

Palestinian Information

Tasks and Perspectives

Below we print the first part of an essay on Palestinian information work, written by Bassam Abu Sharif

The information activities of national liberation movements are closely linked with their goal and political strategy. The goal of these movements is to mobilize the masses in the fight against imperialism and, simultaneously, to wage a direct struggle against the imperialist enemy, particularly against his information activities.

With regard to the Palestinian national liberation movement, its information activities are marked by certain special features, in addition to general ones.

These special features of Palestinian information stem from the specific nature of the Palestinian cause, the situation of the Palestinian masses and the situation of the Palestinian revolution. Palestinians are scattered throughout a number of Arab countries and in emigration. This hinders the process of information unification and concentration. Most Palestinians live outside their fatherland and have no territory from which they can run their information institutions. Those who are at home cannot speak out freely and are under military occupation.

In view of these conditions the Palestinian masses not only do not have their own state and state institutions but, moreover, live in many countries under the rule of different political regimes.

Therefore Palestinian information, like various other aspects of Palestinian activities, cannot be free and spontaneous, except to the degree that it is permitted by one or another regime, and insofar as this freedom does not violate the overall balance of forces. But that is not all. Some political regimes deny the Palestinian revolution the right to unite and mobilize the Arab Palestinian masses through their own information programs; instead they advance their own stances towards Palestinians.

There are very many examples of this - in radio, newspapers, publications, etc.

This makes Palestinian information activities more complicated than that of other national liberation movements.

Furthermore it must be said that Palestinian information operations are more different and complicated because the enemy camp of the Palestinian masses is very diverse. This means that Palestinian information activities must fight simultaneously on more than one front and are compelled to counter enemies who have mastered information practices and their art, both at home and abroad.

The Zionists have committed extensive robbery of Palestinian culture and its civilization legacy. This also gives Palestinian information activities a cultural dimension, because we must include and expose such robbery and return the contributions of real civilization development to its true creators.

But it is not easy to fight on several fronts and the enemy

knows how to use these difficulties, such as our limited facilities and the fact that we are scattered. These difficulties were a great challenge to the Palestinian national liberation movement when it began its activities on this front after the June war. If we were to compare the situation in information immediately after the June war in 1967 with its state in June 1981, it would show that very great progress has been achieved. It would also be evident what more is needed in this sphere to fill in the gaps so that desirable progress is obtained on the qualitative information level.

1) Information Activities Within the Palestinian Home :

Information activities must not only show the world the truth about the Palestinian cause, it is also necessary that these efforts are based on a clear information strategy directed to our own ranks; this means on the national level. This is what I call «information activities within the Palestinian home».

The main task of information in this field is to retain the Palestinian identity of all generations so that they continually cling to Palestine on the basis of knowing the real facts about the country, the people, and their cultural legacy, besides having political knowledge. This task, which lies on the shoulders of information workers, has not been formulated very precisely as yet nor has it yet been given the necessary and desirable attention.

Endeavours expended for this task are an investment for the future; they are the prerequisite for success in the fight for liberation and in the fight against hostile disinformation.

Information activities «in the Palestinian home», altogether, represent building the foundations on which the knowledge of our young generations will grow. And it is on the basis of such knowledge that the Palestinian citizen will continue to cling to his country, his land, and his homeland, because his homeland is his right, as facts show. This truthful knowledge gives him strength to fight for the liberation of his homeland from the claws of the usurpers.

And beyond and above all this, such knowledge will be the sharpest weapon in protecting the national heritage and his weapon against the enemy, which is trying to steal and destroy the culture of our people.

It is on the basis of this that we educate a citizen to be committed in the fight for his homeland and that we would mould national cadres.

Activity in this field must begin by providing truthful information about Palestine before it was seized, and by reinforcing this knowledge in the minds of people.

This has not happened as yet, unfortunately, not only among ordinary citizens but not even among certain cadres