positions and tactics correctly.

On this basis, I can answer the question specifically. The factors of agreement between the two trends are mainly rejection and confrontation of the rightist trend in order to abort it, and a clear concept of the Palestinian revolution's nationalist and progressive alliances on the Arab and international levels. The factors of disagreement mainly concern the means of confronting the rightist trend. The reckless trend, as it is called in the question, thinks that the right can be confronted by scratching it out of our minds, and creating a new position that would lead to a substitute PLO, a PLO formed of nationalist and progressive forces with a clear political line. In contrast, the realistic revolutionary trend cannot ignore the fact that the right exists, that it is represented on the popular level, that it has cadres and bases, and that, unfortunately, it heads the PLO officially. Accordingly, the scientific, successful way to deal with the right is by aligning the broadest range of Palestinian, Arab and internationalist forces to besiege the rightist policy, isolate and abort it. The ultimate success of this approach is that we would retain the united PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, recognized by the Arab countries and people, by national liberation movements, nationalist governments, socialist countries and progressive forces all over the world.

I will answer the last part of the question about uniting the democratic forces in brief. (Editor's note: The PFLP defines the democratic forces as the DFLP, the Palestinian Communist Party, the Popular Struggle Front, the Palestinian Liberation Front, and itself.)

First, we can never forget that uniting the democratic forces is a concept adopted in our main documents. It is a guiding

principle for us, yet we cannot ignore the tactical differences that have arisen among the democratic forces. Second, there are two formulas for the presence of the democratic forces in the PLO. The first is a formula of real partnership. The second is the formal partnership which the right wing wants as a progressive cover for its policies. According to the second, the democratic forces would bear moral responsibility without actually participating in drawing up these policies. In the case of a clear and precise agreement among the democratic forces on the form of their participation in the framework of the PLO institutions, the unity of the democratic forces would be very possible, and soon. Third, the political developments in the Palestinian arena are pushing for the close relations between the democratic forces, as mentioned in the question. We in the PFLP are determined to benefit from these developments.

**Why does the right wing still cling to the Amman accord after the numerous rebuffs it received? Do you expect the PLO or sections of it to participate in the US solution? What are the possibilities that the right will return to the nationalist position?**

Certainly, the Palestinian right's failure to cancel the Amman accord raises a major question, whose answer would help us foresee the future of the efforts being made to reunite the PLO. I raised this particular question in all honesty with brother Abu Jihad during our meeting... I told him I could only see two possible explanations for their not cancelling the accord. One is political, that they are still hoping that mediation by Mubarak of Egypt or another would succeed in reviving the Amman accord; in that case, they are still adhering to the political line that caused the division in the PLO. The second possibility is organizational... that they do not want to admit their mistake in signing such an accord, because this would damage them and their organization, as they see it. In speaking to Abu Jihad, my position was that in the case that they will not cancel the accord publicly and officially for political reasons, then it is very dangerous to have the PLO reunited on a weak and ambiguous basis... If the reason is organizational, I asked Abu Jihad if it isn't in the Fatah Central Committee's favor to do as Abdul Nasser did several times, when he paused to evaluate a period of the national work and criticized himself. Nasser received more support from the masses after such self-criticism. I told Abu Jihad that it is really in their favor to initiate the cancellation of the accord. I asked him why he would give a chance for the masses to say that the PFLP was the only one for cancelling the accord as a result of the dialogue?...

Concerning the question about the participation of some Palestinians in the US solution, this solution includes three parties: the US, 'Israel' and America's Arabs, i.e., Arab reaction. America's Arabs hope that the PLO will participate in the US solution because they need a Palestinian cover for their treachery. 'Israel' refuses the PLO's participation; as Shamir has stated several times, the PLO is unacceptable even if it recognizes 'Israel' or resolution 242. The US does not reject the PLO's participation if the PLO yields to the conditions presented to it. What is the result of the interaction between these three positions? Experience has taught us not to make definite predictions, but the PLO's participation in the US solution is unlikely in the foreseeable future. This is not because of the PLO's own position, but because of Israeli refusal...

Concerning the possibility of the right returning to the nationalist position, this is supported by the objective conditions, i.e., the closing of the door to the US solution. This is the essence of the position we took after King Hussein's speech on February 19th. Still, it requires serious and consistent struggle so that the right can return to the nationalist position, and the PLO could be reunited on a firm basis, making it the instrument capable of achieving our people's goal of national independence.

**For a year and a half, the camps in Lebanon have been subjected to continuous wars. What are the goals of these wars and how can they be confronted?**

It is sheer stupidity to explain these wars as the result of individual incidents... or of the Palestinian armed presence having returned to its negative, pre-1982 state. It is also stupid to explain the tragedy our people and camps are experiencing by saying that they aim at disarming the capitulationist forces controlled by Arafat. Judging from how these camp wars are waged, whether the first in May 1985 or the third which started two months ago and still continues, the only scientific explanation is that this is a war between two opposing concepts about Palestinian armed presence in Lebanon. Amal's concept is to eliminate this, not only the arms of Arafat, but Palestinian arms in general, including those of the Salvation Front. The other concept is holding on to these arms in order to continue struggling against 'Israel', and supporting the Lebanese nationalist forces against Israeli occupation; supporting their goal of a unified Arab Lebanon which is engaged in the nationalist battle against Zionism, alongside the Palestinians and other Arab nationalists.

Why does Amal want to eliminate the Palestinians' arms? This is because 'Israel' wants that and puts it as a condition for its withdrawal, as it claims, from all Lebanese territory. We regret this position and are suffering from it. Naturally, we hoped that all Palestinian and Lebanese weapons, including Amal's, would continue aiming at 'Israel' to force its total withdrawal from Lebanon, and continue the joint nationalist struggle leading to Palestinian national independence. Of course, things do not happen due to wishes. For more than a year and a half, we have been facing a bitter situation in Lebanon. Confronting this, we find no alternative to standing firm and defending our weapons; without them we lose our dignity and our means for achieving liberation. We are proud of having increased our steadfastness in facing these attacks. At the same time, we extend our hands in hopes of finding a political solution that would regulate Palestinian-Lebanese nationalist relations.

We are fighting a just war in Lebanon. That is why many Lebanese, Arab and international forces are supporting us. We hope that by our fighters' steadfastness and our readiness for a political solution, and our broad range of allies, we can put an end to these wars as quickly as possible, based on safeguarding the Palestinian armed presence and consolidating the Lebanese-Palestinian-Arab alliance to continue the liberation battle.

**How do you evaluate the semi-united Palestinian position that has emerged in relation to the current camp war?**

This position will be a source of pride in the history of our Palestinian national struggle. Palestinian unity in the field, whether in occupied Palestine or Lebanon, despite the political disagreements between the various organizations, is a clear proof of the masses' correct nationalist sense, obtained from the experience of long years of struggle. There are two main factors in this great unity in the field. First is the disbelief of our masses and fighters that the goal of this battle is to disarm the capitulationists. They know that the goal is to disarm all the Palestinians. Second is the Palestinian people's and fighters' view of their weapons. In light of their bitter experiences since 1948, the Palestinian masses feel that their arms are their honor, dignity, freedom and homeland until the time they return to Palestine. This explains Palestinian united steadfastness in the field.

**How do you evaluate the Jordanian-Israeli efforts to divide functions between them in order to impose their joint rule of the 1967 occupied territories?**

This plan is the most dangerous development facing occupied Palestine since the 1967 occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Jordanian-Israeli efforts are not confined to the division of functions, but include the attempt to liquidate the Palestinian cause through the plan that is falsely entitled 'improving the quality of life' for the residents of the West Bank and Gaza. This plan got an okay from the US and 'Israel'

that agreed to the opening of branches of the Cairo-Amman bank in the occupied territories in order to finance the plan. This plan has also gained the approval of Western European countries and Arab reactionary regimes. The other aspect of the Jordanian-Israeli attempts to eliminate the PLO and the Palestinian cause is normalizing relations before signing an agreement. This means that the Jordanian regime and 'Israel' agree on intensively normalizing their economic, social and cultural relations as a step towards normalizing political relations...

The danger of this plan lies in the fact that there is an Arab party, Jordan, sharing directly in the Israeli attempts to eliminate the PLO. Since 1967, 'Israel' has attempted several times to eliminate the Palestinian cause by bypassing the PLO. Our masses may remember the attempt to do this by creating the village leagues, etc. We all know the difficulties that the enemy faces in finding a popular sector ready to cooperate directly. Now there is Jordan sharing these attempts with 'Israel', which paves the way for certain Palestinian sectors that previously had difficulties entering direct cooperation, to show willingness to cooperate in this period...

Moreover, this conspiracy is being activated in a situation in the Palestinian and Arab arenas, that encourages the conspiring parties to push ahead. On the Palestinian level, there is the division of the PLO. On the Arab level, there is the deterioration we considered in a previous question. In addition, the joint Jordanian-Israeli plan is being executed along with the continuation of all the Israeli plans imposed since the 1967 occupation: land confiscation, settlement building, subordinating the economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip to the Israeli one, the iron fist, Judaization, etc.

My emphasis on the danger of this plan is in no way intended to mean that we are facing an inevitability. Our heroic people in occupied Palestine, through their struggle, are daily proving their ability to confront and foil these plans... To confront the joint Jordanian-Israeli efforts, all Palestinian political, popular and military powers should be joined, as well as the support of our Arab and international allies, to achieve the Palestinian people's national aim of full political independence...

**Does the danger of the Jordanian-Israeli efforts necessitate the establishment of a national front in the occupied homeland? What are the obstacles facing the formation of such a front?**

This danger imposes the formation of a national front in the occupied homeland, composed of all nationalist forces; it necessitates other things as well. If we look at this issue in detail, we face the following question: Are we thinking of a front to be responsible for leading the struggle of our masses under occupation until the achievement of national independence? Does such a front faithfully adhere to the decisions taken at more than one PNC session, that the national front is the main arm of the PLO in the occupied homeland? If it is to be such a front, we can't ignore the importance of the political line that leads to national independence; we can't ignore the issue of the Amman accord. The front's components should unanimously condemn this accord and demand its cancellation. If we think strategically, we cannot ignore this question. The accord exists and Jordan still publicly says that it was not cancelled, so any such front should have a clear stand on this accord. Hence, the Amman accord is the main obstacle to establishing such a front.

Now, if all parties cannot agree on this issue, don't we have to think of other formulas for uniting the Palestinian national forces under occupation? The formation of a national front, in the strategic sense, is the best solution, and we will continue struggling to achieve this. However, if it is not possible, we should think of all possible formulas for uniting all Palestinian national forces on the platform that can be mutually agreed upon.

We are proud of the unity in the field achieved among the various organizations of the Palestinian revolution in fighting the Israeli enemy and all the joint Israeli-Jordanian plans. We will seek to develop this unity, raising the formula for unity to

a higher level that would eventually lead to the formula of a national front as the PLO's arm and the strategic leader of our masses in occupied Palestine until achieving liberation and national independence.

**What is the status of the struggle of our people in occupied Palestine within the overall national strategy of this period?**

I can summarize my view of these struggles in one sentence: This is our Palestinian people... This is a heroic people... These are the Palestinian children, elderly, men and women, who believe in their cause and are dedicated to continuing the struggle. No obstacle will stand in their way. Their struggle is a challenge to the leadership to face up to its responsibilities. They challenge the status quo on the Arab level and present a living example of the potential of the Arab masses to eliminate this Zionist cancer from Palestine and the Middle East.

The status of the struggle inside occupied Palestine, within the overall strategy for the national work in this period, is that it is the central task in the Palestinian national struggle. Saying this does not, however, diminish the importance of retaining the second base of the revolution, the Palestinian armed presence and revolutionary nationalist work in Lebanon, that aims to support the struggle inside occupied Palestine. Moreover, the fact that the struggle in occupied Palestine is the central task of our national struggle, does not lead to ignoring the importance of Arab nationalist and international factors in achieving our national goals.

**How do you evaluate the PFLP's positions and role over the past year?**

Due to the time factor, I cannot answer this question in depth, but I can pinpoint the things that should be appreciated in recording the history of this past year. The first thing that comes to my mind at this particular moment is the essential role that the PFLP played in ruling out inter-Palestinian fighting in Lebanon. The plan for Amal and the Lebanese Army to eliminate the Palestinian armed presence, changed into accomplishing this by internal Palestinian fighting. I am very relieved by the results of the role of the PFLP in stopping this, this month in particular.

Next, I would point to the slogan of unity in the field raised by the PFLP in order to join together the Palestinian forces in occupied Palestine and Lebanon, to prevent the conspiracies our people are facing in both places. To confront the Jordanian-Israeli cooperation, and in light of the situation of the PLO leadership, the PFLP raised this slogan and worked on this basis. I remember with pride a statement issued by our comrades in occupied Palestine about the intensity of the dangers of the new conspiracy of Israeli-Jordanian cooperation. This statement encouraged our cadres and comrades to work on the basis of this slogan, considering it realistic at this juncture.

There was also the position taken by the PFLP after King Hussein's speech on February 19th, that a new situation had been created in the Palestinian arena, calling for serious thinking about reuniting the PLO on a correct political and organizational basis. Since that time, the political activities of the PFLP have focused on the necessity of using this chance and seriously participating in reuniting the PLO. In this year, the PFLP has been a political voice calling for restoring unity without ignoring the experience and lessons of the past four years. Throughout this year, as in previous years, the PFLP has been fully dedicated to intensifying its military activities qualitatively and quantitatively. On this occasion, I salute the martyrs of the Naharia operation which embodied great heroism and had great political lessons and significance.

As I said, I cannot review all the PFLP's positions of this year. As always, our positions have been taken on the basis of our political and organizational strategy, and the decisions of our national congress. The branches and departments of the PFLP annually draw up plans for the year. When the Politbureau reviews the results of the plans of this year, I expect we will see a high rate of success.

## December Uprising

«WE WILL DIE FOR PALESTINE, WE WILL FIGHT TILL LIBERATION» - slogans at the Bir Zeit University memorial ceremony for the students martyred on December 4th.

The first half of December, occupied Palestine was vibrant with ongoing mass resistance to occupation, reminiscent of the sustained mass uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in spring 1982. Both these uprisings stemmed from the brutal Zionist occupation and the Palestinian people's consistent refusal to accept this. Both encompassed demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins and stoning of Zionist targets. And both were met with the old/new Zionist methods of repression - tear gas, arrests, curfews, school closures and outright murder. Six Palestinian youths were shot to death by Zionist troops in the space of eight days, and many others wounded. Bir Zeit University was partially closed for almost a month, Al Najah University for one week, and Bethlehem University for a day, after student demonstrations.

The latest uprising encompassed new themes as well. The breadth and militancy of the demonstrations showed clearly that the vast majority of Palestinians under occupation have no faith whatsoever in the Jordanian 'solution' which is based on undermining the PLO. Our people continue to adhere to the PLO and their national rights, knowing very well that the occupation will only be lifted by daily and strategic confrontation of the Zionist enemy. Another new, related theme of the uprising was solidarity with the besieged Palestinian camps in Lebanon. Palestinians under occupation are aware that the armed revolution outside is a much needed support to their own daily struggle. In fact, some attributed the uprising's militancy to the people's pride in the Palestinian revolution's heroic defense of the camps. Editor Ibrahim Kareem in Jerusalem, told reporters that the morale of youth «is higher today than at any other time since the Israeli invasion of Lebanon» (*International Herald Tribune*, December 10, 1986). Once again, the masses tore the mask off the false picture of the 'benign' occupation projected by 'Israel' and its supporters around the world. The leading Israeli daily *Haaretz* drew the logical conclusion, writing, «Israeli rule is no more acceptable to the Arabs of the administered territories than it was in 1967.» The UN Security Council, on December

8th, condemned the shooting of defenseless students at Bir Zeit, and urged 'Israel' to abide by the Geneva Convention for protecting civilians in time of war. This time, even the US found it inopportune to use its veto.

### THE OUTBREAK

Although events took on the decided character of an uprising after the confrontation between Zionist troops and Palestinian students at Bir Zeit University on December 4th, there was a prior chain of mass resistance and Zionist terror. Tension had been high since mid-November, when Israelis went on a three-day rampage in Jerusalem, after a Zionist settler was killed. In scenes reminiscent of a pogrom, gangsters smashed the windows of shops and cars belonging to Palestinians, and threw petrol bombs into homes. Two Palestinians were wounded and there was extensive property damage. The Palestinians of Jerusalem protested with a general strike, and there were acts and

### NEW EXPULSION

The Israeli occupation authorities renewed their policy of expelling Palestinians from their homeland by deporting Akram Haniyeh on December 28, 1986. Haniyeh is a Palestinian citizen of Ramallah, and editor in chief of the Jerusalem Arabic daily *Al Shaab*. He was arrested on November 3rd, accused of being a PLO official in the occupied territories. The military governor ordered him deported under the Emergency Regulations, contrary to the Geneva Convention which forbids the deportation of citizens from occupied territories. Haniyeh appealed the deportation order. However, as is usual in such cases, the appeal was sabotaged by the Israeli practice of keeping secret the specific charges against Haniyeh. Thus, despite having competent, progressive Israeli lawyers, Haniyeh was deprived of the right to defend himself. Seeing that the High Court hearing was but a travesty of justice, he withdrew his appeal and was deported as the price for his adherence to the PLO. Haniyeh is another victim of the joint Israeli-Jordanian policy for liquidating the PLO, in order to impose their joint rule over the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

statements of solidarity from other parts of occupied Palestine. At the end of the month, demonstrations were violently dispersed by the Zionist forces on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

On December 1st, students at the teachers' college in Ramallah organized demonstrations in the town and nearby Qalandia camp, expressing support for the besieged Palestinian camps in Lebanon. The demonstration spread to Bir Zeit University. There was a marked militancy: Israeli cars were stoned; residents barricaded roads and raised Palestinian flags high. The Zionist army replied in a way similar to its ally, the apartheid regime in South Africa. Soldiers opened fire on the demonstrators, injuring one student. Bir Zeit University was closed. Twelve were arrested and all gatherings were banned. New Israeli checkpoints were set up around the campus.

On December 3rd, Palestinian and progressive Jewish students at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem organized a mass demonstration in support of the people of East Jerusalem, who had been facing the Zionist settlers' terror.

### STUDENTS MURDERED

The situation boiled over on December 4th, due to the occupation forces' murderous tactics. On that day, the students of Bir Zeit University had planned a sit-in to mark their support of the Palestinian revolution and the besieged camps in Lebanon. When students and teachers were stopped from entering the campus by the Zionist soldiers, they began their sit-in on the road. A military vehicle arrived, and the soldiers detained Dr. Salah Abdel Jawad, a teacher at the university, and dispersed the students with tear gas. This sparked a militant protest demonstration by the students. The Zionists used tear gas, rubber bullets and gunfire, killing two students, Jawad Abu Salmiyah and Saeb Suleiman Dahab, and injuring 25 others. WAFA (the PLO news agency) reported from London that one of the injured, Kamal Ghadi, died of his wounds afterwards. The students used the only weapon they had - stones, and two of the Zionist soldiers were injured.

The occupation troops blocked the entrance of journalists and ambulances, so the injured were taken by private cars to Ramallah. The Zionists then attacked the families of the injured who had gathered at Ramallah hospital to visit the injured; three people were injured. The hospital was sealed off, as was the Bir Zeit campus. To crown their crime, the Zionist soldiers robbed

the bodies of the student martyrs, so that their burial would not become another mass demonstration. In the night, students managed to recover the bodies in a daring effort to thwart the Zionist cover-up, but the next morning the Zionists reconfiscated them.

That night and the next day, news spread about the latest Zionist crime, and demonstrations broke out many places in the West Bank on December 5th. There was a general strike in Ramallah and Al Bireh, and a large demonstration in Nablus. The confrontation increased. Firing indiscriminately on demonstrators in Balata camp outside Nablus, the Zionists killed another Palestinian youth -Majed Abu Dira, 14 years old. News of events also reached imprisoned Palestinian militants in Ashkelon; they and visiting family members staged a vocal protest.

On December 6th, demonstrations spread throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Demonstrators barricaded roads, and threw stones and molotov cocktails against the occupiers. Six Zionist soldiers were injured. Curfews were imposed on fifteen towns. Ramallah was sealed off and declared a military zone. The two students killed at Bir Zeit were buried in Gaza, where large demonstrations broke out. Overall, six Zionist soldiers were injured by stones that day, while around 90 Palestinians were injured.

