

from his «holy Judea and Samaria.» It would be fatal to bet on a qualitative change in the Israeli position regarding our rights. Change is possible, but certain conditions must be met, first and foremost, continuing and escalating the uprising, and inflicting maximum losses on all levels.

Today's international detente is an important factor mitigating for a solution to the Middle East crisis, but understanding the effects of detente on the Middle East, in a mechanical way, leads to inaccurate calculations. The effects of the international atmosphere will always be relative to the local balance of forces. In Namibia, the international factor was effective and the solution became possible, due to the balance of power between SWAPO and the racist South African government.

In our view, the PLO must act so as to change the balance of power. Our daily concern should be continuing and escalating the intifada, using all means, for it is the decisive factor for making the needed change. We must take advantage of the international atmosphere, but not view it as an alternative (to our own efforts). We must also activate the Arab masses and national movements, while urging the Arab states to honor their commitments to the Palestinian cause - financially, politically and media-wise. We must not surrender to the Arab regime's pressure to give gratuitous concessions.

The PFLP's view is not based on the idea that the uprising is able to achieve all our strategic goals, i.e., liberating all our national land. We do not burden the intifada with unbearable tasks. Our slogans are realistic, based on an evaluation that the maximum which can be achieved at this stage is implementing the legitimate international resolutions concerning Palestine. We objected to specifying 242 from among all these resolutions at the 19th PNC, because 242 deals with our cause not as a national issue, but one of refugees. It guarantees the recognition of Israel, and views the problem as one of borders between Israel and the neighboring Arab countries. For this reason, we consider that the insistence of the right wing on including 242 in the PNC's resolutions, was an unjustified concession. This was the start of subsequent gratuitous concessions.

Some say that the policies of the PLO leadership have achieved some positive results, such as the developments in the European and Japanese positions, and the start of the US-PLO dialogue. We say that any policy has positive and negative aspects, but one must judge the overall results.

The intifada and the Arab situation

How do you view the Arab situation in view of the need for support to the intifada?

If we want to analyze the reasons that have so far prevented the Palestinian intifada from a commensurate influence on the whole Arab world, we must take two factors into considerations: The first is the decline of the official Arab order; the second is the aggravated crisis of the Arab national liberation movement.

On the official level

Any review of the Arab official policy clearly reveals the failure of the national program of the ruling strata for liberation, development and democracy. Review also shows that the Arab-

Zionist conflict has fallen from being the top priority to being the last. Of course, this decline is not a result of the current situation; it has its roots in a set of economic and social developments which finally led to the collapse of most of the links of the Arab confrontation against the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary project. This was followed by the official Arab position in the Casablanca Summit, where the Egyptian regime was restored to Arab officialdom, burdened with the Camp David accords and their humiliating terms. This regime can become a bridge for spreading Camp David in the whole Arab area in the future.

The official Arab collapse was also manifested on many occasions during the intifada. Most prominent is that the US has exercised its veto in the UN Security Council six times during the intifada, without having to fear any official Arab reaction to this. On the contrary, the Arab states' imports from the US increased in 1988, as compared to 1987.

Because of this, we apply new criteria in evaluating the present Arab situation and the degree of support to the intifada. The Arab states must define their relations with the US and other Western countries on the basis of whether or not they recognize the Palestinian state. This is the minimum needed to provide the PLO with more weight in the conflict with the US and Israel. The PLO can force these two to give in to the demand for freedom and independence, if the Palestinian people do not have to wage their battle alone, whether in the occupied territories or in the international arena. However, if we apply this yardstick, we will find that the majority of Arab states, if not all, still follow a policy which is below the acceptable minimum.

The Arab national liberation movement

During the intifada, it has become clear that the Arab national liberation movement is suffering an aggravated crisis which needs to be resolved quickly. A comparison between the state of this movement as it was in the fifties and early sixties, and today, reveals the features of this crisis. All of us remember the battles which the Arab masses fought in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and other countries against the Baghdad Pact and other plans which aimed to subordinate the Arab national to colonialism. History is full of Arab victories at that time. we remember the vitality of the masses striving to define their rights and achieve their goals.

Unfortunately, despite two years of the intifada, the situation today is totally different. It is painful to say that the mass demonstrations in some European cities, in support of the intifada, were bigger than those in many Arab countries. The crisis is clearly seen in the weakness of the Arab popular movement, the weakness of Arab theoretical dialogue and the unleashing of secondary contradictions at the expense of the main one, promoting division rather than unity, etc.

In the view of the PFLP, there have been great qualitative developments, from the fifties to the eighties, such as the oil boom and its effect, and the replacement of the old colonialism with neocolonialism, whereby imperialism practices a new mechanism of exploitation. Despite all this, we consider the subjective factor to be the primary root of the crisis, after which comes the effects of the objective factor. By the subjective factor, we mean the ideological and class nature of the