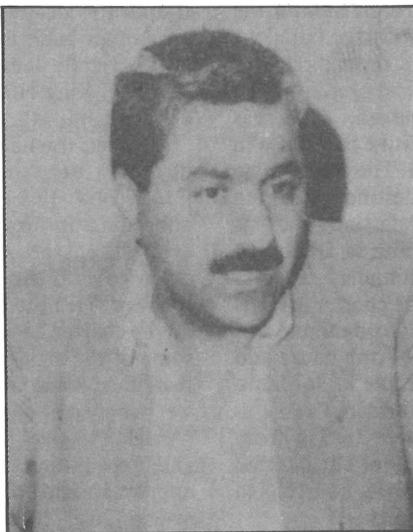
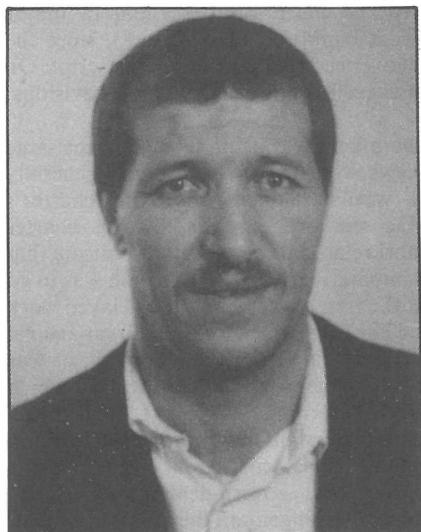


Jordan, Democracy and Palestine

In June, a broad spectrum of the political forces in Jordan debated and adopted the new National Charter, followed by the formation of a new government. The significance of these events is evaluated by DP staffmember Farida Al Asmar, who was in Amman at the time, interviewing representatives of the three main parties of JANDA (Jordan's Arab Nationalist Democratic Alliance), the progressive coalition that acquired five posts in the new government.



The following persons were interviewed as background for this article, left to right:

– Lu'a'y Dabbagh, Politbureau member in charge of the Political Department of the Popular Democratic Unity Party in Jordan, established on the basis of the PFLP's organization in Jordan, and henceforth referred to as the Unity Party. Dabbagh was three times imprisoned for his political work/affiliation in the 1980s, pre – democracy stage.

– Tayseer Al Zabri, Secretary General of the Jordan People's Democratic Party (JPDP), established on the basis of the DFLP's membership in Jordan.

– Abdel Rahman Al Majali, member of the Jordanian Communist Party's (JCP) Central Committee and of the editorial board of *Al Jamahir*, the party's central organ.

On June 8th, Bush and Schwarzkopf were marching in the first victory parade held in the US since World War II. Perhaps they hoped to welcome back soldiers returning from the Gulf in a manner that would eclipse the devastation and unresolved conflicts left behind in the Middle East. But people in Jordan were not mesmerized by the US's military «splendor» or false peace promises. In a survey based on field interviews with 2,000 families chosen at random in Jordan's cities, villages and refugee camps, 80% pinned blame on the US and Israel for preventing a peaceful solution to the Palestinian problem. Almost 70% disputed the idea that a change had occurred in

US, French and British policies towards the Palestinian question, while 78% considered the US – European peace moves as a political maneuver designed to confuse the Arabs and divert attention from the crimes committed against Iraq. An overwhelming 81.8% expressed disbelief in US willingness to pressure Israel into solving the conflict via implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. Also indicative of the national mood in Jordan was the answer to a more overall question: 29.4% of those polled said they would accept Israel's existence and ending the state of war only if Israel were to withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, while 97.5% rejected such acceptance on principle (*The Star*, Amman, June 13 – 19th).

The National Charter

Lu'a'y Dabbagh of the Unity Party evaluated the charter adopted June 9th as follows: «First of all, it is a social charter, setting out basic directives for building a new society, as well as the framework for struggle between the classes. These directives derive from the consciousness of the respective classes, especially the bourgeoisie, as represented in the government and state. We view the charter as a historical compromise between the state and bourgeoisie on the one hand and the remaining classes and forces on the other. Jordan is today very developed compared with 40 years ago when the constitution was adopted by the parliament. It has developed in ►