The uprising continued on December 7th. Zionist soldiers threw bombs in the Bir Zeit University campus, killing one and wounding four. Again, Palestinians with only stones, faced the Zion-

ists' gunfire and tear gas. Cars carrying Zionists were stoned all over the West Bank. In Gaza, a Palestinian youth was shot in the leg by Zionist soldiers. Also in the Strip, Jabaliya camp was declared a military zone.

On this day, the uprising reached the part of Palestine occupied in 1948. There was a mass demonstration in Nazareth, where a Bir Zeit student delivered a speech. Similar meetings were held in other places in the Galilee. In Tel Aviv, the police forcibly dispersed a demonstration organized by the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, and the Campus student organization. One student and one policeman were injured, while the police arrested 15 people. There were also demonstrations at the Hebrew University's Jerusalem campus. Clashes occurred, pitting Palestinian and leftist Israeli students against ultrarightist Israelis.

Demonstrations continued in the occupied territories on December 8th. Firing on the people once more, the Zionist forces killed Mohammad Zeitoun, a 12 year old boy, in Balata camp. Eight other Palestinians were injured that day. One of these was a student shot in the leg as troops burst into an East Jerusalem school. An Israeli soldier was injured slightly by stones and bottles thrown by the residents of Duheisheh camp near Bethlehem. Brigadier General Ephraim Sneh, Israeli 'civil' administrator of the West Bank, ordered the old campus of Bir Zeit University closed until January 3rd. A commercial strike continued for

the third day in East Jerusalem, and was also observed in Nablus and Ramallah. Ramallah and Al Bireh remained under curfew.

On December 9th, the Zionist authorities ordered Al Najah University closed for one week. Strikes and demonstrations continued and became increasingly militant in Gaza schools and camps, where the Israelis showered tear gas and bullets on junior high school students. People in the refugee camps threw stones at passing vehicles carrying Zionists. Several were wounded as the Zionists fired into the crowds. One of these was a 16 year old resident of Bureij camp. The IDF entered Shifa hospital in Gaza and arrested those injured in protests, causing 140 Palestinian doctors in three hospitals in the Strip to stage a two-hour protest strike. Speaking of the repeated entry into schools by the occupation troops, an UNRWA spokesman stated: «Our installations have been violated repeatedly in Gaza.»

In Duheisheh camp on the West Bank, a youth was injured when Zionist soldiers opened fire on a demonstration. This was the first day the new campus of Bir Zeit University had been open since December 4th, and hundreds of students marched from the campus to the town, carrying Palestinian flags and shouting nationalist slogans, while protesting the closure of the old campus.

On December 10th, a 15 year old school girl, Hadiye Al Sussi, was shot

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Palestinian youth from Bureij camp hurl stones at Israeli troops.



and wounded at the junior school of Bureij camp. There was a large demonstration in Gaza, and five Palestinians were brought to hospital, having been severely beaten by the Zionist troops. In Nazareth, high school students went on a sympathy strike with their brothers in the 1967 occupied territories, while women from Rakah (the Communist Party) staged a sit-in, protesting the shooting of children, and the occupation as such.

Israeli military sources announced that 16 settlers had been injured by stones, and 50 Palestinians arrested - a gross underestimation: 200 had been arrested in the Gaza Strip alone; in the West Bank, there were 30 arrested only in Duheisheh camp. On December 11th, Israeli radio said that Palestinians were being brought to trial in groups of 25, which attests to the large number detained since the start of the uprising. The radio also mentioned that five students from Sangel secondary school in the Ramallah area had disappeared under 'mysterious circumstances'. A number of Israeli settlers from Shilo settlement, located near the school, raided it. All indications point to the fact that these students were kidnapped by the settlers.

Meanwhile, the Labor Party's newspaper *Davar* revealed that the Israeli army officer thought to have shot the Bir Zeit students in 'self-defense', was known for his links to extreme rightist settlers. It was also revealed that, especially in the Ramallah area, settlers had joined the official troops in shooting at demonstrators, playing the reserve role for which they have been trained. *Haaretz* reported on December 11th, that the Israeli settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are in possession of approximately 10,000 pieces of arms, with permission from the military authorities or the Interior Ministry. According to Israeli army regulations, a firearm carrier cannot use the weapon unless his/her life is threatened; in such a case, a warning should be given first by shooting in the air, then at the feet, and finally shooting to kill.

As demonstrations continued on December 11th, the Zionist forces committed a new double murder. Two Palestinian girls, Maha Abdul Hadi and her sister, Nuha, were shot dead by Israeli soldiers in Tulkarm in the occupied West Bank.

On December 14th, there was a strike and large demonstration in Jenin. One youth was wounded in the head by the rubber bullets fired by the occupation troops, raising the parallel with the brutality of the British occupation troops in Northern Ireland. In Nazareth, thousands marched in protest of the Israeli murder of demonstrators and for an end to the occupation.

## SOLIDARITY IN THE GOLAN

Of special note was a demonstration in the Golan Heights on December 13th. Several hundred people marched in Majdal Shams, raising slogans denouncing the occupation and the iron fist policy against the residents of the occupied territories. A statement was released expressing solidarity with the Palestinians in the refugee camps in Lebanon.

On December 16th, the students of Al Najah University organized a demonstration protesting the murders at Bir Zeit and the occupation authorities' actions over the foregoing week. The demonstrators kept the Zionist troops out of the campus by erecting stone barricades; they threw stones at the occupiers and proudly raised the Palestinian flag. Students at Abu Dis College of Science and Technology staged a demonstration and strike, protesting Zionist brutality and specifically the demolition of the home of a local Palestinian.

Although the intensity of mass resistance decreased in the ensuing days, the repercussions of the uprising continue. Arrests and other forms of repression continue. Duheisheh remained under siege. *Al Fajr* newspaper was ordered closed for the last week of December and the first week of the new year, on the pretext of its coverage of the uprising. The strictest 'security' was enforced in Bethlehem to ensure that the world would think Christmas is celebrated there in a beautiful, mystical way, free of the blemishes of occupation; in the preceding days, Israeli paratroopers raided and searched many houses in the city. Court proceedings started, with the Zionist authorities trying to convict various persons of 'incitement' to cover the fact that it is their occupation itself that incites unrest and is responsible for the state terrorism reigning in occupied Palestine. Though dovish Zionists raised the brutality of the troops in the Knesset,

there is no outlook to change in the Israeli policy. Speaking on Israeli television in mid-December, Shmuel Goren, military governor of the West Bank, admitted that 'the last few days have been irregular,' but he said that the Defense Ministry would not consider changing its policy in the occupied territories: 'In no way, shape or form. We will not change this policy... We will also strengthen it.' In the course of the uprising, an Israeli military leader was asked by a journalist about how the Israeli army would treat the new phenomenon of Palestinians' refusal to disperse, even after the army shoots in the air or at their feet. He answered, 'This phenomenon is not disturbing, and we will know how to handle it properly.' War Minister Yitzhak Rabin justified the Israeli army's actions during the demonstrations by saying, 'The forces have intervened everytime the disturbances seemed to get dangerous and when there was the risk of a traffic jam.' However, he admitted that the demonstrators 'feared neither tear gas or bullets.'

Regardless of the Israeli reaction, this uprising has had an impact that will become clearer in the future. Mainly, it has shown that neither the Israeli-Jordanian unofficial cooperation, the plan for 'improving the quality of life' in the occupied territories, nor the Jordanian 'development' plan have fooled our masses or lessened their resistance. The main question continues to be the people against the occupation. The Palestinian masses have fought another round with the occupiers, gaining experience and expressing their true position at a time when not only imperialism and Zionism, but many an Arab regime, concur on the necessity of liquidating the Palestinian revolution and the PLO. The uprising, like the defense of the camps in Lebanon, shows the impossibility of the enemy alliance's dream. The people cannot be silenced, and their cry is for genuine liberation.

# Military Operations

The following is a list of military operations carried out in occupied Palestine in late November and December.

Three hand grenades were found in an Israeli bus station in Hertzalia in 1948 occupied Palestine. The Israeli police defused them and arrested several Palestinians. On December 1st, two military vehicles were set afire and burned completely in Jerusalem. On December 3rd, a factory was set afire and completely burned down in the

industrial area of Ramleh in 1948 occupied Palestine. The same day, a hand grenade caused a large explosion in Tigha Street in Haifa; two Israelis were injured; the enemy radio attributed the explosion to a gas canister.

On December 5th, three bus stations were set afire in different quarters of Jerusalem: Kiryat Moshe, Shadrou

Hertzog and near the Knesset building; there was huge material losses. The same day, two fire bombs were thrown at an Israeli bus as it stopped near Nuseirat camp in the occupied Gaza Strip. The bus burned totally.

Three operations were carried out on December 10th. In Jaffa, revolutionaries planted explosives in the engine of a car belonging to a high-ranking Israeli who died instantly when he turned on the ignition. In Jerusalem, an Israeli was hospitalized in critical condition after being stabbed with a knife. The Palestinian militant who had carried out this attack was able to evade the police by hiding in the old city. A fire bomb was thrown at an Israeli military patrol in Rafah in the occupied Gaza Strip. There was a news black-out on the casualty figures.

On December 14th, Zahran Has-souneh, an official of the education department in Jenin, in the occupied West Bank, known for collaborating with the Zionists, was stabbed all over his body. He was hospitalized in critical condition.

An Israeli bus was stoned near Qalandia camp, north of Jerusalem, on December 17th. One Israeli was critically injured. The next day, there were two operations in the West Bank. In Ramallah, a Palestinian militant attacked an Israeli soldier with an axe, injuring him critically (see box). In

Jenin, a military vehicle of the border patrol was stoned, breaking the window.

In Jerusalem on December 19th, a group of Palestinian revolutionaries attacked an Israeli police station with fire bombs, injuring many policemen and destroying several vehicles. On December 22nd, molotov cocktails were thrown against a Zionist military post in Beit Sahour in the occupied West Bank. The Israeli soldiers opened fire on a group of youth, wounding and then arresting one of them. Residents of the town were rounded up; 15 of them were arrested.

An Israeli Egged bus was stoned on December 23rd, when passing the Aroub camp, located north of Hebron. A window of the bus was smashed and one settler was injured. On December 26th, Palestinian revolutionaries blew up a gas storage warehouse in occupied Jerusalem, totally destroying it. The same day, Yitzhak Shoui, manager of the post office of Kiryat Biliac settlement was stabbed to death.

#### THE AXE AS A WEAPON

Continuing their policy of collective punishment, the occupation forces had blown up a house in the village of Beit Rama, near Ramallah. On December 17th, the 17 year old son of the family whose house had been demolished went

into Ramallah. With the only weapon he could find, an axe, he waited off the main city square. Ten Israeli soldiers were in the square. The boy stayed in his hiding place until the soldiers moved. As they passed him, he waited for the last one and struck him on the head with the axe, fracturing his skull. The Israeli army sent in reinforcements and conducted a broad search in Ramallah. The boy was captured by the enemy forces, but his heroism will be remembered in the struggle against occupation.

#### THE REVOLUTION OF KNIVES

Zionist 'genius' in confronting Palestinian resistance resulted in a law prohibiting Palestinians from walking through Hebron's market streets with their hands in their pockets! This was the initial step, to be imposed all over the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The occupation authorities' pretext for the new decree is that some Palestinians carry knives in their pockets. Thus, putting their hands inside their pockets constitutes a 'security' danger, for they may be hiding knives which could endanger the lives of Israelis. This decision was taken after the spread of what is known as the «Revolution of Knives» in occupied Palestine, against the Zionists.

## 1948 Occupied Palestine Survey of Zionist Policy and Palestinian Steadfastness

This study deals with the ongoing Zionist policy to transform the Palestinians into strangers in their homeland, and with the Palestinian response to this. Especially important in the latter are the solid relations between the Palestinians of the 1948 and 1967 occupied territories, and the development of different forms of struggle which have aborted the concept of Arab-Zionist coexistence.

«A time bomb» - That's how the Zionist leaders view the Palestinians living on their land in the area of Palestine where the Zionist state was established in 1948. The Zionists spared nothing in their attempt to transform the Palestinians into a testing field for their conspiracy to defuse this «time bomb». This ranged from efforts to divide the Palestinian people into various sects according to the divide and rule policy, to Judaism aimed at obliterating the Palestinian national identity. It has encompassed the ugliest forms of discrimination, deprivation of the most basic rights, repressive campaigns of pursuit, confiscation, displacement, exiling, arrests and shooting down demonstrators in the «oasis of democracy» and the country of «justice and equality».

Despite all that, this part of the Palestinian people have managed to foil many of these conspiracies through heroic struggle and sacrifices, proving the impossibility of Arab-Zionist coexistence. They continue to adhere to their land, identity, people, cause and revolution. As such they are making a great contribution to the strategic goal of establishing a

popular democratic republic in Palestine, as part of a unified, socialist Arab society.

On May 15, 1948, the Zionist movement succeeded in establishing its colony on more than three-quarters of Palestine, and in expelling more than three-quarters of the inhabitants of this area, dispersing them over the world. Still, the Zionists failed to expell about 160,000 of the Palestinian Arabs. These people insisted on remaining on their land, despite the destruction of the economic and political basis of their existence, the confiscation of vast areas of their land, and the draconian emergency laws which the Zionists adopted from the British and Ottoman occupations, and which are still in effect despite formal cancellation in 1966.

Today, this part of the Palestinian people numbers almost 650,000 persons who continue to suffer from racist discrimination which is one of the basic characteristics of Zionism. Perhaps the clearest manifestation of this is the many schemes concocted by the Zionist «genius» in order to harm the Palestinian Arabs and reduce them to strangers in their own country

and second-class citizens, deprived of the simplest legal rights to a life of dignity and equality, about which the Zionist leaders always boasted. Below we examine Israeli policy in six different fields which most clearly manifest Zionism's nature and goals, as well as how the Palestinian Arabs have faced this policy.

## 1. JUDAIZATION AND LAND CONFISCATION

It is known that the Palestinian Arab citizens are concentrated in three areas: the Galilee, Triangle and Naqab (Negev). The population of the Galilee is almost 376,000, according to the September 1985 census. In the Naqab, there are 110-120,000 Palestinian Arabs. In addition, Palestinians live in five cities: Haifa, Jaffa, Acca, Lydda and Ramleh. Each area has its problems with the Judaization process and land confiscation enacted in accordance with the laws declared by successive Zionist governments. Notorious among these is the Absentee's Property Law which authorized the Zionist state to confiscate the property of all those who were not present at any time after November 29, 1947. Besides being used to confiscate the property of those Palestinians driven out by Zionist aggression in 1948, this law was in practice accompanied by much cheating and fraud, like claiming land to be the property of an imaginary name. Accordingly the owner or owners of the land were absent, and the land was confiscated by the Zionist state. There was also confiscation of land whose owners lived in another city of occupied Palestine and couldn't reach their property at the time of land being classified, due to various reasons, among them Zionist aggression.

There is also the Environment Protection Law under which all forests were considered state property (i.e., reserved for Jewish use), as was all land where the rock content exceeds 40%, or where trees are scarce. Extensive areas of land were closed off or confiscated on the pretext of «security» and Israeli military training. Large areas of cultivated land have been confiscated on the pretext that aerial photos showed that they were forests.

Between 1948 and 1953, the Zionist government confiscated 520 Palestinian Arab villages and established on that land 308 agricultural settlements. Of 1.5 million dunums of land owned by Palestinians in the Galilee and Triangle, 1 million were confiscated by 1972. In 1952, Palestinians were forbidden to enter an area of 62,500 dunums designated as Area No. 9. After a long struggle by the Palestinians, this area was divided into three sections. Section A (5,000 dunums) could be cultivated with no problems. In section B (50,000 dunums), Palestinians were allowed to farm only with special licenses in certain seasons. Section C (6,750 dunums) was closed totally, because it was considered a military firing zone for the Israeli army. Earlier, the residents of two villages, Ikrit and Kafr Berem, had been expelled from their villages for the same reason. (Ikrit was confiscated on November 5, 1948, and destroyed on December 20, 1951, while Kafr Berem was confiscated on February 4, 1949, and blown up on June 16, 1953.)

Land owned by Palestinians of the Druze faith did not escape confiscation despite the Zionists' claims that the Druze are not Arabs, and the resulting imposition of obligatory military service on them. Nonetheless the Druze have struggled fiercely against land confiscation, declaring adherence to their Arab identity and land. In 1975, the Zionist government declared its intention to confiscate extensive areas of land from Druze villages, especially Kasra. The people of these villages held a meeting and took decisions to be executed at all costs. The most important of their decisions were:

- Infringement on any piece of land of any resident of the village is considered an aggression against the whole village;
- resisting such aggression and preventing it by force, no matter the consequences;
- anybody who fails to participate in defending the land is considered an outcast; dealings with him and his family are forbidden; and everything in his house is considered cursed;
- anyone killed while defending the land is considered a martyr and will be buried on that land.

Two days after the meeting, the whole village went out armed with sticks and iron bars, to resist the Israeli bulldozers which were forced to withdraw.

The seventies witnessed a rise in the nationalist awareness of the Palestinians in the area occupied in 1948, at the same time as

talk of a «peaceful» settlement increased, especially after the October 1973 war and the mass movement it generated. The seventies also witnessed a sharpening of the tone of the Zionists' talk about a «pure Jewish state», the necessity of Judaization of the Galilee and expelling its Palestinian Arab residents. This was particularly clear with the issuing of the ill-reputed Koenig report drawn up by Israel Koenig, governor of the northern region. This report reflected the Zionists' fear of the rise in the Galilee residents' nationalist aspirations, and the possibility of their asking for independence, considering that they constitute the majority in the Galilee. The report called for changing the demography of the Galilee, i.e., Judaization. Zionist leaders cried out about the «danger» and the «time bomb», and declared the necessity of settlement in the Galilee, but under the slogan of «improving the Galilee and its inhabitants». Large sums of money were channeled to this project. *Al Hamishmar* newspaper, June 11, 1975, reported that the government and the Jewish Agency had allocated 1.5 billion Israeli pounds to execute a settlement plan in the Galilee to accommodate 100,000 Jews. The plan also included the creation of agricultural and industrial development projects on the edges of the Middle Galilee. Haim Bar Lev, Trade and Industry Minister, declared the existence of a program in his ministry for establishing six large industrial centers in the Galilee, on which work had already started. Shmuel Toledano, the prime minister's advisor on Arab affairs, declared on November 13, 1975, that the government would soon study the confiscation of 20,000



Judaization: Zeeb in northern Palestine became Ahsiv; the village mosque became a resort.

dunums to «develop» the Galilee in the areas of Carmel and Nazareth, and that 32% of government construction would be centered in the Galilee.

The Palestinians moved to defend their land and resist the confiscation procedures. They held popular conferences and formed the Regional Committee to Defend the Land, with branches in many cities and villages. Then came the Day of the Land on March 30, 1976, which climaxed the struggle against land confiscation and expulsion. Demonstrators clashed with the repressive enemy forces in many places. Six Palestinians were martyred and scores were wounded. Since that date, Palestinians everywhere celebrate this day yearly as an expression of their adherence to their rights and land, and their solidarity with their brothers living under occupation since 1948.

Though this struggle slowed down the confiscation process in some areas, it could not stop the Zionists' dream of Judaization, of expelling the Palestinians from the Galilee and confiscating their land. In mid-October 1986, Majd Al Kurum residents were ordered to evacuate 17,000 dunums of their land. The occupation authorities claimed that there had been a decision to confiscate this land since 1967, to add it to Carmel settlement in order to «develop» the Galilee. On November 4, 1986, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres called for continuation of settlement in the Galilee and allocating large sums of money for the purpose. Speaking at the opening of a new factory in Safad, he said, «There is no reason to make us give priority to settling in the north of the West Bank; it is better to develop the Galilee.»

In the Naqab, only a small part of the two million dunums owned by the Palestinians was left after all their villages were destroyed in the 1947-48 war, and the ensuing confiscations on «security», «development», and military pretexts. Then, after the Camp David accord was signed, more than 300,000 dunums were confiscated to build three military airports to replace the ones from which the Israelis withdrew in the Sinai. In May 1982, the Jewish Agency announced a project to settle one million Jews in the Naqab and to build 100 settlements by the year 2000. Intensive efforts are now underway to confiscate large areas of land from the Zubeidat family to join it to nearby Jewish settlements.

