

to recognize the Palestinian state. We should never plant illusions in the minds of our people who are making daily sacrifices. Our heroic masses should understand the nature of the enemy and that it will never acknowledge our rights until the costs of the occupation become greater than its benefits on the economic, political and moral levels.

**The slogan of civil disobedience was raised in the first months of the uprising, but later on there was less agitation for its immediate implementation. Why? What, in your view, are the required conditions for implementing this step?**

There was not complete success in implementing the disobedience slogan as it was first raised and as we understood it. However, our masses who are confronting the occupation every moment have applied this slogan in the field. Lack of total success does not and should not cancel the practice of civil disobedience which have been created by our masses, such as refusing to pay taxes, to renew licenses or to open stores on the occupation forces' orders, attending school despite closure orders, organizing popular education despite the occupation prohibiting it, refusing the magnetic ID cards, the resignation of the police and appointed municipal councils, refusing to work in settlements, abiding by the general strike days, continuing to form popular committees in defiance of the military laws, refusing to pay fines or remove barricades or slogans or Palestinian flags, etc. What happened in the heroic town of Beit Sahour is an outstanding example; the people collectively and totally refused to pay taxes in spite of the violence and collective punishment, and the brutal confiscation of their property, during the 43-day military siege. The battle of the IDs waged by the brave workers in the Gaza Strip, is another outstanding example.

All these events point to the progress which has been made by our masses in their daily experience of confronting the occupation. The battle is violent, but when the occupation began to use new repressive means, we notice that the masses are really ready to confront these. The masses were able to practice many forms of disobedience, but not on a permanent basis. Total disobedience was not realized as we had imagined. Why?

As we understood it, civil disobedience means total rejection of the occupation, refusing to recognize its legitimacy, boycotting the civil administration and forming the alternative popular authority.

The incomplete success has various reasons, some objective and others subjective. The objective reasons are related to the occupation and the realities it has created over 22 years. The Palestinian national economy was subordinated and linked to the Zionist economy; for example, more than 90% of the imports of the West Bank and Gaza Strip had been from Israel, including basic materials. The Israeli economy, with its high technical development, was able to deform and contain the weaker and more underdeveloped Palestinian economy. This makes disengagement very difficult, especially as long as the occupation exists.

As for the subjective factor, we in the PFLP consider this to be a decisive factor. The fact is that the Palestinian national organi-

zations did not possess joint conviction about the concept of civil disobedience, and how to practice it. This inhibited a unified national decision for total national disobedience. The other aspect of the weakness of the subjective factor is the PLO's inability to provide the minimum requirements for national disobedience. For example, how can we deal with some 120,000 Palestinian workers who have been working in Zionist territories? Total disobedience is impossible if the workers do not boycott all work in the Zionist economy.

Why do we say that the subjective factor is decisive? Because we have a deep conviction that we can practice civil disobedience if we devote sufficient effort to surmounting the obstacles. The masses have implemented a series of acts of disobedience; they are ready to sacrifice and have plenty of enthusiasm to escalate the struggle against the occupation, but on the basis of a collective national position and the fulfillment of the needed material support. In the PFLP, we feel that this process is realistic and feasible. In order not to push the situation towards adventurism, especially in view of our understanding of the nature of the enemy and the difficulty of implementing total disobedience, we in the PFLP proposed the tactic of raising the civil disobedience slogan in different areas and at different times. This would allow the mass movement to gradually head towards civil disobedience. Gradual disobedience would serve as a rehearsal - for one week, then ten days, then two weeks, and so on, and then return to the previous situation.

This process would lead to self-examination, to knowing the enemy's reaction, to discovering the problems arising from the steps of disobedience and helping us to find solution. In the course of this dialectical process, the economic, political, militant and organizational basis of the uprising would be consolidated. Our masses have been practicing acts of civil disobedience, but provisionally. Now they could begin practicing this in a total and collective way. This in itself would reinforce the confrontation and escalate it, meanwhile strengthening cooperation among the masses.

This is what we have understood when raising the disobedience slogan. What is our evaluation now of this slogan? It became clear that the essence of the slogan was genuine and possible, but it seems that our assessment of the obstacles to its implementation was not precise. In any case, we are raising this subject very clearly. It is necessary to continue the work and propaganda among the contingents of the Palestinian national movement, aimed at applying this slogan, because in our view, it is one of the most important dynamics for moving the uprising to a more advanced level. We must have a unified, serious national decision and fulfill the material requirements in order to implement this slogan.

**Why haven't Hamas and the Islamic trend joined the United National Leadership after two years of the uprising? Also, do you expect that the Islamic forces' success in the parliamentary elections in Jordan, will reflect on the Islamic trend's strength in the occupied territories?**