

current) clearly emerged from the ranks of the left (the Democratic Front and the communists) after the 1973 war, and was resisted by the centre and rightist tendencies.

The logic of events, however, compelled the PLO centrists under the leadership of Arafat to seek such a compromise solution. The October war had convinced them that the gap between Palestinian national slogans ("secular democratic state") and the actual capacities of the Palestinians can only be bridged by a radical reorientation of their objectives.<sup>9</sup> This realisation was brought home with vengeance by the war of 1973.

The role of the Palestinian organisations during the October 1973 war was completely marginal. A confusing situation was created in which organisations whose sole and only reason for existence was the liberation of Palestine had achieved on this particular front less than normal bourgeois armies whose reasons for existence was defense of the interests of their respective ruling classes.  
(Ja'far, 1978:117)

The result was a rethinking of Palestinian strategy towards liberation and a reassessment of the limitations of PLO effectiveness in a situation where the organisational social base of the movement was atomised and declassed. This process of rethinking was shaped by two basic considerations. The first was the failure of the Palestinian resistance to fulfill its revolutionary objectives in Jordan (1970-1971) and in Lebanon (1975-1982) through a pattern of alignments with the left in the latter and a section of the army in the former. The resistance was limited in both cases by its social base to act either as a vanguard of the revolutionary movement -- a kind of a surrogate proletariat -- or as an integral part of the indigenous national movement, to which the PLO would be a subordinate contingent. In Lebanon the PLO was consumed, and often sidetracked unwillingly, by confessional sectarian politics. In Jordan it was crushed by the (under-