The Zionist government is also seeking to settle the Bedouins in seven housing areas as a step towards confiscating their land. However, this conspiracy has met fierce resistance despite all the repressive measures used against the people, their herds and crops, by the Green Patrol, created by Ariel Sharon when he was minister of agriculture, to execute the Judaization and expulsion plans. Despite all the land that has been confiscated, the Zionists have fallen short of their goals in the Naqab. At a festival held in Eshkol settlement on September 21, 1986, for the 100th anniversary of Ben Gurion's birthday, Israeli President Haim Hertzog admitted that «the settlement that had started intensively in the Negev is losing its thrust, and we are today very far away from seeing the Negev as Ben Gurion envisioned it, and these days we need a dramatic effort in this field.» Ben Gurion considered the Naqab as a sensitive area that must be settled to form a human and military wall against Nasser's Egypt.

## 2. HOUSING POLICY

This is a studied policy that aims at restricting Palestinian residents all over, forbidding them from settling down, creating social diseases as a result of overcrowding and housing shortages, and ultimately driving them to despair and emigration. There is a dual basis for this policy. First is the lack of a plan for the majority of Arab cities and villages. This serves the Zionists' expansionist aims of swallowing Palestinian land to annex it to Jewish settlements. Second is the discriminatory policy of the Housing Ministry which denies Palestinians access to housing projects, while providing such projects, apartments and other facilities for Jews. As an example, the Jewish town of Upper Nazareth was built at the expense of the Palestinian Arab city Nazareth and the villages of Ain Mahil, Rina, Kafr Kana and Al Mashhad. The area of Nazareth is approximately 7,500 dunums, of which one-third is owned by the state and churches, while Upper Nazareth covers 9,500 dunums. This is despite the fact that Nazareth's population is over 40,000, while Upper Nazareth's population is about half that.

Such institutionalized discrimination is the source of the problems of overcrowding and housing shortages from which the Palestinian Arabs suffer, and which leave negative social and psychological effects. Since the Israeli government deliberately delays the granting of construction licenses to Palestinian residents, they often start to build without a license. Today, over 7,000 houses in the Galilee and Triangle were constructed in this way, and are threatened with destruction. Many committees have been formed to study this matter, the latest being the Kovitch committee which recommended that 4,500 of these houses be retained, while the rest, located near or on roads, crossings and state land, be destroyed. Still, the government only agreed to grant a few hundred licenses, perpetuating the problem. Koenig, governor of the northern region, resigned last March as a result, for he had insisted on all these houses being destroyed.

In the Naqab, the Zionist government refuses to grant any construction licenses since it is seeking to settle the Palestinian Arabs in special villages so they can serve as a cheap labor force. The government decided to destroy all unlicensed houses, especially those in Zubeidat village. However, a committee of the Interior Ministry, formed to handle the housing problem, recommended issuing licenses for these houses in return for the confiscation of 500 dunums of the village land to be annexed to Kiryat Taoun settlement.

In Jaffa, where the Palestinian Arabs are concentrated in two quarters, Al Ajami and Jabala, they also suffer from overcrowding. Here the authorities refuse to grant them licenses for

construction, repair or enlarging their homes, or to buy buildings or apartments. In addition, Jewish residents refuse to lease to Palestinian Arabs. In the May 22, 1981 edition of the Israeli daily *Haaretz*, Ilan Shouri wrote, «The two quarters in which the Arabs live in Jaffa leave the impression of two neglected refugee camps. Thousands of residents who seem to have equal rights in the State of Israel, live there in subhuman conditions, and in buildings more like stables or archaeological sites at best. In Jaffa, time stopped 33 years ago.»

The situation in Acca is not different. Here the Palestinians live behind the old walls of the city, surrounded by Jewish quarters that keep them from expanding with population growth needs. They live in old houses, about 200 of which were estimated to be on the verge of collapse by Acca township in 1973. The sunlight cannot penetrate the cracked walls that still don't stop the rain from coming in, all of which causes dangers and diseases. The authorities prevent the Palestinians from repairing, rebuilding or enlarging their houses in an obvious attempt to drive them to leave for a village or emigrate altogether. Meanwhile the residents adhere to their homes. The protest campaigns they have mounted always elicit promises to build an Arab quarter in Acca, and transform the old city into a tourist attraction. However, after 12 years nothing has come of these promises. There are houses to be bought in Acca, but purchase is conditional on the buyer's having finished military service, which excludes the Palestinian Arabs.

Although Palestinian Druze are forced to do military service, they suffer the same dilemma. Despite all promises given by the government to build a special housing quarter, especially for released soldiers and newly married couples, nothing ever materialized. This proves beyond the shadow of a doubt the discrimination practiced against the Palestinian Arabs.

## 3. FUNDING LOCAL COUNCILS

There are 63 local councils for Palestinian Arabs, of which 17 are in Druze villages. These councils were established in the sixties and seventies after continuous struggle on the part of the Palestinians. The number of Palestinian citizens under the jurisdiction of these councils is over 12% higher than the total number of residents in the jurisdiction of the other local councils in the Zionist state. However, only 2.3% of the budget for local councils is allocated to the Palestinian councils by the Interior Ministry. In 1985, the budget was \$1.3 billion. This means that less than \$60 is spent for each Palestinian, whereas the share of the individual Jew is \$300. The Palestinian Arab councils' budget is subject to the Zionist regional governor's estimations and moods. It covers only a fraction of the needs and services of the Palestinian towns and villages. While the Israeli Property Department collects 400 million shekels yearly in taxes, only 3% of this is transferred to local councils. Revenues from taxes collected by the Palestinian Arab councils constitute only 16% of their self-acquired income, while the self-acquired income of the local Jewish councils is 32%, of which 18% is collected from local taxes imposed by the councils (1985 census).

This discriminatory policy has led to the accumulation of a deficit in the local councils' budget for many years, with no solution. This deficit reached \$17 million in July 1985, and \$25 million one year later. Thus, the councils were unable to pay employees and school teachers for many months, after which salaries are paid in a lump sum; then things return to as they were before. Many development projects have been stopped, and the services provided by the councils have deteriorated. Employees, teachers and students went on strike scores of times in 1985-86, to protest these conditions; the citizens at large declared their solidarity and went on a general strike. The Regional Committee of Local Arab Council Heads, formed in 1982, negotiated with government officials, but this resulted in nothing more than bits and pieces of no consequence. (In contrast, when the Jewish local councils faced a financial problem in 1985, the government quickly granted emergency aid totalling \$6 million for each of these councils.)

Members of the local Arab councils, along with the citizens at large, have repeatedly demonstrated in their towns and villages, and in front of the Israeli Knesset and the Prime Minister's office, shouting: «Oh Peres, oh Rabin, we want bread and flour... oh Peres, oh Rabin, you made us poor...» The results

are always «morphine injections» - promises and small payments. In 1986, the local councils declared a general strike that lasted the first seventeen days of July. The strike was suspended after the government declared readiness to increase the 1986 budget by 11 million shekels; this was then raised to 20 million shekels on the insistence of the local Arab councils. The government also decided to increase the development budget of the Arab councils by 65 million shekels. This occurred on the condition that the councils increase their local tax revenues by 4.5 million shekels, which would increase the hardships on the Palestinian residents. This was the first time the authorities have submitted to demands to increase both the general and development budgets, although the councils have long struggled for this. The Arab councils still demand that the government lay down a plan that would equalize the budgets of Arab and Jewish councils in relation to the size of the population they serve.

To the extent that the Arab councils have succeeded in carrying out projects and programs, this occurred through aid from charity societies, collection campaigns and organizing voluntary work camps, where delegates from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip participate, along with supporters of the Palestinian struggle from other countries. This has saved the councils millions of dollars.



#### 4. EDUCATION POLICY

The Zionist entity has continued the stultification policy previously enacted by the Ottoman and British occupations. This is manifest in a gross shortage of Arabic schools at all levels - nurseries, kindergartens, elementary and vocational schools. In addition, there is a lack of laboratories and libraries. In 1982, an Israeli committee was formed to study the conditions of Arabic education, headed by Emanuel Kapolovitch. It issued a report in 1984 which, among other things, stated: «At the end of the 1982-83 school year, the school shortages in the Arab domain reached 600 classrooms, and 600 departmental and laboratory rooms. There is a need for 1,200 rooms for kindergartens. To expand vocational education, there is a need for an additional 800 rooms. There is a big number of classrooms that are rented, very small, unfit and overcrowded... Health conditions in the schools are difficult. There are no doctors or even nurses. The Arab schools lack the most important basic facilities like services, drinking water and water for washing... We are not talking about luxuries, but describing very bad health conditions which constitute a great danger by facilitating the spread of intestinal diseases.»

Things don't stop here, for the Arabic curriculum has been distorted in a manner that serves Zionist goals. This is especially true of the history books which concentrate on Zionist history and mention only a fraction of Arab history and even then from a Zionist viewpoint.

In the Naqab, there were only four schools in 1960 with a total of seven teachers. By the 1967-68 school year, this had increased to 36 teachers for 15 schools and 45 classes. Until 1961, instruction ended with the fifth grade; in that year, a sixth grade was added, and in the seventies, a secondary school was opened. On October 17, 1984, *Haaretz* reported on educational conditions in the Naqab: «The preparatory school buildings don't have indoor toilet facilities... Some windows haven't been fixed for

years... There are no gardens near the schools... It is easily said that educational buildings of this standard are a shame on Israel.»

In the field of higher education, the number of Palestinian Arab graduates between 1950 and 1960 was 100. From 1960 to 1970, about 300 graduated. Despite the relative increase in the number of Palestinian Arab graduates in succeeding years, a high percentage of them don't get work in their field of study, because the doors of government institutions and departments are closed in their faces. Palestinians university students face problems on a daily basis, ranging from insults to expulsion and deprivation of union representation. Still, there are many committees and unions for university students, which are not recognized by the university administration. Palestinians also face high tuition fees as compared to those paid by Jewish students whose fees are reduced in accordance with their term of military service. (Jewish students do military service before entering the university.)

#### 5. HEALTH POLICY

In this field we will suffice with a quick look at the bad health conditions and intentional negligence, as documented in the report of the first Arab Health Conference, held in Nazareth on April 12, 1986, and published in *Al Ittihad* newspaper of Rakah:

- Among Palestinian Arabs, the average infant mortality rate is double that among Jews.
- Among Palestinians, three times more children die of unknown causes than among Jews.
- 80% of Palestinian Arab citizens live in areas where there is no sewage system.
- There is 33% leakage in pipes in the Palestinian Arab domain, due to corrosion, as compared to 10% in the Jewish domain. Such problems lead to water pollution and the spread of intestinal diseases and poisoning.
- The number of Palestinian Arab Histadrut members (and their families) benefitting from health insurance is 437,500 (13.7%); the number of Histadrut health insurance clinics in the Arab domain is 101 out of a total of 1,274 clinics. None of the 46 regional clinics are in the Arab domain.
- The percentage of health personnel in the Palestinian Arab domain is 3.8% and of doctors, 2%; while there are no dentists and dental clinics.
- While a doctor in the Jewish domain treats 1,800 cases, a doctor in the Palestinian Arab domain treats 2,900.
- In the administrative staff of the Histadrut's health insurance service, there are no Palestinian Arab employees.
- First aid centers do not exist in the Palestinian Arab areas.
- There are only three ambulances of the Histadrut's health insurance service available to Palestinian Arabs.
- Night medical care is available only in main cities, not in villages.
- Doctors in the Palestinian Arab sector work 90 hours weekly, while those in the Jewish sector work 177 hours.
- The Israeli budget for medical services is 3.8 million new shekels, of which the Arab domain receives 2.28%.\*
- There are no schools or institutions for handicapped or retarded children in the Palestinian Arab sector.

Moreover, there is no health program for schools in the Palestinian Arab sector. There are the problems of overcrowding, unhealthy housing and insufficient sanitary services, etc. If an Israeli medicine factory makes a mistake, this is brought to the attention of the public in the Hebrew press, but not in Arabic newspapers. Even if a Palestinian citizen is covered by health insurance, the medical care which he/she receives is dependent on the doctor's racist thinking and mood. In early October 1985, 20,000 Palestinians in the Naqab collected their health insurance cards to return them, as a protest against the bad health conditions.

#### 6. ECONOMIC POLICY

The Palestinian Arab citizen is the first to suffer from Israeli economic policy. Taxes are high. Exemptions and aid provided by the government to Jews and large families are conditional on

\* 1000 old shekels = 1 new shekel

military service. There is intentional neglect of the industrial, agricultural and service sectors in Palestinian Arab regions; only small amounts of money are allotted for these purposes.

In agriculture, the Zionist authorities control cultivated areas, the kind of crops raised and the amount of irrigation. The authorities force the Palestinian Arab farmers to cultivate crops that are needed on the Israeli market and have a low marketing price. More profitable crops are reserved for Jewish farmers. The areas cultivated by Palestinian farmers are constantly being reduced by confiscation. Special laws are issued concerning crops that the Palestinian Arabs commonly cultivate. In September 1985, a new property tax law was issued imposing high taxes on olive groves. At the same time, the authorities prohibit Palestinian farmers from cultivating quality olives with good returns. There are other forms of harassment as well. The Department of Archaeology warned the Palestinian farmers of Sakhnin and Arraba villages not to raise trees or use big plowing machines on the pretext that these villages are in an area of archaeological value. They asked them to cultivate grains only. Until the end of 1985, Palestinian Arab farmers were not represented in the Israeli Agricultural Center of the Histadrut's Union of Farmers' Cooperative Associations where aid is given from which Palestinian farmers don't benefit.

In the most obvious form of harassment, the Green Patrol regularly confiscates dozens and sometimes hundreds of cows and sheep on the pretext that they have entered a military area or other area where grazing is prohibited. The animals are then transported to a distant place. To recover his livestock, the Palestinian farmer or shepherd must pay a high price for shipping them back, in addition to a heavy fine.

In mid-October of 1986, the police and border patrol took over Jaffa port and closed it in the fishermen's faces on the pretext that it would be turned into a tourist harbor for yachts; this led to the loss of livelihood for dozens of families.

In industry, Palestinian Arabs are usually given low-level jobs in heavy industry where great physical effort is required and the work is hard and often dangerous. More than 65% of Palestinian Arabs work far away from their homes due to the absence of development and job opportunities in their villages or towns. When a factory suffers financial problems, they are the first to be fired. They are also vulnerable to attacks by the Zionist terrorists such as the gangs of Kahana and Levinger.

The latest economic plan adopted by the Israeli national unity government had grave repercussions for Palestinian Arabs. There were mass dismissals as part of the efforts to ease the economic crisis and cut down expenses. As a result of this plan, thousands of Palestinian construction workers were discharged. Half the construction workers in the Zionist state are Palestinian Arabs; they are most often hired without contract, and can be discharged at any time.

Racist discrimination in hiring and firing has left its mark on the number of unemployed. According to the estimate of the Labor and Social Welfare Ministry, there are 10,000 unemployed Arabs. When workers registered at the employment offices are selected for new jobs, Palestinian Arabs are sent to jobs far away from their homes and with no consideration for their skills; they usually get jobs in sanitation and road construction. If a Palestinian refuses such a job, his unemployment benefits are reduced. In the case of two such refusals, he is considered unwilling to work and loses his right to unemployment benefits totally. To show the scope of the unemployment tragedy in the Palestinian Arab sector, we draw attention to the fact that in February 1986, 20% of the work force in Nazareth was unemployed; in some villages, unemployment was at 35%. The unemployed have demonstrated at the employment offices and the Prime Minister's Office. At a demonstration in front of the National Insurance Institution's office early in 1986, one citizen, Yousef Odeh, burned himself in protest of the desperate situation.

In the service sector, there is clear discrimination between the Palestinian Arab citizen and the Jewish one in terms of insurance facilities, exemptions, education, health, welfare, and the provision of facilities for sports, cultural clubs, parks and theaters. There is a vast discrepancy between the budgets allocated for Jewish and Palestinian Arab communities, which is one of the roots of this discrimination. The other is difference in access to the existing services. Palestinians are usually regarded as

second-class citizens, if not tenth-class. They are forbidden from entering some public places, including hospitals and restaurants, only because they are Arabs. *Hadashot*, the Israeli newspaper, published an obvious example of how Palestinian Arabs are treated. On August 22, 1986, the paper reported that Leumi Bank in Beer Sheba (in the Naqab) receives Palestinian Arab Bedouin customers outside the bank building, where one employee handles their transactions. The bank's manager answered the paper's question about the reason for this procedure by saying, «Receiving Bedouin customers inside the bank would make Jewish customers escape because of the Arabs' smell and their destruction of the furniture and artificial plants.»

Of 11,600 public telephones in occupied Palestine, only 176 are in the Palestinian Arab domain. Communications Minister Amnon Rubenstein justified the discriminatory policy of his ministry by saying that Arabs don't take care of these phones and quickly destroy them. Shmuel Toledano, former advisor to the Israeli prime minister on Arab affairs, summarized his experience of 12 years in this post, after he retired in 1977: «With great sorrow, one can say that the Arabs in Israel are second-class citizens.» Ezra Weizman, minister without portfolio, summarized his experience with the Arab domain by saying, «There is much negligence towards the Arabs, and no one can deny that there is a problem in Israel called the problem of the Arab citizens.»

## THE POLITICAL, SYNDICAL AND POPULAR FIELD

It is the policy of the Zionist state to prevent the emergence of any independent Palestinian Arab political or social formation, and to thwart nationalist aspirations. Accordingly, the Zionist leaders have blocked the establishment of any independent Palestinian Arab political party, or popular or syndical organization. They have forcefully suppressed all attempts to form such organizations. The Zionists have relied on the same tools as did the Ottoman and British occupiers, such as the mukhtars and other traditional figures who care only about their own personal and class interests. All the people's demands for improvement were dealt with by the Zionist authorities through these figures. Thus, the Zionist occupiers attempted to force the Palestinian Arabs to accept the status quo.

Continuing the British Mandate's policy of divide and rule, the Zionist state tried to divide the Palestinian Arabs based on their religions (Muslim, Christian and Druze), even going so far as to consider the Druze faith a new nationality, separate from Arab nationality. In line with this, they forced the Druze to do military service in the Israeli army. However, these attempts have ultimately failed, for the Druze insisted on adhering to their Arab identity. Over the years, many have refused to do compulsory service and demanded that the government cancel this decision. In 1956, Sheikh Farhood Farhood and others refused to do military service, declaring adherence to their Arab nationality, and insisting that the word *Arab* be written under the nationality category on their identification cards, with Druze designated as their religion. (Druze is written as nationality on the Israeli identity cards.) On January 10, 1972, the Druze sheikh of Al Raha issued a statement calling for an end to drafting Druze. He questioned the reasons for drafting them as they are true Arabs who share their destiny with their Arab brothers. In an interview with the Israeli newspaper *Davar* on May 18, 1972, Farhood Farhood, leader of the Druze Initiative Committee, said, «We are Arabs in every aspect. Therefore, it is a shame to be drafted. I don't want history to misrepresent us. We have no right to separate Druze from Arabs.»

The Zionist enemy has also resorted to encouraging the Palestinian Arabs to emigrate. To this purpose, several companies have been formed, that offer immigration to the US, Canada and European countries, with enticements such as paid travel and accommodations, an insured job, etc. However, these attempts failed to tempt our people to leave their homeland.

As Palestinian Arabs increasingly articulated their demands in the face of the discriminatory Israeli policy and their own lack of political rights, they turned to the Israeli Communist Party (Rakah) which has an Arab majority in its membership and is the first defender of Arab interests among legal parties. Other progressive nationalist movements grew up and tried to form

independent movements and parties. In the fifties, *Al Ard (The Land)* nationalist organization was founded, but it was savagely repressed and its leaders imprisoned. On July 24, 1964, a law was issued banning its activities.

After the June War of 1967, the nationalist relations between the Palestinians in the 1948 occupied land and those in the newly occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, became more direct and deeper. The emergence of the organized armed Palestinian revolution, and its military struggle, had deep effects in terms of crystallizing the masses' national awareness, especially after their disappointment with the Arab bourgeois regimes. These developments greatly curtailed the influence of the mukhtars and other traditional figures who couldn't compete with the new generation of nationalist intellectuals in the 1948 occupied area. This new blood headed the election lists for town and village councils. The trend of struggle for improving the conditions of life increased and grew into struggle for legitimate national rights and full political rights. The new generation formed several independent political movements - the Sons of the Village, the Druze Initiative Committee, the Progressive Nationalist Movement, the Movement for Organizing the Ranks in Nazareth, the Arab Academics' Union, Union of Arab Students' Committees, the Arab Students' League, etc. Other groups were established such as the Committees for the Defense of the Land, the Regional Committee of the Heads of Local Councils - 1982. Some of the groups formed sprang from political movements, but publicly adopted demands concerning living conditions in order to be considered legal.

## UNITED PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE

Regardless of the stated goals of these movements, from the time of their formation, all dealt with the political issues that concern the Palestinian people as a whole. They have continuously expressed their adherence to the PLO and solidarity with the struggles of Palestinians everywhere through statements and demonstrations against attacks on the Palestinian cause. These movements and organizations have mass roots, as does Rakah whose influence has grown among Palestinian Arabs. All rejected the Camp David accords. They made large demonstrations against the 1982 Zionist invasion of Lebanon, calling for a stop to this expansionist war and immediate withdrawal of the invading troops. On September 20, 1982, Palestinians protesting the Sabra-Shatila massacre clashed with the Border Patrol and police; there were scores of wounded on both sides.

These organizations and movements also refused the Reagan plan, while declaring their support to the national consensus resolutions of the 16th PNC and the national unity which resulted from that session. At the same time, they warned against the PLO leadership's policy of saying 'yes' and 'no' at the same time, and its attempts at hegemony. They had a clear position against inter-Palestinian fighting at the time of the internal fighting in Tripoli in 1983. They also expressed support to the Program for Unity and Reform in the PLO, presented by the Joint Leadership of the DFLP and PFLP in 1983. With the Palestinian right-wing increasingly betting on US solutions and Arafat's visit to Cairo, these movements and organizations declared their position that this visit did not serve the Palestinian people's cause. They also voiced their opinion against the convening of the 17th session of the PNC in Amman, and against the Amman accord. They spoke out for national unity between the organizations of the Palestinian revolution on a political and organizational basis rejecting illusions about a 'peaceful' settlement, rejecting hegemony and in favor of a collective leadership.

The recent years have witnessed more cohesion between the struggles of our people in the 1948 occupied land and those in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Their unity has found expression in joint voluntary work on community projects and in yearly celebrations like the Nazareth festival for volunteer work. The Day of the Land, celebrated all over Palestine, clearly demonstrates the unity of the Palestinian struggle. There is a joint position against Zionist settlements and settler terrorism, especially the attempts of Kahana to intrude in Um Al Fahm in the Galilee, Taibeh in the Triangle and Duheisheh camp in the West Bank. The Palestinians of the 1948 occupied land initiated committees for the defense of Duheisheh and of the Palestinian revolutionaries who are imprisoned in Zionist jails. They have repeatedly protested against the attempts to burn Al Aqsa mosque, and other attacks on Islamic and Christian holy places. The national progressive movements in the 1948 occupied land have rejected all conspiracies faced by West Bank and Gaza Palestinians - self-rule, the Israeli-Jordanian division of functions, the Jordanian 'development's plan, etc.

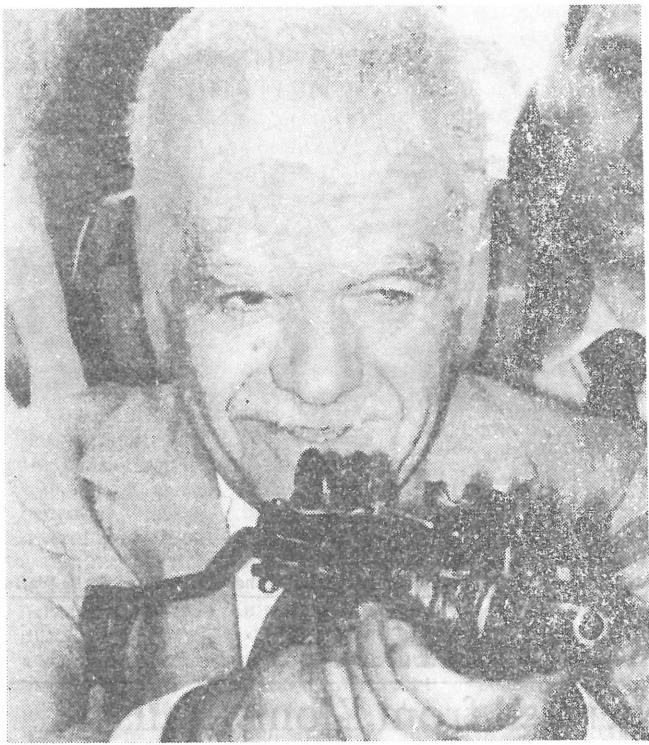
## ATTEMPTS TO DISRUPT THE PEOPLE'S UNITY

The growing struggle and unity of the Palestinian people, and the increasing influence of Rakah and the progressive nationalist movements, didn't exactly please the Zionists. For this reason, one could hear Zionist voices proposing to issue licenses for establishing 'independent Arab parties' on the supposition that it would be easier to eliminate public work than to search out secret movements. Obviously, the intent was to give the Palestinians a chance to let off steam, channeling their political activities into frameworks considered less dangerous. However, the Zionist-sponsored attempt to establish the 'Arab Party' in 1955 failed. Zionist attempts to support some Arab candidates for Knesset elections succeeded only partially. Also, there were calls for assimilating some Arabs into the Zionist parties or forming Arab chapters for these parties, focusing on figures known for loyalty to their own interests and privileges. Some such figures were presented for Knesset elections.

The Zionists have also resorted to attempts at inciting the nationalist parties and forces against each other. More recently, there were attempts to use new groups, such as the Progressive List for Peace, headed by Moh'd Miary, to weaken the progressive nationalist forces and parties. (The Progressive List for Peace obtained political and financial support from the right-wing PLO leadership when running for the 11th Knesset.) This weakened Rakah's electoral force and dispersed the Arab vote, increasing the votes to Labor and Likud.

Another effort to break the people's unity has been inciting local Arab councils against their heads or Druze, Islamic and Christian councils against each other, by discriminating in the budgets allotted to each. Some small councils receive amounts much larger than those received by some big councils. This policy also aims to incite the population against the councils in order to break the strong mass adherence to their local lea-





Historical terrorist Shamir - still targeting the Palestinians

dership. Sometimes the Zionists claim that the reason for the discrimination is because a particular person heads the council. This aims to push the masses to dismiss that person and accept candidates more conciliatory to the Zionist authorities.

The Zionist authorities also seek to incite the Palestinian Arabs of the 1948 occupied area against their brothers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. There is also the policy of intensifying the iron fist against members of the Palestinian revolutionary organizations, or others who engage in military struggle, imposing long, tough jail sentences, to make an

Annual Day of the Land celebration in the Galilee



example of them and frighten off others from joining the militant struggle. The authorities also commit acts of terrorism against some Palestinian forces and then claim that these acts occurred as a result of internal Palestinian conflict. Such an incident occurred at the 11th annual festival for volunteer work in Nazareth, when a molotov cocktail was thrown into the crowd. The Zionists claimed that this happened due to internal differences among Palestinian Arab forces.

There are scores of other plots to disrupt the people's unity, which the Palestinians have succeeded in aborting. The growing alignment among the various nationalist forces in the 1948 occupied area provides a good example of the failure of the Zionist policies. There is good coordination, especially in the fields of social struggle, joint candidates for student council elections at universities, and coordination among local councils.

## FAILURE OF ZIONIST—ARAB COEXISTENCE

The long years of occupation and the great struggles fought by our people have heightened their sense of Palestinian and Arab nationalism. Armed struggle has also increased in the 1948 occupied areas. At the same time, the role of traditional forces attached to the Zionists by reason of their personal and class interests, has been diminished. Attempts at Arab-Zionist dialogue conducted by the Zionist government in the schools have failed, as have attempts to form an Arab lobby loyal to the Zionist government. Another consequence of our people's experience is the transformation of their struggle for demands concerning daily life, into struggle for political demands and national rights. All these developments provide evidence of the failure of the Zionist policy for assimilating the Arabs in the Zionist entity.

Conversely, they prove the Palestinian Arabs' insistence on adhering to their own identity, traditions and culture, as is seen every year on the Day of the Land and in folklore committees and festivals. This determination was also exhibited in this year's (1986) commemoration of the Kafr Kassem massacre of 1956, and the establishment of a memorial for the victims. There was also the 100th anniversary celebration for the Palestinian writer, May Zaida, the commemorations of Ghassan Kanafani's martyrdom and the call to establish a memorial for him in his hometown, Acca. There was the establishment of the *Al Hadaf* institute in Um Al Fahm, which has published the works of Kanafani. There was the production of the movie entitled *Roots*, showing the Palestinian Arab folklore and traditions, the attacks on holy sites and land confiscation. There have been poetry festivals, cultural evenings, theater, demonstrations, declarations of support for the national struggle, and the formation of committees against Zionism, racism and the iron fist. All these events prove the impossibility of Arab-Zionist coexistence, the purpose of which Ariel Sharon revealed at a conference for Palestinian Arab businessmen at the Hilton Hotel on January 15, 1986, when he said: «I see in you a direct bridge with Egypt and an indirect one with Jordan and the rest of the Arab countries... Peace with Egypt has opened new gateways for Israeli products, especially the ones from the Arab sector, for you speak their language. My office will spare no efforts in supporting you, and you can sell your products in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states.»

This is how the Zionist leaders understand the concept about Arab-Zionist coexistence. To them, it means their invasion of the Arab markets and the exploitation of cheap Arab labor. The Egyptian people have proved the failure of this policy, as have the Lebanese nationalists, and even earlier the Palestinians in the 1948 occupied homeland. Despite 39 years of Zionist terror, they refuse to serve as a bridge for Zionist-Arab coexistence. This precious section of our Palestinian people have through daily steadfastness made a great contribution to the overall struggle resisting Zionism and its artificial state. The Palestinian revolution has a great duty towards these people to hasten the time when they will be free from Zionist occupation. Fulfilling this duty means escalating the struggle against Zionism, imperialism and Arab reaction, intensifying armed struggle in particular, and most importantly restoring Palestinian national unity opposed to imperialist settlements, allying with the Arab national liberation movement and with the socialist countries. This will push the struggle forward and hasten the day of our people's liberation.



Zakaria, Mohammad, Zuhdi, Abdul Hamid, Abu Waffa

## The Battlefield Inside

### Interviews with Militants Liberated from Zionist Jails

This is a composite interview conducted with five comrades of the PFLP, who courageously served long terms in Israeli jails and were liberated in the 1985 prisoner exchange, when two Israeli soldiers were released by PFLP-General Command in return for the freedom of 1,150 revolutionaries.

*Democratic Palestine* interviewed Khalaf Nasser (Abu Waffa) from Ramallah, who spent 17 years in the Zionist jails; Zuhdi Hamoud Al'Adawi of Gaza, who spent 15 1/2 years in Zionist jails; Abdul Hamid Mohammad Al Shatali of Gaza, 14 years; Zakaria Tatari from Gaza, 13 years; and Mohammad Al Rukoi from Gaza, 12 years. All five took part in the phase of the Palestinian resistance that immediately followed the 1967 occupation. All five were sentenced to long prison terms, ranging from thirty years to multiple life sentences. In fact, the Zionist enemy intended for them to die in prison. All five spent their youth - the best years of their life - in prison, but they turned this into another battlefield in the Palestinian national struggle. All of them served time in several different jails and took part in the battles of the political prisoners, such as the prolonged hunger strike in Nafha in 1980, and earlier strikes in Ashkelon, etc. All five are now active in the Palestinian revolution, in fields ranging from military to mass and cultural work, within the ranks of the PFLP.

We began the interview by asking each comrade about the circumstances of his arrest. Abu Waffa explained what happened to him: «Two patrol cars came to my house and took me to the center. I was interrogated for going to Jordan. My legs and hands were tied and I was blindfolded. At first, I was

confused, but when I realized that all the questions focused on my travel to Jordan, I relaxed. I stayed 21 days in detention. The interrogator said that I would be released in two days because of lack of evidence. That was on May 6, 1968, but two days later I was surprised to see one of the comrades, who came from Jordan to work under my leadership, enter my cell. He explained that he had come with a combat patrol and was arrested after a clash with the Zionists on April 12th. Then, on May 9th, he was called for interrogation, and on the same day, I was accused of leading a combat cell in Ramallah, that had carried out several operations. He served as a witness, and he turned traitor. His name was Lutfi Sa'adeh.»

Zuhdi added his experience: «In 1970, at one o'clock in the morning, a group from the Zionist army broke into the house where I was staying with four other people, all friends, not PFLP members. That was in Gaza. They started interrogating us right in that house, beating us severely and asking about the location of other comrades and arms. At that moment I felt highly responsible for my comrades. That gave me strength, though I had little experience then. They blindfolded me and took me to the jail.»

Abdul Hamid prefaced telling about his arrest by describing the situation in that period as he had experienced it: «I joined the PFLP in the Gaza Strip, in

what we call the golden time of the resistance. The PFLP was the most active and developed organization in the Strip, with the most support, as everybody acknowledges, even the enemy. That explains why the militants of the PFLP were especially targeted by the Zionists. Due to the rise in armed struggle in Gaza, the Zionist enemy hysterically pursued, arrested and detained many people. In this way, they learned about my activities and began to hunt for me.»

«I lived underground for a period of time and carried out several operations against the enemy. An example was the attack on the Zionist military camp at Al Nuseirat, where the enemy admitted the death of six of their soldiers. Because of their anxiety about the escalating resistance, the occupation forces enforced collective punishment. This was organized by Moshe Dayan and included demolishing the houses and land of families of members and supporters of the revolution, as well as administrative detention. Hundreds of thousands of our people were affected by this policy, including my own family. My father and two of my uncles were detained. The rest of my family was sent to one of the concentration camps the Israelis built in the Sinai.»

«All this, however, failed to deter the revolution in the Gaza Strip, so the Zionists opened an all-out war on Gaza. This was called Sharon's campaign, led by the infamous Ariel Sharon. I was arrested during that period. While I was on a mission, I found myself surrounded by Zionist troops. I tried to escape, but was caught. I tried to ignite a grenade, but they were faster and stopped me. They attacked me like a pack of dogs, beating and kicking me.»

## THE NIGHTMARE OF ARREST AND THE BATTLE OF DETERMINATION

Abdel Hamid continued, «At first, I was in shock. I felt my brain stop. After a few moments I began to realize the severity of what had happened. They continued to ask me about my comrades, and I knew I was entering a new battle - the battle of determination against the enemy. They handcuffed me and took me to Al Nuseirat camp. There a Zionist soldier tried to shoot me but missed. His superior screamed at him and took away his pistol...»

Mohammad Al Rukoi was arrested a few years later: «At midnight on March 16, 1973, I was arrested in my house. I was sound asleep, and suddenly my bedroom door was broken open and several soldiers entered. I thought it was a nightmare. After a moment, I realized what was happening. Several soldiers held me in the dark, shining a flashlight in my eyes. They asked me to lift things and help them search the room, but they forbid me to touch anything except on their orders. They were afraid I would reach for a hidden weapon. They took me into the courtyard in my pyjamas; they didn't allow me to wear my shoes. They made me take off my pyjama pants and blindfolded me with them. They tied my hands with nylon ropes and took me outside.»

«They attacked my mother and beat her, then returned her to her room. They encircled me and beat me up, asking about where I had hidden my weapon. When I didn't answer, they took me away in a car which was part of a convoy. On the way to the jail, a soldier hit me in the eye with his pistol, and I suffered a black eye.»

Zakaria prefaced the description of his arrest by thanking *Democratic Palestine* for opening its pages to the prisoners' story. He stressed that the way the Zionists torture Palestinian freedom fighters is comparable to the Nazis' brutality... He told about the work that he was involved in prior to his arrest: «I was part of a fighting cell of the PFLP. We concentrated our work on planting explosives in different parts of occupied Palestine. On November 29, 1971, the anniversary of the day the UN adopted the plan dividing Palestine (since turned into the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People), we planted explosives in three different places in the 1948 occupied territories. The enemy admitted 30 casualties that day. Then on February 2, 1972, we had prepared 27 explosives in the occupied West Bank, but one of them exploded by accident. A comrade was martyred and another one injured. The injured comrade was taken to hospital and arrested there. I was told to go to Gaza to tell the leadership what had happened.»

«I told them the same day, and they suggested that I leave for Jordan, but I refused, and it was decided that I should go to the West Bank. I went to

my home to say good-bye and prepare for my departure the next day. That night, February 6, 1972, 72 Zionist soldiers came to my house at 3 a.m. We heard heavy knocking. When my father opened the door, the house was surrounded. Several soldiers entered. They ordered us out and searched the house. They dumped all our grain, rice, sugar and oil on the ground, while we were forced to wait outside with our hands in the air. They asked for ID cards, and when they saw mine, they said: 'That's the one. That's the terrorist.' My mother began to cry, but I told her not to, that I would come back to her... My morale was high. I knew that I had entered a new form of war with the enemy. I was determined not to give in.»

### FASCIST TORTURE

Our questions about the first hours of detention elicited vivid accounts of torture from the comrades. Needless to say, political prisoners have no access to lawyers during the interrogation period which may be very prolonged in accordance with the Zionists' efforts to break the militant's will. Lawyers are first provided at the stage of trial which is a sham where anyway the accusations of the intelligence are accepted at face value.

Mohammad recounts: «I arrived at the detention center at about 1 a.m. and they handed me over to the wardens. They stripped me and searched me thoroughly; they took my watch. Then a policeman came with a soldier and a member of the Shin Beth, and took me to the interrogation room. There were about 24 cells in that section, and I was led into a small room with paintings that looked like crosswords and mazes on the walls. There was a table and several chairs. The interrogators were Iraqi Jews in civilian clothes. They asked me to take off my clothes. When I refused, they attacked me and tore them off. I was totally naked.»

«They made me sit on the floor and put my legs through the chair; they started beating me on the feet with a stick. After my feet swelled, they made me sit on a chair. One of the butchers, with big hands, started beating me on the ears until they bled. They dragged me by the hair to another room where there was a shower, and poured ice-cold water on me for fifteen minutes. Then I was sent to another room where they 'ghosted' me.» This torture is notorious in Zionist jails. The detainee is handcuffed by one hand and hung by this hand from the ceiling, in a position resembling a ghost. It is a very dangerous form of torture, as it can result in paralysis of the hand and arm.

Under the pressure of such torture, Mohammad was asked the following questions over and over: Which organization do you belong to? Did you hide arms? Did you carry out any operation against 'Israel'? Who are your comrades and where are they? Who helps you? Where are the hiding places of

fugitives?

Next Abu Waffa told about his questioning: «When they started, I realized that the information they had was not accurate. I was charged with several operations I did not do. Usually when one is arrested, he would say that others did all the things he did, so I found myself responsible for many operations. They asked the whereabouts of our comrades, the names of people in charge and who carried out specific operations. During that period, time stopped for me.»

This questioning was accompanied by severe torture: «They used several methods. The worst is the 'ghosting', but they would also put the tube of a ballpoint pen into the penis. There were electric shocks and injecting a water hose into the rectum, with a jet of water, that made you feel your insides would come out of your mouth. They make you eat chocolate with pickled fish and bread, which causes extreme thirst. They use chemicals on your skin. They use specially trained dogs to attack you, and show you beheaded bodies.»

Zakaria explained that the Zionists use both psychological and physical torture: «They ask you what you think of the Israeli army, then they put you up against a wall blindfolded and make you think that they will shoot you. They told me that they knew everything about me, for others had confessed; they promised good treatment if I cooperated. Then they said that they would force me to speak, that I would speak from my ass. Then they showed me a map and asked me to point out the locations of the revolutionaries' hideouts. When I didn't cooperate, they hung me from the ceiling by my legs, so I felt my head would explode. They also put a plastic bag on my head, so I felt I would suffocate.»

### «WHERE IS GUEVARA GAZA?»

Abdul Hamid was an assistant to Mohammad Al Aswad, called Guevara of Gaza, the PFLP Politbureau member in charge of the Gaza Strip in that period. This fact was predominant in his interrogation. He relates the proceedings after he was arrested: «They moved me from Al Nuseirat camp to the offices of the Zionist military governor of Gaza. On the way, I was severely beaten, and I was bleeding. Then the military governor's deputy ordered me transferred to the Gaza Central Prison. On the way, they treated my injuries in a superficial manner.»

«In the Gaza prison, several officers received me and started asking questions, especially about the whereabouts of Comrade Guevara of Gaza. They sent me to the intelligence section of the prison. There I learned that they knew that I was an assistant to Comrade Guevara. I was taken to a room where a Shin Beth officer gave me a paper with the following questions: Where are

your personal weapons? Where are your hideouts? Where did you get food? Who were your contacts and how did you make contact to the outside? (referring to the resistance outside of Palestine) Who are your comrades? Where is Guevara hiding? What operations did you carry out?»

«When I refused to answer, he ordered torture. A number of methods were used: beating me on all parts of my naked body; cursing me and spitting in my face; deprivation of food and sleep. They also threatened to kill me, and made me sign a paper saying that I was going to commit suicide. Using psychological torture, they tried to encourage individualism, getting me to think of saving myself, quoting traditional sayings like: 'A hundred mothers crying, but not mine' and 'Kiss the hand you cannot bite.' They said that my comrades were happy, together with their wives. They tried to make us suspect the leadership of the resistance outside, saying that they were comfortable while we were suffering.»

Zuhdi said that he couldn't add to what had already been said. Instead he stressed: «While under torture we gained strength from our belief that our cause is just, and our belief in our party; that enabled us to be steadfast in the face of the enemy.»

## IN SOLITARY

We asked each of the comrades how long their period of interrogation and torture was, and how their feelings were during the times when they were in solitary confinement, deprived of the morale support of comradeship.

Zuhdi began, «For me, that period lasted 45 days. I felt strange. Mainly I worried about the things that I knew concerning the whereabouts of other comrades and weapons. Still, that concern gave me strength.»

Abu Waffa spoke next: «I stayed for two periods, from May 9th until June 7th, and from June 16th until June 23rd (1968). They gave my body nine days of rest because of my physical condition. Under such torture as we have described, even the revolutionary will have confused feelings like anyone else, but his ability to be steadfast depends on his revolutionary experience and awareness.»

Zakaria said, «I stayed two months in that situation, because I was sent to a different area in the 1948 occupied land, to be interrogated about different operations. I thought mainly about the comrades outside, and how to protect them and not give any information.»

Abdul Hamid told us that he remained under interrogation about a month. «In the first period of torture, you think of how to end it without harming the party and other comrades. You think about when you will get a rest, relief. What can you feel when you are in the hands of such sadists? You sometimes wish for martyrdom. I stayed altogether four months in soli-

tary confinement. There you wish for the period to end, because you want to be back with other comrades in the jail, at least to know what is going on. One of the main weapons of the enemy is making you feel lonely.»

Mohammad stayed under interrogation and torture for seven months, in three different stages. The first was when he was arrested. The second was after he tried to escape. The third was after a traitor spoke about him, and he was brought to trial another time. He explains his feelings: «During the torture, I was in such severe pain that I only wanted to be returned to the cell. In the cell, I would not talk with anybody. I would remember my family and friends, the sun, walking freely, my painting - I am a painter. At night I dreamt of freedom. In the morning I woke up and stayed in a corner of the dark cell. The morning means a new round of torture. When the door opens, everybody freezes. They call a name and that person goes with the guard. We relaxed for five minutes. Then the door opens again and another name is called...»

## PRISONER SOLIDARITY

We asked the comrades how it was to enter the 'normal' prison after the interrogation was finished. Abdul Hamid began, «In prison, the revolutionary is welcomed warmly by the other prisoners. They contribute personal belongings to make life easier. Your morale is raised greatly after the difficult period of torture... There were 45 of us in a room fit for 15. There was no space for sleeping. If you woke up in the night to use the bathroom, you lost your space and had to sleep sitting. There were not enough blankets, just four old rags with a dirty, thin piece of plastic for a mattress. However, the crowded room had one benefit in the winter - body heat! The food was very bad - a bowl of rice for six militants, four pieces of bread, and so-called soup which was only hot water with salt and onions or bread in it.»

«The quality and quantity of food changed because of the prisoners' struggles. After the uprising in Ashkelon prison in 1971, we started seeing fruit. Before that, there was none. In the beginning, books and radios were not allowed, but after hunger strikes in which several prisoners were martyred, they allowed books, papers and pencils. We started studying. Through struggle, we also gained the right to sports and to write to our families. With organized work, we were able to transform the imprisoned national movement into a cadre school. As Sahar Khalifeh wrote, the prisons were intended to be the graveyard of the Klashnikovs, but they turned out to be universities of nationalism.»

Zakaria's experience was similar: «After interrogation we were moved to a room three by four meters with about fifty militants. They gave each of us

two plates, a spoon and cup, a shirt and overalls or pants. We each had a space 20 cm wide to sleep. In my time, the food was horrible. In the morning, we got half an egg, four olives and a cup of cold, horrible liquid that was only tea in name. Sometimes they gave us half a tomato. For lunch, three times a week, there was macaroni; two times a week, half a plate of rice and 20 grams of bad quality fish; and two times a week, 20 grams of bad quality meat with soup, i.e., hot water with salt and a carrot in it. Supper was boiled potatoes and half an egg and a piece of cheese. We were not allowed books in the beginning. Then they let in trashy novels and religious books; but after our struggles, we were allowed some Marxist books. We spent our time studying, holding meetings and doing sports.»

«Being received by the comrades in the jail after the interrogation period is like a miracle,» said Mohammad, «just to see people in solidarity with you after the torturers and sadists. The comrades and brothers in the cells give you soap, clean clothes and a toothbrush. These are small things, but priceless after the period of torture... We used to speak about the revolution, our families, the outside and our aspirations. We were allowed a hot bath once a week; the toilet and bath were all in the cell... We used to joke a lot.»

Abu Waffa said, «After the period of interrogation, when we were moved into prison cells, the militants suffered from different injuries and an average weight loss of 20 kilos. Still, we were proud of our steadfastness and kept our belief in victory. I especially remember the comrades of that time, that I shared the prison experience with: Abdullah Al Ajami, Fuad Al Ghosain, Ahmed Al Karawi and Al Arori.»

## REVOLUTIONARY CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

In any society there will be social problems and conflicts among individuals. This is more so in the prison, where many people are compressed in a small, closed space, in uncomfortable conditions at best. For the imprisoned national movement, resolving daily problems is an integral part of keeping up the prisoners' morale, solidarity and ability to struggle together in the face of the enemy attempts to divide them, break their will and find collaborators. For these reasons, the political prisoners gradually worked out a code of behaviour within the prison, and enforced it with the few methods of control at their disposal.

An internal structure emerged whereby every cell was led by a coordinator, usually the most respected person in the group. There was an overall committee in each prison with representatives of the different resistance organizations, to regulate any problems that arose among the organizations, such as competition in recruiting, or who had the final say in whe-

ther any action should be initiated. The comrades explained that the PFLP's organization in the prisons stood for democratic and collective solutions. For example, if a strike or other action was intended, it should be decided on by all the prisoners and organizations together. New prisoners should themselves decide which organization they chose to affiliate with, or if they wanted to change organizations. Unity should be the main criterion regulating solutions for various problems. Fights between fellow political prisoners should be avoided at all costs. The PFLP comrades launched a novel method for stopping fights between persons of different organizations. If two refused to stop fighting, then all the prisoners in the cell would fight the two, forcing them to cease.

Zuhdi summed up his impression: «After being sentenced and moved to prison, life was more stable. We had an organizational code that regulated punishment for any infractions. Our life was very organized.»

Abu Waffa pointed to the changes that occurred over time: «In the beginning we ran our affairs according to the traditions and customs inherited from our society. Some clannish attitudes appeared among the prisoners and were encouraged by the enemy. We saw everything in terms of black and white, while in reality, there is a whole range of colors. We were very harsh on any mistake. However, we developed in jail, and we developed our internal relations in a more progressive way.»

Zakaria said, «The situation in the

prison went through different phases. In the sixties, there were clannish relations between the prisoners, which was encouraged by the Zionists. In 1970-71, we were made to do forced labor. Then, in 1971, the Interior Minister said that the Palestinians who once threw bombs now work and help the soldiers on the front. After we heard that, we stopped working. Between 1972 and 1977, the nuclei of the resistance organizations developed in the prisons. This was the democratic phase. The prisoners' internal organization was strengthened. There was a constitution and a code of punishment, which we followed. Our main struggle against the enemy increased.»

Abdul Hamid said, «I do not exaggerate by saying that the prison life was highly organized. Concerning the PFLP, our internal regulations were strictly implemented and highly respected. Our party activities were carefully programmed. We also had cultural and art activities. The imprisoned national movement had its own imprisoned national constitution that all organizations abided by. It was the supreme law to be referred to if there were problems between the organizations. There was a committee composed of members of different organizations, that dealt with the enemy's prison administration. This committee negotiated with the prison authorities during struggles for demands to improve our conditions. Any problematic issue between the organizations was dealt with through democratic dialogue. We

always put our national interests above such differences.»

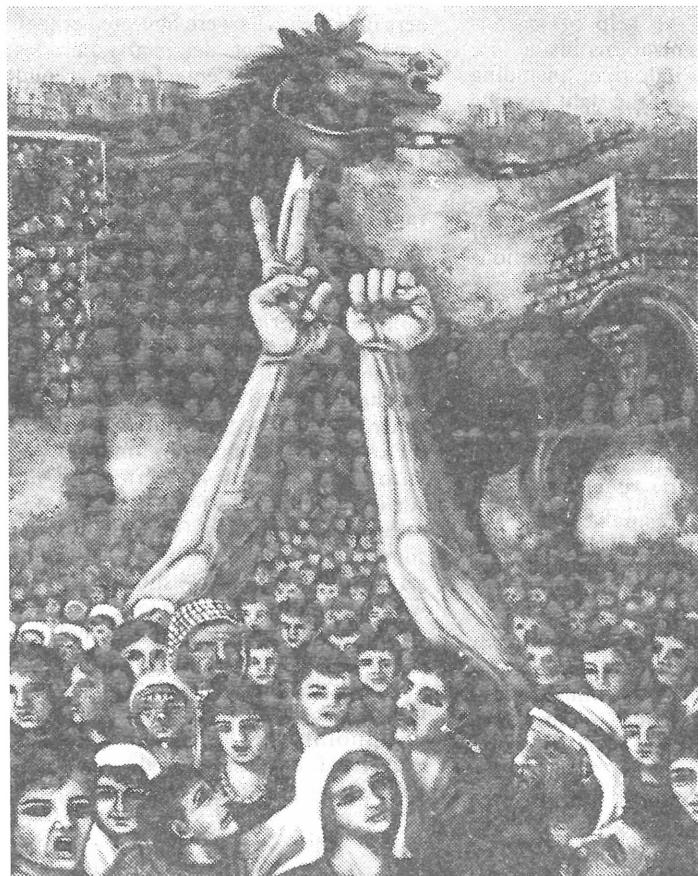
Mohammad concluded, «Everything was organized; each organization had its leadership inside. There was also a penal code to be used in cases of one prisoner aggressing another, spying for the enemy or otherwise collaborating. Depending on the offense, and whether it was the first time or a repetition, punishment was decided and implemented collectively. This could be social - ostracizing the offender. It could be physical in serious cases. It might also be educational, requiring the offender to read or copy a text, or to enter into discussions.»

## PROBLEMS AND STRUGGLE

We asked the comrades to enumerate the main problems they faced while in the prison, either with the Zionist authorities or with fellow prisoners. Abdul Hamid responded, «The main problems we had with the enemy concerned the bad conditions, so we were in continuous struggle for improving our living conditions and the food, for having a cultural life, visits and medical treatment. We insisted on celebrating national occasions but, of course, the enemy refused this. We celebrated the PFLP's anniversary even though the Zionists used tear gas to stop us. But we went on, using the walls and doors as drums, fulfilling our program. The authorities went berzerk and sent some of us to solitary confinement and others to other jails. However, tension mounted and they had to relent; everybody was returned to his original place. The same type of thing happened in our struggle for the right to a break outside in the sun.»

Abu Waffa noted, «Our problems with the enemy are part of the contradiction between Zionism and our people overall. The enemy wanted to rid us of our revolutionary spirit and we wanted to solidify it. Our weapons in this struggle were first of all our own unity in the jail and then our bodies and souls. An example of these weapons being used effectively was the hunger strike in Ashkelon that lasted 65 days with the participation of 430 militants... If there were problems among us, these were solved with reasoning. Violent solutions were rare.»

Mohammad said that among the prisoners, there were some minor problems that could easily be solved. In contrast, with the enemy, there were numerous problems which he described as follows: «There was aggression against the prisoners and destruction of our few belongings. We replied according to the maxim: an eye for an eye. There were arbitrary searches of our cells, just to annoy us; things were



«To Freedom» by the Palestinian artist Fathi Gabin in the Gaza Strip, to celebrate the 1985 prisoner release

confiscated like what prisoners had written, paintings, letters and books. In this case, we sent protests to the administrator of the prisons and to the Red Cross.»

«Also, the enemy tried to make some of the prisoners collaborate. We worked to prevent this through political education among all the prisoners. To improve the bad living conditions, we engaged in different forms of struggle: banging on the cell doors, strikes, petitions to the Red Cross and international organizations. Often the enemy would move people to different cells or prisons, to break the prisoners' solidarity or just to disorient people. We protested to the administration about such moves.»

Zakaria felt that the others had generally covered the problems with the enemy, so he focused on the problems among prisoners, saying, «The problems we had among the imprisoned nationalists were mainly because of political differences between organizations. We were able to solve these problems easily because of the democratic atmosphere established among the different organizations in the jails. Moreover, all realized that our efforts should be concentrated against the Zionist enemy and prison administration. Our constitution clearly stated that problems outside the prison among the organizations should not reflect on life inside the jails. When there was the split in Fatah after the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, some problems occurred. These were contained and solved democratically. The comrades of the PFLP started a strike and all the detainees joined in; this defused the problem among the Fatah prisoners.»

We asked the comrades what kind of cultural life they were able to have in view of the Zionists' restrictions. Abu Waffa told that in the beginning of his detention, pens, paper, newspapers and all books were forbidden. «Later, as the result of fierce struggle, the Zionists were forced to allow some books and pencils and paper to be brought by the Red Cross. We should know that the Nazi-like enemy was afraid of us being educated. There was always censorship.»

Zuhdi added, «In the beginning of my detention, there were only some ridiculous books, but after our struggle, the situation improved. We also had secret ways to bring in certain political books.»

Abdul Hamid explained, «Education and culture are the spiritual bread of the militant, especially in jail where the enemy aims to destroy our revolutionary spirit. For that reason, we considered education and culture as important weapons. At the beginning of my incarceration, the administration allowed only a few religious books.

After some struggle, we were allowed stupid books, but our struggle intensified and we gained the right to receive Marxist books via the Red Cross. We particularly enjoyed receiving books published in the Soviet Union.»

«After winning certain rights, we increased our activities. The detainees' central edition of *Al Hadaf* (PFLP magazine) was issued regularly in the jails. It was a vanguard among the Palestinian publications. There were also joint publications published in each prison. During the time of the joint leadership between the PFLP and DFLP, we issued a joint publication called *The Path of Unity*. Of course, these publications were not allowed by the enemy. In fact, they considered them a major security problem. Still, imprisoned comrades worked on these, while others wrote poetry, books and studies about our national cause. We also had great painters among us, like Zuhdi and Mohammad. Our political and ideological education also became more deliberate. Some cells had eleven meetings every week.»

Zakaria added, «When we were able to obtain a nationalist book about our cause, or a book from our organization, secretly of course, we spent time copying it by hand, so that we could all read it and send it to the prisoners in other jails as well.»

We asked the comrades about recreation opportunities in the jail. Zakaria began: «The enemy aimed to destroy us physically and mentally, and therefore forbade all recreation. This was something we struggled for. With our struggle and the help of various humanitarian organizations inside and outside occupied Palestine, including the Red Cross, we got the right to some sports like table tennis, volleyball, basketball and also chess. In 1984, the year before our release, radios were permitted. Before that, they were considered a security issue, a means of communication with our organizations outside.»

Abdul Hamid said, «I was told that after our release, the Zionist administration withdrew the right of having radios. I hope that international organizations will move to help the prisoners reinstate that right.»

Mohammad told that it had taken individual and group struggle to get the right to paint in the prisons. «As a result we have made a series of beautiful paintings which were published in the book *Palestinian Art Behind the Bars*.»

We asked about the different forms of struggle employed to obtain these rights from the Zionist administration. Abdul Hamid responded, «Our life in the prison was a chain of confrontation and struggle against the enemy. The struggle of the imprisoned national

movement took a variety of forms. There was the hunger strike which we called strategic struggle, i.e., our last resort and the form that required the most preparation and commitment. Short hunger strikes were also used as political manifestations, to mark national occasions. The purpose of such a strike is to mark our position and show our support to our people and revolution outside on the propaganda level. Such strikes were made after the 1982 invasion of Lebanon and the Sabra-Shatila massacre.»

«In terms of struggling for specific demands, there are six forms which we consider tactical: refusing to go to the daily exercise break; refusing to see visitors; refusing to shower, shave or wash our clothes; refusing a meal or two; refusing to meet with the prison administration; and refusing medicine. Sometimes we would concentrate on one form; other times, we used them in combination, as part of struggling for specific demands. The imprisoned national movement played a role in igniting and participating in the struggle of our people. When we go on hunger strike, our people under occupation increase their confrontation of the enemy; also media coverage increases.»

«The first stage of the imprisoned national movement's struggle started in 1967. There were landmark hunger strikes: in Ashkelon prison in 1976, in Nafha in 1980, in Jenin in 1984 and others. That first stage ended with our release in 1985. (Approximately one-third of the Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails were liberated at that time.) Now other detained comrades and brothers have entered the second stage.»

## LIBERATION

In conclusion, we asked each comrade to describe his feelings upon receiving information about the possibility of being released, and upon being released and received by his comrades outside. Zakaria began, «I would like to explain that we had been disappointed several times before, not least by the way Arafat has dealt with prisoner release negotiations. In 1979, there was an exchange, but many long-term prisoners, some critically ill, stayed behind. Then in 1983, Arafat released six Zionists for those imprisoned in Ansar, but they had only served one year. More shocking to us was that this was arranged to insure Arafat's safe passage from Tripoli by sea to Egypt. That was a political move, at the expense of the detained national movement. The third time we were disappointed was when Arafat exchanged an Israeli captive and an Israeli spy for only two imprisoned

Palestinians: William Nasser and Abu Ati Bisaiso. We sent several petitions condemning these methods.»

«One year before our release, we heard that PFLP-General Command had three Israeli prisoners, and we were asked for suggestions about the negotiations... We proposed the following criteria for those to be released: (1) those who had served the longest time; (2) the disabled, sick and mentally disturbed; (3) those who request to stay in occupied Palestine; (4) the exclusion of spies. General Command did a very good job in this exchange. The whole imprisoned national movement was pleased... Our reception among comrades was very happy. We felt we had scored a victory, but we were angry because the camp war had started in Lebanon.»

Zuhdi related his feelings: «I had feelings of longing for freedom, happy feelings of reuniting with my people. This was clear in the welcome we received. I realize that we are entering a new stage of struggle with its difficulties, but I am optimistic.»

Mohammad said, «When we were told about the exchange, I could not describe my happiness. I felt I was going to the paradise of freedom. Nor can I describe my feelings when I was received by our comrades in Libya. Just imagine yourself having been in jail for about twenty years, having a life sentence, and then being freed.»

Abdul Hamid recalled, «We received information from the PFLP leadership that negotiations were taking place, but due to past experience with Arafat's negotiations, we did not feel sure. I did not believe anything until I was taken to Lod airport. Even then, knowing the enemy and its disrespect for agreements, we thought the Zionists would cheat. I started feeling secure when I left the Israeli plane and was on the bus. I felt safe when the Libyan plane took off. I felt proud that my revolution had accomplished another victory over the enemy. I felt happy that I could see the sky without barbed wire, no guard dogs, no handcuffs. On the plane I took a nap. I was awakened by the stewardess trying to separate my hands. I thought they were still handcuffed like on the Zionist plane. I did not yet comprehend freedom. I realize that I have changed locations in the struggle. In the life of freedom, we will continue the struggle until liberating all of Palestine.»

Abu Waffa concluded, «Upon being received by the comrades outside, I felt the happiness of freedom. I entered jail at 26 years of age and came out at 43. I stayed 17 years in the Zionist jails - 6,120 days when I saw the sun for only a few hours at noon and the moon only three times. You can imagine my feelings when I was freed!»

# PFLP—DFLP—PCP

## Joint Communique

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### JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE (PFLP), THE DEMOCRATIC FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE (DFLP) AND THE PALESTINIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP), DECEMBER 22, 1986.

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On December 22, 1986, representatives of the leaderships of the PFLP, DFLP and PCP met to discuss the current situation of the Palestinian revolution. In particular, they discussed the savage war of extermination being waged against our Palestinian people in Lebanon by the Amal movement. They also discussed the Zionist-Jordanian schemes against our people in occupied Palestine and the question of Palestinian unity. Herein are excerpts from the communique:

#### LEBANON

«The central task facing all Palestinian nationalist forces in Lebanon is to confront and put an end to the war of extermination being waged against our people's camps by the Amal movement. This war aims to disarm the masses in the camps, to force the inhabitants to flee and to build a security belt in southern Lebanon. This belt, together with that of Antoine Lahd, would be part and parcel of the security measures being demanded by Israel. These measures aim to end the heroic nationalist resistance of both the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples.»

«The Amal movement which adamantly continues to execute its plan... bears the main responsibility for the failure to reach a solution that could stop the bloodshed and destructive agony.»

«Our Palestinian people in Lebanon stand in a position of self-defence... The continuation of this war is threatening the national interests of all concerned parties - Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian.»

«It is of utmost importance, in order to end this conspiracy, to devote all efforts to achieving a ceasefire, ending the siege of the camps and arriving at a political solution capable of putting an end to the conflict, in order to guarantee the fundamental rights of our people in the camps in Lebanon, and enhance the militant, nationalist Palestinian - Lebanese alliance.»

«The Palestinian nationalist presence in Lebanon does not aim to exert hegemony over the Lebanese nationalist forces or to control their nationalist decision. On the contrary, this presence is a supportive factor to the Lebanese nationalist forces and their nationalist program... Neither is the Palestinian

nationalist presence contradictory to the Syrian nationalist role in Lebanon. Rather it is complementary. In the light of these facts, any political solution must guarantee the preservation of Palestinian armed presence, the political and civil rights of our people, the right of our masses to defend their camps and continue the armed struggle against the Zionist enemy, in the context of the common nationalist strategy of the main confrontation forces.»

«Until such a political solution is achieved, it is necessary to stop the bloodshed and end the war against the camps. The three organizations reaffirm their commitment to the agreement reached on the basis of the Iranian initiative. The three parties shall facilitate the mechanism of its application, providing guarantees for its success and all parties' adherence to it.»

«The three organizations call upon all forces of the Palestinian revolution to shoulder their responsibility and solve all the problems which have arisen on this level. This stand shall preserve the unity of the Palestinian nationalists and deprive the aggressors of any pretext for continuing their aggression on the basis of Palestinian rejection of implementing the agreement.»

«The three organizations reaffirm the importance of maintaining the unity in action of all forces of the resistance movement in defending the Palestinian camps. We warn of all attempts to split the Palestinian ranks. These attempts aim to instigate inter-Palestinian fighting.»

#### OCCUPIED PALESTINE

In occupied Palestine, «the Zionist occupation authorities escalate their repressive policies which aim to strike the Palestinian nationalist forces and personalities. The Palestinian people in the occupied territories are facing a severe terrorist campaign which aims at breaking their heroic resistance. The Jordanian authorities continue their policy of crossing out the PLO and fabricating an alternative. The ultimate goal of this policy is to enforce a bilateral liquidationist deal with the Zionist enemy, at the expense of our people's rights to repatriation, self-determination and the establishment of an independent state. The Jordanian authorities are making use of the

Amman accord, the split within the PLO, and the Arab official silence to accomplish their policy.

«In this context, the Jordanian regime is intensifying its moves in the occupied territories to enforce the plans of normalization and joint administration with the Israeli occupiers. These plans are being executed under the guise of the development plan, appointment of reactionary mayors to replace the legally elected ones, and sending many official delegations to the occupied territories.

«The heroic uprising of our people in the occupied territories against Zionist repression and the Jordanian policies, and in support of our people's struggle in Lebanon, is one more manifestation of their revolutionary spirit.. It reaffirms the unity of our people and their determination to continue the struggle even under very hard conditions...»

«The three organizations... reaffirm the importance of joint efforts to unite all Palestinian nationalist forces, personalities and mass organizations on a solid nationalist basis, in order to combat the policies (mentioned above)...»

## PALESTINIAN UNITY

«The main task which guarantees successful confrontation of the aggressor

sive, liquidationist onslaught, is the continuation of the efforts to reunite the PLO on an anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist and anti-capitulationist basis. The success of these efforts requires that unity have a solid political and organizational basis... including the following points:

1. To abide by the PLO's national political program and the resolutions of national consensus.
2. To uphold our people's right to repatriation, self - determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state; to adhere to the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people without sharing, delegating or mandating this representation; to continue the struggle by all political, military and mass means to fulfill this task.
3. To reject all capitulationist plans - Camp David, the Reagan project, self-rule and joint administration; to consider an international conference the appropriate framework for dealing with the Middle East conflict; this conference is a means for blocking bilateral and partial solutions; it should have full power; the PLO should participate on an independent and equal footing.
4. To abide by the national consensus resolution resolutely rejecting Security Council resolution 242.

5. To cancel the Amman accord explicitly and officially.

6. To stop relations with the Egyptian regime as long as it adheres to the Camp David accords; to consolidate relations with the Egyptian people and nationalist forces struggling against normalization and reconciliation with the Zionist enemy.

7. To consolidate the militant Syrian-Palestinian alliance; to build fraternal relations and alliance between Syria and the PLO; these relations should be based on common struggle against imperialist-Zionist plans and all capitulationist solutions.

8. To consolidate the alliance with the forces of the Arab national movement and of the world revolution; in particular, to enhance friendship with the USSR and all socialist countries.

9. To form a collective, trustworthy leadership for the PLO; to implement all organizational points of the Aden - Algiers agreement.

«The adherence of all Palestinian nationalist forces to these points will pave the way to success. A comprehensive national dialogue is the means to adopt these points. This should lead to a political and organizational agreement which will be the base for convening a unifying PNC session whereby the PLO's unity will be restored...»

# The PFLP's Social Service Work

This article was contributed to *Democratic Palestine* by Comrade Abu Al Abed Younis, member of the PFLP's Politbureau.

Since its establishment, the PFLP has realized the importance of social work. The bad socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian masses in the refugee camps of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, necessitates a high degree of social care. The Palestinian masses used to live in tents, on the little that was provided by UNRWA. UNRWA services cover only about 20% of the people's needs. The PFLP believes that social services are important to ease the suffering of our masses and solve their economic and social problems, so that they can confront the enemy and contribute to the liberation struggle. Social services are an integral part of the mass work carried out to develop the revolutionary characteristics - ideological, political and class awareness - needed by our people in the battle with the Zionist enemy that occupied the land of Palestine and dispersed its inhabitants.

On this background, we can evaluate the PFLP's social services. We must first clarify that many factors affect this work, such as the geographic dispersion of the Palestinians and the material resources available. In addition, most Arab countries prohibit the



Comrade Abu Al Abed Younis

Palestinian revolution from providing any kind of social services to the masses, for this is viewed as an avenue for organizing the Palestinians politically and mobilizing them as freedom fighters. An obvious factor is the Zionist state that constitutes the main obstacle to social work in occupied Palestine. The various services covered in this article are also carried out in Palestine and Jordan, but in different forms, due to the need for secrecy.

## SOCIAL COMMITTEES

The PFLP has established a number of social committees and welfare societies in the areas where there are Palestinian camps. These social and humanitarian institutions aim at meeting the needs of the camp population. It is important to point out that the PFLP's social institutions are not an alternative to those of the PLO. Rather they complement and contribute to the overall social service work of the Palestinian revolution, in the light of the fact that the PLO's institutions do not accommodate all of our people's needs. The rightist, individualist tendency in the PLO's leadership has affected the PLO mass organizations and institutions, and their distribution of aid and services.

Most of the PFLP's social institutions are based in Lebanon, due to the particularity of the situation there. These institutions serve both the Palestinian and Lebanese people. The social committees establish and supervise educational institutions; social, cultural and sports clubs for youth; committees that care for the families of prisoners, detainees and martyrs; committees for orphans and martyrs' children; and centers for the elderly and war handicapped.

A major function of the PFLP's social committees is providing for health needs by establishing clinics and providing medical care and medicine.

In Lebanon, due to the constant war situation, the committees also work to provide shelter for the homeless, to maintain, repair and rebuild homes or provide building material, in accordance with financial capacity. These committees played a prominent role after the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

The PFLP's social committees also contact friendly Arab and international humanitarian societies and social institutions, particularly in the socialist countries, to solicit aid, especially for the Palestinian camps in Lebanon. The PFLP has received substantial material support from our allies for the social service work, which reflects great

internationalism in supporting our people's cause. This in turn consolidates our faith in our international allies and the important role they play at all stages of our struggle.

## CHILDCARE AND EDUCATION

Raising the new generation is obviously a priority of the social service work. To this end, kindergartens and nurseries are very important. In Lebanon, the Ghassan Kanafani Cultural Foundation has undertaken a great work, opening kindergartens in almost every Palestinian camp. There are now also nurseries in many of the

camps. The UNICEF provides certain services and facilities for these kindergartens and nurseries.

In Syria, there is a nursery in Yarmouk Camp established by the PFLP's Women's Organization. The PFLP's social committee will soon open nurseries in the camps of Khan Al Sheikh, Jaramana and Sbaineh in the Damascus area, and in Nairab camp near Aleppo. Plans are under consideration for opening kindergartens in these camps as well.

In Burj Al Barajneh camp, near Beirut, the PFLP's social committee supervises a school which has the 1st to 12th grades, and a nursery. The school was originally founded in 1965.



Nursery in Yarmouk camp

Sewing course in Jaramana camp, Syria



## WORKSHOPS

The PFLP has made plans to establish workshops for embroidery, sewing and needlework in most areas where there is a Palestinian population. These workshops serve a multiple purpose. First, they have an educational function, by teaching traditional arts and skills. Second, they have an occupational function, employing people at useful work which gives them a stable income. Third, they serve a nationalist goal by keeping our traditions alive and spreading them. Fourth, they serve a political goal, being part of the work to mobilize the largest possible number of women in the revolution, and raise their political consciousness.

In the camps in Syria, there are two such workshops, both of which were founded in 1983, in Khan Al Sheikh and Jaramana. As of now, they are mainly for educational purposes. In the future, they will be able to offer employment for some. These workshops run four courses a year, each lasting three months. Twenty to thirty persons participate in each course. By the end of 1987, the PFLP's social committee will open workshops in every Palestinian camp in Syria.

In Lebanon, there are several production workshops in most of the

Palestinian camps. These employ poor Palestinian and Lebanese women, chiefly those from the families of martyrs. The aim is to encourage these women's participation in the revolution, while giving them the opportunity to support themselves and their families. The PFLP is working to develop these activities and extend them to most areas where there are Palestinians living.

## SUPPORTING THE FAMILIES OF MARTYRS AND PRISONERS

The PFLP's social committees everywhere show special concern in caring for the families of our martyrs in a thorough and correct way. As soon as any PFLP fighter is martyred, representatives of the social committee visit the family to give condolences, having in mind their social and economic situation and political sentiments. The social committee makes all needed preparations for the martyr's burial; it pays for the burial expenses and provides whatever is necessary for ceremonies up to the 40th day commemoration.

The martyr is listed in the records of the PLO's institution for martyrs and prisoners. The PFLP's social committee continues to pay the martyr's salary to the family, including increments that the martyr would have gotten with promotion if he had lived. The committee visits the family at least five times each year on religious holidays, May 1st, Martyrs' Day and the PFLP's anniversary. The martyrs' families receive monetary gifts based on their economic needs. The social visits aim to consolidate relations with these families, keeping them informed about political developments and recruiting them into the PFLP's mass organizations.

The social committee keeps a file on each family, updating it annually to make sure that the martyr's salary is enough to sustain the family. The social committee provides health insurance to the martyrs' families, so that they receive the medical care they need free of charge. The social committee also encourages nationalist and humanitarian institutions and individuals to adopt martyrs' children financially. Each year, on Martyrs' Day, the social committee arranges a commemoration for the martyrs.

The same services are provided to the families of prisoners and detainees -salary, health insurance, regular social visits, presents and honoring them on the annual Palestinian Prisoners' Day.

## MEDICAL WORK

The medical field has the greatest potential for humanitarian work among the PFLP's various social services. Our masses, dispersed in different countries, live in conditions that are far from ideal in terms of health.

Overcrowding, poverty, the absence of education in health and hygiene, and the dirtiness of the camps, all contribute to general poor health and the spread of disease. Despite limited capacities, the medical aspect of the PFLP's social work is constantly improving.

The PFLP had established a clinic in every Palestinian camp in Lebanon. Some camps have medical centers, including a dental clinic and X-ray laboratory. In the camps near Tripoli in North Lebanon, there is a clinic and a polyclinic. In the camps near Beirut, there are clinics in Burj Al Barajneh, Shatila and Mar Elias camps. In the Baalbeck area of East Lebanon, there is a clinic in Al Jaleel camp. In South Lebanon, there is a clinic and medical center in Ain Al Hilweh camp, a clinic in Miyeh Miyeh camp, and a clinic and medical center in Rashidiya camp.

In Syria, there is a clinic and dispensary in Yarmouk camp. The PFLP is not now operating other clinics in Syria, partly due to the fact that basic medical needs are generally covered here by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (P R C S). Moreover, the PFLP has chosen to concentrate its capacities in Lebanon, where the constant state of war has created a more dramatic need.

In general, the PFLP's clinics are not intended as an alternative to those of the PRCS. The PFLP's clinics play a supportive role, in the light of the fact that PRCS resources have historically been distributed in accordance with the PLO leadership's priorities. At times, in accordance with the political situation prevailing within the PLO, there has been good cooperation. A good example was during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The PFLP's clinics and entire medical staff were put at the disposition of the PRCS. However, with the onset of the PLO's current crisis, the situation became more difficult. With the right-wing leadership's control of finances, the amount of money allotted to the PRCS's work has decreased in places where the need is great.

The PFLP's clinics are open to all, free of charge, regardless of political affiliation. Medicine, when available, is given free. Through the PFLP's medical committee, full health insurance is provided to all members and their families, as well as to the families of martyrs and detainees. The PFLP's clinics are open every day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. In states of alert and emergency cases, they are open 24 hours a day, every day. Normally, thirty to forty patients are treated a day on the average, depending on the conditions in the camp where the clinic is located. In war times, the count is much higher.

## PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

The PFLP's medical committee works in the preventive field as well as the curative. It conducts educational seminars in cooperation with mass

organizations, such as the Palestinian Women's Organization and the Palestinian Youth Organization. These cover topics such as first aid, baby care, family care, in addition to educational seminars for the fighters. The medical committee provides vaccinations for children, free of charge.

In Lebanon, the PFLP's medical committee works closely together with the medical facilities of the Lebanese National Movement, providing doctors, nurses and medicine when needed. In cooperation with the Red Cross of the socialist countries, the PFLP's medical committee provides treatment for cases that cannot be treated locally. This includes any member of the PFLP and their families, any fighter and their families, and the masses in general.

Besides extending medical treatment, the socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union, assist the medical work in other ways, providing medicine, training doctors and nurses, and donating funds for building clinics. The medical committee needs all the help that can be provided. Every tablet of medicine is necessary. As yet, many fighters don't have a first aid kit, which they should have, for this could save their life in an emergency situation. The medical committee has definite information that medicine sent to the PFLP sometimes rots in the depots of Arab countries before reaching its destination. Many times, medicine that has been donated never arrives. This is due to political reasons, which affect even this humanitarian aspect of the work.

The PFLP's medical committee provides scholarships for Palestinian youth wanting to be trained as doctors. Many return after their studies to devote their work to their cause and people, working with the PRCS or PFLP medical facilities, but there is still a need for more medical personnel in all Palestinian camps.

The medical committee also sends doctors to specialize in various fields of medicine. All specializations are needed. In the interim before all these cadres have completed their specialization, the medical committee has established contacts with specialists (gynecologists, surgeons, eye doctors, etc.) to which patients can be referred by the PFLP's own clinics. The fees are then paid by the medical committee.

The medical committee has a supervisory role in relation to all the other social and mass organizations of the PFLP. Medical cadres make regular visits to the nurseries, kindergartens, military training centers and hostels for the fighters. They supervise the hygiene in washrooms and kitchens to keep them up to standard. They regularly visit military bases to attend to the fighters' health needs.

The main obstacle for the work of the PFLP's medical committee is financial limitations. Thus, the committee welcomes all donations and all forms of support-medicine, equipment, medical personnel, etc.

# The Camp War Continues

On December 27th, as this article was being written, fighting between Amal and the Palestinians in Lebanon was minimal «due to weather conditions,» as one news agency put it. Still, this dirty war did not stop. For over a year and a half, it has continued, halting occasionally as a result of a ceasefire agreement soon to be broken by the Amal gangs. Occasionally also, a thunderstorm temporarily halted the battles. Although this meant a rest period, it was little consolation since the besieged Palestinians in the camps had to suffer from the heavy rain in their devastated houses.

In the previous issue of *Democratic Palestine*, a full report was given of this ongoing dirty war against Palestinian presence, armed or otherwise, in Lebanon. Unfortunately, we find ourselves writing once again about this war of the camps. With the escalation of attack and siege by Amal and the sectarian Lebanese Army, the war moved northwards to Beirut, hitting Shatila and Burj Al Barajneh camps. This is a semi-daily account of the situation facing our people and fighters, projecting the severity of the dirty war.

## SHATILA CAMP

Aggression intensified against Shatila after November 26th. It was obvious that Amal, along with the 6th and 1st brigades of the Lebanese Army, was determined to bring down Shatila, no matter the cost. From November 29th, there was heavy fighting around the camp. Amal and the 6th and 1st brigades intensified their attempts to destroy the camp entirely, using all the



Palestinian families taking refuge in Mar Elias camp

weapons in their arsenal: artillery, rockets, mortars, tanks, heavy machine guns, fire bombs, explosives, sniping rifles, etc. The Palestinian defenders fiercely resisted many attempts to storm the camp. Buildings inside and surrounding the camp were systematically targeted for destruction. That day, the attackers lost three tanks, two T-54s and one T-68.

On November 30th, the destructive shelling continued and more troops and tanks were concentrated around the camp. It was reported that 1,500 Lebanese Army soldiers and 400 Amal fighters were concentrated around the camp. This figure shows that the Lebanese Army with its heavy equip-

ment, especially tanks and artillery, is the principal force besieging the camp.

On December 1st, Amal and the Lebanese Army attempted to storm Shatila several times, but in vain. The officers of the two Lebanese Army brigades had to calm their soldiers by claiming that the camp had fallen militarily speaking, and that it would only take three or four days to finish the job. This was necessary because the army's losses were high, and the soldiers' morale low. That day the attackers lost four tanks. Needless to say, destruction in the camp was extensive due to the continuous shelling.

A message sent by the Popular Committee of Shatila described the situation inside the camp as follows: «The destruction of buildings continues; 60% of the camp has been destroyed in one week; 4,000 people inside are facing a housing problem. Most of the food supply is used up. What is available in the stocks of the Popular Committee and the resistance organizations is not enough. Water pipes are broken; there is no electricity except that from a few small generators. We face a problem with medicine which is most needed at this moment, especially with the large number of wounded people. The artillery, rocket and mortar shelling continues, along with heavy machine gun firing, against the camp...»

From December 4th until 9th, artillery and rocket shelling continued, along with heavy and light machine gunning; 70% of the camp is destroyed. Attempts to storm the camp continued, but were fiercely resisted, forcing the

Victims of the Shweifat massacre



attackers to back away. On December 10th and 11th, Shatila lived an uneasy peace, which was occasionally disrupted by sniping, shelling and machine gun fire. Heavy fighting then erupted and continued for the next two weeks, until the date of writing this article. Heavy, destructive shelling targeted Shatila and its besieged residents. It was clear that Amal and the Lebanese Army 1st and 6th Brigades were making intensive efforts to enforce Shatila's surrender. Reports from Beirut confirmed that Amal's leader, Nabih Berri, had issued an order to the army and his gangs to bring down Shatila, regardless of developments in Maghdousheh, where efforts were underway for a ceasefire. The order termed the operation to bring down Shatila 'Operation Al Fajr' (Dawn -sic).

## BURJ AL BARAJNEH

Although the aggression against Shatila was the fiercest, Burj Al Barajneh camp did not escape the wrath of Amal's gangs. The camp had been under siege for over two months, with daily shelling, sniping and destruction. With the intensification of aggression against Shatila, Burj Al Barajneh also came under heavier fire.

The first ten days of December, Burj Al Barajneh lived through a savage daily routine of artillery and rocket shelling, sniping, machine gunning, intrusion attempts, concentration of attacking troops, etc. On November 29th, a chemical bomb was thrown into the camp, causing dryness and stinging of the throat, vomiting and diarrhea among the people present near the site of the explosion. On December 6th,

during a funeral for a martyr, a fighter was killed by a sniper's bullet, and the funeral procession and cemetery were shelled. A message sent out by the Popular Committee of Burj Al Barajneh reported that 1,065 houses had been destroyed, and there were hundreds of martyrs and wounded since the siege was imposed.

For the following two weeks, as in the case of Shatila, Burj Al Barajneh faced escalating aggression: heavy artillery, rocket and mortar shelling, heavy machine gunning and several intrusion attempts which were faced with fierce resistance, forcing Amal to withdraw.

## MAGHDOUSHEH

In the first week of December, there was intense fighting in Maghdousheh

## Broken Ceasefires and War of Attrition

Throughout the recurring camp war, the majority of Palestinian forces have stood ready for a ceasefire agreement to end the fighting on reasonable grounds. Their top political priority has been guaranteeing Palestinian armed presence in Lebanon in a way to enable defense of the refugee camps and continuation of the struggle against Zionist occupation, while preserving good Palestinian - Lebanese relations on the political, military and mass levels. The Amal movement, in contrast, has repeatedly displayed unwillingness to make peace among brothers.

Despite Amal's unwillingness, a ceasefire accord was reached in the second week of December, mainly as the result of two developments. One was the persistent efforts of Iran, Libya and other nationalist forces to end the dirty war. Two was the inability of Amal and its external backers to achieve their goals quickly on the battlefield, as they had expected. These dreams were thwarted by Palestinian unity in the field, and heroic defense of the Palestinians' camps and rights. The agreement contained the following points:

1. A ceasefire in Beirut and the South.
2. Palestinian withdrawal from Maghdousheh, to be replaced by Lebanese nationalist and Islamic forces.
3. From the moment the Palestinian forces begin withdrawing, Amal lifts the siege from all the camps; relief supplies enter Rashidiya camp, and the wounded are evacuated.
4. As the ceasefire goes into effect, detainees will be released and refugees return to their homes.

These points constituted the first stage. Upon its completion, the second stage would begin with a meeting between the leaderships of Amal, the Palestinians, and the Lebanese nationalist forces, under Syrian auspices, to

discuss an overall political solution for the conflict.

The agreement was positive because it did not include terms fulfilling the condition set by Amal and its backers, for disarmament of the Palestinian fighters and camps. Moreover, it included no clause for having certain Palestinian factions control others. Amal and its backers had worked for such a development in order to incite inter-Palestinian fighting, so they could more easily achieve their goal, instead of facing united Palestinian defense lines.

This agreement was guaranteed by Libya and Iran, in contrast to the Damascus agreement of 1985, that was guaranteed by Syria. It soon became apparent, however, that Amal and its backers had no intention of abiding by its terms. Rather Amal signed the agreement to relieve the political and military pressure on itself, to save face and buy time.

The Iranians in particular exerted great efforts to make the agreement a success. Their mediator, Issa Tabatabai, went to stay in Rashidiya starting December 10th, saying he would remain until the crisis was settled. Such efforts greatly angered Amal as they served to expose its failure to abide by the accord it had signed. Accordingly, the Amal leader in the Tyre area, Daoud Daoud, called for Tatabai's removal, claiming ridiculously that he was «an agent of Arafat.» (It is well known that the Iranian government has always opposed Arafat's policy of wagering on US solutions.) Daoud's remark exposed only Amal which continues to claim that it is fighting Arafat, while in practice fighting the Palestinians as such.

Throughout December, the same points for a ceasefire were agreed upon

numerous times by the Palestinians, but never implemented due to Amal's repeated violations and sabotage. Finally, slightly different terms were worked out towards the end of the same month. The essence was the same, with Palestinian withdrawal from Maghdousheh made simultaneous with lifting the siege on the camps. The forces of the Lebanese nationalist movement were assigned a greater role, replacing the Palestinian forces in Maghdousheh, and securing the coastal road from Beirut through Sidon and south to Tyre. A delegation from the PFLP and DFLP went from Damascus to the Sidon area, to make sure that all Palestinian forces, including those of Arafat still in Maghdousheh, would implement the agreement. Yet by the time this was accomplished, a statement by Nabih Berri made it clear that neither Amal nor its backers considered that they had committed themselves to the new terms. Amal also rejected the participation of some Lebanese nationalist organizations, especially the Popular Liberation Army of Mustafa Saad in Sidon, in the joint force that was to implement the ceasefire in Maghdousheh. At the same time, the murder of a Libyan diplomat in Lebanon showed the extent to which Amal will go to sabotage any mediation attempts that might be to the interest of the Palestinian revolution and the nationalist cause.

Having failed to achieve their aims, Amal and its backers are not giving up, because they judge a strong Palestinian revolutionary presence to run contrary to their distorted dreams of bolstering their own power in a new sectarian redistribution of power in Lebanon. To this end, they are willing to turn the camp war into a war of attrition, hoping vainly to wear out the Palestinians over time, regardless of the damage this will inflict on the common Arab struggle against Zionism and imperialism.

between the Palestinian defenders and the Amal gangs, supported by the Lebanese Army 6th Brigade. Amal attempted to advance several times, but was faced with fierce resistance, forcing it to back down, having suffered many casualties. Amal also shelled nearby Ain Al Hilweh camp, causing the death and wounding of many civilians and much destruction. On December 4th, in a clear projection of military as well as political cooperation with Amal, Zionist warships shelled Palestinian positions in Maghdousheh, aiming to ease the pressure on Amal and the army.

The Iranian initiative aimed at ending the war was put forward on December 4th. On December 7th, the Palestinian forces agreed to a full ceasefire to start that night. As usual, Amal rejected the agreement, as was seen in intensified aggression against Shatila and Burj Al Barajneh. Thus, the ceasefire did not take effect immediately. Despite the Palestinian fighters' adherence to this agreement, Amal continued attacking their positions, but without success. However, the fighting did ease off by December 10th, and the situation was quiet thereafter. The majority of Palestinian forces withdrew from their posts in Maghdousheh in accordance with the agreement, but Arafat's fighters did not.

## RASHIDIYA

Rashidiya camp has been living under siege since the first of October, experiencing the worst conditions, ranging from food shortages to daily sniping and shelling, and the impossibility of getting the wounded out of the camp for treatment. On December 1st, Amal burned down most of the small, nearby camp, Al Bass, after having looted the contents of the houses, in a continuation of executing its dirty plan for expelling Palestinians from the Tyre area, in preparation for building a Shiite canton in the South.

The agreement reached on December 7th did not in Amal's interpretation mean an immediate lifting of the siege. On December 10th, food supplies were not admitted into the camp. Only two trucks carrying rotten potatoes and onions were let in, and these were sent back by the popular committee. The wounded could not be evacuated. With the entrance into the camp of the Iranian delegation and some Lebanese clergymen, shelling and sniping eased, though it did not stop. Amal asked these delegates to leave the camp. When they refused, Amal escalated the shelling and sniping.

On December 12th, Amal did start executing the first clauses of the agreement reached through Iranian and Libyan efforts, concerning evacuating some of the wounded from Rashidiya and allowing food supply trucks to enter the camp. It was following this that the Palestinian forces (except Arafat's) withdrew from Maghdousheh.

## WEST BEIRUT

Not only the Palestinians living in the camps of Tyre, Sidon and Beirut were targeted. Palestinians living outside the camps were also a favorite prey for Amal's gangs. Palestinians living in West Beirut have been indiscriminately killed, kidnapped, humiliated and tortured. Amal stationed barricades on the streets, looking for someone, anyone, whose identity card identified him/her as a Palestinian. Homes of Palestinians were looted. Amal conducted house-to-house searches for Palestinians. Many Palestinians, young, old, men and women, were killed on the spot. Barbarism, it seemed, had no limits.

On December 3rd, a whole family of Palestinians was killed. Their bodies were mutilated and thrown into the streets of West Beirut, near the Kuwaiti embassy. On December 4th, at half past seven in the evening, the Amal gangs committed a massacre Sharon would have been proud of. They stormed a house in the Shweifat area, and attacked all those present. Six were killed and three injured, all women and children.

Road blocks, looting, kidnapping and arbitrary arrests and detentions continued in West Beirut, and began to affect Lebanese nationalists as well as Palestinians. In a report from West Beirut, it was estimated that 90% of houses belonging to Palestinians had been looted, while the remaining 10% had been confiscated. All Palestinians 14 years of age and older were especially targeted. The number of Palestinians in detention is unknown. However, Amal did tend to ease the pace of setting up road blocks, after several attacks were launched at its centers and barricades. Still, this did not totally deter the Amal gangs; raids and arrests continued.

On December 18th, Amal thugs committed yet another crime. This time it was not random killing; it was deliberate. The target was a Palestinian woman whose name is known to most poor Palestinians and Lebanese. Her name was Nabila Breir. She was a UNICEF official, who had dedicated her work to humanitarian aid for the needy. In particular, she had worked

with the provision of aid to children displaced by the recurring wars. Nabila was dragged out of a car by four thugs and murdered on the spot. The same day, Amal members fired at the entrance of Mar Elias camp, attempting to spread the war into one more camp. One resident of Mar Elias was killed and three wounded. Then, on December 21st, gunmen in a car shot at an army barracks near Mar Elias, provoking the soldiers to direct their fire at the camp. The dangerous situation in West Beirut continues...

## STOP PRESS

On December 31st, Amal gangs escalated the military situation, breaking the ceasefire. They attempted to infiltrate into the camp, but were faced with fierce resistance which caused many casualties in their ranks. As a result, they began a heavy barrage of rockets (two per minute) and machine gun fire against the camp. In the morning of the same day, a group of children and youth were picking oranges, when Amal thugs captured two of the youth, Jihad Sabri and Mahmoud Karimy, both PFLP members, and barbarically killed them.

Amal's New Year's eve 'party' included a variety of activities. Shatila was one of the targets, and Nabih Berri's ceasefire pledge was forcibly implemented by heavy shelling; mortars and rockets rained down on the camp at the rate of 25 shells per minute. Burj Al Barajneh received the same 'gifts' from Amal.

Military forces from all sides went on alert in West Beirut following reports that a large battle would soon erupt. Taking advantage of this situation, Amal set up scores of new roadblocks for checking the identification of passers-by. Amal also raided several houses in the Fakhani/Tariq Al Jadida area. On January 2nd, Amal issued a warning to the residents of the Daouq and Sports City stadium area, adjacent to Shatila camp, to evacuate their houses; otherwise their houses would be destroyed with them inside.

## PFLP Politbureau Statement on the Camp War

The PFLP's Politbureau convened on January 4, 1987, to discuss the latest political and military developments relevant to the third war being waged against our people's camps, by Amal, with the aid of the Lebanese Army's 6th and 1st brigades. The Politbureau discussed the factors that have prolonged this war and the suffering inflicted on our masses... and the insistence of Amal on continuing to execute its project, aimed at disarming

the Palestinian camps and expelling the population, as a prelude towards creating a canton in the South, subject to US-Israeli conditions... The insistence of Amal and the backers of its suicidal project was manifest in various forms, mainly:

1. Amal's rejection and delay of the initiatives and solutions put forth by friendly forces to stop the bloodshed, bring (the parties involved) to the negotiating table... and put a final end

to the continuous wars... Amal made all efforts to obstruct the execution of these solutions under vague, unfounded pretexts...

2. Amal, and the 6th and 1st brigades, intensified the siege around the camps in Tyre and Beirut, using all kinds of tanks, rockets, artillery and machine guns... and escalating the level of pursuit, assassinations, expulsion and confiscation against Palestinians living in West Beirut... climaxed by expelling the residents of Abu Al Aswad camp (in the Tyre area) and setting it afire.

3. Intensifying the antagonistic campaign against the Palestinian people and revolution, and kindling hateful, sectarian feelings... under the pretext of fighting the «resettlement conspiracy» or the «capitulationist and deviationist trend»...

In particular, the Politbureau examined the political-military tactics used by Amal and the backers of its extermination project, noticing a change in these tactics imposed by the conditions prevailing during the ongoing war of over three months... This change was seen in the tactics of appearing to deal positively with the initiatives put forth, while continuing the siege, and war of starvation and attrition, against the Palestinian camps... preparing to bring them down from inside.

There is no doubt that the steadfastness of the Palestinian defenders, Amal's failure, and the breadth of Arab and international support to our struggle, all contributed to exposing the extermination project's goals, and forcing Amal to employ new methods and tactics, based on maneuvering and buying time... It has become clear that the sponsors of the project to eliminate the Palestinian armed struggle are betting on the time factor. This fact could not be covered by Amal's allowing some food supplies to enter Rashidiya, while at the same time intensifying its siege of starvation and destructive shelling...

In the light of these facts, the Politbureau finds it necessary to reaffirm that:

1. Amal is determined to execute its plan... despite all of its claims... Thus, the PFLP's Politbureau calls on all Palestinian fighters to be on the alert... It calls on the Palestinian and Arab masses, as well as friendly and allied forces, to seriously examine the dangers of the project and its disastrous results.

2. The dangers resulting from the continuation of this destructive war will definitely have a negative impact on the Palestinian-Lebanese-Syrian nationalist alliance and on all Arab national liberation movements; this demands the consolidation of all friendly efforts...

3. The Politbureau renews the PFLP's aspiration to develop and consolidate the militant alliance with the Lebanese nationalist forces... It calls on them to shoulder their responsibility in a manner which would force Amal to stop its antagonistic war...

4. The Politbureau renews its commitment to the agreement reached on the basis of the Iranian plan... It calls on all Palestinian factions to shoulder their nationalist responsibility by abandoning all selfish considerations and adhere fully to the position of Palestinian national consensus. This will expose the pretexts which Amal hides behind... It would safeguard the unity in the field among the fighters of our people and revolution, and develop this unity...

5. The Politbureau reasserts the aspiration and constant striving of the PFLP to find political solutions for the bloody conflict created and planned by Amal. The Politbureau positively appraises the great efforts of our friends in Iran, Libya, the Soviet Union and all the Arab liberation movements. The Politbureau reaffirms the PFLP's determination to defend the Palestinian armed struggle, and the rights and gains of our people, no matter how great the sacrifices required.

## Martyred While Defending The Camps

The PFLP announced the martyrdom of a group of heroes who fell while defending the Palestinian revolution, camps and armed presence in Lebanon. The PFLP pledged to the martyrs to continue struggling, no matter how great the sacrifices required, in defense of our revolution and masses until achieving all of our people's aims: to return to Palestine, exercise self-determination and establish an independent Palestinian state, under the leadership of the PLO, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Below is a summary of the lives and struggle of the seven martyrs of the PFLP:

Omar Yousef Oufi was born in 1959 in Tulkarem, Palestine. He joined the PFLP on March 3, 1979. His nom de guerre was Sultan Abdul Muhsen Hasan; he attained the rank of captain in the PFLP's military forces. He was married and had two daughters. He was martyred in Maghdousheh, Lebanon. This heroic martyr was an example of generosity and sacrifice, struggling for the revolution and the masses. In 1982, he participated in resisting the Zionist invasion, and in the battles of confrontation in Sidon and Beirut. He participated in the liberation of the Lebanese mountains from fascist control, and in fighting the Zionist occupation. He was martyred while defending the revolution, camps and armed presence in Lebanon.

Dhaher Hamid Abu Azrah, whose nom de guerre was Abu Firas Dhaher, was born in 1947, in Gaza, Palestine. He joined the Palestine Liberation Army in 1966. He participated in the September 1970 battles against the regime in Jordan, and the 1971 battles in Jarash and Ajloun. He fought in the October 1973 war. In 1975, he joined the PFLP, and participated in the battles against the fascists in Lebanon. He participated in the resistance against the Zionist invasion of South Lebanon in 1978, and in the defense of besieged Beirut in 1982. He attained the rank of captain, and was married and had seven children. He was martyred in Maghdousheh on November 29, 1986, while

defending the camps and Palestinian nationalist presence in Lebanon.

Ahmad Arabi Ali was a Yemeni, born in North Yemen in 1952. He joined the PFLP in January 1985, and attained the rank of lieutenant in its military forces. He was married and had two sons. He was a model of sacrifice. He participated in the battles in Keifon and Eitay, in defense of the national democratic program in Lebanon. He was martyred on November 29, 1986, in Maghdousheh, while defending the Palestinian camps and nationalist presence in Lebanon.

Ali Dhayan was from Turkey, born in Ankara in 1954. This martyr was a model of generosity and sacrifice. He was an internationalist struggler, having fought in the ranks of the Turkish Communist Labor Party, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Turkey and the Armed Struggle League in Turkey. His nom de guerre was Malik Ismael Ahmad, and he served as an assistant in the PFLP's military forces. He was martyred in Maghdousheh on November 29, 1986.

Azzo Ibrahim Ahmad Mustafa was a Palestinian born in Oman in 1968. He joined the PFLP on June 29, 1986, and took the nom de guerre Abu Ali. He was martyred on November 28, 1986, while defending the Palestinian camps in South Lebanon, and the revolution's right to continue the armed struggle.

Ismael Khalil Rashwan was a Syrian, born in Damascus in 1966. His nom de guerre was Mohammad Mahmoud Sabri. He was martyred in Maghdousheh on November 24, 1986, while defending the Palestinian camps and armed presence in Lebanon. He had previously participated in the battles in Eitay and Kifon in defense of the national democratic program in Lebanon.

Ahmad Al Masri was a Palestinian, born in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1967. He joined the PFLP in 1984, and took the nom de guerre Guevara Yassin Haddad. He was an exemplary fighter who gave many sacrifices for the cause. He was martyred on December 4, 1986, while bravely defending Shatila camp.

## Interview with the Egyptian Communist Party

# Class Structure of Egypt

Below is the concluding question and answer in the interview with the Egyptian Communist Party, which we printed in our last issue.

Can you give us an idea about the class structure of the Egyptian society?

It is a grave deficiency that, based on available information and statistics, it is difficult to define Egypt's capitalist strata in terms of their position in the production system, their ownership of the means of production and their share in the profits. Until now, scientific efforts have not been exerted to delineate the lines of demarcation between the various classes and the strata within each class. However, there is sufficient data to give a general picture of the class structure and how this has changed, as reflected in the censuses of 1960 and 1976.

In 1960, the civilian labor force was approximately 7.8 million. (This is much more comprehensive than the working class as it contains all who are capable and willing to work, employed and unemployed.) Of the 7.8 million, 576,400 were business owners; these are the big bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie which are bureaucratic, technocratic, feudal, capitalist, industrial and middlemen. They constituted 7.4% of all those working. On the other hand, the number of salaried workers was approximately 3.8 million or 49.2%. Along with salaried workers, there were 1.4 million unsalaried workers, who are usually members of small producers' families, and 150,000 unemployed. The number of self-employed (small producers, farmers, professionals, shop and workshop owners) was about 1.8 million; all of these constitute the petit bourgeoisie.

The situation changed with the extent of the penetration of capitalist relations in the Egyptian society. According to the census of 1976, the number of business owners rose to about 860,000. In other words, the size of the big bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie increased 49%. The number of salaried workers increased to about 6.6 million workers and personnel, or approximately 59.5% of the total number of workers, an increase of 71.9% from 1960 to 1976. The number of unemployed rose to 850,000 - five times the number of unemployed in 1960. The rate of unemployment rose from 2.2% of the civilian labor force in 1960, to 7.7% in 1976. This is in accordance with a fundamental law of any capitalist system.

The extent of the penetration of capitalist relations in Egypt is more clearly seen in another fact which complements the first phenomenon. The number of self-employed in 1976 was approximately 2 million, or 18.9% of the civilian labor force, in contrast to 22.4% in 1960. This means the percentage of the small producers of the petit bourgeoisie has diminished. The percentage of unsalaried workers declined even more sharply; their number decreased to 617,000; in 1960, they were 18.4% of the civilian labor force; by 1976, they constituted only 5.5%. These statistics indicate the near disappearance of family work. They indicate that small producers are diminishing on the one hand, and being transformed into petit bourgeoisie on the other, for they became almost completely dependent on salaried work. In my view, these small producers have become the representatives of the overwhelming majority of what can be called the nationalist bourgeoisie or nationalist capitalists. They are the ones who own enterprises with capital that is solely Egyptian. Following the open door policy, the big bourgeoisie and the overwhelming majority of the middle bourgeoisie was directed towards cooperation with multinational companies and capital. A glance at the size of the open door projects shows that the majority possess capital ranging from just under half a million pounds to three million pounds. Only a few exceed that; they are the projects in which only the big bourgeoisie participate. This shows that the upper strata of the middle bourgeoisie, which are identified as the national

bourgeoisie, while striving to improve their cooperation with foreign capital, no longer express their nationalism by fighting for the independence of the domestic market. For this reason, the social base of the open door policy is not limited to the big bourgeoisie. It also includes the major strata of the Egyptian middle bourgeoisie. The base of subordination is much larger than what some claim it is - only a handful of what they term parasitic capitalists. The petit bourgeoisie is in fact the true representative of the nationalist bourgeoisie. They have a prominent role in the completion of the tasks of the national democratic revolution with socialist horizons. The following table shows the distribution of workers according to occupation:

Occupation	no. in 1000's	percentage
professionals, technicians, related jobs	699.1	10.6%
administrators, related jobs	99.1	1.5%
writers, related jobs	698.7	10.6%
commercial workers	137.2	2.1%
service workers	716.3	10.9%
agricultural workers	2188.4	33.1%
production workers (industry, transport and construction)	1583.1	24.0%
miscellaneous	478.1	7.2%
	6600.0	100.0%

This shows that industrial workers, the most active and organized faction of the working class, constitute 24% of the civilian labor force. Along with agricultural and commercial workers, they constitute 59.2%. Thus, wage earners in general constitute approximately 17.5% of the population. This is almost twice the percentage of wage earners in Czarist Russia when the October Revolution was victorious.

The rural areas also experienced the penetration of capitalist production relations more clearly between 1960 and 1976. On the one hand, the number of agricultural workers decreased from more than 80% in 1960 to less than 60% in 1976. The increase in non-agricultural labor is an indication of extensive capitalist penetration in the rural areas. On the other hand, the number of those owning less than 5 acres of land, i.e., the small farmers, increased from 2,919,000 (or 94.1% of all land owners), to 3,479,000 in 1981 (or 95.6%). Their share of the land decreased from 3,172,000 acres, with an average holding of 1.1 acres, to 2,916,000 acres, with an average holding of .9 acres. At the same time, there was an increase in the number of farmers owning 5-10 acres. There were 80,000 farmers, or 2.6% of land holders, who owned 516,000 acres, with an average holding of 4.6 acres. This rose to 87,000, or 2.4% of all land owners, owning 577,000 acres, with an average land holding of 6.6 acres. However, the number of rich farmers, owning 10 or more acres, decreased from 1.2 thousand, or 3.3% of all owners, who own 2,396,000 acres, with an average holding of 23.5 acres, to 74,000 or 2% of all land holders, owning 2,004,000 acres, with an average of 27.1 acres in each land holding.



Street in Cairo

More important is that whereas the overwhelming majority became small farmers, owning less than an acre, the number of the wealthy rural landowners, with more than 100 acres, decreased from 5,000, owning 500,000 acres, with an average holding of 100 acres, to 2,000, owning 413,000 acres, with an average holding of 206.5 acres. This indicates the extent of class differentiation in the rural areas. More than half the owners have less than an acre, while the filthy rich own more than double the maximum set by the last land reform law, issued in 1969, that limited land ownership to 100 acres per family. Thus, we see the phenomenon of more and more poverty among small land owners (bearing in mind that the

income of agricultural wage laborers is much lower still). On the other hand, ownership of land and means of production is concentrated in the hands of the rural rich. The accumulating land ownership confirms this fact.

The data which we relied on to analyze the changes in the social constellation stops with the year 1976, due to the absence of a current census that can be relied upon. It is necessary to apply the same indicators and directions of investments, concentration of capital, poverty and wealth, on the entirety of this constellation. We will find that the tendencies noted above have intensified with the furthering of the open door policy which has accelerated over the past ten years.

## Palestinian Popular Arts Ensemble

— The Popular Arts ensemble was established in Al Bireh in the occupied West Bank in 1979, by a group of men and women who were interested in the arts, particularly Palestinian popular arts.

— The group was interested in exploring the Palestinian people's original cultural roots and employing these in artistic works that encompass progressive humanitarian contents in a sophisticated, aesthetic framework.

— The ensemble despatched trainers to several institutions in occupied Palestine in order to establish groups there.

— In 1981, the ensemble won first prize in the dabka (folkdance) festival held by Bir Zeit University.

— In 1983, the Friends of Society charitable association in Al Bireh began to sponsor the ensemble, putting all capacities at the group's disposal so as to advance it.

— In 1983, the ensemble presented its first long work which was entitled «Folklore Scenes» and also won the first prize in the dabka festival of that year.

— In 1984, the ensemble participated in the Bir Zeit Nights festival, performing the play entitled «Wadi Al Tuffah» (Apple Valley) which received first prize at the festival.

— In 1985, the ensemble once again won first prize at the Bir Zeit University's dabka festival.

— In 1986, the ensemble presented its



new work called «Mashaal» which is a name, while also meaning torch.

### MASHAAL

The story of «Mashaal» is rooted in Palestinian popular legend. The ensemble did not stick to the exact historical details or the original story. Rather they formulated it in a new artistic style, adding new incidents which served the main line of the story. The story goes back to the outbreak of World War I, when the Ottoman sultan issued an ordinance for drafting Arab youth to participate alongside the German and Turkish troops in the war. This elicited a new phenomenon called 'escapees' and Mashaal was one of those. He escaped to the mountains, but could not stand staying away from his village and home, his wife, Aysha,

and the village spring. This homesickness led him to endanger his life by heading for the spring where Turkish soldiers were waiting. They arrested him.

Mashaal was carried by ship to Europe to fight for the cause of others, to fight a war that was not his own, this crazy war being waged by the capitalist powers with the people as cannon fodder.

When the war ended, Mashaal returned to his village, carrying with him the British promise that if they were victorious and the country (Palestine) came under their rule, they would withdraw shortly after the war ended. Mashaal then started looking for a sword, a horse and a rifle for the purpose of showing off, for there was no need to worry anymore.

After a short period of time, Mashaal discovers that the British were lying and had broken their promise. So he continues looking for a sword, horse and rifle, but this time for purposes other than showing off. Thus, he sells Aysha's jewelry, but it is not enough to buy all the things, so he decides to travel to Haifa to work as a porter in the harbor. There he spends several long years. During his stay in Haifa, he participates in the famous harbor workers' strike. Afterwards, he returns to his village with the three things - sword, horse and rifle, to create a bright new dawn for his beautiful Aysha.

# Al Hakawati Theater

## in Occupied Palestine

The following article is based on an interview with Francois Abu Salem, director of the Palestinian theater group *Al Hakawati*, while the group was touring Europe. The interview appeared in the Lebanese newspaper *Al Safir* on November 1, 1986.

*Al Hakawati* is a very distinctive experience in Arab theater. The members of this group attempt, through their artistic work, to achieve an ambitious project: Defining the features and identity of an alternative Arab theater that will stand out as avant-garde in this era, and at the same time, have the Palestinian heritage deeply rooted in it.

The experience of *Al Hakawati* is exceptional if only because of its location in occupied Palestine. This imposed a state of isolation on *Al Hakawati*, at least initially, but there is no doubt that the group has accepted the challenges imposed by occupation and isolation and turned these into motivations for development. *Al Hakawati* had to start from point zero in posing questions and treating thought-provoking issues, despite the difficult conditions. The issues the group has dealt with have exposed it to continuous persecution by the Zionist authorities. Last year, their center in Jerusalem was closed down several times, and director Francois Abu Salem was summoned for interrogation by the authorities. In addition to being made to feel alienated in their own homeland,



Francois Abu Salem

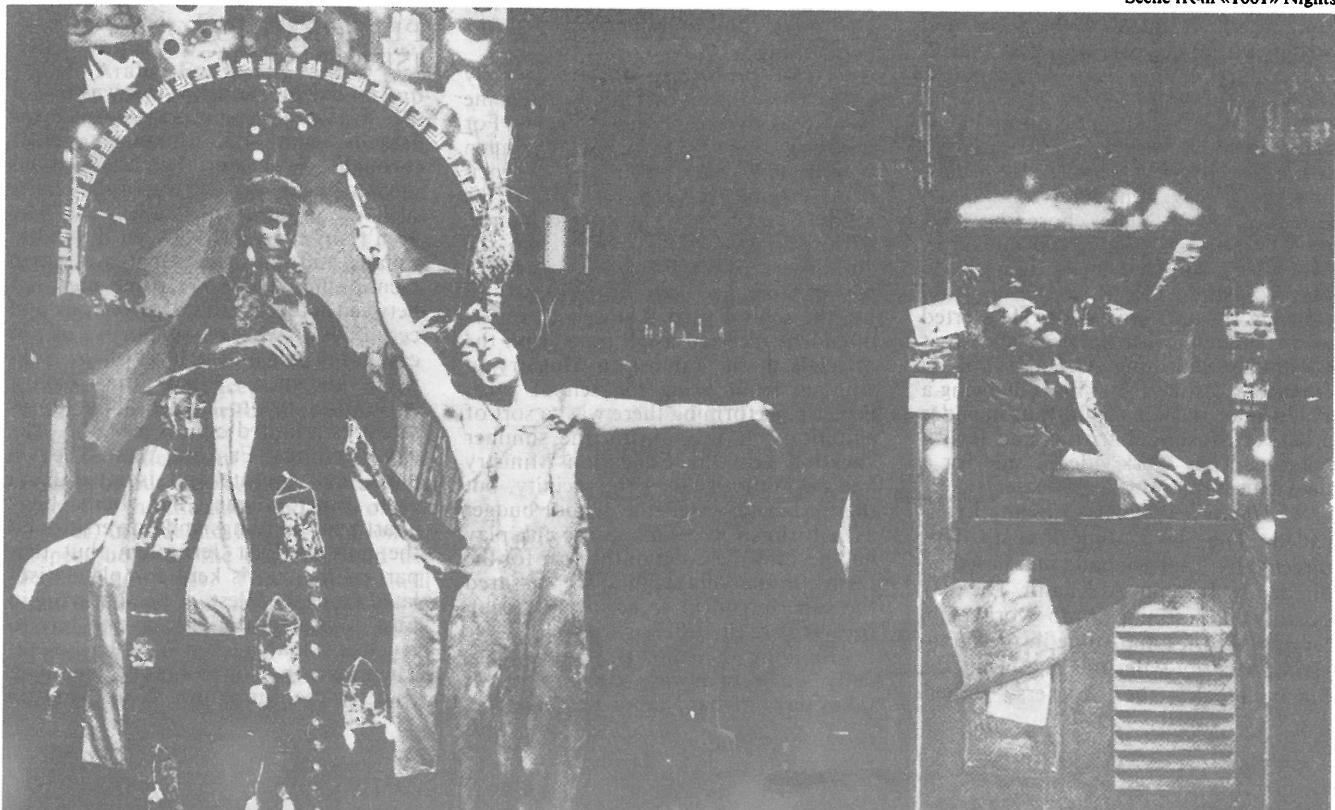
the members of *Al Hakawati* have had to endure and overcome continuous attempts to isolate them from their primary audience, the Palestinian community.

## THE PALESTINIAN THEATER MOVEMENT

The first independent experiments in Palestinian theater date back to the mid-sixties. *Al Hadeth* (Contemporary) Theater in Nazareth began in 1965, and *Al Nahed* (Awakening) Theater began in Haifa in 1969. These were modest experiences that were subjected to all forms of harassment which deprived them of the opportunity to establish themselves firmly and develop. Eventually, they died out.

The emergence of the theater movement in occupied Palestine coincided with the tumultuous political developments of the late sixties and early seventies - the June War in 1967 and the resulting occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the rise of the armed Palestinian resistance, and the exposure of the Arab regimes' impotency. In particular, Black September 1970 in Jordan, when the regime unleashed a wholesale massacre against the Palestinian people and revolution, contributed to the maturation of the Palestinian theater movement both in terms of its themes and independent identity. The features of Palestinian theater emerged more clearly with the establishment of *Balaleen* (Balloons) Theater in occupied Palestine. Then more groups were born: *Sandouq Al Ajab* (The Amusement Box), *Dababees* (Pins) and *Al Masrah Al Jamei* (The University Theater). Though none of these groups lasted a long time, they represented a new form of production based on collective work and sharing of expenses. Every member of each theater group participated in designing the costumes and sets, and in acting and directing the plays.

Scene from «1001» Nights



## THE START OF AL HAKAWATI

*Al Hakawati* theater was established in 1977, by a group of amateurs organized by Francois Abu Salem. *Al Hakawati* owes its Arab and international fame to the play «Mahjoub, Mahjoub» in 1981, but they had produced two other works before that: «In the Name of the Father, the Mother and the Son» in 1978, and «Bread and Salt» in 1979-80. In 1982, *Al Hakawati* produced «One Thousand and One Nights of a Stone Thrower», and filmed some scenes of Emil Habibi's play «Al Mutasha'el». They produced «Ali of Galilee» in 1983, and «The Story of the Eye and the Tooth» in 1985. *Al Hakawati* ventured to establish a theater and culture center in Jerusalem, named the Arts and Theater Center.

«One Thousand and One Nights of a Stone Thrower» is a good example of the group's innovative style and Palestinian essence at the same time. Though *Al Hakawati* means storyteller, the group's stories are not told in a traditional narrative way. Rather they employ pantomime and special effects to get their point across. Though about the Palestinians under occupation, «One Thousand and One Nights of a Stone Thrower» is neither didactic nor propagandistic in style. Rather the relationship between the oppressed and the oppressors is to a great extent conveyed by the structure of the play and the set. The stage has two levels. On the upper one reigns the governor. On the lower one are the people, including the stone thrower, upon whom the governor is trying to get his hands. The message comes across through the way the play unfolds more than from dialogue.

Director Francois Abu Salem himself chose his Palestinian identity. He is the son of the Hungarian surgeon and writer, Loran Gaspar, who held French citizenship, and came to Palestine to work. Francois was born in a village near Bethlehem and grew up in Palestine with his brothers, until his father was expelled by the Zionist authorities, and the family went to live in Tunis. However, Abu Salem chose the land of Palestine, its people and language. Moreover, he challenged himself to play a leading role in the young and growing theater movement. He started as an amateur with *Balaleen* and went on until establishing *Al Hakawati*. *Al Hakawati* distinguishes itself by being a Palestinian theater group that includes artists of Muslim, Christian and Jewish religion. They work side by side for a dual cause: Palestine and theater.

*Al Hakawati's* latest presentation is called «The Slaves' Banishment». It is directed by Radi Shahada and based on an idea by Ibrahim Al Khalili. The play portrays Palestinian Arab workers in Israeli factories and some in the factories of wealthy Palestinians. During the lunch break, the workers gather,

expressing their common troubles, hopes and aspirations. They are all looking for somebody to sympathize with their problems, and to defend their rights.

## PERFORMING IN THE VILLAGES

Though *Al Hakawati* has now toured extensively abroad, its first performances were in towns and villages of Palestine where an exceptional experience was created in terms of introducing new national cultural forms and audience participation. Francois Abu Salem describes *Al Hakawati's* experiences performing in the villages:

«We had very close relations with our masses, regardless of their liking theater or not. We are not affiliated with a specific political group, which enabled us to maintain close relations with different people in different areas. In the Galilee, for example, the political tendencies are public and very intense, but we were able to work with everybody and bring opposing groups together in our shows. We don't claim that we unite them, but we bring them together in joint work if only for a week. This is exactly the role of the theater we aspire to.»

The cities have traditionally been the domain of the theater and fine arts, but *Al Hakawati* has broken out of these narrow confines and performed in villages before audiences with no previous involvement with theater. Abu Salem relates the details of such experiences: «When we travel to perform in one of the villages, we stay there for days. Usually we are confronted with very difficult circumstances. In most villages, there is no stage. We take a school yard or the village square. This in itself gets us into trouble with the occupation authorities who try to pressure us to prevent us from performing.»

«These problems, however, really gather the villagers around us. All come to help us overcome the obstacles. For instance, the young men and women help us build the stage.... In one incident, I remember that we needed the school yard for the performance. Although we had a permit from the authorities to perform, we needed a permit from the Education Ministry to use the school yard. The school superintendent received a telegram from the officials in the Education Ministry to stop us from using the school yard, because performing there was 'a sort of agitation.' It was during the summer vacation and the Education Ministry had no authority over the vicinity, but the authorities used the school budget as a form of pressure. Since the play had become the event of the year for the people in the village, they all pressured the superintendent to get a permission for us to use the school yard.»

«Building the stage is another difficulty we were always confronting. It takes days of hard labor to build one,

and to fix the lighting and sound systems. Our financial resources were very limited, and the stage, for example, requires a certain kind of wood that is costly. We don't own a portable stage that is big enough. In one of the villages, a few people took apart the roof of their home to build a stage, and everybody worked all night to build it. Everyone in the villages shared the experience with us.»

«We eat and sleep in the people's homes when we are performing in their villages. We live among them for days, and a very warm relationship is established among us.»

Abu Salem also described the people as an audience: «Our audience is definitely spontaneous. People don't watch the shows with a critical view. They may applaud when they are not supposed to, or comment in a loud voice and interrupt the actors; some may not understand the meaning of the sound or light effects. A lot of them stand behind the stage throughout the whole show to see what goes on behind the curtains.... Moreover, a huge number of children come to our shows. In the Galilee, the children arrive before all others. Many run away from home and hide until the show begins. Children are always more spontaneous than adults. They just forget everything around them and surrender themselves to the magic of the show.»

«In Jerusalem, our audience is more intellectual. They give us their comments and critiques, and we benefit from this. In the villages, our people's spontaneity is our only criterion. They either get interested or bored. They wait for the show to end to talk to us and to celebrate. In some villages, women come to the shows; in others, women are the majority of the audience, and in still others, only men attend.»

## PERFORMING FOR ISRAELIS

Abu Salem was asked if it was one of *Al Hakawati's* purposes to bring Israelis and Palestinians together through the theater. He prefaced his answer by giving a picture of the reality of living in occupied Palestine: «There aren't any meetings between the Palestinians and the Jews, that are worth mentioning. There are some meetings between intellectuals... between us and certain Jews who are supportive of our cause, but not on the level of the ordinary audience. What the Zionist authorities try to depict about Jerusalem as a united city, is a big lie. The city is split into East and West. The two parts are separate and isolated from each other. Israel has built huge apartment buildings and universities on the hills of East Jerusalem, but that part of the city is kept completely isolated from the West. A person living in East Jerusalem doesn't have to buy so much as a match from West Jerusalem. Therefore, there aren't many Jews who come to see our shows. If we want an



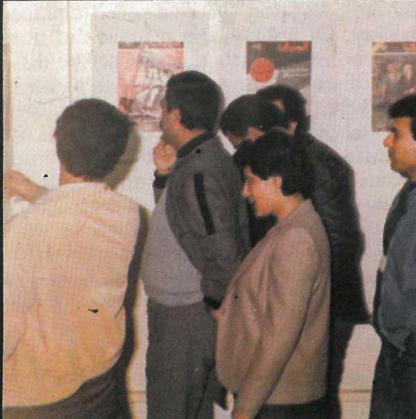
# PFLP's 19th Anniversary

PFLP anniversary activities in Yarmouk camp, near Damascus, Syria, included photo and handicraft exhibitions, a ceremony to honor the martyrs at the cemetery, and a children's rally.

Speech in solidarity with the children in the camps of Lebanon



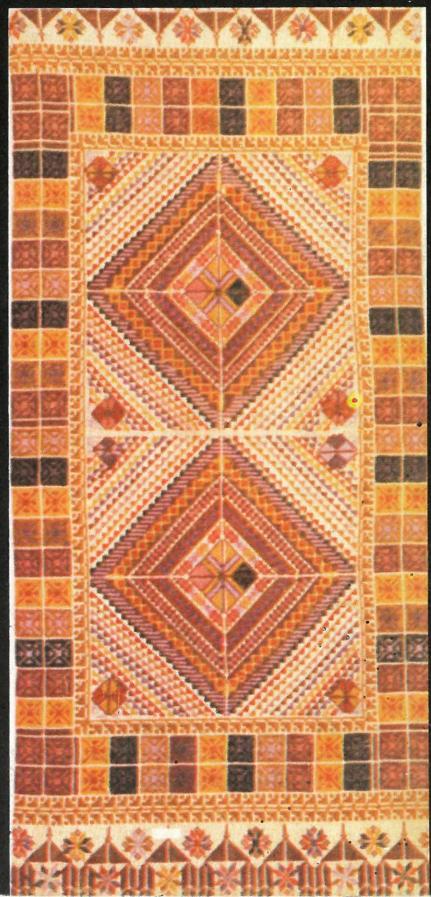
Handicraft exhibition organized by the Palestinian Women's Organization



Children's rally



Palestinian embroidery



PFLP Politbureau members honor the martyrs.

